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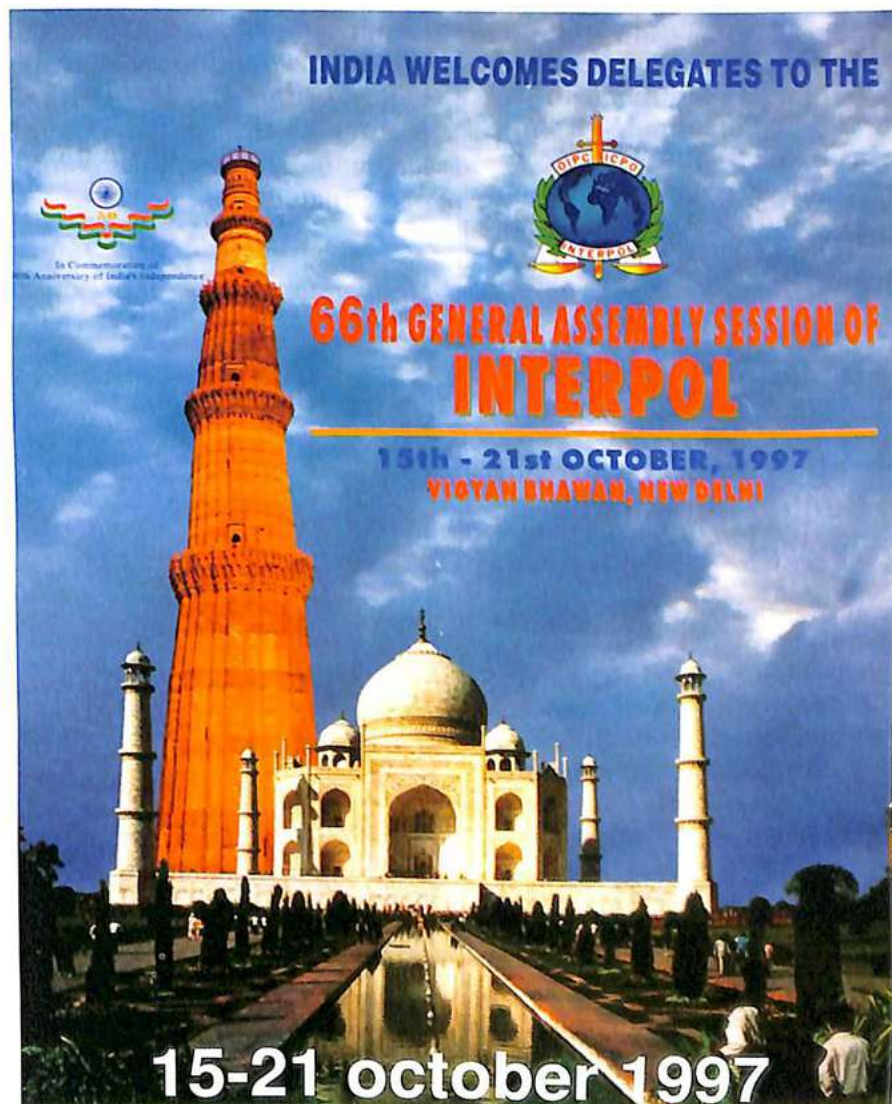
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GENERAL ASSEMBLY

66th session New Delhi



OPENING CEREMONY

The 66th session of the ICPO-Interpol General Assembly was held in New Delhi, India, from 15th to 21st October 1997.

The opening ceremony took place on 15th October in the presence of Mr Kanemoto, President of Interpol, Mr Inder Gujral, Prime Minister of India, the Home Minister of India, the Indian Minister of State for Personnel, Mr Anatoly Kulikov, Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, and Mr Sharma, Director of the Central Bureau of Investigation of India.

The full texts of the speeches given on this occasion appear below.

Speech by the Director of the Central Bureau of Investigation

"Honourable Prime Minister of India,
Honourable Home Minister,
Honourable Minister of State for Personnel,
Deputy Prime Minister of Russia,
President of Interpol,
Secretary General of Interpol,
Vice-Presidents,
Distinguished delegates,
Special invitees,
Observers,
Ladies and gentlemen,
Members of the Press.

Interpol India and my colleagues in the Central Bureau of Investi-

gation extend a hearty welcome to you to the Inaugural Session of the 66th General Assembly of Interpol. We are honoured by the presence of the large congregation of delegates from Interpol member countries and observers from international organizations. I feel proud in announcing that never before in the seventy-four years' history of Interpol, has such a large number of member countries participated.

Mr Sharma, Director of the Central Bureau of Investigation of India



We are particularly honoured by the presence in our midst of the Honourable Prime Minister of India, Honourable Home Minister and Honourable Minister of State for Personnel. I am grateful to them. But for their generous encouragement, it would not have been possible for us to take up the enormous responsibility of hosting the General Assembly in India. We have also in our midst eight Ministers of Interior of member countries who have come as Delegates. The presence of so many luminaries bestows special importance and dignity to the meeting.

It was the cherished dream of my predecessors to bring the General Assembly Session to India. They worked tirelessly for this for many years. I feel obliged to them. Their dream is fulfilled today.

During the five-day deliberations, the delegates will be discussing, for possible consensus, the burning issues of present-day policing. Our common concern is the rapid growth of international crimes like terrorism, arms and drug smuggling, money laundering, sexual abuse of young children, computer busting, illegal sale of flora, fauna and national heritage etc. The globe has shrunk to a small village and now it is possible for resourceful criminals to have easy access to any place in the world in spite of the national barriers. The miraculous strides in communication and informa-



Mr Kanemoto, President of Interpol

tion technology have opened new vistas in crime, the world over, making it difficult for any one country to tackle it alone. Detection and to some extent prevention of crime, both at the national and transnational level, will be possible only through the active co-operation amongst the police forces of all the countries. The call on the services of Interpol will certainly increase in times to come. Interpol plays a unique role in bringing together member countries with diverse laws, procedures and ideologies, in their fight against crime. Ladies and gentlemen, I would not be exaggerating if I state that Interpol has been a success because it is a union of die-hard professionals — a police club. The policeman or woman takes a vow to fight the battle against the criminal irrespective of his origin, nationality, ideology or religion. I salute you all.

Distinguished delegates, I wish you meaningful deliberations in the Session and a very happy and pleasant stay in the capital of India. We have resolved to make the 66th General Assembly a memorable experience for you and I am confident that you will remember it for a long time.

Thanking you all once again."

Speech by the President of the ICPO-Interpol

"Mr President,
Mr Prime Minister,
Honourable Ministers,
Fellow Platform Guests,
Honourable Delegates,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is indeed a great honour for me to address all of you at the opening ceremony of the 66th General Assembly of the ICPO-Interpol here in New Delhi.

As a member of Interpol since 1949, India has always been quite active within the Organization. India hosted the 13th Asian Regional Conference in 1994, while regularly sending its highest police officials to serve on the Executive Committee. I personally have a very fond and pleasant memory of working together with Mr Mohen G. Katre between 1985-1988, and with Mr Joginder Singh since last year.

Building on such a longstanding contribution to Interpol, it is particularly significant that India hosts the annual meeting of the Organization's supreme body in the same year as she celebrates

her 50th anniversary of independence.

On behalf of Interpol and all the delegates representing 177 Member States, I would like to express our profound appreciation to the Indian Government, Prime Minister Mr Gujral and Minister for Home Affairs Mr Gupta for hosting Interpol's General Assembly.

Our gratitude also goes to Messrs. Singh and Sharma and their staff who spared no energy in making this meeting a success and our stay comfortable. I am convinced that this Assembly will be an important milestone for Interpol which will celebrate its 75th birthday next year.

Ladies and gentlemen, one year has passed since you elected me President of Interpol during the 65th General Assembly in Turkey. I would like to thank all of you again for the confidence you expressed in my candidacy.

Since this conference is my first General Assembly, I believe that I should identify four principles which have directed and will continue to direct my actions as President. They are effectiveness, efficiency, accountability and solidarity.

Since we are all professional crime fighters, let us be effective by targeting our efforts and energies to where they are most needed. To do so, we should always re-examine our priorities and the relevance of what we have been doing.

Let us be efficient, because wasting scarce resources could be as serious a crime as that which might have been prevented with a more careful allocation of our re-

sources. Being more conscious of achieving "value for money allocated" and being more result-oriented in our actions is all the more essential as the policy of "zero-growth budget" adopted by the Rome Assembly in 1994 dictates our basic course of action.

Let us remain accountable, to each other, to our Member States and most of all to the billions of innocent and law-abiding people of the world. Today, Interpol is a professional organization of law enforcement agencies worldwide whose primary mission is to make sure that people are protected from crimes and that the criminals are brought to justice. The relevance of Interpol is judged solely by the extent to which it has discharged this responsibility.

And finally, solidarity. Interpol derives its unique strength from the fact that it has 177 Member States within its network of police co-operation. I believe that Interpol is like the ozone-layers, which are invisible to the naked eye but which have a powerful and protective net shielding the earth from deadly ultra-violet rays. Like the ozone layers with ozone holes, Interpol would greatly lose its protective capacity if it severs contact with its members for whatever reasons. It is crucially important for Interpol to keep Member States "in constant touch" with each other and with the General Secretariat.

Having identified the four principles of effectiveness, efficiency, accountability and solidarity, please allow me to quote the gen-

eral policy guidelines that I referred to in my campaign platform.

They are:

- (1) to optimize Interpol's Database System and promote data feedback between member countries through efficient management of the Organization;
- (2) to fight against new threats to the international community, in particular, transnational organized crime;
- (3) to promote its Regionalization Programmes in harmony with existing regional initiatives; and
- (4) to advance its Telecommunications Network Modernization Programme with the aim of consolidating its role as the only organ in the world for global police co-operation.

These are the main areas of action where I believe Interpol's efforts should be focused. Time would not allow me to address each important agenda item in the light of these challenges. Let me remind you that many of the proposed decisions and actions that you have on the week's agenda stem from this set of priorities. However, the world of crime fighting rapidly changes its features and I suspect that there already exist other equally important problems which need to be ad-

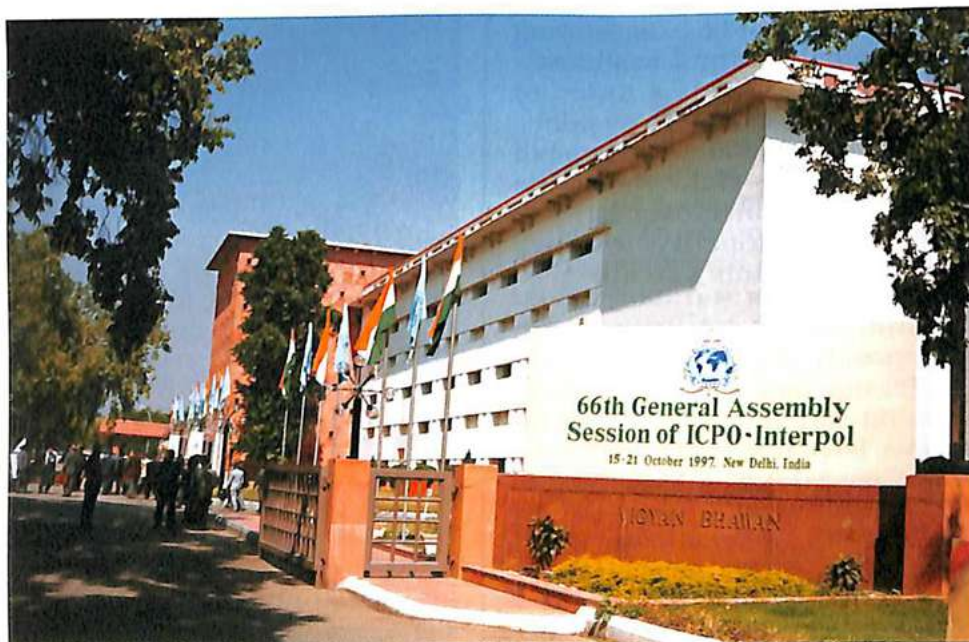
ressed. Needless to say, Interpol should always stay vigilant and flexible enough to adjust accordingly its policy preferences.

Indeed, our agenda for the 66th General Assembly session is replete with the challenges that face every law enforcement body in the world. These items require your full attention and your energetic debate. But there are two strategic challenges internal to the Organization which require at least an equal measure of your attention and of course your debate. They are (1) the question of Organizational Financing; and (2) the selection of the next Secretary General.

The question of Organizational Financing, i.e. the amount of the contribution to be paid by each Member State and the question of arrears, has been and will be one of the most important and difficult issues that faces the Organization. The issue of Interpol's Finances will require your full attention, reflection and debate. Let me take a moment if I may to provide a context for the discussion that must occur.

The actual system of financing of Interpol was established in 1990 on the basis of the proposal of the then Adviser of the Organization,

The Vigyan Bhawan Conference Centre where the General Assembly was held



Mr Robert Van Hove. Since then, Interpol has witnessed several important decisions that have had a great impact on the system of Interpol's financing based on the Van Hove Plan.

The first decision related to the Regional Modernization Programme instituted from 1991. Combined with the computerization of Interpol's database, this ambitious project has helped Interpol to become one of the most modern and technically advanced police organizations in the world. In a few years more than 150 Member States will be linked to this advanced information network. However, Interpol cannot maintain its position without incurring increased update costs every five to six years.

The second is the resolution of the Rome General Assembly on the "zero-growth budget". This decision, I am convinced, has tremendously encouraged the Organization to streamline its management, to prioritize its projects and to become more cost-conscious. Every one of you would certainly agree that these measures should continue. At the same time we must enable the Organization to adequately meet the challenges of technological modernization and new types of international crime which will appear in the next century.

The third is the creation of Sub-Regional Bureaus in the Americas and Africa. By providing a framework for sub-regional police co-operation, the project helped the member countries concerned to more effectively combat crimes of immediate sub-regional concern and in the process bring Interpol closer to them. But it is also becoming apparent that the Sub-Regional Bureaus lack a solid financial base and that, despite efforts of all concerned, they suffer from budget problems that eventually may undermine the relevance of the project itself.

Combining these three decisions with, first, some problems unre-

solved by the Van Hove Plan, second, the increasing amount of arrears and third, the rising number of demands for reduced statutory contributions, the solution of the question of Organizational Financing has become more complicated but much more urgent as well.

It is in this context that the Executive Committee has decided this year that a study of Organizational Financing be undertaken by an Adviser, in the person of Mr Ronald K. Noble, a former member of the Executive Committee. The purpose of the study will be to update and modernize the whole system of member countries' statutory contributions and also to address the problem of funding the Sub-Regional Bureaus. Mr Noble has committed himself to working closely with the Executive Committee and the Member States in conducting this important study. I encourage all Member States with proposals to submit them to the General Secretariat for Mr Noble's review and consideration. We all understand too well that the problems to resolve are overwhelming but we also know that unless we address these matters collectively we will not be able to survive the challenges of the next century.

The second strategic issue that will need your attention, reflection and debate concerns the selection of the successor to Secretary General Raymond E. Kendall. As you know, Mr Kendall was appointed Secretary General in 1985 and was reappointed in 1990 for the second term and in 1995 for the third term. By virtue of Article 28 of the Organization's Constitution, his term of office normally comes to an end in the year 2000.

You would certainly agree that in the light of the tremendous contributions that Mr Kendall has made to the Organization during his stewardship as Secretary General, the selection of his successor in the most appropriate manner is one of the most important deci-

sions that the Organization is required to make before the turn of the century. And to do so, we should begin the process with sufficient lead time.

Therefore, the Executive Committee has decided that the new Executive Committee which will be formed following the elections at the end of this General Assembly session will start the process of selecting a candidate for the post of Secretary General to be presented to the General Assembly for approval. You will be regularly informed of progress in this matter.

May I conclude, Ladies and Gentlemen, by thanking again all of you in advance for making this General Assembly a great success. Thank you very much."

Speech by Mr Gujral, Prime Minister of India

"Mr President,
Mr Secretary General,
Distinguished delegates,
Honoured guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

First let me apologize for being late, which was quite unintentional.

It is my unique privilege to extend to you a hearty welcome to our country. We are hosting the 66th General Assembly Session of Interpol in the 50th year of our Independence. It is not only a proud moment for the Police of India — of whom we are proud because they have greatly contributed to stabilizing the situation in the country (Applause) — but also for our country as a whole as this very important event is taking place here for the first time in our history.

India is a senior member of Interpol, having joined the Organization in 1949. India has also been one of its most active members. We have had the privilege of hosting the 13th Asian Regional Conference in 1994, the first Interpol

Conference on Methaqualone in 1992 and an Inter-Regional Meeting of Heads of Drug Services in 1988.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Secretary General of Interpol for the remarkable successes achieved during his successive terms of office. (Applause)

Ours is an era marked by globalization in every sphere of human activity. This unfortunately carries within its fold, the phenomenon of globalization of crime as well. As the nations of the world come closer and the barriers between them crumble, newer opportunities for international crime inevitably emerge. Criminal conspiracies today are hatched across continents using high-tech telecommunication facilities. With liberalized immigration procedures to facilitate international travel, criminals too cross borders conveniently and seek refuge in safer havens. Movement of drugs, arms, stolen works of art, and ill-gotten money across the world has virtually the same state of the art infrastructural support as other commodities connected with trade and commerce. Such crimes place substantial legal and jurisdictional hurdles before the police, as there is no uniformity in the laws of the countries. These crimes and the complex problems being faced in tackling them are a cause of great concern. The only organization which addresses these concerns on a global level is Interpol.

Interpol, Ladies and Gentlemen, is a unique institution symbolizing the universal concern of the world community towards the phenomenon of crime. But for Interpol, crime would have had a free run in the world of today. As someone put it, if Interpol did not exist, we would have had to invent it today. We must, therefore, acknowledge and applaud the basic wisdom and foresight of those who conceived and created this organization in the early part of this century and also those who have contributed in its evolution



Mr Gujral, Prime Minister of India

to its present form. The fact that Interpol has acquired the status of an observer at the UN is yet another landmark in its emergence as a truly world body today.

I must also congratulate the member countries whose representatives are assembled here, but for whose co-operation and continued goodwill an organization like Interpol cannot exist. India has a long list of cases in which your excellent co-operation has been of great benefit, be it the collection of evidence for investigation or the location, detention and extradition of some of the most wanted criminals. Equally long is the list of cases in which we have provided co-operation to other member countries. In spite of the complex problems being faced by law enforcement the world over and the wide variances in our procedural and substantive laws, we, the member countries of Interpol, have been largely successful in rising to the challenge of international crime.

The most crucial factor in successful police co-operation between nations is the realization that we are all fighting a common enemy. Crime anywhere does not augur well for the world community as a whole. International crime spreads like wild fire and if your neighbour's roof is gutted today, it will not be long before your own meets the same fate. Criminals can never be good friends of any individual, let alone any nation. Anyone giving succour and refuge to them will sooner or later have to pay a heavy price. It is heartening to note that this realization is sweeping across the world today and our coming together once every year is ample proof of our universal concern.

For this General Assembly session, you have an impressive agenda including such relevant issues as terrorism, organized crime, drug trafficking and money laundering. At India's request, an agenda item relating to red notices has also been included for discussion with a view to passing a resolution to accord legal status to these notices issued by the Interpol General Secretariat. I am sure your deliberations will go a long way in evolving uniformity of approach towards these notices, as they can be a most effective measure in location, detention and extradition of wanted criminals.

I must stress the vital need for progress with computerization and the need to deal at the highest level with the laundering of money linked to corruption, in order to establish a sort of internationally accepted code of good conduct.

The problems of fugitives from law, moving freely in safer havens with impunity is indeed a serious one to which you must address yourselves. Our country is deeply affected by this malaise. With Interpol's help and the help extended by some member countries we have succeeded in bringing a number of dreaded criminals and terrorists on the run to justice. But

many others still evade the law. Nearly fifty of our most wanted men are safely ensconced elsewhere. We know their precise whereabouts but are unable to bring them to our country to face trial. They are posing serious threats to our internal security and law and order. They operate through a network of foot soldiers based here. They organize kidnappings for ransom and murders, and foment trouble on sectarian lines. We look up to Interpol and to the goodwill your meeting in New Delhi will generate in attempting to solve this problem.

There is also a requirement to find an agreed definition to cer-

tain kinds of crime whose effect transcends international borders. Terms such as "political crime" also need to be defined and should be incorporated into the legal codes of member countries. For a session such as this should deliberate on and define such terms and encourage member countries to adopt such definitions. Agreed definitions in respect of procedural law for the location, detention and extradition of fugitives and for the confiscation of the proceeds of crime should also evolve and these will go a long way to removing some of the legal bottlenecks in the sphere of international police co-operation.

I am confident that the deliberations of this General Assembly Session will be very fruitful and result in positive steps to tackle major problems being faced by police officers the world over today. Before concluding, I would like to reassure you of India's commitment towards this cause.

I am also hopeful that your stay in New Delhi will be enjoyable and that the 66th General Assembly Session will go down in the history of Interpol as an important landmark.

Thank you."

A view of the official platform during the Opening Ceremony



LEGAL MATTERS

Annual Report of the Supervisory Board for the Internal Control of Interpol's Archives (Report No. 1a)

Rules of Procedure of the Supervisory Board

The Board drew up and approved its Rules of Procedure. These Rules confirm the Board's independence, define the procedure for its discussions and deliberations, and establish the principle that the Board's meetings should be held in camera.

