



INTERPOL statement

12th session of the Working Group on International Cooperation (25-26 March 2021)

Dear chairman,

Distinguished delegates,

On behalf of INTERPOL, I would like to give you a brief overview on how INTERPOL can support its Member Countries in combating Transnational Organized Crime by providing assistance to Joint Investigation Teams and developing special investigative techniques.

INTERPOL connects its 194 Member Countries via a secure global communications system called I-24/7. I-24/7 gives investigators real-time access to INTERPOL's criminal databases so that they can search, for example, if a passport is stolen or if a fingerprint matches one for which we have a name.

At the request of Member Countries, INTERPOL can provide specialized teams to assist national law enforcement investigations. These INTERPOL teams can be integrated in Joint Investigative bodies and make available specific expertise in real time for the purpose of investigation.

In particular, INTERPOL teams can provide a range of investigative and analytical support at the crime scene such as:

- Database queries of fingerprints or facial recognition to quickly identify suspects;
- Access to the database of stolen and lost travel documents which gathers over 100 million records;
- Checks for counterfeit passports;
- Money laundering expertise;
- Providing technology on remote spots to allow real time access to INTERPOL's databases during an operation or an investigation.
- Issuing international notices for fugitive criminals wanted for arrest. To give you an idea of its effectiveness, every single day, on average, nine INTERPOL Red Notices are cancelled because of the arrest, extradition or surrender of the fugitives in question.

To conclude, INTERPOL teams, as a part of Joint Investigation Team, can assist the national and foreign liaison officers of participating countries to make the best use of INTERPOL's tools and capabilities. They facilitate real-time exchange of messages and vital police data between countries (including fingerprints, photos, wanted person notices, and data relating to stolen and lost travel documents and stolen motor vehicles, among others).

Taking into consideration the proposed draft recommendations, INTERPOL would therefore like to submit for your consideration our action oriented proposals with regard to the recommendations (a), (c), (g) and (k) to reflect on the tools INTERPOL puts at the disposal of joint investigative bodies to promote international cooperation, and support Member States in addressing Transnational organized crime. These recommendations are annexed to the statement we submitted in writing; and we would like to kindly ask whether they can be included in the Summary by the Chair to be prepared after the meeting.

ANNEX

INTERPOL PROPOSALS FOR THE DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS (IGO)

INTERPOL plays an important role to support its 194 member countries in providing (Rec. 1 and 2) legal, operational and logistical technical assistance to establish joint investigative teams and (Rec. 3) specific training on special investigative techniques; but also to (Rec. 4) transmit international cooperation requests (e.g. mutual legal assistance/extradition requests).

On this basis, you will find below some suggestions for your consideration with a view to including INTERPOL in the draft recommendations of the UN Working Group on International Cooperation:

1. Recommendation (in <https://undocs.org/CTOC/COP/WG.3/2020/L.1/Add.1>):

*(a) States parties are encouraged, where possible and necessary, to use joint investigations as a modern form of international cooperation to increase the effectiveness of and expedite cross-border investigations for the broadest possible range of offences, as an alternative of, or to complement, MLA requests; in doing so, States parties need to be able to act quickly, bearing in mind that information or evidence to be obtained may be available only for a limited period of time. **States parties are encouraged to use INTERPOL's policing capabilities and databases to foster international law enforcement cooperation. States Parties are also encouraged to make full use of I-24/7 INTERPOL secure global communication system when establishing joint investigative teams to ensure that they have the ability to exchange criminal data in a timely and secure manner.***

2. Recommendation (in <https://undocs.org/CTOC/COP/WG.3/2020/L.1/Add.1>):

*(g) States parties are strongly encouraged to make use of the resources and facilities provided by **international, regional bodies or mechanisms, including Eurojust and the International Criminal Police Organization-INTERPOL**, as well as existing judicial and law enforcement networks, to enhance coordination for joint investigations at all their stages, from planning to setting-up, and from operation to closure and evaluation.*

3. Recommendation (in <https://undocs.org/CTOC/COP/WG.3/2020/L.1/Add.2>):

*(c) States parties are further encouraged to facilitate training activities for judges, prosecutors, law enforcement officers or other practitioners engaged in the conduct or oversight of special investigative techniques, **including with the support of the International Criminal Police Organization-INTERPOL**, bearing in mind the complexity of issues relating to the use of such techniques for obtaining particularly electronic evidence, and also taking into account the different stages of development in terms of the application of ICTs among States parties.*

4. Recommendation (in <https://undocs.org/CTOC/COP/WG.3/2020/L.1/Add.2>):

*(k) States are encouraged to make use of technology in the field of international cooperation to expedite related proceedings and, particular, address challenges encountered in this field due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Such use of technology may include, the more frequent use of videoconferences in mutual legal assistance practice, the electronic transmission of international cooperation requests, **including through the International Criminal Police Organization-INTERPOL**, and, to the extent feasible, the paperless administration of work in central and other competent authorities, not only in relation to their cooperation with their foreign counterparts but also in relation to their inter-institutional cooperation domestically.*

NOTE: As background information, INTERPOL has been gradually assigned to the role of “channel” to submit such requests by various international treaties, such as the United Nations Convention against transnational organized crime (art. 18, par. 13) and the United Nations Convention against corruption (art. 46, par. 13) which recognize that “INTERPOL can be utilized in urgent circumstances as a communications conduit for mutual legal assistance should the need arise”.