Report No. 1a also contained the text of an Agreement between the Supervisory Board and the General Secretariat.

Verification of personal information held in Interpol's archives

In 1995-1996, the Board carried out two kinds of verification.

Requests for verification

These requests for verification are made by private individuals.

In 1996, the Board considered 27 individual requests for verification, some of which were of a very sensitive nature.

After studying the requests carefully, the Board replied to the persons concerned that all the verifications provided for had been conducted. It also asked for one file to be deleted and for an addendum to a red notice to be published.

In this respect, the Board was pleased to note that the Secretary General had taken the necessary measures to have the Board's decisions, which he had accepted and signed, implemented without delay or questions by the General Secretariat departments.

The Board also considered that one request for the publication of a red notice from an NCB contravened the provisions of Article 3 of the Constitution. In this case, the Board was pleased to learn that its opinion, which it had given after consulting the Secretary General, was shared by the Executive Committee.

In its Rules of Procedure, the Supervisory Board has laid down certain principles concerning the admissibility of requests from private individuals. For instance, Article 9(6) of the Rules of Procedure specifies that such requests must be made by persons who are directly concerned or by their duly authorized or legal representatives. In application of this principle, the Board has also accepted that an administration mandated by an individual may formulate a request for a case to be re-examined or to have access to the files, it being understood that any such mandate will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

As a general rule, the Board informs requesting parties that it is not empowered to divulge whether or not Interpol's archives contain information concerning them, or to give them access to such information should it exist. The Board maintained the principle of not giving specific data to any individual, but it modified its position slightly in certain cases

where it indicated to requesting parties that they might have a better chance of obtaining information by applying to specified institutions. In conformity with Article 23 of the Rules on International Police Co-operation, the Board also told requesting parties whether or not there was information about them in the General Secretariat's archives, once it had obtained the express agreement of the NCB empowered to dispose of the information. The Board also obtained authorization from two NCBs to inform a requesting party that no police information concerning him had been supplied from the NCBs in question, although this did not rule out the possible existence of information from other NCBs.

In any event, if a requesting party learned from an official source other than the General Secretariat that police information about him existed, or if the information was communicated by the NCBs concerned under the conditions described in Article 10 of the Rules on International Police Co-operation, the Board agreed to confirm to the requesting party that such information existed in the Organization's archives and that it had been recorded in conformity with the Organization's rules and regulations.

Spot checks

The Board made spot checks to ensure that computerized personal data was properly processed, and heard reports from the heads of departments responsible for applying the Rules on Deletion or updating the computerized files. In this connection, the Board noted that the General Secretariat

had fulfilled its obligations to delete files which were the subject of spot checks. However, the Board observed that there was some delay in the deletion of broadcast messages which were not confirmed within the required time-limits by the originating NCBs.

After being told that these delays were due to a lack of response on the part of the NCBs, the Board recommended that the General Secretariat delete any police information which had not received a positive or negative response within the prescribed time-limits.

In accordance with Article 2(2) and Article 8(7) of the Rules on the Deletion of Police Information, the Board asked the General Secretariat to keep copies of documents indicating the deletion of information in an administrative filing system separate from the criminal records.

That would enable the Board to make spot checks on the purpose of keeping such documents and on the actual use made of them. The Board also asked the General Secretariat to introduce an access authorization system which would prevent unauthorized individuals or departments from consulting the documents.

Opinion of the Board on the use of press articles in the Criminal Information System

At the request of the General Secretariat, the Board examined the question of whether or not the Organization should process information culled from the press. It gave an opinion recommending that information containing personal data should be verified with the NCBs.

This requirement is justified by the risk involved of keeping personal data when there are no relevant judicial or police files in Interpol member countries. This verification will also avoid the misuse of personal information by NCBs which could attach the

same importance to such press information as to data provided by other NCBs.

However, if the information contains no personal data, the General Secretariat has much wider scope for interpretation and it may decide not to ask NCBs to confirm an item of press information, particularly when the public source is a reliable one.

In any case, the Board considers that Article 6(2) of the Rules on International Police Co-operation compels the General Secretariat to delete personal or non-personal information about specific criminal cases when it finds that such information is incorrect or no longer correct. The Board, too, is under an obligation to verify the accuracy of personal police information, as well as the period for which it is kept. Finally, the Board is of the opinion that no unconfirmed personal information should be kept in the Criminal Information System beyond the current time-limits. It is up to the Organization's appropriate bodies to supplement, if necessary, the rules governing the use of personal data which has not been confirmed by the NCBs or to submit a draft amendment on this subject to the Board.

Assessment of the Criminal Archives Computer Systems

The Board noted that the current system is very satisfactory, despite a few remarks which will be taken into account in the new computer system.

The Board decided to go beyond examining the basic texts and the organization of the computer system, and to try to link up theory with practice, by checking that the Organization's rules and regulations are effectively applied. It has decided to look into the transfer of information between the NCBs and Interpol, and the validation of such information.

The General Assembly took note of the Board's report outlined

above, which had been approved by the Executive Committee. It also took note of the importance of publishing the Board's annual report in application of a resolution to that effect.

Amendment of the Constitution and of the General Regulations

Choice of General Assembly meeting place: Modification of procedure (amendment of Article 12 of the Constitution and Articles 3, 5 and 6 of the General Regulations) — Report No. 2

The General Assembly made one modification to the text of Article 12 of the Constitution allowing the General Assembly to choose its meeting place two years in advance. That modification meant that other changes had to be made to the General Regulations, to bring them into line with the Constitution. Draft Resolution AGN/66/P.RES/1 was adopted unanimously by the 118 delegations voting, thus becoming Resolution AGN/66/RES/1.

Regional Conferences (amendment of Article 11 of the Constitution and Articles 35, 36 and 37 of the General Regulations)

Report No. 3 was then submitted to the Assembly. It contained the Executive Committee's proposal to give Regional Conferences institutional status: they would be considered as regional sessions of the General Assembly, with the decision to hold them being taken by the General Assembly each year.

The Executive Committee's proposal were adopted unanimously (Resolution AGN/66/RES/2).

FINANCIAL MATTERS

The Finance Committee was chaired by Mr Taylor (United Kingdom), a Member of the Executive Committee and chairman of that Committee's Finance Subcommittee.

Implementation of the 1997 Budget

The Financial Controller described the financial situation at 30th September 1997, the date by which 75% of budget appropriations should have been spent. In fact, on that date actual spending amounted to 65.9% of appropriations for expenses at Headquarters, 47.4% of appropriations for expenses outside Headquarters (because of delays in implementing regional modernization projects) and 64.2% of total expenditure appropriations. The only programme in respect of which the implementation percentage resulted in an anomaly was "Meetings and Missions" (104%). The low percentage (19.3%) for assets subject to depreciation should be noted; however, it resulted merely from delays in acquiring or paying for some of those assets. All in all, the budget appropriations for 1997 were being spent quite normally.

Financial Report — 1996

The Director of Administration and Finance reported on Interpol's financial situation on 31st December 1996, suggesting that delegates should look at the charts in Report No. 1. He commented first on assets (fixed assets, accounts receivable and financial accounts) and then on liabilities (equity, funds, other current liabilities). The accounting result

gave a positive balance of FRF 10,723,094.28 and a decision would have to be taken about allocation of that sum.

Turning to certain specific items, he said that Interpol had changed its bank as a result of a call for bids issued to the banking community. The change had proved very profitable with respect to both investments and bank charges: the gains over the course of the year totalled over one million francs.

The sum under the heading "Exceptional income" reflected the FRF 4.5 million paid to the Organization following negotiations with the French unemployment insurance scheme. FRF 2.7 million of that sum had been paid into the IUCS, the internal unemployment insurance compensation scheme.

The increase in spending on personnel reflected the rise in social insurance charges (pensions and health insurance) but remained reasonable (+3.69%). Operating costs for regional modernization rose by 82% and would rise still further in 1997, but current costs rose by only 1.78% which was remarkable in that most of them were affected by the 2% increase in VAT imposed at the end of 1995 although, of course, VAT was eventually refunded by France. Those figures illustrated the efforts the General Secretariat had made to economize. The final table, showing total income and total expenses, gave FRF 10,723,094 as the accounting result for the year and a preliminary draft resolution had been prepared on allocation of that sum.

The Financial Controller gave his report on implementation of

the 1996 budget. The balance, FRF 11,370,000, was slightly different from the net accounting result because the tables did not include exceptional items or exchange rate gains. He then commented on the different programme charts in Report No. 1, one after the other.

In the case of the Policy and Management Programme, the result stemmed from the fact that one official had not been recruited and that spending on transport and on meetings and missions had been cut.

The Liaison and Criminal Intelligence Programme showed a surplus of FRF 1.9 million in favour of the Organization: that was due to the fact that six officials budgeted for had not been recruited, and to the continued policy of keeping transport, meetings and missions costs down, despite the increase in the number of missions carried out. The low exchange rate for the United States dollar against the French franc also had a beneficial effect for the Organization.

The General Administration Programme showed a surplus of FRF 1.9 million. That was due mainly to the constant difficulty in assessing the cost of recruitment under the "Other expenses" item.

The result of the General Services Programme (a surplus of FRF 1.5 million) showed the effects of improved cost management, despite the fact that maintenance costs were increasing as the building grew older.

The surplus of FRF 0.5 million for the Meetings and Missions Programme was due mainly to the relatively low costs for the 65th

General Assembly session in Antalya.

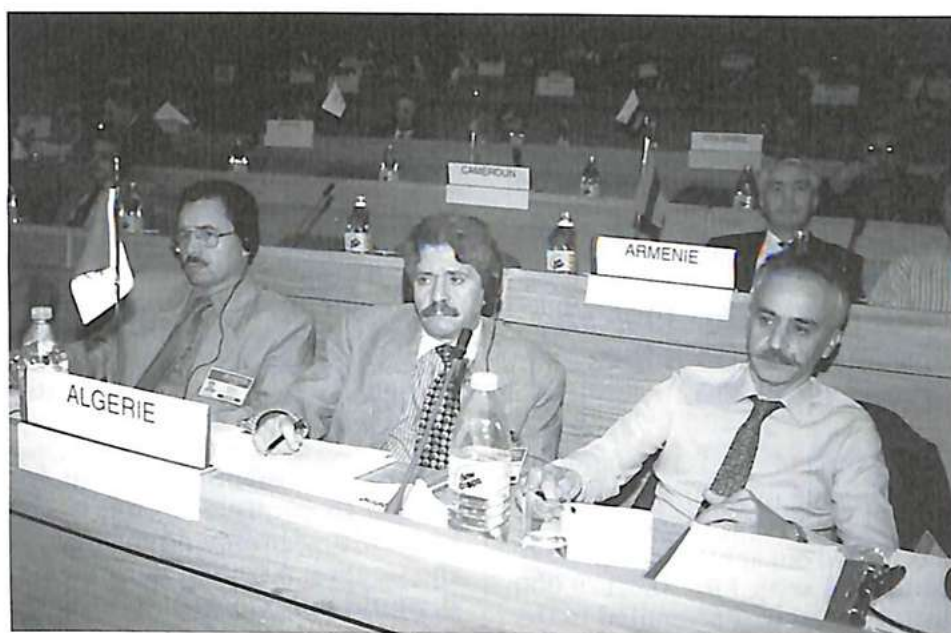
The surplus of FRF 1.7 million for the Information Technology Programme was due principally to a fall in telecommunications costs since 1995, following the replacement of telex by the X.400 network.

Under the ATSFDC Programme, one item concerned training for the staff of the NCBs (FRF 197,000 of which was spent in 1996) and another item covered implementation of the regional modernization programme.

For the South American project, which had been operational for the past two years, the amount spent was much lower than the amount budgeted. Spending was generally lower than that forecast in the case of projects which had only started up in 1996 (West Africa, Europe-Mediterranean, East Africa). The Caribbean and Central American project had only been partly implemented during the year. Implementation of the Asian project — initially planned for 1996 — would actually begin in 1997. The delays were due to the time taken to complete formalities in the countries to which equipment had been supplied, and to the technical condition of the telecommunications networks in the regions concerned.

The Financial Controller pointed out that his main task was to ensure that expenditure commitment and payment procedures were observed, and that the money was spent in the Organization's best interests. He added that 4,000 budget items had been committed and sanctioned for expenditure during 1996. He had asked for written or verbal explanations with regard to certain operations but he had not refused approval for any of them.

The Financial Controller stressed that the implementation of expenditure and the slight increase over 1995 was a good illustration of the efforts made to



keep costs down and to obtain "value for money".

During the financial year, 26 contracts had been the subject of calls for bids. In that area also, expenditure had been limited and even reduced.

Mr Reuter, the External Auditor, reported on the administrative and financial management of the Organization during 1996. He read out large extracts from Report No. 20.

He also emphasized that implementation of the 1996 budget reflected the continued policy of keeping costs down, especially the Headquarters' operating costs. Given that the general increase in costs was often much higher than the rate of inflation, it was possible that the excellent results achieved would reach a limit beyond which it would be difficult to go any further, given the unavoidable new costs in the future.

The External Auditor considered that:

- the financial documents faithfully reflected the Organization's financial situation at 31st December 1996 and the result of its operations during the financial year ending on that date;

- the accounts had been prepared in conformity with the accounting policy currently in force;
- the operations carried out had been in conformity with the Financial Regulations.

Commenting on point 2.3.3 of his report, the External Auditor said that the recommended formula of drawing on the Capital Investment Fund and the ATSFDC was already being applied in part and would be applied in full in the Draft Budget for 1998.

He said that the Keesing company (see point 2.3.4 of the report) was studying the possibility of producing "Counterfeits and Forgeries" as a CD-Rom. He felt that formula had disadvantages from several points of view which should be studied closely (confidentiality, risk of piracy, updating).

The Chairman said that the Finance Sub-Committee and the Executive Committee had wanted the Finance Committee to be fully informed about the efforts being made to increase productivity.

A discussion then ensued during which the project of extending the Headquarters premises was considered.

Following a proposal by the Delegate of the United Arab Emirates, seconded by the United States Delegate, the Committee adopted the preliminary draft resolution approving the balance sheet and accounts for 1996, and allocating the net accounting result.

Draft Budget for 1998 and information about the period 1999-2002

The Director of Administration and Finance introduced the Draft Budget for 1998 in Report No. 13. It balanced out at FRF 161,456,000, compared with FRF 155,179,000 in 1997, and was presented in the same way as for the previous year. A distinction was made between expenditure at Headquarters and expenditure outside Headquarters, and the budget itself was followed by a series of appendices on financial forecasts for 1999 to 2002, on the disposal of assets subject to depreciation and fixed assets, on the budgets for the Sub-Regional Bureaus, and on ongoing commitments. A preliminary draft resolution expressing approval of the 1998 Budget was also appended.

In the draft budget being presented to the Committee, income and expenditure naturally balanced out and the figures were given in French francs. It was based on the following principles: in conformity with the zero-growth policy, the value of the budget unit had been set at FRF 75,700 (compared with FRF 74,200 in 1997), representing an increase corresponding to the 2% increase in the cost-of-living forecast for France; the number of budget units called up was 1,780 (compared with 1,745 called up in 1997 and 1,753 received in 1996); it was proposed that FRF 3,825,000 should be withdrawn from the Capital Investment Fund and FRF 2,600,000 from the ATSFDC to cover the cost of acquiring equipment.

Although he did not wish to go into details, the speaker highlighted several important points.

As far as staff were concerned, there were appropriations for the recruitment on contract of a fund raiser and of an official for the General Reference Branch.

There was also provision for the recruitment of a detached official to work for the Financial Controller. Similarly, the draft budget included appropriations for nine supplementary seconded officials to work in the Sub-Regional Bureaus.

The General Secretariat intended to continue to apply the cost-cutting policy advocated by the General Assembly. However, it would not be possible to go on cutting costs for ever, especially if the Organization had to take on new tasks.

As things stood, there were plans to allocate FRF 1.5 million to the AFIS project (bringing the total cost of the project up to FRF 7 million), to build a larger canteen and a supplementary conference hall (that subject had already been discussed), and to allocate FRF 1.5 million to completion of the South Pacific regional modernization project, thus bringing the whole regional modernization programme to a close.

The appended forecasts for the years from 1999 to 2002 were of indicative value only but nevertheless showed the deficits Interpol would have to face up to if there was no change in the zero-growth policy. In the short term, withdrawals from the ATSFDC and the Capital Investment Fund would go towards the financing of equipment which, in turn, would contribute to cutting operating costs, provided that no new development projects were approved and that the level of activity did not increase.

The actual sums to be derived from disposing of fixed assets and assets subject to depreciation had not been specified because computer equipment, in particular, tended to become obsolete and lose its value very rapidly.

Total expenditure for the four Sub-Regional Bureaus (Appendix No. 3) amounted to FRF 7.6 million: FRF 6.7 million was to be paid by the countries of the region, while the countries hosting the Bureaus paid the remaining FRF 900,000. Financing of the Sub-Regional Bureaus would be discussed as a separate item.

Ongoing commitments consisted mainly of construction costs and operating expenditure. Sums would be allocated in 1998 and 1999 for the construction of the buildings referred to earlier.

Following discussion of the item, the preliminary draft resolution contained in Report No. 13 on approval of the Draft Budget for 1998 was adopted unanimously.

Statutory contributions and Sub-Regional Bureaus

The Chairman suggested that the Committee should take the two items together: Report No. 16 on statutory contributions would be introduced by the Director of Administration and Finance, and Report No. 17 on the budget deficits of the Sub-Regional Bureaus would be introduced by the Regional Co-ordinator.

The Director of Administration and Finance reported on the statutory contributions situation. On 31st August 1997, the General Secretariat had recorded sums totalling FRF 99 million of the FRF 137 million called up, representing a recovery rate of 76%. A new table had been drawn up on 7th October 1997 and it showed that a certain number of countries had paid their dues after the previous table had been printed. Since that date, still more countries (Nepal, Rwanda, France, Kuwait, Djibouti, Namibia and Chile) had brought themselves up to date with their contributions. Uganda had stated that its contribution should arrive within the next few days.

Consequently, the situation was fairly satisfactory in that the up-

ward trend in the recovery rate had been confirmed: the 1997 rate was higher than the 1996 rate had been at the same time of the year. Seventy-five member countries still had arrears to pay but some of them had said that payments would be made shortly. It was clear that many member countries were determined to settle their accounts as soon as possible.

The debt-rescheduling possibilities that had been offered had also incited many countries to make partial payments. The fact remained, however, that all commitments had to be honoured if debt-rescheduling agreements were not to be cancelled as had already happened in some cases.

The speaker then listed some of the countries which had made considerable efforts in 1997 to reduce their arrears: Cameroon, Cape Verde, the Dominican Republic, the Gambia, the Seychelles, Togo, Burkina Faso, Malawi, Mali, Suriname and Mauritania.

The Chairman asked the Committee to vote on the preliminary draft resolution contained in Report No. 16 on a study of Interpol's system of statutory contributions and the appointment for that purpose of Mr Noble as Adviser to the Organization with a mandate to conduct the said study, which was to be submitted to the Executive Committee and then to the General Assembly in 1998.

The preliminary draft resolution contained in Report No. 16 was adopted unanimously.

Following the report on the Finance Committee's meeting given to the General Assembly in plenary session, the following three resolutions were adopted unanimously:

- Approval of the balance sheet and accounts for 1996; allocation of net accounting result (AGN/66/RES/11)
- Approval of the 1998 Budget (AGN/66/RES/12)
- Study of Interpol's system of statutory contributions (AGN/66/RES/9).

INTERNATIONAL DRUG TRAFFICKING

Mr Neal Parker (Canada) was elected to chair the meeting of the Drugs Committee.

Mr Ian Bain, Assistant Director, Head of the Drugs Sub-Directorate at the General Secretariat, summarized the activities of the Drugs Sub-Directorate during the previous 12 months. He referred to the various meetings which had been held and co-operation with other international organizations; he also described operations currently being undertaken. He reminded NCBs how essential and important it was that they should report all drug seizures to the General Secretariat.

Mr Sundaralingam, Expert Consultant of the Drugs Sub-Directorate, introduced Report No. 9, dealing with the worldwide illicit drug trafficking situation in 1996.

There had been increased production of heroin in Afghanistan, resulting in an increased supply of heroin and morphine to Western Europe.

He added that opium was the most valuable cash crop in Afghanistan, where it was currently estimated that there were some 200,000 opium farmers.

He described current enforcement efforts by the Iranian authorities which were designed in particular to prevent movement of the drug across the border from Afghanistan. He went on to illustrate the key role of Turkey as a transit country and referred to two seizures which had occurred on the border between Serbia and Bulgaria within the space of two weeks; 500 kilograms had been seized.

Mr Sundaralingam then spoke of new routes and new outlets being developed to distribute heroin originating from the Golden Triangle, and drew attention to trafficking activity through Vietnam, Cambodia and China. He pointed out that that activity had been revealed by seizures, thus reflecting the efforts of the authorities concerned

to combat the threat. As far as the American scene was concerned, he noted that Colombian heroin accounted for 62% of heroin seized in the United States.

Worldwide seizures of cocaine indicated sustained production in South America, directed principally to North America and Europe. Although some of the key Colombian figures involved in cocaine trafficking had been removed, the world had now witnessed the emergence of four major Mexican cartels. The various routes currently being used were described, and Mr Sundaralingam gave details of some recent successful operations. One such operation had involved co-operation between Denmark, Estonia, Russia and the United Kingdom, which had resulted in the seizure in St. Petersburg of 205 kilograms of cocaine which was being shipped from Venezuela to Siberia.

New cocaine networks had surfaced in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Describing trends with regard to the movement of West Asian hashish, Mr Sundaralingam referred to co-operation between Australia, Canada, Indonesia and the United States which had resulted in a number of smuggling syndicates being dismantled and in seizures of 8 tonnes in Australia and 17 tonnes in the United States. He noted that countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States had become important transit routes for cannabis smuggled from Afghanistan. He also described large seizures of Colombian cannabis destined for Europe.

Turning to psychotropics, Mr Sundaralingam stated that the United States alone had dismantled 878 illicit methamphetamine laboratories in 1996. He went on to suggest that amphetamines, Ecstasy and LSD would become the drugs of choice in the 21st century because of high profitability, high purity levels and the ease of obtaining precursors.

Trafficking in substances such as Ecstasy had spread to regions hitherto unaffected by the phenomenon, in particular South-East Asia.

In his concluding remarks Mr Sundaralingam expressed his regret that in certain countries measures to control the movement of precursor chemicals were weak and that there was a failure to comply with Article 12 of the United Nations Convention of 1988. He also reminded delegates how important it was to be attentive to the 40 FATF recommendations and in particular to the need to introduce and implement anti-money laundering legislation.

The Chairman thanked Mr Sundaralingam for his excellent presentation.

The Turkish Delegate gave an outline of the situation in his country. Due to its critical geographical position, Turkey was a transit country for all types of drugs. Morphine and heroin transited from the East and South to



the West. Synthetic drugs and cocaine moved in the opposite direction. Seven national agencies were working together to combat the problem. There had been some significant seizures of drugs in 1996 which represented almost 50% of all European seizures. A huge investment had been made by the Turkish Government to combat the flow of drugs and chemicals. The Delegate emphasized the links between drug trafficking and terrorism. Drug trafficking was a means of financing the terrorists' activities.

The Chinese Delegate cited a number of significant committees, meetings and recommendations with which China had been involved. He stressed that China considered the fight against drug trafficking to be one of major importance. China had signed a large number of treaties relating to drugs, in particular with India, Pakistan, Russia and Mexico. He gave statistics on drug seizures in his country and described the legislation that had been implemented in particular in relation to the control of amphetamines. China and the United States had introduced a system of mutual confirmation of the import/export of ephedrine. That agreement was an example of excellent co-operation.

The Jordanian Delegate said that Jordan was not a producer coun-

try; however, it was a significant transit area for other Middle Eastern countries. As a result of the efforts of the Jordanian law enforcement authorities, seizures had increased, but at the same time, so had demand. It was difficult to control the movement of drugs through Jordan but a number of agreements signed with neighbouring countries were proving to be effective. Seizures of heroin, opium and Captagon tablets had increased significantly in 1997 compared to 1996. Seizures of hashish had declined. Jordan had hosted many international meetings on combating drug trafficking; that demonstrated its commitment to fighting the scourge of drugs. Although the number of drug users was not dramatic, Jordan had set up a number of rehabilitation programmes and was in the process of building a new hospital to treat drug abusers.

The Bahamian Delegate described his country's geographical situation: it was the gateway to the South-East border of the United States and an important transit country for shipments of cocaine and cannabis. Agreements had been signed with the United States and the Turks and Caicos and a number of successful joint operations had been conducted. The Bahamas had also developed working relationships with Jamaica and Cuba.

In response to increased pressure by Mexican drug traffickers whereby South American cocaine cartels were being forced to deliver one kilo of cocaine for every two kilos smuggled through Mexico to the United States, Colombian syndicates were re-routing cocaine shipments to the United States via the Bahamas. The movement of drugs was mainly by air and small craft known locally as "go-fast" boats. Joint operations with the United States authorities showed an increase in seizures in 1997 over the preceding year. The traffic of marijuana through Jamaica to the Bahamas was significant: seizures had more than doubled in the previous year. The Delegate wished to thank the United States authorities for their close co-operation.

The Observer from the World Customs Organization said that co-operation between police and customs was essential. He was pleased to report that there was now a good exchange of information between the WCO, Interpol and the UNDCP. Thanks to meetings, information exchange and training, better information was being collated.

The Observer reported that 80% of seizures of all types of drugs happened at borders. He emphasized the importance of national controlled deliveries.

WCO had established Regional Intelligence Liaison Offices throughout the world. Over 100 customs administrations were feeding that intelligence network. He thought that the RILOs should work in conjunction with Interpol's regional activities.

The Malian Delegate expressed the view that arms trafficking, money laundering and terrorism went hand-in-hand with drug trafficking. In his country it appeared that all types of drugs were being used more frequently and that new distribution networks were appearing. In Mali, low-level cultivation of cannabis and khat was occurring in rural areas. Those

substances were either smoked or chewed. However, Mali was a transit country and the authorities were preparing new laws to combat such crime. Mali had supported the 1988 United Nations Convention. Finally, he agreed with the General Secretariat that information exchange and efficient co-operation were essential.

The Bahraini Delegate stated that hashish and opium were consumed in his country. New substances transported from producing countries were on the increase. Bahrain was currently enacting legislation. There were serious penalties — including the death sentence — for drug trafficking. Bahrain's initiatives included modernizing drug analysis laboratories, conducting awareness campaigns and concluding bilateral conventions. Significant seizures of heroin, opium, cocaine and Mandrax had been made. The Bahraini authorities were extremely willing to co-operate with any other state in the fight against drug trafficking.

The UNDCP Observer congratulated the General Secretariat on its overview of the world drug trafficking situation. He drew attention to a recent publication issued by UNDCP entitled "The World Drug Report", a compre-

hensive study of world drug trafficking trends designed to guide readers through the intricate world of drug trafficking and abuse.

He also expressed satisfaction with the growing co-operation between his agency, the World Customs Organization and Interpol.

He then addressed the important issue of controlled deliveries, saying that his agency would be willing to participate in attempts to draw up clear definitions for that enforcement technique.

The Delegate of Pakistan described recent measures designed to counter the flow of drugs produced in neighbouring countries. During the previous year, several law enforcement agencies in Pakistan had been successful in stopping the export of substantial quantities of prohibited substances. The Delegate stressed the need at international level to reduce demand in order to supplement the efforts undertaken by his administration to reduce the flow of drugs to market destinations. He emphasized the benefits to be derived from regional and inter-regional co-operation.

The Delegate of Bangladesh described recent developments in



Bangladesh which were of particular concern to his country. For instance, there was the growth in use of a substance called Phenidyl, which was being abused increasingly by young people. The substance was readily available and was not currently a controlled substance in Bangladesh. In response to the increase in drug trafficking and abuse in Bangladesh, a specialized agency called the Department of Narcotics Control had recently been set up, and new and stringent measures had been adopted.

The Nigerian Delegate presented an exhaustive and enlightening overview of achievements obtained by law enforcement agencies in Nigeria since 1994. Use of popular drug trafficking routes identified in previous years had diminished significantly as a result of accrued enforcement controls at Nigeria's major airports. In response to a perceived increase in smuggling of drugs via maritime containers, the Nigerian Government had recently acquired 20 patrol boats to deter trafficking in the area. Stringent measures had also been adopted to monitor the smuggling of drugs in mail parcels to Nigeria. The overall effect of these and other measures had been to reduce the number of seizures and arrests in Nigeria.

The Chairman of the Drugs Committee reported on the meeting to the General Assembly in plenary session. The general theme of the Committee meeting had been the need for sustained international co-operation. Several delegates expressed their countries' concerns.

The Indian Delegate said he had submitted a detailed report which the General Secretariat could use at a later date. He put particular emphasis on his country's activities with regard to international co-operation and controlled deliveries.

India had signed bilateral co-operation agreements with a number of countries, a protocol of

understanding with Iran and Egypt, and a special agreement with Pakistan. It planned to sign treaties with several countries on mutual assistance in legal matters. It had modified and strengthened its own legislation. It had ratified several international conventions and co-operated regularly with the drugs bureau in Colombo. It called on the WCO's regional liaison officer and the permanent liaison officers of a number of countries. In 1996, it had carried out 22 controlled deliveries abroad and had already carried out 17 in the current year. As far as combating precursors was concerned, it had adopted a special law and was actively attempting to dismantle clandestine laboratories.

The Uruguayan Delegate reported that his country's parliament would soon approve a law making money laundering an offence in itself. A law (currently a draft), aimed at reversing the burden of proof with regard to money laundering, was to be included in the country's anti-corruption legislation.

Mr Chakrabarti, the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) Observer, described the activities of the Board, which had been set up by the United Nations Economic and Social Council in application of Article 9 of the 1961 Single Convention. The Board was responsible for fulfilling obligations set out by the Single Convention, the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances and the 1988 United Nations Convention. In particular, the INCB used an authorization and periodical report system to control the legal production, export, import and distribution of drugs needed for medical and scientific use by ensuring that there was no diversion of such drugs or of the precursors and essential chemicals needed to transform them. To carry out its work, it naturally needed to co-operate very frequently with law enforcement agencies. The INCB received excellent help from the UNDCP, Interpol and the

WCO. It normally contacted national police forces via the administrative departments made responsible by their governments for enforcing the treaty obligations.

The INCB Observer went on to give several examples of cases in which the INCB had detected and, in some cases, prevented the diversion of very large quantities of drugs and precursors. The examples underlined the importance of international co-operation, which could be strengthened by the general ratification of the international conventions he had referred to. He noted that too many Members of Interpol had not yet ratified the 1961, 1971, 1972 and 1988 Conventions. He placed particular emphasis on the 1988 United Nations Convention: Article 6 would allow extradition between parties which did not have extradition treaties.

Dr Mustafa Kara, the Observer from the Technical Secretariat of the Arab Interior Ministers' Council, said he had not been able to take the floor during the Committee meeting; he described the efforts the Arab Interior Ministers' Council had been making over the previous 14 years to combat drug-related crime and to increase resources for that fight. The Amman Bureau had played a major role in eradicating the scourge from the Arab countries. The Council's Technical Secretariat had defined a general strategy and launched five-year plans. A drug law and a united Arab plan for combating drugs had been adopted.

The General Assembly took note of the report on the Drugs Committee meeting and the reports by the different speakers.

INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL CRIME

Mr D.R. Karthikeyan (India) was elected to chair the meeting.

Universal classification system for counterfeit payment cards

Mr Takizawa, Assistant Director, Economic and Financial Crime Sub-Directorate, submitted Report No. 15.

In 1994, the First International Conference on Payment Card Fraud had recommended that a working party be set up to study the possibility of standardizing classification systems for counterfeit payment cards. The project had been approved by the General Assembly in 1995, following which a working party had been set up. After several meetings, it had succeeded in developing a classification system. In 1996, an intermediate report had been submitted by the Working Party, and the report currently being submitted to the General Assembly contained the final proposals. A database would be established at the General Secretariat to classify and store the images supplied by member countries. The information in that database would be available to members, but all non-nominal information could also be supplied to the card manufacturers.

Since the implementation of the project required substantial funding, the payment card sector had been asked to make contributions. Several manufacturers had already expressed their willingness to provide funds. If the General Assembly gave its approval at the current session, it would be possible to move ahead to the implementation stage of the project. The Com-

mittee was asked to approve the preliminary draft resolution given at Appendix 2 to Report No. 15. The Committee adopted Preliminary Draft Resolution AGN/66/A.P.RES/14.

Counterfeiting of travel documents

Report No. 14. was submitted. The 3rd International Conference on Fraudulent Travel Documents (Helsinki, June 1997) had proposed that Interpol recommend that its member countries limit the variety and number of travel documents they issued. The Committee adopted Preliminary Draft Resolution AGN/66/A.P.RES/13, which became Draft Resolution AGN/66/ P.RES/14.

Money laundering

Mr Takizawa referred delegates to Assembly Report No. 6 entitled "Monitoring of Resolutions".

Interpol had been active in combating money laundering since 1960 and had taken even more initiatives since 1983 when a special working party had been set up. As a result, the General Assembly had adopted quite a large number of resolutions on the subject during various sessions. Within the framework of the General Secretariat's project on monitoring resolutions, all those texts had been reviewed and many of them had been merged. Three new resolutions would therefore be submitted to the General Assembly: they were to be found on pages 13, 16 and 19 of Report No. 6. The second and third of those resolutions contained some new ideas.

Mr Storr, United Nations Observer (UNDCP, Vienna), said that his organization's Drugs Control Programme and its Crime Prevention Centre were running a technical assistance scheme, with a budget of USD 4 million, designed to help countries which



were combating money laundering.

The second preliminary draft resolution the Committee was being asked to look at (on page 16 of Report No. 6) mentioned the confiscation of the proceeds of crime. Would it not be advisable to add to that resolution a recommendation that member countries should use some portion of confiscated assets to fight against money-laundering groups? That idea had been approved by the United Nations.

Mr Takizawa explained that the idea was implicitly contained in the last two lines of point (2) of the measures recommended. However, the Executive Committee was aware that it was not explicitly expressed and had suggested amending it to read "... and provide adequate resources — possibly derived from confiscated assets — for Interpol use and for law enforcement departments...".

The United Kingdom Delegate did not entirely approve of that amendment because he considered that any assets seized should benefit not only Interpol but also all the countries which had made sacrifices to combat money laundering energetically.

The French Delegate said that confiscating illegal assets and di-



viding them up between different countries would be a legislative matter. A more appropriate place for the subject would therefore be in preliminary draft resolution AGN/66/A.P.RES/3 on money laundering legislation. He therefore proposed an amendment which would become point (4), and read: "PROVIDE FOR the possibility of sharing out confiscated illicit assets among law enforcement agencies, including the ICPO-Interpol". The amendment was adopted. Paragraphs (4), (5), (6), (7) and (8) of the preliminary draft resolution were consequently renumbered. Mr Takizawa

noted that the amendment met the request made by the Executive Committee.

After a lively discussion, during which several delegates made particularly detailed points, the Committee adopted Preliminary Draft Resolution AGN/66/A.P.RES/3, as amended. It then became Draft Resolution AGN/66/P.RES/10.

Preliminary Draft Resolution AGN/66/A.P.RES/4 on investigations and international police cooperation in connection with money laundering was then adopted, as amended by proposals from the Algerian and Indian Delegates.

Finally, the Committee adopted Preliminary Draft Resolution AGN/66/A.P.RES/5 on statistics relating to money laundering, which became Draft Resolution AGN/66/P.RES/12.

Currency counterfeiting

Mr Takizawa recalled that Interpol played a key role in the international fight against currency counterfeiting and stressed the problems faced in that task by the General Secretariat, which did not have enough experienced staff.



He said a circular would shortly be sent out asking member countries to second between four and six specialists in currency counterfeiting or forensic science to the General Secretariat.

That step was in response to the recommendation adopted by the 9th International Conference on Currency Counterfeiting held in Helsinki in June 1997. Mr Takizawa said Interpol's Counterfeit Currency Group dealt with over 3,000 cases a year and received over 100 banknotes a month for analysis. It was therefore necessary to maintain and increase its expertise.

He then drew the Committee's attention to some statistics on currency counterfeiting and said that United States banknotes still represented almost 80% of counterfeit currency seized in the world. The United States authorities had tried to dissuade counterfeiters by recently bringing out a new 100-dollar bill which they hoped was well protected.

The other currencies most often counterfeited were French and German banknotes.

Everyone knew that the arrival on the market of very high-performance and ever cheaper colour copiers had given banknote counterfeiting a "shot in the arm". The equipment manufacturers had perfected systems which made it possible for machines to "refuse" to photocopy certain banknotes: the photocopiers blocked the reproduction of dollars, yen, marks and francs, and produced completely black photocopies.

Furthermore, each machine had been given a code, which could not be seen on the photocopies but could be identified using specialized software. It was therefore possible to locate the machine used to produce a particular counterfeit banknote by contacting the manufacturers' association. The member countries could ask the General Secretariat to be responsible for the decoding process.

Environmental crime

Mr Takizawa briefly reported on the work of Interpol's Working Party on Environmental Crime, which had been created in 1993; it had three sub-groups dealing with illegal transportation of waste, illegal traffic in radioactive and nuclear material, and illegal traffic in protected species of flora and fauna.

The Working Party had developed an ECO-message which could either be transmitted by X.400 or, in standardized form, by mail or fax. To date, since the start of 1997, the General Secretariat had received 62 ECO-messages, 20 of which had been via the X.400. Mr Takizawa asked the members of the Committee to make use of that form of transmission as often as possible in the future.

He gave a brief report on the activities of the three sub-groups and said that a training session on the transport of illegal waste would be held in Europe in the spring of 1998, and that a guide had been prepared in co-operation with the IAEA on illegal traffic in radioactive and nuclear substances: an international conference would be held on that subject in Dijon in September 1998, in co-operation with the WCO and

the European Union. Finally, a database had been created on animal and plant species of particular interest to traffickers, and on the modus operandi the traffickers used. The database did not contain any nominal information. The 2nd International Conference on Environmental Crime would be held the following month.

The following draft resolutions were adopted unanimously in plenary session:

- AGN/66/P.RES/15 on counterfeit payment cards (becoming Resolution AGN/66/RES/16)
- AGN/66/P.RES/14 on fraudulent travel documents, as amended following a proposal from the Jordanian Delegate (becoming Resolution AGN/66/RES/14)
- AGN/66/P.RES/10 on money laundering legislation, as amended following proposals from the Uruguayan and Spanish Delegates (becoming Resolution AGN/66/RES/15)
- AGN/66/P.RES/11 on investigations and police co-operation in connection with money laundering cases, as amended following proposals from the Swedish and French Delegates (becoming Resolution AGN/66/RES/17)
- AGN/66/P.RES/12 on statistics relating to money laundering (becoming Resolution AGN/66/RES/18).



ORGANIZED CRIME AND INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

Organized crime

The Director of Liaison and Criminal Intelligence gave an oral presentation on the activities of his Directorate which had been concentrating on six major projects.

Project GoWest had been launched to process information received about organized crime groups composed of people from Eastern Europe. Unfortunately it had not proved easy to identify the groups because the NCBs concerned had not provided all the assistance the General Secretariat had hoped for.

Project OCSA was concerned with crime in South America and had made it possible to call a halt to the activities of certain gangs specializing in stealing and forging means of payment. Concerted investigations by the Belgian, Chilean and French police had established that the profits derived from the gangs' illegal activities were sent back to the gang members' countries and used there to buy large quantities of cocaine which, in turn, were shipped to Western Europe.

Detailed reports had been sent to the countries concerned and Chile had been able to break up one of the gangs. Several people — including the head of the gang — had been arrested, large sums of money and large quantities of cocaine had been seized, and the gang's Swiss bank accounts had been frozen. A bulletin giving more details about the whole operation was being prepared.

Project EastWind was concerned with Asian illegal immigration

networks. The General Secretariat had been pleased to receive extremely interesting information from many of the countries concerned, including transit countries.

Project Macandra dealt with the three main Italian organized crime groups. A computerized database had been created and, in the fairly short time since the project had been launched, a number of investigations had proved extremely successful in that certain major groups had been put out of action and various well-known figures had been arrested. The General Secretariat was currently trying to obtain information about the changes in structure that had taken place as a result of the arrests and about possible alliances between different groups.



CROATIE

Information received about developments suggested that the arrest of major figures had led to hasty re-organization: some new groups had been established and violent conflicts had broken out between various small gangs who were engaging in what might be termed guerrilla warfare. It had also been noted that some groups had diversified their activities so as to be able to conclude agreements.

The aim of Project Rockers was to collect as much information as possible on Scandinavian criminal motorcycle gangs whose members frequently committed robbery with violence, engaged in drug trafficking or stole and then sold powerful motorcycles. The General Secretariat was trying to collect as much information as possible about the Hells Angels, Bandidos, Outlaws and other gangs.

Finally, Marco Polo was the name that had been given to the Liaison and Criminal Intelligence Directorate's latest project which aimed to pinpoint illegal immigration trends since 1992. A detailed report had been prepared and would be discussed both during the Meeting of Heads of NCBs and at the 7th Symposium on Organized Crime to be held at Interpol's Headquarters in November 1997.

The Liaison and Criminal Intelligence Directorate intended to launch a similar project to deal with illegal immigration from African countries, and the General Secretariat would be prepared to help by allocating staff if African countries wished to participate in this huge venture. How-

ever, the departments concerned would have to provide the necessary information in return.

International terrorism

The Director of Liaison and Criminal Intelligence recalled how the General Secretariat's Terrorism Branch operated. The Branch had become operational in January 1987 in application of a General Assembly resolution from 1985, which had recognized terrorism as a form of crime, after taking due account of Article 3 of the Constitution. The Assembly had felt there could be no justification for terrorist crimes. The Terrorism Branch had therefore developed a systematic approach to gathering and processing information about such criminal activities for prevention purposes and for formulating a police response. The information was gathered from a very wide variety of sources and concerned groups and individuals who might intend carrying out terrorist activities.

When the information had been analysed by the General Secretariat, it was circulated to the countries, which used it in their dissuasion and law enforcement activities. When terrorist incidents occurred, the General Secretariat analysed the information which would allow it to help the countries carry out their investigations. That strategy had been efficaciously applied since the end of the 1980s and was still valid. Terrorist acts were generally committed by individuals belonging to groups. National police forces could investigate such groups but the General Secretariat was not authorized to declare any particular organization a "terrorist group". It worked mainly on crimes with terrorist group involvement.

To allow it to continue its activities in that connection, the General Secretariat asked member countries to send it all possible information about criminal ac-



tivities, whether real or potential, related to terrorism. Its only reservations concerned activities related to political, racial or religious matters referred to in Article 3 of the Constitution: they prevented it from taking into consideration certain information received from countries whose codes did not take such restrictions into account. The General Secretariat took great care to ensure it only provided member countries with valid information which conformed to the Organization's statutory regulations. The annual symposium organized by the Terrorism Branch would be held on 3rd and 4th October 1997. Its theme would be the prevention of terrorism. The General Secretariat asked all countries to try to send representatives to that symposium. It was grateful to Interpol's members for co-operating with the Terrorism Branch and asked them to continue to do so. Following comments from the Syrian and Ugandan Delegates, the Secretary General recalled that Interpol's practice resulted from resolutions adopted by the General Assembly to interpret Article 3 and to apply the theory of predominance. Interpol took an interest in terrorist acts when the criminal aspect prevailed over all others and, in particular, over questions of motive. The relevant principles were

clearly stated in the manual the Organization had published on combating terrorism. Replying to the Syrian Delegate in particular, the Secretary General recalled that Interpol was a police organization, dealing with police co-operation. Political questions were a matter for the United Nations. Interpol had not been created to solve all the world's problems. It was only concerned with questions of co-operation in criminal matters.

For a time, the Organization had wanted to avoid using the word "terrorism". It had talked about "violent crimes committed by groups". Current thinking was more realistic, but Interpol acknowledged its limits and did not intend trying to do what the countries could do themselves, for example through bilateral agreements.

The Secretary General added that since the time it had established those rules, the Organization had not encountered any more difficulties than it might in areas such as crimes against humanity. In fact, most international conventions made a distinction between terrorist crimes and politically motivated acts.

The General Assembly took note of the presentations given.

COMPUTERIZATION AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Mr Webb (United Kingdom) was elected to chair the meeting of the Computerization and Telecommunications Committee.

The Director of Information Technology presented the Organization's strategy for 1995-2000. It aimed to:

- establish a worldwide telecommunications network serving all member countries in 1998;
- give members access to the General Secretariat's ASF database via that network;
- improve the quality of the databases and the messages sent to the General Secretariat and between NCBs by standardizing the messages.

The General Secretariat was attempting, in particular, to modernize its structures and systems to meet the increasing needs of Members in new areas (stolen vehicles and works of art, paedophiles, etc.). The network was already 90% complete and that result had been obtained within the specifications, standards and budget adopted. Interpol's Criminal Information System had been

restructured and should be fully operational by the end of the year. A range of options for the ASF had been installed to meet the needs of the various users. The InterForm software would be tested during the first quarter of 1998 and the different departments in Directorate II would adapt to the new tools. Finally, the Director said he was preparing a new Information Technology strategy to take the Organization into the 21st century.

The Director concluded the first part of his report by describing the current situation of the network and contacts by electronic mail which had been established between the 177 member countries, with their connections to the Criminal Information System and its databases.

Mr Silva (Argentina), Chairman of the Standing Committee on Information Technology, then gave a presentation.

He began his report by briefly describing the background to the SCIT. He recalled that, in 1982,

the Organization had still been served by a short-wave radio network. Exchanges had been made in Morse and had been very slow. A telex system had been added to that network. At that time, there had been 2 million files, processed by hand.

It was then that the most highly developed countries had decided to create a Working Party which had become the SCIT at the General Assembly session in Cannes (1983). The SCIT's terms of reference had been defined in 1984. In 1987, the General Assembly had decided to install the first electronic mailing system and the SCIT and Division IV had agreed to push for the Teletex protocol. Morse had ceased to be used in 1989 and it had been decided to cease radio transmissions in 1992. The modernization plan had been launched in 1994, first with the pilot project in Buenos Aires, then in Puerto Rico, in Europe and on the other continents. It had been decided to use the SITA network, which already had great international experience and offered a high level of quality.

The SCIT currently had representatives from the founder countries and the regional stations. It could be said that all the member countries were represented on the SCIT via the regional stations. The SCIT's work was mainly technical, but certain political and economic aspects could not be ignored. Following an Executive Committee decision taken in March 1997, the SCIT's terms of reference had been modified and it was currently able to work more effectively on studying Interpol's technology and possible developments. It was also able to prepare opinions and technical and operational guidelines.





Although the structure of the Interpol network seemed to be based on a fairly simple scheme, the growing needs and very different desires expressed by the Members all over the world made it essential to draw up a strategic plan very carefully to ensure that the increase in initiatives did not lead Interpol away from the aims it had set itself.

Interpol had decided to acquire an automatic fingerprint identification system. The previous September, the SCIT had been informed by the United States NCB of an offer to use an existing system in the United States. That was clearly a very interesting possibility from the economic point of view. The SCIT was pursuing its technological study.

The electronic mail system was giving excellent results and allowed officers on the ground to receive all the information they needed for their investigations.

A Working Party chaired by Mr Webb was preparing standardized forms so that the quality of information transmitted could be improved. The forms would obviously lighten the workload at the General Secretariat, which would no longer need to rewrite the information received.

The delegates would find proposed image-transmission stan-

dards in Report No. 11. The Argentine police had studied them and found them very interesting but they felt that Interpol's X.400 network was the appropriate support for transmitting information.

The Chairman of the SCIT drew his colleagues' attention to the fact that although technicians were very important because they provided investigators with the tools they needed, they should not make any mistake about their role: they had to be very careful never to go beyond that role which was to support the officers.



EGYPTE

Mr Silva explained that the SCIT had at first been wary of the Internet, which was an anarchic network based on the commercial appetite of the service providers. It had, however, taken a positive approach in its studies. It could not be denied that the Internet offered remarkable facilities at extremely low cost. Unfortunately, Interpol would have absolutely no control over the confidentiality of its transmissions if it used the network. However, the Organization could use the Intranet software tool with an encryption system which would avoid any risk of piracy. It was quite within the bounds of possibility that new developments would make the Internet more interesting for Interpol, but the Organization had to resist giving in to pressure from dealers who wanted to make it believe it was a panacea for all ills.

A very lively discussion on the Internet then ensued, with many delegates giving their points of view.

The Director of Information Technology then began on the second part of his presentation by reminding delegates of the objectives of regional modernization. He described the current situation, region by region, and announced that the number of messages transiting through the General Secretariat had risen from 1 million to 1.7 million between 1993 and 1997 — an increase of 70%.

The overall availability rate for equipment had been 96.5% in 1996, while the rate for the Equant/SITA network had been 99.72%. By 1998, he added jocularly, a magnifying glass would be needed by anyone looking at a map of the world to try to find the countries that had not yet joined the network.

Turning next to the ASF (Automated Search Facility), he reported that 29 NCBs were using ASFDirect while 140 NCBs were using ASFMail. His Directorate intended to build on ASF Option



5 in order to produce a new and improved Option 6 which would make it possible to integrate the ASF databases into national databases.

On the subject of the ICIS (Interpol Criminal Information System), which would replace the current somewhat out-of-date CIS, he explained that the new system had been designed to improve the quality of information circulated, to extend the scope of such information, and to allow for integration with InterForm messages. The Information Technology Directorate had noticed that even though 65% of information was now transiting over the X.400 network, 33% of messages were still received at the Headquarters in the form of hard (paper) copies and 2% in the form of faxes.

That situation was no longer tolerable in the computer age. The purpose of the InterForm project was consequently to improve the quality, efficiency and accuracy of information, to save time, to prevent overlapping, and to standardize messages.

Once all member countries were covered by the X.400 network — which should be achieved in 1998 — the General Secretariat would give very low priority to messages sent by any other system.

The InterForm software would be compatible with all electronic

mail systems; it would help to do away with messages on paper and would reduce language problems by providing automatic translation in four languages. In that connection, the Director asked if any of the Arabic-speaking countries would be willing to send an engineer to the Headquarters for a short period. InterForm should also result in a drop in the volume of information exchanged, by helping message drafters to concentrate on the essential facts. It would also enable the police forces of Interpol's 177 member countries to store and print out messages. A pilot study, with a three-language version of the soft-

ware, would be undertaken very shortly by five countries.

Mr Suc, Project Manager, said that the European Regional Conference, meeting in Sinaia, Romania, in 1994, had called for a database on stolen vehicles to be set up. The General Assembly, at its session in Rome, had subsequently agreed to the request. The General Secretariat had therefore used the X.400 network to establish the database. Illustrating his talk with transparencies, Mr Suc described how the system worked, stressing that the database did not contain any information of a personal nature.

To allow for the wide range of equipment used by the NCBs, it had been decided to select three options, each of which required the information transmitted to be structured in a given format. Since the telecommunications network existed, it was necessary to ensure that communications were made. The speaker then described the main features of Option B, which most of the NCBs taking part in the project had chosen. At present, the system was operational in six countries, tests were under way in eight others and seven Member States had asked the General Secretariat for more details. A study



had also been undertaken, in cooperation with the FBI and the NCB in the United States, to determine whether it would be possible to allow those NCBs equipped with InterForm — either currently or in the future — to have access to the United States database on stolen vehicles.

Mr Suc went on to mention the resolution adopted by the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in Vienna in May 1997, under the terms of which Member States were asked to support Interpol's efforts in combating the theft of and traffic in stolen vehicles by sending Interpol the data in their possession. The European Union was prepared to fund certain projects on the subject in Eastern Europe, as part of Project Phare. Finally, Mr Suc stressed the need for greater co-operation between Central and Eastern European countries.

Referring briefly to stolen works of art, Mr Suc said that a database of more than 3,000 files and 10,000 images had been created. The database could be consulted using InterForm, and a CD-Rom was being prepared.

A discussion then ensued which highlighted the fact that databases were springing up all over the world and stressed the need for a joint strategy in order to avoid duplication of effort and to ensure coherent action.

The Director of Information Technology then went on to talk about the AFIS (Automated Fingerprint Identification System) project.

He reminded the meeting of the resolution that had been adopted in Antalya authorizing the General Secretariat to call for tenders and announced that the process was under way and possible suppliers had been identified. Furthermore, it seemed that the sum required for the project would be much lower than the FRF 10 million originally estimated.



Meanwhile, via the United States NCB, the General Secretariat had been approached by the FBI which had invested substantial resources in a similar system and which was suggesting that Interpol should "outsource" the handling of its fingerprints to the FBI. The SCIT had heard a presentation on the subject by an FBI representative and the Information Technology Directorate had to decide whether the operation would be technically feasible.

The Chairman gave the floor to Mr Imhoff, Head of the United States NCB and a member of the FBI.

Mr Imhoff said that the proposal made to Interpol to use the United States' AFIS database would prevent contradictory technical developments within the Organization and would also avoid the signing of bilateral agreements which damaged a global approach to problem-solving. The United States system was already developed, was available relatively quickly and was a less costly approach than acquiring new equipment. If Interpol used the system made available by the FBI, it would increase its capacity to combat international crime.

Mr Archer (FBI, United States) said that when the American cities had decided to acquire AFIS equipment more than ten years earlier, they had noted that their police forces could not communicate with each other because the

algorithms offered by the different suppliers were incompatible! The problem had finally been solved and the FBI currently had over 33 million individual files. The technology currently in place allowed the FBI to communicate with all AFIS systems throughout the world. When the system was coupled with an electronic mail system, any enquiry could be answered within two hours.

It was therefore no surprise that the Research and Development Department in Washington had been visited by representatives of some 40 countries. The United States wished to share the experience it had gained at great expense both in terms of technology and of the purchasing of AFIS equipment. If the technical capability existed, which was the case, why not have access to the FBI's 33 million files? Was it not more economical to use an existing system than to create another one, knowing that all the information would pass through the Interpol network?

Mr Domin (FBI, United States) stressed the fact that standardization was at the heart of all the AFIS projects. He used slides to present the system recommended by the FBI, which consisted of digitizing fingerprint images and then storing them after they had been scanned. Once they had been compressed and encrypted, the images could be sent over the Internet at high speed and low cost. The value of the system in the

fight against international crime was obvious to all, but it could also be used for humanitarian purposes, since it could be used to identify disaster victims, for instance.

The FBI's AFIS system was consulted 54,000 times a day and could be consulted up to 65,000 times a day. Interpol's current needs were estimated at 6,000 consultations a day, so much was still possible. The database would remain in Virginia, but the flow of information (enquiries and replies) would pass through Interpol Headquarters. There would be no nominal information, as the fingerprints would be reduced to a series of numbers. The system would be permanently operational and would be available to all member countries. Finally, it would be possible to create a specific Interpol section, which would benefit from a worldwide system for sharing information about fingerprints accessible via Lyons from any registered workstation.

In order to clarify matters, the Chairman pointed out that the United States proposal had been submitted to the SCIT and to the Executive Committee. The latter had decided to ask the Information Technology Directorate to continue with a call for bids to acquire an automated fingerprint identification system, in accordance with the decision taken by the General Assembly and, at the same time, to make a feasibility study of the United States proposal. All the Directorates concerned — including the Legal Affairs Directorate — had been asked to examine the financial, political, legal and technical aspects of the proposal. A report would be submitted to the Executive Committee at its session in March 1998. The call for bids should be completed by December 1997.

The Assistant Director of Legal Affairs said that Interpol's principles governing the protection of personal data were similar to those

that had been adopted by the European Union and the Council of Europe. It was true that the United States proposal would raise various legal problems. That proposal would have to be studied very carefully and quite impartially, and the report on the subject would be duly transmitted to the Executive Committee which would then take what it considered to be the right decision for the Organization.

Mr Richardot (France) said that the Executive Committee — of which he was a Member — had asked for a full report on all the aspects of the United States offer. He personally considered that the Committee had been very wise to decide that the call for tenders for an AFIS should continue at the same time, in conformity with the General Assembly's decision. In fact, certain other countries had offered to assist with the installation of an AFIS at the General Secretariat. The whole subject should be considered from a worldwide point of view.

In conclusion, the Director of Information Technology mentioned the other projects his Directorate was working on.

It was about to send out a circular to all NCBs asking them to consider the implications that moving into the year 2000 might have on their computer systems: that date was fast approaching and the ensuing difficulties might be serious.

Another project was to define an overall strategy for information security. A study had been conducted on the subject and the General Secretariat intended to participate in the work of the European Forum on Security which had begun to consider the problem. Then there was the question of establishing interfaces with various international organizations such as the United Nations and WCO.

Finally, the General Secretariat would have to acquire the resources it would need to keep up with the trend towards regional approaches to policing and to support Sub-Regional Bureaus, as it was already doing in Southern Africa.

The Directorate's aims for 1998 were to continue working on its current projects, to study users' requirements thoroughly, to consider all the possible ASF options very carefully, to monitor developments on the telecommunications network, and to help prepare the new five-year plan which would be submitted to the General Assembly at its next session.

A report on the meeting of the Computerization and Telecommunications Committee was subsequently given in plenary session and was noted by the General Assembly.



MEETING OF HEADS OF NATIONAL CENTRAL BUREAUS

Mr Palmer (Australia) was elected to chair the meeting.

Reports on the activities of the working parties set up by the General Assembly

The Director of Liaison and Criminal Intelligence reported on the activities of the working parties set up by the General Assembly.

Working Party on Bank/Police Co-operation

The Director began with a brief overview of the work carried out by the Working Party on Bank/Police Co-operation, which had been set up at the 55th General Assembly session. The Working Party's primary aims were to continue to work towards improved co-operation with the banking industry in order to find practical ways to combat banking fraud.

Working Party on Environmental Crime

Since its creation in 1993, the Working Party had held three meetings, and in September 1996 an International Conference on Environmental Crime had taken place in Lyons. Due to the success of that Conference, another one was planned for 13th and 14th November 1997.

The Working Party was divided into four sub-groups. The first sub-group dealt with the transborder movement and dumping of hazardous waste. The second sub-group focused on the trafficking of real or purported radioactive substances. The third sub-group was

responsible for dealing with the protection of endangered species and wild flora and fauna. Finally, the fourth sub-group had the responsibility of co-ordinating the activities of the other three sub-groups.

One of the sub-groups' significant achievements was the development of the ECO message, which facilitated the rapid exchange of information in that field. The sub-group also reviewed the practical guide on co-operation between Interpol and CITES.

The General Secretariat had also conducted two analytical studies in relation to environmental crime, namely Project Nuclear and Project Noah. A study was currently ongoing regarding the possibility of setting up a joint database for Interpol, CITES and the World Customs Organization.

Standing Working Party on Offences against Minors

Mr Higdon outlined the origins of the Standing Working Party and its work over the years. He spoke of the current activities of sub-groups formed by the Standing Working Party, the appointment of Contact Officers within the member countries, training seminars for Contact Officers, and the various meetings held jointly with ECPAT (End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism) and UNICEF. He referred in particular to the more recent meeting held in Buenos Aires, the purpose of which had been to increase awareness in the South American countries of offences against children. At the instigation of Argentina, a Regional Committee had been set up in South America to allow law enforcement within the region to

discuss such issues. Brazil, Chile and Colombia were particularly active in promoting those concerns.

Interpol was in the process of publishing a handbook which would be a practical guide to be used by police officers dealing with offences against children. Interpol's work through the Standing Working Party had gained recognition on the worldwide scene for its achievements and professionalism in that important area of criminality. Interpol would continue its work in this area as mandated by the General Assembly at its 65th session held in Antalya, Turkey.

The Delegates of Bangladesh, Colombia, Sri Lanka, India, the United Kingdom, Brazil, Hungary, Norway, Saudi Arabia, Canada and South Africa reported on the situation in their respective countries and the legislation and means adopted to combat offences against minors.

The Chairman summarized the various statements made by the delegates and reiterated the remarks made by the Delegate of Bangladesh, who had provided interesting statistics. He thanked Sri Lanka for the efficient co-operation which had taken place with some European countries. He added that he was pleased and encouraged to see that countries were treating this issue very seriously and were taking appropriate measures in their national legislation to combat this type of criminality, as in the example given by the United Kingdom. In closing his remarks the Chairman congratulated the Standing Working Party on Offences against Minors on a job well done.



Standing Committee on Disaster Victim Identification

Mr Higdon then presented a report on the activities of the Standing Committee on Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) since the last General Assembly session. The DVI Standing Committee, which was composed of police officers, forensic experts and pathologists, had been created in 1981 and was comprised of 23 countries; Argentina and India had been the most recent members to join the Working Party. DVI Standing Committee meetings had been annual events since 1993. The DVI Form and Manual had now been reviewed and a circular would shortly be sent to the NCBs, together with copies of the new documents. Six resolutions relating to DVI had been condensed into one single resolution at the 1996 General Assembly session.

Mr Higdon highlighted the importance of the DVI Standing Committee's 1997 meeting, which he described as historic: it had marked the beginning of a new era of co-operation on the subject which would lead to improved circulation of information among member countries and to the promotion of Interpol's activities in disaster victim identification. A new working party had been set up, composed of representatives from Belgium, Norway, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom

and the General Secretariat. It would hold its first meeting in March 1998. The working party would concentrate on presenting initiatives on training and increasing police awareness with regard to identifying the victims of major disasters.

He stressed the importance of the centralizing role played by Belgium in the working party. That country had, in fact, volunteered to be responsible for all training in the context of the programme of activities. The training provided to all Interpol's members was based on a module which had been prepared by the Belgian NCB and thoroughly tested.

Monitoring of resolutions

The Chairman said that the item mainly concerned the preliminary draft resolutions on information technology, firearms and money laundering.

The Director of Legal Affairs reminded the delegates of the importance of abrogating resolutions which had become obsolete or which had been implemented. He provided some interesting statistics on the subject: between 1958 and 1996, no fewer than 433 resolutions had been adopted by the general Assembly at its various sessions; 96 of them (25%) had been abrogated between 1995 and 1997.

He stressed the importance of member countries having only one up-to-date document on each subject to deal with, instead of a series of different documents. He said he was convinced the procedure of abrogating outdated texts would gain the countries' approval and avoid unnecessary work for the Heads of NCBs during General Assembly sessions.

Mr Higdon then submitted the first resolution, on the SCIT, to be abrogated (AGN/58/RES/6), following the approval by the Executive Committee in 1997 of the SCIT's new terms of reference and new rules of procedure.



The Chairman then read out the text of the preliminary draft resolution contained on page 4 of Report No. 6, abrogating Resolution AGN/58/RES/6 of 1989.

The preliminary draft resolution on the SCIT's terms of reference and rules of procedure was adopted unanimously, becoming Draft Resolution AGN/66/P.RES/6.

The Chairman called upon the Director of Legal Affairs to outline the contents of Report No. 7 on the procedure for monitoring resolutions. Mr. Durand said it was a means of saving time at General Assembly Sessions by allowing the Executive Committee to supervise changes in former resolutions. The Chairman then read out the preliminary draft resolution.

The Saudi Arabian Delegate said that during meetings of Heads of NCBs, delegates often asked for clarification of resolutions which had been adopted previously. It was therefore appropriate to brief delegates on all previous resolutions adopted by the General Assembly.

The Canadian Delegate said that in his opinion, although there was administrative work associated with reviewing resolutions, abrogation was not an administrative task. He therefore emphasized that



the review of resolutions was an essential process and recommended the continuation of submitting reports to the General Assembly concerning such resolutions.

The Chairman moved to a vote on Preliminary Draft Resolution AGN/66/A.P.RES/7, which was adopted unanimously, becoming Draft Resolution AGN/66/P.RES/7.

The Chairman then asked Mr Higdon to outline the background to Preliminary Draft Resolution AGN/66/A.P.RES/6 on firearms. Mr Higdon said that since 1963 there had been 20 resolutions in that field and it was an important area to consider. A common-sense

approach was needed. The Chairman then read out the preliminary draft resolution on the manufacture, use and control of firearms. Several delegates proposed amendments to the text. After it had been amended accordingly, Preliminary Draft Resolution AGN/66/A.P.RES/6 was adopted, becoming Draft Resolution AGN/66/P.RES/18.

Outline Agreement with the United Nations

The Director of Legal Affairs provided the background to the Agreement and outlined the points which were covered in it. He said that once the Agreement had been adopted by the General Assembly, the Secretaries General of both organizations would be competent to sign any future agreements between the United Nations and/or its subsidiary bodies and Interpol in the framework of that Agreement. Preliminary Draft Resolution AGN/66/A.P./RES/9 was adopted, becoming Draft Resolution AGN/66/P.RES/8.

Traffic in stolen vehicles

A comprehensive presentation was made by Ms Good, a Specialized Officer at the General Secretariat, who gave an overview of the worldwide situation in relation to the traffic in stolen vehicles



and a report on current Interpol projects in that field. She described the development of the Interpol ASF international stolen vehicle database which had been started in 1996. Only six countries were currently forwarding stolen vehicle data to the General Secretariat, although 38 countries had access to the system. Ms Good encouraged member countries to join the system as soon as possible. She also announced the imminent publication of the "Interpol Guide to Vehicle Registration Documents".

The Chairman expressed his satisfaction at the fact that a number of countries were already linked to the ASF stolen motor vehicle database, and that the United Nations had adopted a resolution on the subject. There were indications that vehicle theft incidents were on the decrease in some countries: he encouraged Interpol to continue its efforts in that regard. He concluded by saying that the "Interpol Guide to Vehicle Registration Documents" would be a very useful tool for member countries.

Red notices

The Director of Liaison and Criminal Intelligence introduced Report No. 8 on red notices.

He briefly described the background to the subject and announced the first results of a study aimed at expanding the legal recognition of red notices. He referred to the relevant international texts, which acknowledged the essential role played by Interpol as the institution through which requests for provisional arrest could be sent. He stressed the importance of keeping written records of all such requests, and recalled that provisional arrest was a judicial measure which was different from mere detention in police custody.

The General Secretariat had so far received a total of 91 replies in the context of the study he had



mentioned, including six from different countries' Ministries of Justice. Of the countries which had replied to the General Secretariat, 64 (75%) had stated that they could make a provisional arrest on the basis of a red notice issued by Interpol, whereas 24 had stated that they could not. The latter category included the North American countries, Russia, the United Kingdom, South Africa and Japan.

Mr Higdon then presented the new format for red notices which had been prepared by the General Secretariat with the aim of providing information that was as clear as possible to all the departments concerned (police and justice).

He urged countries to implement Resolution AGN/65/RES/12, demonstrating clearly that red notices in their current form contained most if not all the information member countries had said they needed in their replies to the Secretariat. He said he was convinced that combined implementation of the proposals contained in Report No. 8 and of the preliminary draft resolution currently being submitted, should once and for all give a legal basis to red notices in all member countries. He ended by saying that Professor Larnaud, a Frenchman, had made the same appeal in 1914.

The Delegates of Pakistan, Egypt, Switzerland, Armenia, Romania, Brazil, Syria, France, Azerbaijan, Argentina, Australia, India, Spain, Bangladesh and the United States gave their opinions on the matter and some of them proposed modifications to the text of the preliminary draft resolution.

The Director of Legal Affairs summed up those modifications by stating that there was an agreement in principle to the analyses and considerations contained in Report No. 8, provided that:

- Brazil's name is removed from the list of countries which indicated that a red notice has the value of a provisional arrest;
- in the report and on the form, a reference is added to the Convention on legal assistance and legal relationship in civil, family and criminal matters, concluded by the countries of the CIS, signed in Minsk in 1993;
- Section 5 of the report, entitled "Meetings of the Internal Working Party on red notices" is deleted and replaced by a statement to the effect that responsibility for continuing the work has been entrusted to the Secretary General;
- the General Secretariat sends the NCBs all the information in its possession on the wanted person;
- the possibility of using the Internet to circulate red notices is explored;

- all the nationalities of the wanted person are specified on the form;
- it is stated that Report AGN/66/RAP. No. 8 may not be distributed without the present amended resolution."

Preliminary Draft Resolution AGN/66/A.P.RES/8, incorporating the proposed amendments, was adopted, becoming Draft Resolution AGN/66/P.RES/9.

Interpol standard of exchanging computerized fingerprint images by countries using AFIS equipment

The Director of Information Technology gave a brief overview of Report No. 11.

The Expert Working Party on Computerized Fingerprint Image Handling had been set up in 1995 to explore the feasibility of defining Automated Fingerprint Identification Systems (AFIS) standards for handling fingerprint images. The excellent work done by the Expert Working Party had resulted in a recommendation being adopted at the 26th European Regional Conference (Piestany, Slovakia) in 1997, defining an Interpol standard for computerized transmission of fingerprints. The Interpol standard was a major achievement and thanks should go to the members of the Expert Working Party for their outstanding work.

The Chairman put Preliminary Draft Resolution AGN/66/A.P.RES/10 to the vote. It was adopted, becoming Draft Resolution AGN/66/P.RES/16.

Interpol: A source of criminal information and intelligence

Mr Cameron-Waller, Regional Co-ordinator, introduced the subject, stating that the title reflected part of the core business of the Organization. Examining Interpol's role as a source of criminal information and intelligence was in reality asking how effective Interpol was to be. He referred to the significant achievements made in recent years: the introduction of the X.400 system, the creation of the ASF, the development of the Interpol Criminal Information System and the plan to acquire an Automated Fingerprint Identification System. He reminded the meeting that all those facilities were merely tools and stressed that the essential question remained outstanding. The Organization must develop a clear understanding of how the tools should be used.

Mr Cameron-Waller described the way in which information was handled at the General Secretariat by reference to what he referred to as the "intelligence wheel".

He outlined the role of the various units at the General Secretariat which developed strategic and op-

erational intelligence from individual pieces of information submitted by the NCBs and disseminated that intelligence by a variety of means. He stated that it was intended that such intelligence should result in arrest, the seizure of stolen or illicitly possessed property, or the frustration of criminal activity. That in turn should lead to the submission of new and more recent information to the General Secretariat by the NCBs.

He stressed the crucial role that the NCBs had to play if that dynamic process was to be effective. He reported that the American Regional Conference held in Ottawa earlier in 1997 had considered the subject and resolved that each of the member countries in the region should conduct a fundamental review of the role, contribution and capability of their NCBs in the provision of information to the General Secretariat and other countries and in the dissemination of information from those sources within their countries, having particular regard to the value of providing operational law enforcement units with information which was timely, accurate, relevant and complete.

Subsequently, the African Regional Conference held in Algeria in August 1997 had adopted the same approach. Mr Cameron-Waller suggested that the issue was of such importance that each of the member countries throughout the world should be involved in this process. He furthermore proposed that each NCB should appoint an intelligence co-ordinator whose responsibility it would be to create awareness of Interpol's role as a source of criminal information and intelligence, and to stimulate and co-ordinate the flow of information via the NCB to the General Secretariat.

The Chairman introduced Preliminary Draft Resolution AGN/66/A.P.RES/16 which related to those proposals. It was adopted, becoming Draft Resolution AGN/66/P.RES/17.



Co-operation to search for persons responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law committed in Rwanda or neighbouring countries

The item was introduced by the Rwandan Delegate who briefly described the atrocities which had resulted in the establishment of the United Nations Tribunal in Arusha. He referred to Resolution 955 of the United Nations Security Council which gave parallel competence to both the United Nations' and the Rwandan national tribunal for those crimes.

Despite Resolution 955, which urged all States to co-operate regarding the prosecution of those responsible, many culprits had fled and were living peacefully and with impunity abroad.

He then introduced Preliminary Draft Resolution AGN/66/A.P.RES/11 which highlighted the need for police and judicial co-operation to bring those responsible for such crimes to justice.

The Director of Legal Affairs proposed adding the following phrase to the preliminary draft resolution: "Asks the Secretary General to bring this Resolution to the attention of the United Nations authorities".

The Ugandan Delegate pointed out that it was not sufficient simply to locate and deal with those suspected of such crimes. It was also necessary to ensure the surrender of exhibits and any other evidence that would assist in reaching a just conclusion.

The Chairman invited the meeting to vote on the Preliminary Draft Resolution with the amendment proposed by the Director of Legal Affairs.

The Preliminary Draft Resolution, thus amended, was adopted, becoming Draft Resolution AGN/66/P.RES/13.

Exploitation of illegal immigrants by organized crime groups

The Director of Liaison and Criminal Intelligence informed the meeting that the General Secretariat had initiated a project to study and report on that type of crime. He urged all member countries to co-operate fully on the project, reminding those present of the earlier discussion on Interpol's role as a source of criminal information and intelligence.

Strategic Plan — Interpol's future aims and objectives

The Director of Information Technology reminded the meeting that the purpose of developing a strategic plan for the Organization was to define its future path.

Stressing the importance of the project, he stated that it was intended that there should be wide-ranging consultation with member countries. A report could be submitted via the Executive Committee to the General Assembly session in 1998.

The draft resolutions adopted during the meeting of Heads of NCBs were subsequently put to the vote in plenary session.

The following draft resolutions were adopted unanimously:

Terms of reference of the Standing Committee on Information Technology (SCIT): AGN/66/P.RES/6. This became Resolution AGN/66/RES/3.

Procedure for monitoring resolutions: AGN/66/P.RES/7, becoming Resolution AGN/66/RES/4.

Co-operation Agreement with the United Nations: AGN/66/P.RES/8, becoming Resolution AGN/66/RES/5.

Red notices: AGN/66/P.RES/9, becoming Resolution AGN/66/RES/7.

The manufacture, use and control of firearms: AGN/66/P.RES/18 (following amendment), becoming Resolution AGN/66/RES/6.

Interpol standard for exchanging computerized fingerprint images by countries using AFIS equipment: AGN/66/P.RES/16, becoming Resolution AGN/66/RES/9.

Co-operation to search for persons responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law committed in Rwanda or neighbouring countries between 1st October 1990 and 31st December 1994: AGN/66/P.RES/13, becoming Resolution AGN/66/RES/10.

CONTINENTAL MEETINGS

African Continental Meeting

The meeting was chaired by Mr El Rooby (Egypt), Vice-President of Interpol.

Regional activities

The General Secretariat had changed the method used for providing regional training. Training was now provided locally, in a single language, and better met the specific needs of each region. The results of the courses organized in French in Côte d'Ivoire and in English in Harare had been satisfactory. Discussions were under way with the Egyptian authorities with a view to organizing a course in Arabic in Cairo in early 1998.

It was pointed out that the training organized in the new way was no longer exclusively for NCB officials and was also open to heads of police colleges. That formula could be used to promote use of Interpol. The Organization felt that teaching on international co-operation should also be included in the programmes of all police colleges.

There had recently been a meeting in Togo on car crime.

Day-to-day co-operation

The Malian Delegate said that his country was the scene for traffic in cars which had been stolen in neighbouring countries and sometimes in Europe. An investigation carried out by the Malian police following requests from the Côte d'Ivoire authorities had revealed that a large number of vehicles had been stolen following attacks carried out by individuals living in Côte d'Ivoire. The vehicles had then been smuggled



into Mali by couriers using false documents.

The Malian authorities had therefore introduced a certificate which had to be presented before any imported vehicles could be registered. However, it was sometimes difficult to explain to the owner of the stolen vehicle that the certificate — which was not foolproof — had been issued at a time when the Malian authorities were not aware that the vehicle had actually been stolen.

The Chairman said he supposed that such procedures nonetheless provided a fairly effective means of screening. However, what could the police do when a victim took too long to report the theft?

The South African Delegate pointed out that co-operation among chiefs of police in Southern Africa had led to the development of a certification system which would be used throughout the region. Before a vehicle could be reregistered outside the country of origin, the latter would have to issue a certificate attesting that the vehicle had not been stolen.

The appropriate forms would shortly be distributed to the Sub-Regional Bureau and to all the NCBs in the region.

The Chairman asked why the countries in the region did not send their requests directly to the General Secretariat, which had a database of stolen vehicles.

The South African Delegate replied that, at present, not all the countries in Southern Africa had access to the General Secretariat's database. He pointed out that, in addition to the certificate which he had just mentioned, the person applying to register the vehicle would have to supply the original vehicle documents and the owner's identity papers. That system of checking documents would also apply to other countries suspected of being involved in vehicle trafficking.

The Côte d'Ivoire Delegate said that the police in his country merely consulted the country of origin of the vehicle, as they considered that the NCB in that country should have an index of stolen vehicles.

The Algerian Delegate drew his colleagues' attention to the fact that the original owners of vehicles were sometimes involved as accomplices in the exportation and fraudulent sale of their cars: they had declared the vehicle as stolen and then claimed reimbursement from the insurance company.

The Chairman agreed that the problem referred to by the Algerian Delegate was a source of difficulty, and he asked his colleagues to think about ways of solving it.

The Regional Co-ordinator (General Secretariat) thought that the method recommended by the South African Delegate would be particularly effective since it harmonized the procedures in the twelve countries of the region.

The Ugandan Delegate pointed out that an owner in good faith might report the theft of his vehicle to the police quite late. He proposed that — within Interpol in general — when a request was made to reregister a vehicle abroad, the NCB of the country of origin should be contacted first.

The South African Delegate said that, in Southern Africa, over 100,000 vehicles were stolen every year, half of which were never found; he felt the certificate system could be quite a good guarantee against complicity by the original owner.

The Chairman acknowledged that co-operation between all Interpol member countries was absolutely vital if the problem was to be solved. However, a forum such as the Continental Meeting could not expect to find a solution. Such meetings could only suggest avenues to be explored.

The Zambian Delegate felt the development of X.400 would make it possible to circulate information about vehicle thefts much more effectively. For that to happen, however, the information had to be transmitted in the first place.

The Zimbabwean Delegate agreed. Whatever the procedure adopted, it would only be valid if there was sufficient useful information available.

Mr Cameron-Waller, the Regional Co-ordinator, pointed out that the recommendations about stolen vehicles had already been adopted by various African meetings. Most of the proposals which had just been made merely concerned good practice by the NCBs and did not require any further decisions to be taken.

The Togolese Delegate said that his country had organized the Third Regional Meeting on Stolen Vehicles in 1997 because it attached great importance to the subject. To combat traffic using the port of Lomé, and in application of one of the recommenda-

tions adopted during the meeting, it had established a "discharge system" for registering imported vehicles. The discharge was issued by the Togolese NCB, which began by consulting the database in Lyons. In implementing the system there had unfortunately been some problems of harmonizing procedures, speed of information exchanged, etc.

Sub-Regional Bureaus — Status and activities

The Regional Co-ordinator reported on the status of the three African Sub-Regional Bureaus, the one in Abidjan for West Africa, the one in Harare for Southern Africa, and the one in Nairobi for East Africa. There had not been much in the way of new developments since the Regional Conference in Algiers.

As far as the West African Bureau was concerned, the financing situation was still deplorable, only four out of twenty-four countries having paid their contributions. Côte d'Ivoire was still financing the use of the premises itself. The staff consisted of one Ivorian official and two Gabonese officials, and there were plans to detach Nigerian officials. Failure to respect their commitments on the part of the countries of the region was becoming an extremely serious problem.

In the case of the Bureau for Southern Africa, seven countries out of eleven had paid their contributions and the sum thus made available was sufficient to ensure proper functioning. The Bureau had been officially opened by President Mugabe a few weeks previously, in the presence of Ministers from all the countries it served. In addition to Zimbabwean officials, six officials from various other countries in the region worked in Harare and three further appointments were being made. A great deal of activity was taking place and there were regular contacts between the Bureau and the SARPCCO.



The problem of financing for the Sub-Regional Bureaus was extremely serious. Interpol's policy was clear: the Bureaus should be financed by the countries they served. The Executive Committee had taken two decisions:

- that the whole subject of financing for Sub-Regional Bureaus should be reviewed by Mr Noble who was going to be appointed an Adviser to the Organization;
- that no further proposals to establish new Sub-Regional Bureaus should be accepted unless they were accompanied by secure arrangements as to financing.

The Ministers of the countries to be served by the East African Bureau had all expressed agreement, but no payments had been received and financing would have to be secured before the Headquarters Agreement was signed, even if the Assembly had approved its terms.

It had been at the request of the Ministers concerned that ministerial meetings had been organized, first in Abidjan in 1995, then at Victoria Falls and finally in Nairobi. It was the Ministers themselves who had suggested the conclusion of international agreements which would be binding on the countries concerned.

In the absence of the actual sums needed, the situation seemed insoluble. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the countries affected had been informed of developments by diplomatic note and copies of the note would be sent to the Ministers of Home Affairs.

However, the problems that had arisen had not prevented the General Secretariat from making considerable efforts to help the Sub-Regional Bureaus to make progress, particularly in respect of technical equipment. It seemed that it would not suffice to link them to the X.400 network — they would also need PCs connected to the network. But here again the problem of the substantial financial cost of the equipment arose, and the Bureaus needed the equip-

ment if they were to operate satisfactorily. The capital investment plan for Harare was expected to total FRF 1.3 million and it seemed scarcely reasonable to ask the countries concerned to contribute that sum themselves. Outside assistance would therefore be sought and similar efforts would naturally be made for the other two African Bureaus.

The Chairman said he hoped that all the African countries would understand the importance of making the required financial effort. Africa would have to wake up if it wished to ensure the security it needed for its economic development by co-operation between its peoples. He expressed his thanks to all the countries, particularly France, which had given the African countries financial assistance.

Regional and Sub-Regional Committees' progress reports

The Regional Co-ordinator said he was very happy with the idea of establishing Sub-Regional Committees in Africa.

There were now Regional Committees for West, Central and Southern Africa. The Committee composed of Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania planned to expand to take in the whole of Eastern Africa.

The Central African Committee had been established during a ministerial meeting held during the current year in Brazzaville, with two Sub-Committees — one for information and the other for legal affairs. Its Chairman was the Chief of Police of Congo. Given the situation in Brazzaville, however, the Chairman had not been able to call the planned meetings and the Committee's Headquarters were to be transferred.

The Nigerian Delegate said that the West African Committee had been set up in Nigeria in March 1997; it was composed of 16 countries and two Observers (Congo and the Central African Republic).

A West Africa Police Chiefs' Committee had also been established. The Chairman was the Director of Police of Nigeria and the Vice-Chairman was the Chief of Police of Mali. Two Sub-Committees had been established, one to study and harmonize existing bilateral and multilateral agreements in the region, and the other to study an integrated training programme to standardize investigators' methods.

The South African Delegate reported that a first meeting of the Sub-Regional Committee had been held in Cape Town. A chairman had been appointed and a document on co-operation was planned. It was hoped the initiative would improve the level of co-operation between the police forces of Southern Africa. The opening of the Bureau in Harare on 1st October 1997 would also greatly contribute to strengthening that co-operation. The countries of Southern Africa used the Interpol machinery to the full, mainly X.400 which was to be installed everywhere within a few weeks. The Regional Committee would provide the interface with Interpol and would divide the work between its Sub-Committees (legal affairs, training and, soon, operational know-how). Co-operation in the region — especially with the co-ordinating committee of heads of investigation — had led to some remarkable successes in the area of stolen vehicles. There still remained legal difficulties — occasioned by the differences between national structures — which sometimes prevented a vehicle which had been recovered from being returned to its owner.

The chiefs of police, who had met the previous week and who would be meeting again in a few months' time, had analysed the main crime threats for each country. The meeting had led to areas of common concern being defined: drugs, stolen vehicles, diamonds, weapons, illegal immigrants. It had been decided that all data on criminal cases would be sent to Interpol, if possible via the X.400

network. The South African Delegate said he hoped that the Sub-Regional Committee would be a model of police co-operation for the entire world.

The Ugandan Delegate reported on the co-operation which had existed for some time between his country, Tanzania and Kenya. Following recent discussions in Nairobi, it had been decided to extend that co-operation to other countries in East Africa. The Ugandan authorities hoped to be able to host a meeting of chiefs of police in the near future to discuss that proposal. The Delegate added that his country's authorities were determined to make up the delay incurred in paying their contribution towards the funding of the East African Sub-Regional Bureau, and were also planning to detach officers to the Bureau.

Date and meeting place of the next Regional Conference

It was decided that the next African Regional Conference would be held in Cape Town and would begin on 17th March 1999.

American Continental Meeting

The meeting was chaired by Mr Mery Figueroa, Vice-President for the Americas.

Mr Higdon, Director of the Liaison and Criminal Intelligence Directorate, reported on the Regional Conference which had been held that year in Ottawa, and gave an outline of the status and activities of the Sub-Regional Bureau in Buenos Aires.

Since the new Head of Bureau had taken up his post, great efforts had been made to enhance the Bureau's profile and activities. The Head of Bureau had carried out a number of studies on crime in his sub-region, in particular drug trafficking, precursors, and the theft of cultural property. He had also prepared quarterly activity reports and had also

helped to organize three meetings in the region.

The Puerto Rican Delegate reported on the meeting of the Interpol Regional Committee for the Caribbean and Central America which had taken place in San Juan in September 1997. One of the key points arising from that meeting had been San Juan's central role as the Interpol regional station for the X.400 network. He also stated that San Juan were offering training facilities for a regional group of up to 50 people. At the meeting a report had been given on the General Secretariat's strategy for the region, in particular the key role played by the various associations of chiefs of police. Other points on the agenda had included technical developments in relation to the exchange of intelligence. The conclusions of the meeting had been that Interpol San Juan should be designated as a permanent secretariat for the regional committee and that a working group should be created to develop ROC-CISS using all existing facilities. In addition, Puerto Rico had offered to host an international Interpol conference in 1998.

The Panamanian Delegate emphasized how useful that meeting had been and mentioned that an Observer from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police had also made a valuable contribution to the meeting.

The Uruguayan Delegate said that the MERCOSUR countries (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay) and associate members (Bolivia and Chile) had been carrying out a number of activities and aimed to increase their links with Interpol. In November 1996 a consultative mechanism had been set up by the MERCOSUR Ministers of the Interior and Justice, and the heads of police of those countries had met several times with the aim of supporting the ongoing work of the Ministers of the Interior. It was important to strengthen support for Interpol's activities. In November a meeting would be held for the Ministers

from MERCOSUR member and associate countries. The Delegate indicated that Uruguay would be putting forward a candidate for the Interpol Executive Committee. That indicated his authorities' commitment not only to their region but also to the Organization as a whole. He stressed the need to co-operate with other States.

The Paraguayan Delegate clarified some dates in relation to the various MERCOSUR meetings.

The Chairman mentioned that, on 18th and 19th November 1997, Mexico would be hosting a meeting on the traffic in stolen vehicles in Central and South America. He asked all countries of the region to attend, as such crime was a matter of general concern.

The Brazilian Delegate said that in order to highlight the importance of the Sub-Regional Bureaus it should be obligatory to invite Heads of Sub-Regional Bureaus to General Assembly sessions and to require them to submit a report.

The Chairman then moved on to the final topic of the agenda and asked the meeting whether any country was willing to host the next American Regional Conference in 1999. No offer was forthcoming.

Asian Continental Meeting

The meeting was chaired by Mr Kanemoto, President of Interpol.

The Chairman reminded delegates that a meeting of the Working Group on Co-operation in Asia had been held on 14th October 1997. (Notice of that meeting had been sent to all NCBs in Asia by way of a message from the General Secretariat on 27th August 1997.) Mr Kanemoto drew the attention of the meeting to a report of the Working Group Meeting which had been distributed and suggested that it be used as a discussion paper instead of following the standard agenda.



Mr Takizawa (General Secretariat) then read out the report.

The first item discussed by the Working Group had been the role of the Bangkok Liaison Office. The Australian Delegate supported remarks made by the Chinese Delegate and said that greater publicity should be given to the Bangkok Liaison Office through the law enforcement agencies of the individual countries, as that would further enhance its effectiveness.

The next item discussed by the Working Group had been regional modernization. The Working Group had been informed that 13 countries in the region were involved in the next stage of the programme and each of them had signed the necessary legal agreements.

In answer to a question from the Malaysian Delegate, the meeting was informed that the 13 countries were: Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Kazakhstan, Laos, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Uzbekistan and Vietnam. The Information Technology Directorate would now go ahead with the procurement of the appropriate equipment.

Mr Takizawa then reported on the Working Group's discussion of initiatives being undertaken to deliver training for NCB officials on a regional basis. A questionnaire on training needs and opportunities, which had been circulated by the General Secre-

tariat in March 1997, had also been discussed and it was reported that only 14 countries had returned the completed questionnaire.

Mr Takizawa then reported on discussions by the Working Group on Co-operation in Asia of a proposal by the Australian Delegation that representatives of different sub-regional groups in Asia should be invited to identify the critical issues of common concern in the various sub-regions with a view to setting up a process to develop initiatives and remedy difficulties.

The Malaysian Delegate insisted on the need for harmonization of regional initiatives due to the extreme diversity of the Asian region. He pointed out there existed in Asia bodies such as the ASEAN Chiefs of Police which met regularly to discuss issues of common concern.

The Australian Delegate said he wished to add to the comments made. The Asian region was the most diverse both geographically and culturally, stretching from the Mediterranean to the Western Pacific. The region had to find a way to communicate and get over any difficulties which were created by the diversity of the region. He recognized that difficulties and problems relative to the region could be dealt with by Chiefs of Police within bodies such as ASEAN. He proposed that representatives of the various sub-regions should ex-

amine and identify the issues of critical concern to them and said that Australia was willing to prepare a document based on the findings, in advance of the next Asian Regional Conference.

Mr Cameron-Waller, the Regional Co-ordinator, expressed his appreciation of the proposals made by the Australian Delegation and referred to the enhanced status of Regional Conferences which, as a result of the resolution adopted the previous day, had effectively become special committees of the General Assembly.

Referring to the arrangements described by the Malaysian Delegation for co-operation within the ASEAN region, he suggested that it might be timely to examine the relationship that such bodies could enjoy with the Regional Conferences.

He pointed out, however, that currently some of those bodies functioned without any direct input from Interpol. He acknowledged that that was a sensitive issue, but felt that measures needed to be taken in order to ensure that those participating in such bodies were fully informed of current issues and recent developments, that full advantage was taken of the opportunities offered by Interpol, and also that duplication of effort was avoided.

The Australian Delegate said that such an initiative would be a test of the commitment of the representatives of all the countries in the region and that success would depend upon everyone playing their part. He realized that they were working to a tight timeframe and suggested that the Australian NCB write to all the other NCBs seeking information and put together a composite document. In that way, real progress could be made by the Asian Regional Conference.

The Delegate of the United Arab Emirates said that delegates should re-consider mechanisms for the exchange of information and co-

operation. Such co-operation should be as efficient as possible, which, unfortunately, had not always been the case in the past.

The Chairman suggested that the meeting endorse the Australian proposals, that the pre-conference work should be done through a questionnaire, and that Australia should prepare a document for the Asian Regional Conference to be held in Canberra from 17th to 19th February 1998. That proposal was agreed.

European Continental Meeting

The meeting was chaired by Mr Richardot, Vice-President for Europe.

Regional activities

The Delegate of Luxembourg reported on police co-operation within the European Union and recalled that such co-operation was the responsibility of the Justice and Internal Affairs Council, also known the "Third Pillar".

In the context of the Union, police co-operation was approached from different angles: the establishment of Europol; the fight against the most serious forms of crime affecting the Union, such as organized crime, drug trafficking and terrorism; the further development of co-operation with regard to training, particular techniques and public security.

As everybody knew, the member States of the European Union were in the process of ratifying the Europol Convention. Four States had already done so and it was highly likely that Europol would become operational during the first half of 1998, thus taking over from the Europol Drugs Unit (EDU).

Luxembourg's presidency would therefore have to deal first with protecting secrecy, the transmission of Europol data to non-Member States, receipt by Europol of data from non-Member States, re-



lations between Europol and the authorities of non-member States and organization of the joint control authority.

It went without saying that the Presidency was concerned about the satisfactory functioning of Europol's computerized system, on which the satisfactory functioning of the new entity would depend.

He then referred to the fight against organized crime, drug trafficking and terrorism, and recalled the adoption by the Amsterdam Council of a 30-point strategy which stressed prevention as well as law enforcement, sought to bring closer together and even harmonize legislations, and advocated practical co-operation between the various judicial and police bodies responsible for enforcing the law.

The strategy provided for a full two-year calendar and the Delegate mentioned its main characteristics.

To co-ordinate efforts, the Council had decided to establish a multi-disciplinary group on organized crime in July 1996 and the Presidency had set priorities in that field. Furthermore, the 1996 report on organized crime within the European Union was being prepared.

The Presidency would report to the European Council meeting in

Luxembourg on the steps taken in 1997 to follow up the priorities defined during the European Council meeting in Dublin. Furthermore, work was under way on the activities carried out in the fight against intracommunity traffic.

The Council was also following closely the EDU-Europol projects on controlled deliveries and cocaine and heroin traffic. Finally, a warning mechanism had been installed to allow Member States to react quickly in the event of new synthetic drugs being discovered.

In the area of terrorism, efforts were being concentrated on improving co-operation among Member States. The Presidency would be organizing an expert seminar on the funding of terrorism. The link between terrorism and information technology was the subject of close attention.

Another seminar would also be held on the initiatives taken to halt the traffic in stolen vehicles.

The European Union was making special efforts to develop co-operation in areas such as training, special techniques and public safety.

Co-operation with the Association of European Police Colleges would be intensified and a programme would be developed to help the countries of Central and Eastern Europe to train their police officers.

With regard to technical co-operation, the Council had adopted — on 9th June 1997 — a resolution on sharing DNA analyses by setting up databases and standardizing techniques. Discussions were still in progress on the development of a European standard for radiocommunications. The interception of communications was the subject of much discussion, since satisfactory solutions had to be found to both the technical and legal aspects of the problem.

The police co-operation group was primarily concerned with preventing the counterfeiting of future euro banknotes.

The speaker then briefly addressed the issue of relations between the European Union and Interpol, an issue which had already been discussed within various forums with a view to avoiding duplication of effort and to promoting harmonious co-operation.

Meetings had already taken place between the Troika members and the President and Secretary General of Interpol; such meetings would continue.

On the subject of customs co-operation, the Presidency had given priority to the conclusion of the "Naples II" Convention, in accordance with the directives of the European Council at its meeting in Amsterdam. At the same time, the "Customs 2000" project was being examined by national customs administrations.

In the area of judicial co-operation, a draft convention on mutual assistance in criminal matters was being drawn up.

Noteworthy developments with regard to rights of asylum and immigration were the entry into force on 1st September 1997 of the Dublin Convention, and the preparation of a convention on the installation of the Eurodac system for comparing fingerprints of asylum-seekers.

Mr Storbeck then gave a presentation on the activities of the EDU-Europol. Since Interpol's previous General Assembly session, the scope of the Unit's activities had been extended and it now dealt with illegal immigration and traffic in human beings, *inter alia*.

One of Europol's priorities was to ensure that more intelligence and information were shared through the liaison officers located in The Hague. There were about forty of those officers, working independently of their national administrations. During 1996, the EDU-Europol had provided assistance in more than 2,000 cases and it hoped that the number would grow to reach 3,000 in 1997.

Two-thirds of the cases it had dealt with had been drugs cases, 10 to 12% had been illegal immigration cases, and it had also been involved in investigations relating to money laundering and even traffic in nuclear substances.

One important aspect of its activities was strategic analysis which it aimed to conduct in close co-operation with Interpol, WCO and UNDCP. To that end, the EDU-Europol was trying to harmonize its software and working methods with those of its counterparts.

Mr Storbeck described a very successful operation initiated by the Italian police and judicial authorities with the aim of putting

an end to the activities of a Mafia-type gang. During the investigations, it had become clear that five different European countries were looking for the members of the gang. Europol had co-ordinated the monitoring of means of transport throughout Europe and had finally organized a meeting on its premises during which plans had been drawn up for concerted action. That action had resulted in the simultaneous arrest of 68 of the 76 wanted persons, in five different European Union countries.

The permanent contact between the various institutions concerned had undoubtedly contributed to the successful outcome of the case, and Mr Storbeck emphasized the need for complementary action by Interpol, Europol and Schengen.

Informal contacts had already been established, the three institutions invited the others' representatives to their meetings, documents were exchanged, and technical responsibilities were defined. It was clear that relations between the three institutions were constantly improving but more political and practical co-operation was required, although some countries — Belgium for example — were already trying to make certain that there was no untoward overlapping.

The Chairman thanked the two speakers and expressed his plea-



sure at the fact that links were being forged between the various institutions dealing with crime investigation in Europe.

The Swiss Delegate asked what concrete measures had actually been taken to boost co-operation between the international organizations referred to earlier. Had a list of priorities been drawn up? What was Interpol's position on the subject?

The Director of Liaison and Criminal Intelligence replied that Interpol and Europol were endeavouring to improve their relations not only from an operational point of view, but also from a political point of view, as the two speakers had pointed out earlier.

That had resulted not only in joint invitations being issued, thereby helping to ensure that each institution's resources were not wasted on the pursuit of similar projects, but also in summit meetings, at which Interpol's Secretary General had stressed the importance of maintaining a political dialogue.

It had been pointed out to the Secretary General that various legal aspects would have to be examined before closer co-operation could be considered.

However, the parties had decided to draw up documents making it possible to define potential areas of co-operation and the priorities to be set. Current relations were by no means bad; however, there was certainly room for improvement and, to that end, permanent contacts were being maintained in a spirit of mutual respect.

Sub-Regional Bureaus — Status and activities

Mr Higdon, Director of Liaison and Criminal Intelligence, announced that Mr Heijerman, the Head of the European Liaison Bureau, would be leaving his post after five years and would be taking up a liaison officer's post in Paris.

At the end of the current Continental Meeting, the members of the European Committee should therefore join the Chairman of the meeting in considering the applications for the post. The Secretary General would then make the final choice. Mr Higdon went on to say that he had been pleased at the welcome received by the handbook on police and justice systems in Europe; the Dutch NCB had put the text on computer and it was consequently obtainable by X.400. He appealed to all NCBs which had not done so to send the General Secretariat all the information it needed, as soon as possible, so that the handbook would be really complete.

He spoke briefly on the various meetings which had been held during the course of the year, highlighting the 9th Meeting of European Contact Officers which had been held in Lyons on 18th and 19th September. The meeting had been attended by 36 contact officers from 32 different countries.

Unfortunately, many of the participants had stated that they could not provide some of the services expected of them because they were not in positions of enough importance in their own NCBs. The European Committee would certainly want to consider the recommendations made by the contact officers.

Regional Committee Progress Report

Mr Thiesen (Denmark), Chairman of the European Committee, submitted the Committee's Progress Report on its activities since the previous European Continental Meeting held in Antalya in the autumn of 1996, pointing out that it was the last time he would be submitting it.

The Regional Conference recently held in Piastany had taken note of the work under way, so Mr Thiesen said he would confine himself to reporting on the discussions that had taken place during the Committee's meeting held in Lyons on 27th June.

He recalled that the European Committee was currently composed of delegates from Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania and Slovakia.

During the next Regional Conference, the Polish and Romanian delegates would withdraw and it was already known that Lithuania would apply to join.

Mr Thiesen then reminded delegates that the European Regional Conference in Piastany had supported the European Committee's proposal to draft a new version of the strategic plan and that a drafting committee constituted for that purpose had held its first meeting in Lyons in September.

A new framework had been drawn up which would be submitted to the European Committee during its forthcoming meeting on 18th November in Lyons. Mr Thiesen hoped he would be able to submit the new version of the strategic plan for approval by the 27th European Regional Conference.

He confirmed his decision to give up the chairmanship of the European Committee — after serving for three years — during the forthcoming European Regional Conference, in application of the rules drawn up in 1995, whereby the chairman's term of office was limited to three years. Denmark would still be a member of the Committee until 1999, but the Committee would have to elect a new chairman.

A lively discussion then ensued, during which the Delegates of Switzerland, Germany, Poland, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Finland and Belgium gave their respective views on service standards, their monitoring by the NCBs, and improvement of Interpol's performance.

Date and meeting place of the next Regional Conference

The next European Regional Conference would be held in Dubrovnik, Croatia, from 13th to 15th May 1998.

PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES FOR 1998

The Director of Administration and Finance submitted Report No. 4 which contained the Programme of Activities for 1998.

The Programme, with three additional items described below, was approved by the General Assembly in plenary session:

- In 1998, there would be regional training for NCB officers: a course for Asia and the Middle East (put back from 1997 to 1998) and courses in Latin America, for the North American region and Caribbean region, and for West and Central Africa.

- In March 1998, the first meeting of the Regional Committee for South America on offences against minors would be held in Buenos Aires.

- In application of a resolution adopted by the General Assembly that morning, the General Secretariat would be organizing a seminar at the Headquarters on the role and responsibilities of the NCBs' criminal intelligence co-ordinator.

The French Delegate said that, during the Committee on International Financial and Economic Crime, the Head of his Delegation had proposed a first meeting of the Working Party on economic crime in Europe, which would be held in his country in October 1998.

The Programme, thus modified, is given below.

Administration and Finance Directorate

- Implementation of the new computerized accounting and payroll system and the computerized stock management system

- Replacement of the perimeter and peripheral security systems at the Headquarters

- Construction of a new conference hall and extending the dining area

- Archiving reorganization

- Study on and installation of a computerized system to manage document workflow and of a computer-assisted translation system

- Ongoing study on social welfare schemes.

Liaison and Criminal Intelligence Directorate

Sub-Directorate 1: General Crime

Disaster Victim Identification

- Publication of the Disaster Victim Identification Form and Guide in the established Interpol languages, and circulation to member countries

- Creation of DVI response packages for NCBs

- Closer co-operation with the UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs with a view to obtaining expert status on DVI at the UN

- Extension of Interpol's working relationship to external bodies like IATA and ICAO.

Motor vehicle crime

- Further development of the motor vehicle action plan, in particular in collaboration with Directorate IV to actively promote and develop the centralized database of stolen vehicles using the ASF

- Development and completion of the brochure on motor vehicle registration documents to encompass all European countries

- Development of a motor vehicle trafficking prevention programme, in collaboration with other organizations, e.g. HEUNI, following a study of the countries concerned.

Works of art and cultural property

- Development of the CD-Rom project on stolen works of art and cultural property

- Continuing back record conversion of stolen art notices

- Analysis of trends regarding stolen art.

Weapons and explosives

- Ongoing efforts to encourage co-operation and participation in Interpol weapons/explosives trafficking programs with particular focus on the IWETS program

- Production and dissemination of a Worldwide Situation Report on Firearms and Explosives

- Ongoing monitoring of the establishment of new tracing centres in member countries and dissemination of updated register

- Organization of, and participation, in regional working group meetings and training (Africa, Caribbean, Eastern Europe)

- Incorporation of the IWETS database into the ICIS program: this includes: — Formatting the IWETS entry form for X.400 transmission — Providing direct, limited query access to IWETS through the NCBs

- Maintaining contact with the United Nations Crime Prevention

and Criminal Justice Division with regard to international firearms regulation

- Conducting the follow-up studies as recommended by the United Nations *ad hoc* Expert Group as a result of the UN International Study on Firearms Regulation.

Offences against minors and trafficking in women

- Promotion of Interpol's international role with the aim of achieving UN expert status regarding offences against minors

- Follow-up of the Standing Working's Party initiatives in the long term and also the World Congress Plan of Action adopted in Stockholm in 1997

- Compilation of an international compendium of legislation on offences against minors in member countries

- Production of model specialized training programmes

- Study on the legal aspects of creating child pornography image databases

- Monitoring of the implementation of the two General Assembly resolutions adopted in 1996 in Antalya concerning crimes against children and traffic in child pornography

- Production of a manual on law enforcement techniques for the use of officers in the investigation and prosecution of traffickers in women

- Increasing co-operation with the appropriate organs of the United Nations and the European Union, with a view to conducting joint campaigns against trafficking in women and "forced-labour" practices in prostitution.

Organized Crime

- Ongoing work on the following projects, and on individuals wanted on an international level in connection with the projects:

MACANDRA (Italian organized crime)

ROCKERS (motor cycle gangs)

OCSA (organized crime in South America)

EASTWIND (Organized crime in Asia)

GOWEST (Organized crime in Eastern Europe)

MARCO POLO (Organized illegal immigration from Asia, closely connected with EASTWIND)

- Creation of a new project on organized crime in Africa.

Terrorism

- Ongoing development of specific complementary databases concerning terrorist criminals, information and terrorist group characteristics

- Updating of the list of terrorists in general and of terrorists involved in unlawful acts against aviation.

Sub-Directorate 2: Economic and Financial Crime

E Branch

- Computer-related crime: Organization of three European training courses on computer crime and two or three project groups

on specific IT-related subjects, updating the Computer Crime Manual, pursuing the process of regionalization

- Monitoring of West African fraud trends

- Introduction of an international programme on increasing corruption awareness

- Payment cards: setting up of an international payment card database as part of the future ICIS, establishment of an international central reference point and central reference library for counterfeit payment cards

- Environmental crime: Training courses on hazardous waste, endangered species of fauna and flora, and trafficking in radioactive substances.

F Branch

- Continuing to serve as the central information collection point for currency counterfeiting, in conformity with the 1929 Geneva Convention

- Creation of an Interpol official publication on genuine passports and its transfer to a CD-Rom

- Production of a CD-Rom of Part II of C & F Review to facilitate consultation.



FOPAC Branch

- In-depth study of money laundering in Asia
- Compendium on money laundering.

Sub-Directorate 3: Drugs

- Special analysis and monitoring of all drug trafficking along the Balkan Route (including Albanian ethnic criminal groups, former Yugoslav drug trafficking networks)
- Feasibility study regarding Turkish drug trafficking organizations and related issues to assist on-going European projects
- Study on combining programmes on statistics and conferences with the WCO, UN and ICPO-Interpol
- Continuing to update and supplement the documentation on controlled deliveries and conducting a survey of the possibilities of carrying out controlled deliveries in European countries, especially in Eastern and Central Europe
- Following up the Pompidou Group's initiatives regarding drug trafficking by ship
- Continuing to work closely with the UNDCP, INCB, WCO, EC, EDU and WHO in training, regional meetings and co-operation initiatives and meetings
- Conducting an international drug price and purity review in conjunction with Europol
- Monitoring African heroin and cocaine trafficking organizations involved in smuggling drugs via the postal system.

Sub-Directorate 4: Criminal Intelligence

Message Research/Response Branch (MRRB)

- Provision of prompt, professional, and accurate computer research and telecommunications

responses to National Central Bureaus (NCBs)

- Encouraging NCBs to make full use of the services provided by the MRRB
- Creating cases as appropriate from criminal information sent to the General Secretariat by NCBs
- Updating and linking existing computer cases on the basis of new information sent to the General Secretariat by NCBs
- Continuing to provide full support for conversion to the new ICIS.

ASA Branch

- Training staff on the new computer systems (ICIS, 3-tiered Architecture, Automated Office, etc.).

International Notices Branch

- Provision of guidance to the NCBs on the notice application process in order to improve the quality of applications and notices
- Encouraging NCBs to utilize the notices system to its full capability
- Periodical publication of the "Wanted by Interpol" bulletin, the "Missing Children" poster, and similar material designed to increase the awareness of Interpol's role and efforts in these areas
- Co-operation with the International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia in collaboration with D.III.

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Fingerprints Branch

- Modernization of the Branch: AFIS Project: continuing provision of assistance for the acquisition of an AFIS system in accordance with the resolution adopted during the General Assembly of Antalya
- Monitoring the use, by the NCBs, of the standard forms for transmitting fingerprints and latent

traces to and from Interpol member countries

- Encouraging NCBs to send the General Secretariat more fingerprint forms to enlarge the database.

Analytical Criminal Intelligence Unit (ACIU)

- Further development of ACIU automated facilities: the archives (images of all original information received) are at present stored on optical disks provided by the Wang technology (this system needs to be reviewed; possibility of link with ICIS).

European Liaison Bureau

- Pursuing the Business Plan 1996-2000 for Europe
- Updating the Police and Judicial Booklet for Europe
- Further explore, in conjunction with D.III, the possibilities of external funding for police co-operation projects in Central and East European Countries (e.g. "Phare", "Takis")
- Monitoring developments, establishing working agreements and maintaining close association with the European Union, Europol, Schengen and other relevant fora involved with police co-operation in Europe.

Regional Co-ordination Bureau

- Defining the existing regional elements of the structure for international police co-operation (within the context of Interpol) that might usefully be adopted by other regions
- Promoting the development of organized administrative support for Regional Committees following the precedent of the Interpol European Committee
- Researching the demand for the creation of additional Regional and Sub-Regional Bureaus and (in conjunction with the Legal Affairs Directorate) developing the frame-

work for their introduction where appropriate

- In conjunction with the Information Technology Directorate, providing a liaison facility for the implementation of the Regional Modernization Programme outside Europe

- Liaising with the Information Technology Directorate to ensure that the "police" response to technical improvements being made at NCB level is adequate

- Promotion of the expansion and effective utilization of the Asian Contact Officers network.

Legal Affairs Directorate

- Ongoing responsibility for the secretariat of the Supervisory Board for the Internal Control of Interpol's Archives

- Ongoing action to conclude agreements with other international organizations

- Drafting texts in connection with technological modernization

- Ongoing work to reduce the number of resolutions that have been adopted by the General Assembly

- Making a computerized remote-access documentation system fully operational

- Ongoing work on indexing General Assembly and Executive Committee documents.

Information Technology Directorate

- Ongoing work on information-technology strategy: three-tiered client/server architecture project

- Completion of the merging of the CIS (Criminal Information System), the ASF (Automated Search Facility) and the EAS (Electronic Archiving System) to form a single Interpol Criminal Information System (ICIS)

- ASF (Automated Search Facility): Developments relating to stolen or suspect vehicles, boats and aircraft, to lost or stolen passports and identity documents, and to counterfeit credit cards

- Study on implementation of ASF Option 6

- Establishment of a strategy for the development of ASF options and the use of X.400 protocols for ASF/ICIS data exchange

- Installation of an Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) and its integration into Interpol's information system

- Gradual, modular installation of stock-management, accounting, payroll and finance systems

- Providing advice for NCBs (PHARE, ASEANAPOL, ALERT, ROCISS)

- Ongoing study on, and installation of, an Intranet/Internet server to allow for the widest possible dissemination of non-confidential and non-nominal data

- Ongoing work on development and use of the InterForm software

- Study on workflow on the AGORA and ICIS systems

- Full evaluation of information security

- Development of long-term strategy for information systems

- Ongoing work on the Regional Modernization projects, particularly for the South Pacific

- Introduction of a systematic on-line encryption system for all data exchanges

- Replacement of the General Secretariat's X.400 central server

- Technical equipment for the new conference hall

- Continuing provision, on a regional basis, of technical information in connection with the equipment installed at the Regional Stations.

ELECTIONS AND SELECTION OF A MEETING PLACE FOR THE NEXT GENERAL ASSEMBLY SESSION



Elections to the Executive Committee

- Election of a Vice-President for the Americas (three-year term of office): Mr Kelly (United States) was elected.
- Election of a delegate for Africa: Mr Nebout (Côte d'Ivoire) was elected for a three-year term.
- Election of a delegate for the Americas: Mr Parker (Canada) was elected for a three-year term.
- Election of a delegate for Europe: Mr Koweszko (Poland) was elected for a three-year term.
- Election of delegates for Asia: Mr Jassim Al-Thawadi (Bahrain) and Mr Palmer (Australia) were elected for three-year terms.



POLOGNE



Selection of a meeting place for the 67th General Assembly session

By acclamation, the General Assembly decided to accept Egypt's offer to host the next session in Cairo.



TSWANA

Closing ceremony

The President and the Secretary General both thanked the Indian authorities for organizing the General Assembly so efficiently. The 66th session ended with the hymn "Abide with me", which was a favourite of Mahatma Gandhi.



CANADA



Left, from top to bottom: Mr Kelly, Mr Nebout, Mr Parker. Right, from top to bottom: Mr Koweszko, Mr Al-Thawadi, Mr Palmer.

States, Territories and Observers attending the 66th General Assembly session

States and Territories

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Aruba, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Ecuador, Egypt, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Gibraltar¹, Greece, Guinea, Honduras, Hong Kong¹, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Korea (Rep. of), Kuwait, Laos, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macao², Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands Antilles, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Puerto Rico³, Qatar, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syria, Tanzania, Thailand, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, Yemen, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

1. United Kingdom NCB Sub-Bureaus
2. Portuguese NCB Sub-Bureau
3. United States NCB Sub-Bureau

Observers

International Air Transport Association
International Association of Chiefs of Police
International Banking Security Association
United Nations Organization
General Secretariat of the Arab Interior Ministers Council
European Union

RESOLUTIONS

AGN/66/RES/6

Subject: The manufacture, use and control of firearms

AWARE of the harm done to the citizens of member countries by international criminal activities involving the use of illegally acquired firearms,

RECOGNIZING that successful action against such illegal activities depends on close co-operation between member countries, law enforcement agencies, all levels of government and other international organizations,

COGNIZANT of the diverse legal systems, political structures and cultural differences of member countries and of the need to respect their sovereignty,

The ICPO-Interpol General Assembly, meeting in New Delhi from 15th to 21st October 1997 at its 66th Session:

RECOMMENDS:

(1) That all firearms manufactured in any country be sufficiently identifiable by permanent markings which should indicate at least the manufacturer's name, the model name or number, the calibre and the country of origin, and which should include each firearm's unique serial number:

(2) That, if not already in place, each country adopts effective legislation and a reporting system enabling it to supervise and control all transactions relating to firearms (i.e. imports, exports, sales, purchases, possession and transfers) on its territory:

(3) That NCBs use all available means for communicating information about illegal activities with

international implications involving firearms to the Interpol General Secretariat and other concerned member countries, including the electronic message formats which are compatible with the Interpol Weapons and Explosives Tracking System (IWETS) and other databases;

(4) In conformity with the laws in their country, all NCBs give information to Interpol concerning the purchase of any firearms and ammunition by foreign non-resident private individuals;

(5) That, if not already in place, all member countries, especially those that manufacture firearms, establish firearms tracing systems so that they can respond accurately and promptly to tracing requests;

ASKS member countries to conduct campaigns encouraging their citizens to use and store firearms safely;

INVITES member countries to consider that the criminal misuse of firearms as a serious penal offence, for which appropriate penalties should be instituted;

ENCOURAGES member countries to adopt legislation and regulations relating to the use of firearms by civilians;

ABROGATES the following resolutions:

- AGN/32/RES/1
- AGN/36/RES/2
- AGN/37/RES/1
- AGN/38/RES/8
- AGN/41/RES/11
- AGN/43/RES/8
- AGN/49/RES/3
- AGN/51/RES/6
- AGN/55/RES/4
- AGN/56/RES/7
- AGN/61/RES/15.

AGN/66/RES/7

Subject: Red notices

BELIEVING that one of Interpol's main goals is to combat international crime and that arresting fugitives with a view to extraditing them to the country where they are wanted for prosecution or to serve a sentence, can make an essential contribution to that goal,

CONVINCED that if the extradition process is to have a successful outcome, the fugitives must be provisionally detained while the extradition request is forwarded and studied,

BELIEVING that, through its red notices, Interpol can play a vital role by facilitating and speeding up the pre-extradition process,

RECALLING that red notices are documents intended for both the police and the judicial authorities and can be considered valid requests for provisional arrest, because they are only issued on the basis of valid national arrest warrants,

HAVING TAKEN NOTE OF Report No. 8, submitted by the General Secretariat, on red notices,

The ICPO-Interpol General Assembly, meeting in New Delhi from 15th to 21st October 1997 at its 66th session:

ASKS the Secretary General of the ICPO-Interpol to advance an initiative to urge the United Nations to pursue the elaboration of a Universal Convention on Extradition:

AGREES in principle to the analyses and considerations contained in Report No. 8, provided that:

- Brazil's name is removed from the list of countries which indicated that a red notice has the value of a provisional arrest;
- in the report and on the form, a reference is added to the Convention on legal assistance and legal relationship in civil, family and criminal matters, concluded by the countries of CIS, signed in Minsk in 1993;
- Section 5 of the report, entitled "Meetings of the Internal Working Party on red notices" is deleted and replaced by a statement to the effect that responsibility for continuing the work has been entrusted to the Secretary General;
- the General Secretariat sends the NCBs all the information in its possession on the wanted person;
- the possibility of using Internet to circulate red notices is explored;
- all the nationalities of the wanted person are specified on the form;
- it is stated that Report AGN/66/RAP. No. 8 may not be distributed without the present amended resolution;

ASKS the General Secretariat to follow the guidelines contained in the Report on red notices;

RECOMMENDS that the NCBs do likewise, in so far as the competent national authorities allow them to do so.

AGN/66/RES/8

Subject: Interpol standard for exchanging computerized fingerprint images by countries using AFIS equipment

RECOGNIZING the increasing need for Interpol member countries to exchange information on fingerprints for crime investigation purposes,

AWARE of the fact that more and more fingerprint departments in member countries are installing Automatic Fingerprint Identification Systems (AFIS),

NOTING the need to define Automated Fingerprint Identification

Systems (AFIS) standards for handling fingerprint images,

RECALLING the decision taken by the 24th European Regional Conference (1995) to set up an Expert Working Party on Computerized Fingerprint Image Handling to explore the feasibility of defining Automated Fingerprint Identification Systems (AFIS) standards for handling fingerprint images,

MINDFUL of the recommendations made by the 26th European Regional Conference (Piešťany, Slovakia, 1997) with respect to the Final Report of the Expert Working Party on Computerized Fingerprint Image Handling,

HAVING studied Report, No. 11 entitled "Interpol standard for exchanging computerized fingerprint images by countries using AFIS equipment", submitted by the General Secretariat,

HAVING TAKEN NOTE of the recommendations made by the Expert Working Party on Computerized Fingerprint Image Handling, and in particular the contents of Appendix 2 of the Final Report entitled "ANSI/NIST-CSL 1-1993 Standard: Data Format for the interchange of fingerprint image information - Interpol implementation",

CONVINCED of the importance of using a worldwide Interpol standard to transmit computerized fingerprint images from one AFIS installation to another, in order to promote international co-operation,

The ICPO-Interpol General Assembly, meeting in New Delhi from 15th to 21st October 1997 at its 66th session,

RECOMMENDS that:

- The ICPO-Interpol standard for exchanging computerized fingerprint images between countries using AFIS/AFR equipment should be based on the ANSI/NIST CSL 1-1993 standard and any future development of that standard;

- Any future call for tenders for AFIS/AFR equipment or fingerprint transmission systems should mention that an Interpol Standard exists and that the AFIS/AFR to be provided should meet that standard;

- All future AFIS/AFR equipment should handle images with 500 dots per inch and with a grey scale of 256;

- The documents for the transmission of fingerprints and latent prints should be the two forms already endorsed by the Interpol General Assembly at its 64th session;

- The Interpol X.400 communication system should be used as the means of transmission between member countries.

AGN/66/RES/9

Subject: Interpol — A Source of Criminal Information and Intelligence

NOTING the contents of Report No. 18 regarding Interpol — A Source of Criminal Information and Intelligence,

RECOGNIZING the key role of information sharing and the development of intelligence in the process of international law enforcement co-operation,

ACKNOWLEDGING the significant progress made to this end in the development and implementation of computer systems by the General Secretariat of the ICPO-Interpol and in the Organization's member countries,

AWARE that the full potential of these systems and the various specific crime-related projects which the General Secretariat is called upon to carry out can only be realised through a consistent and maintained supply of information through the National Central Bureaus to the General Secretariat,

The ICPO-Interpol General Assembly, meeting in New Delhi from 15th to 21st October 1997 at its 66th session:

CALLS UPON each member country to review the role contribution and capability of its NCBs in:

(a) particular regard to the value of providing to operational law enforcement units

(b) information which is timely, accurate, relevant and complete.

URGES member countries which have not already done so to give serious consideration to the appointment within each National Central Bureau of an Intelligence Co-ordinator whose responsibility it would be:

(a) to create and maintain an awareness within the National Central Bureau and the various operational law enforcement units in the country concerned of (i) the capacity of Interpol to provide information which is relevant to their needs and (ii) the value of all member countries playing their part in providing relevant information to feed the databases and

(b) to stimulate and co-ordinate the flow of information via the NCB to the General Secretariat for this purpose.

DECIDES that the appointment of an Intelligence Co-ordinator within each NCB should become a Service Standard within the context of the policy guidelines "The National Central Bureaus of the ICPO-Interpol: Policy" adopted by the 63rd session of the General Assembly (Rome, 1994).

AGN/66/RES/15

Subject: Money laundering: Legislation

RECOGNIZING that Interpol has assumed a leading role among international organizations in combating the laundering of funds derived from criminal activities,

ACKNOWLEDGING the value of the 1988 United Nations Convention against illicit traffic in

narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances,

MINDFUL of the existing international mechanisms dealing with money laundering,* such as the said United Nations Convention, the 1992 OAS Model Regulations concerning laundering offences connected to illicit drug trafficking and related offences, the Forty Recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force, the Convention on laundering, search, seizure and confiscation of the proceeds from crime (Council of Europe, 1990), and the European Council Directive on prevention of the use of the financial system for the purpose of money laundering (Council of European Communities, 1991),

CONVINCED that, in order to strengthen international co-operation in the fight against money laundering, it is necessary for member countries both to have legislation that specifically makes the laundering of illegal proceeds a criminal act and to develop effective enforcement strategies,

The ICPO-Interpol General Assembly, meeting in New Delhi from 15th to 21st October 1997 at its 66th session:

CALLS UPON member countries which have not yet done so to ratify the 1988 United Nations Convention against illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, and to urge their governments to implement the Convention in order to give their law enforcement institutions the powers it provides for,

RECOMMENDS that member countries consider adopting national laws which would:

(1) **PROVIDE** for the criminal prosecution of individuals and legal entities that knowingly participate in the laundering of assets derived from criminal activities;

(2) **ALLOW** for the confiscation of such assets, and give law enforcement officials the power to identify, trace, and freeze assets

derived from illegal activities in order to prevent those assets from being placed beyond the reach of appropriate authorities;

(3) **MAKE** provision for the repatriation of assets derived from illegal activities;

(4) **ALLOW** for the possibility of sharing out confiscated illicit assets among law-enforcement services, including the ICPO-Interpol to be used in the fight against drug trafficking and the prevention of drug abuse;

(5) **REQUIRE** banks and other financial institutions to report unusual or suspect currency or other transactions to appropriate officials who would have authority to conduct further investigations to determine if the transactions reported involved funds derived from illegal activities;

(6) **REQUIRE** financial institutions to maintain, for at least five years after the conclusion of the transaction, records on both domestic and international transactions so that money laundering cases can be properly investigated;

(7) **FACILITATE** international co-operation by enabling member countries to respond to each others' requests for such records;

(8) **FORBID** the acceptance of anonymous accounts by banks and financial institutions;

(9) **ALLOW** for the expeditious extradition of individuals charged with money laundering offences;

ABROGATES the following resolutions:

- AGN/29/RES/9
- AGN/48/RES/6
- AGN/58/RES/8.

AGN/66/RES/17

Subject: Money laundering: Investigations and international police co-operation

RECOGNIZING the difficulties encountered by law enforcement authorities in their efforts to iden-

tify and prosecute all those who launder assets derived from illegal activities.

RECOGNIZING the need to confiscate the proceeds of crime,

FURTHER RECOGNIZING that unexplained wealth is a legitimate subject of enquiry for law enforcement institutions in their efforts to detect criminal activity,

The ICPO-Interpol General Assembly, meeting in New Delhi from 15th to 21st October 1997 at its 66th Session:

RECOMMENDS that the member countries extend co-operation in investigations to other members, whenever such a request is made, in respect of money laundering activities, and that the General Secretariat compiles and distributes information submitted by the member states on good investigative practices;

RECOMMENDS that member countries consider adopting effective laws, that give law enforcement officials the powers they need to combat money laundering both domestically and internationally, by taking the measures listed below:

(1) Simplify procedures for the production of relevant financial records, overcome obstacles hindering or delaying the sharing of financial and criminal information by appropriate agencies, and improve the effectiveness of disclosure systems by increasing contacts with financial institutions in order to facilitate the gathering of intelligence;

(2) Grant law enforcement officials the authority they need to investigate such cases, waive bank secrecy rules when there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that certain transactions are connected with criminal activities, authorize law enforcement departments to use techniques such as covert (undercover) investigations, technical surveillance and controlled deliveries when dealing with cases relating to assets

known or suspected to be the proceeds of crime, and provide adequate resources for law enforcement departments, in order to increase the likelihood of a successful outcome for investigations;

(3) In the context of criminal procedure, allow courts to consider circumstantial or indirect evidence of the illegal origin of assets, provide protection or ensure anonymity for witnesses who give evidence in money laundering cases, and subject to the fundamental principles of each country's domestic law, allow the appropriate authorities to consider granting immunity from prosecution, or reducing penalties, or providing protection, for accomplices who testify to illegal activities;

(4) Subject to the fundamental principles of each country's domestic law, reverse the burden of proof (use the concept of reverse onus) in respect of the confiscation of alleged proceeds of crime;

ABROGATES the following resolutions:

- AGN/52/RES/2
- AGN/52/RES/3
- AGN/53/RES/10
- AGN/57/RES/8
- AGN/58/RES/4
- AGN/61/RES/9
- AGN/62/RES/7
- AGN/63/RES/11
- AGN/64/RES/24.

AGN/66/RES/18

Subject: Money laundering: Statistics

RECOGNIZING that any assessment of the progress achieved in combating the laundering of funds derived from crime must be based on statistical data,

ALSO RECOGNIZING that the relevant statistics are not currently available,

The ICPO-Interpol General Assembly, meeting in New Delhi from 15th to 21st October 1997 at its 66th Session:

RECOMMENDS that member countries collect and circulate such data, particularly through Interpol channels;

ALSO RECOMMENDS that such data include, at least:

- the number of reports on suspicious transactions received from financial institutions and the number of such reports referred for further investigation (giving the outcome of the case where known),
- the number of convictions for money laundering and related charges,
- the number of cases where assets were seized and/or confiscated and the value of the assets forfeited.

* For the purposes of this resolution a concise working definition of money laundering is: "any act or attempt to conceal or disguise illegally obtained assets so that they appear to have originated from legitimate sources".

Conference Sidelights

by Miguel Chamorro



With the late arrival of our flight to New Delhi, we were denied our long-awaited pleasure of seeing the snow-covered peaks of the Himalayas, the world's highest mountain range that extends unbroken for 2,400 km and cuts the Indian sub-continent off from Central Asia.

Our destination was the capital of the immense country of India, host to Interpol's 66th General Assembly session, which was to bring together 538 delegates representing 136 member countries, 7 international organizations and 3 Sub-Bureaus.

It is often said that India is not a country, but a continent. This southern Asian republic is the world's seventh largest country, just after Australia in terms of surface area (3,287,263 sq. km), and second largest, after China, in terms of population (estimated at over 936 million). The density of

population is much greater than in regions of comparable size in Africa or the Americas.

India is truly a kaleidoscope of customs, languages, religions and cultures, and a land of contrasts with its highly differing ethnic groups. It is easy to distinguish the southerners, with their dark complexions, from the people from the Indus-Ganges Plain, who are taller and have a lighter complexion, or those from Kashmir, who have more Asian features.

To understand this mosaic of religions and cultures, we need to journey through the different periods of India's history, from the Indus Valley civilization to independence via the Aryan invasions, the Maurya and Gupta dynasties, the Muslim invasions and the Mogul Empire and, of course, British colonization.

For the delegates, India was first and foremost the land of yoga,

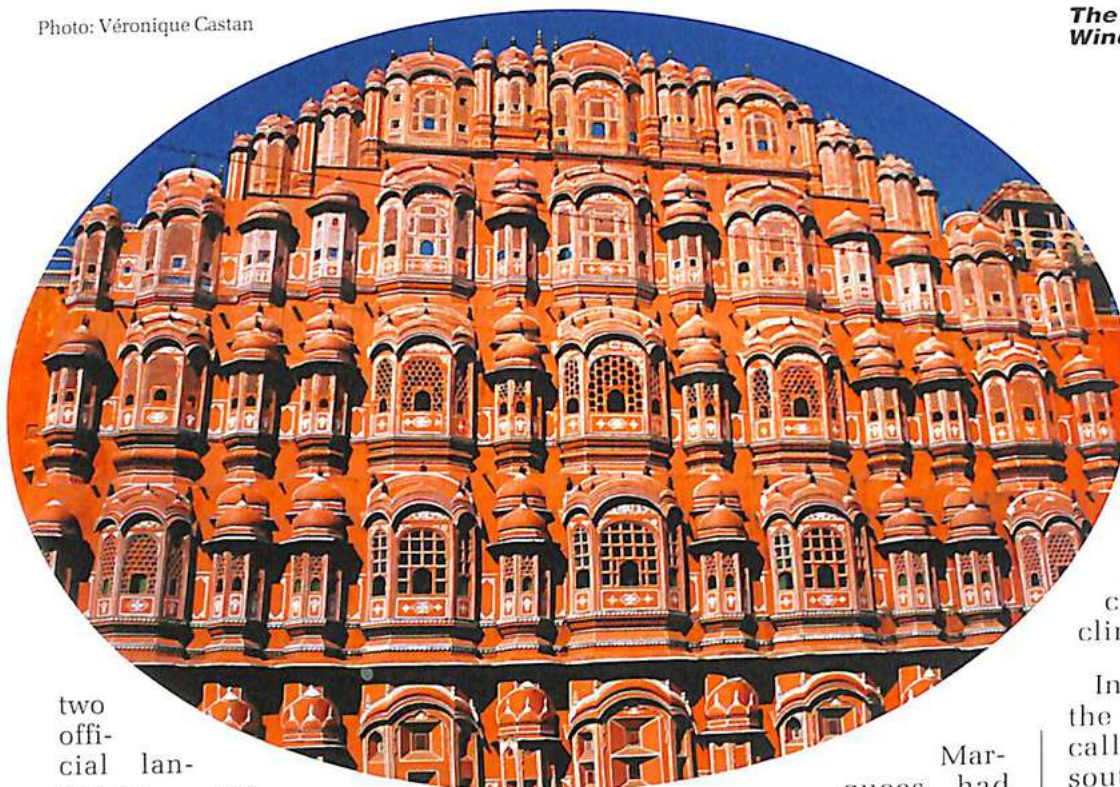
Hindu mysticism and the spiritual gurus. As visitors, they did not need to read through the countless texts — written in Sanskrit and a whole host of dialects — which the country has offered us over two thousand years to realize that, in India, religion permeates everything. Here, the devil is no more than a god from a lower caste.

Today, Hinduism is the dominant religion (85%), followed by Islam (11%), Christianity (2%), Sikhism (2%), Buddhism, Jainism and Parseeism.

India is a country steeped in tradition where socio-religious structures have remained virtually intact, despite four thousand years of existence and the many invasions and disasters it has endured.

Another feature of the country, which deserves special mention, is its linguistic diversity, with each of the over 1,600 ethnic groups having its own language. India's

Photo: Véronique Castan



The Hawa Mahal (Palace of the Winds) in Jaipur

On the Tuesday evening, we found ourselves in the Napoleon Room of the Meridien Hotel where representatives of Thomas Cook, the company responsible for part of the General Assembly logistics, were giving a cocktail party. The icy blast from the air-conditioning system in the room was in stark contrast to the outside temperature, and gave rise to a good deal of conversation about the Indian climate.

India is such a vast country that the climate in the north is radically different from that of the south. Generally, the country has a tropical climate (very hot on the plains, where temperatures can exceed 50°C in some central parts), with milder temperatures in the mountainous areas and distinct seasons — humid in summer and dry in winter. This influenced our Indian colleagues' choice of October for the General Assembly session in New Delhi, as the weather at that time of year is milder.

The aim of this cocktail party was to allow the two teams which would be working side-by-side throughout the session — the Indian organizing committee and the General Secretariat team — to get to know each other better: an aim which this informal gathering certainly helped to achieve.

The opening ceremony was on Wednesday, which promised to be a very busy day, so we left our hotels in good time to be able to keep to the timetable set by the Indian authorities.

The first day of the Assembly session was made all the more special by the presence at the opening of the ceremony of the Indian Prime Minister, various Ministers and high-ranking offi-

two official languages are English and Hindi.

The Executive Committee held its usual pre-Assembly meeting on Monday, 13th October, before the first delegates had even arrived in New Delhi. When the meeting had finished, the Director of the Central Bureau of Investigation hosted a dinner for the committee members in the gardens of his colonial-style residence, which we entered along a small gravel path illuminated by two rows of torches.

Our host was extremely entertaining throughout the evening and took the opportunity to introduce us to his family and his closest colleagues.

In keeping with tradition, the ladies were dressed in pretty, brightly coloured saris which, originally, would have been signs of the socio-economic status and religion of the wearers. Curiosity got the better of us and we had to ask about the significance of the red dot, or bindi, which ladies paint on their foreheads. In days gone by, it was a subtle, feminine sign that the lady was married, but today it is just another part of her makeup.

Marquees had been erected under the dense foliage of hundred-year old pipal trees, and this was where the drinks and other refreshments, and an excellent buffet were served.

We discovered how very varied and spicy Indian cooking can be during the few days we spent in the country.

While strolling in the gardens enjoying a cool drink, we went over to the Indian chef to see how he prepared and cooked the roti, the flat white bread we would be served with dinner.

During the evening, music was provided by the police band, which played tunes from different countries to hearty applause from the audience. The Latin-American rhythms even had some of the more daring among us singing along.

After thanking our hosts for their excellent hospitality during the evening, we crunched back along the gravel path towards the waiting coaches to the strains of the march from "The Bridge on the River Kwai".

cials, and their spouses and other guests.

The Conference Hall was decorated with an abundance of natural flowers, and the acoustics and light lent an atmosphere of rare splendour to the ceremony, which reached its high point when, after the usual speeches, the Prime Minister lit the incense burners on either side of the official rostrum and clouds of fragrant incense filled the hall.

The opening ceremony was followed by a press conference, and then by the plenary sessions which finished late in the afternoon, when we returned to our hotels.

We had an important appointment in the early evening: an official dinner hosted by the Vice-Governor of Delhi at the Qutb Minar tourist complex.

Flanking the entrance and all along the pathways leading to the esplanade, where dinner was served, camels superbly harnessed for the occasion and elephants with their foreheads, trunks and ears decorated with brightly-coloured floral motifs stood watching the guests.

Inside the complex — a magnificent example of Afghan architecture — over 600 guests took their seats at tables laid out over the uneven lawn. The meal, prepared for us under the marquees which had been erected all around, gave us the opportunity to taste the most delicious and most typical dishes of the different regions of the country.

The speech by the President of Interpol was followed by one given by the Vice-Governor, Mr Shri Tejendra Khanna, who welcomed us to Delhi and gave us an introduction to the more noteworthy aspects of Hindu philosophy. He illustrated his talks with specific examples of social and religious tolerance, and urged us to take advantage of our stay in India to immerse ourselves more



Photo: Muriel Millet

deeply in the life and culture of the country.

His speech over, the Vice-Governor withdrew, his fading silhouette replaced in a flood of light by a troupe of folk dancers accompanied by music, the sounds and strains of which were totally new to our ears. The police band struck up during the intervals and was justly rewarded with hearty applause at the end of the evening.

At the end of each day's morning session, the delegates were joined by their spouses and other guests at the conference centre for lunch, providing a pleasant moment for them to relax and socialize. Those who had spent their morning visiting cultural sites or shopping described what they had seen and learned of Indian culture, or showed off what they had bought, from expensive, beautiful silk carpets, to simple scarves, marble or wooden elephants or bronze statuettes, all excellent examples of India's rich craftsmanship.

On the Friday evening, the United States Delegation offered a cocktail party at its traditional "hospitality suite". The reception provided the occasion for those aspiring to a post on the Executive Committee — or even the post of Secretary General — to begin

The temple of Adinath in Ranakpur

"campaigning", since the Executive Committee had officially announced during the day's session that it would begin preparations for Mr Kendall's succession, as he would be leaving the Organization in 2000, as provided for in the Constitution.

There was a very early start to Saturday since the coaches taking us on the much-awaited trip to Agra would have to leave the hotels before 6.30 a.m. Still sleepy, we took our places near the windows, determined to miss nothing of the passing countryside.

As on previous days, the weather was summery and there was definitely a holiday atmosphere. Wearing comfortable clothes and carrying a good supply of sandwiches and cold drinks, we set out on what would be a long journey, lasting three hours each way.

Scarcely had we left the hotel, and still within the city limits, than we witnessed a group of people performing their morning ablutions in a lake in an enormous park, thus purifying body and soul.

On the way, we flicked through a guidebook to find out more about the places and monuments we hoped to visit. The book was abundantly illustrated with superb colour photographs and filled us with the urge to visit cities such as Jaipur, the "pink city", and its most emblematic landmark, the five-storey Hawa Mahal (Palace of the Winds), with its stunning pink stone façade and balconies with windows covered by blinds, a silent witness to lives and loves of days gone by.

The next photograph was of the royal family's summer residence, the Jal Mahal, set in the calm waters of a lake and reflecting peace and serenity.

We learned from reading a few pages about Indian architecture, sculpture and art that each religion had its influence: under Hinduism, for example, sculpture became an integral part of architecture.

Unfortunately, we would not have time to see the temples of the Chandela dynasty in Khajuraho, one of the country's main tourist attractions. Visitors come from all corners of the globe to see the friezes depicting hunting scenes, festivals and dance, as well as the carvings which are so remarkably expressive in terms of sensuality and eroticism they look as if they have been taken straight from the Kama Sutra.

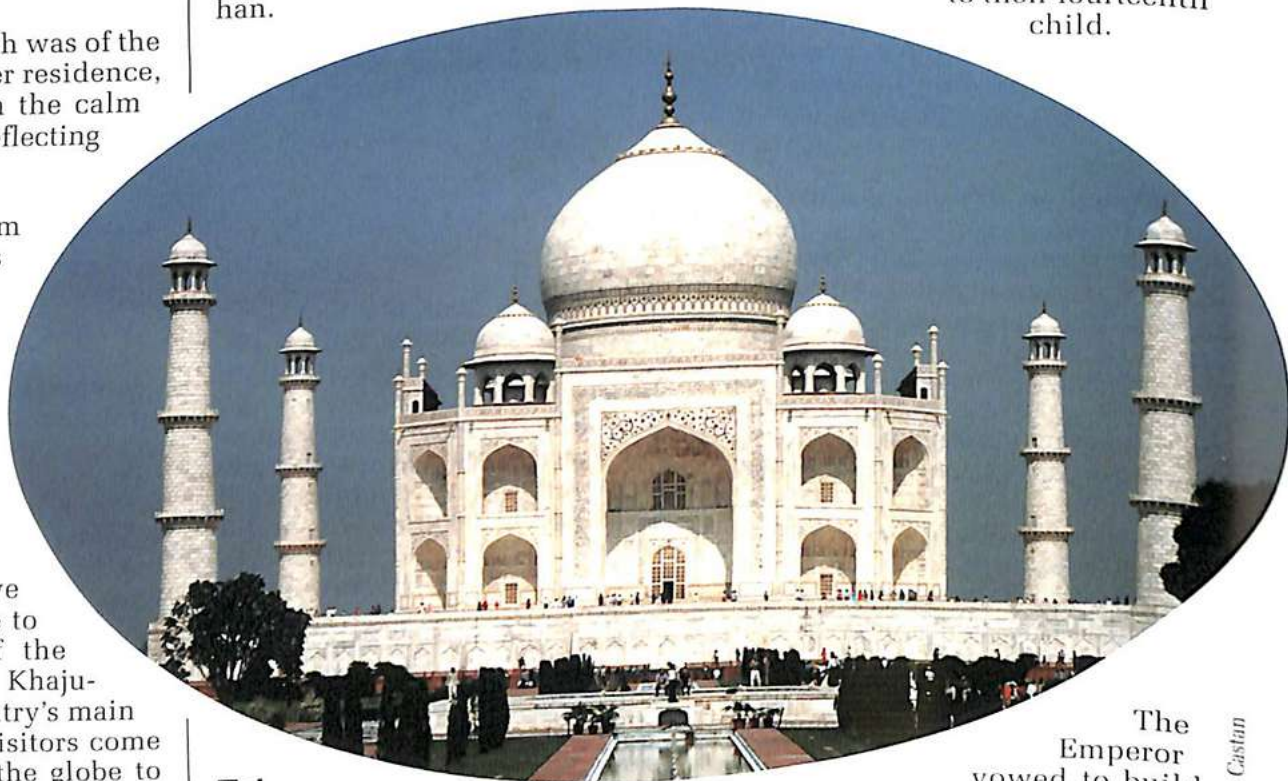
We did manage, however, to catch a glimpse of the most glorious monuments of Indian history and discover temples which can have no equal.

Agra

Over 200 km south of Delhi on the banks of the River Yamuna, Agra was the capital of Mogul India in the 16th and 17th centuries,

and today has a population of over one million. The city may have lost some of its former splendour, but travellers can still admire most of the major monuments of the time. However, beautiful detail outshines the overall size, and people come mainly to see the red fort, the mosque of Jama Masjid and the Taj Mahal, without realizing they are in the city which will forever be associated with the name of the man who ordered these treasures to be built: the Emperor Shah Jahan.

bazaar in the red fort of Agra. When he saw the ravishing Arjumanand Bano Begum it was love at first sight. Five years later, she became his wife and took the name Mumtaz Mahal. A faithful wife and an inseparable companion whom he adored, she even followed him on his military campaigns. But their happiness only lasted nineteen years as, three years after her husband acceded to the throne under the now famous name of Emperor Shah Jahan, the Empress died giving birth to their fourteenth child.



Taj Mahal

**The Taj Mahal
built in the
17th century**

We were aching to finally accomplish the main purpose of our visit to Agra: to see the Taj Mahal mausoleum, which the Indian poet Tagore described as a "tear on the face of eternity".

Even the most sceptical and disbelieving in matters of love and romanticism could not deny the evidence before them: the Taj Mahal is a veritable monument to Love.

It all began four hundred years ago when the young Prince Khurram was walking around the royal

The Emperor vowed to build a monument dedicated to the memory of his beloved wife which would astound the world.

Building began in 1631, the year Mumtaz Mahal died, and lasted 22 years. The Emperor demanded perfection, and chose the Iranian Isa Khan as the chief architect. He brought in the most renowned architects, decorators, jewellers and stonemasons from France and Italy. Over 20,000 people from India and elsewhere worked on the building which stands on the Yamuna River on the outskirts of Agra. Rising above its base of red sandstone and white Makrana marble, even

Photo: Véronique Castan

on the greyest days, it gives off an extraordinary light.

To add to its magnificence, the Emperor ordered the use of crystal and jade from China, diamonds from Golconda, turquoise from Tibet, and gold and precious stones from the royal treasure. Inside the Taj, beneath the central dome, are the cenotaphs of the Emperor and Empress, both in white marble with precious stones inlaid in a floral design and with fine calligraphy engravings.

Outside stand four stylized minarets, seemingly watching over their emperors for all time. The ensemble is surrounded by magnificent Mogul gardens with paths and watercourses in which the main building is reflected. The majesty of the architectural work and the exquisite refinement of the execution combine to give the Taj Mahal a unique beauty, all of which contributes to a feeling of peace and tranquillity which permeates this immaculate structure, considered to be one of the wonders of the world.

According to legend, a second monument — identical to the Taj Mahal but in black marble — was to have been built on the opposite bank of the river to house the Emperor's tomb, but the Emperor was deposed by his son Aurangzeb before the project could be implemented. Shah Jahan spent the rest of his days imprisoned in the fort of Agra a few kilometres away, from where he could see his beloved's tomb on the bank of the Yamuna.

Delhi

By 9 o'clock on Sunday morning, we were already settled in the coach which would take us on a tour of Delhi's main tourist attractions. Our guide, an erudite young man, gave us some information which he felt we ought to know before we began our trip, so that we could appreciate our visit around the city more. Delhi was formerly the capital for sev-

eral kings and emperors and today with its 8.5 million inhabitants, is the capital of modern India, its seat of government, and has the status of an autonomous territory.

It is only the country's third-largest city however, behind Bombay (12,571,330 inhabitants) and Calcutta (10,916,000 inhabitants), but is amazingly cosmopolitan, a blend of ancient and modern, eastern and western. It is thought that modern-day Delhi was built on the foundations of eight primitive cities, the oldest of them being Indraprastha, which was founded over 3,000 years ago.

Today, two very distinct parts of the city coexist, Old and New Delhi, and the contrast between the two is striking.

The old city is surrounded by walls and was the capital of the Muslim Empire of the 17th and 18th centuries, which explains why most of the Muslim architecture and large mosques are to be found in this area. It is a must for the photographer, with its narrow, crowded, noisy streets and the sacred cows roaming freely around and hogging the pavements.

New Delhi is resolutely modern, well planned and intersected by wide avenues which clearly mark out the commercial, residential and administrative districts.

Our tour began with a visit to the most representative area of New Delhi, where the government buildings are to be found. We got off the coaches in a huge square outside the circular bicameral parliament building (Sansad Bhavan) which offers visitors a beautiful panoramic view of all the public buildings. Well spaced out, along wide, well-maintained avenues, they add to the atmosphere of calm and serenity.

Next stop was the National Museum, with its rich collections from the Mauryan period (2nd and 3rd centuries BC) in terracotta, wood and bronze, and ancient manuscripts, miniatures, frescos and other ancient artefacts.

Before leaving the Vijay Chowk hill, on which the official buildings stand, we admired the view down the main avenue to the 43-metre-high arch called India Gate, which commemorates the great sacrifice made by the country dur-

A street in Jodhpur

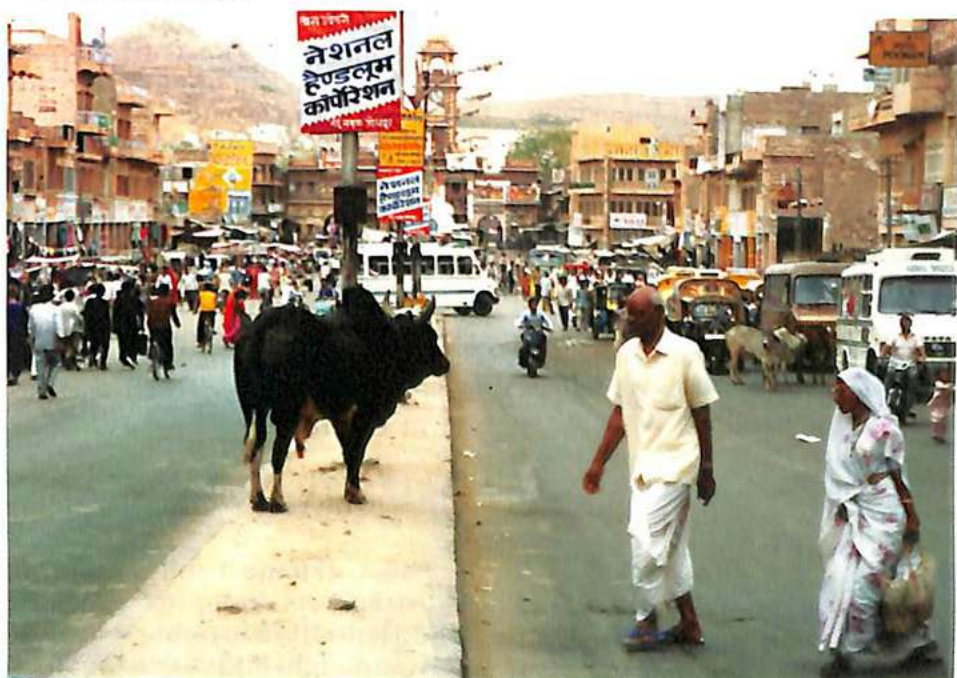


Photo: Muriel Millet

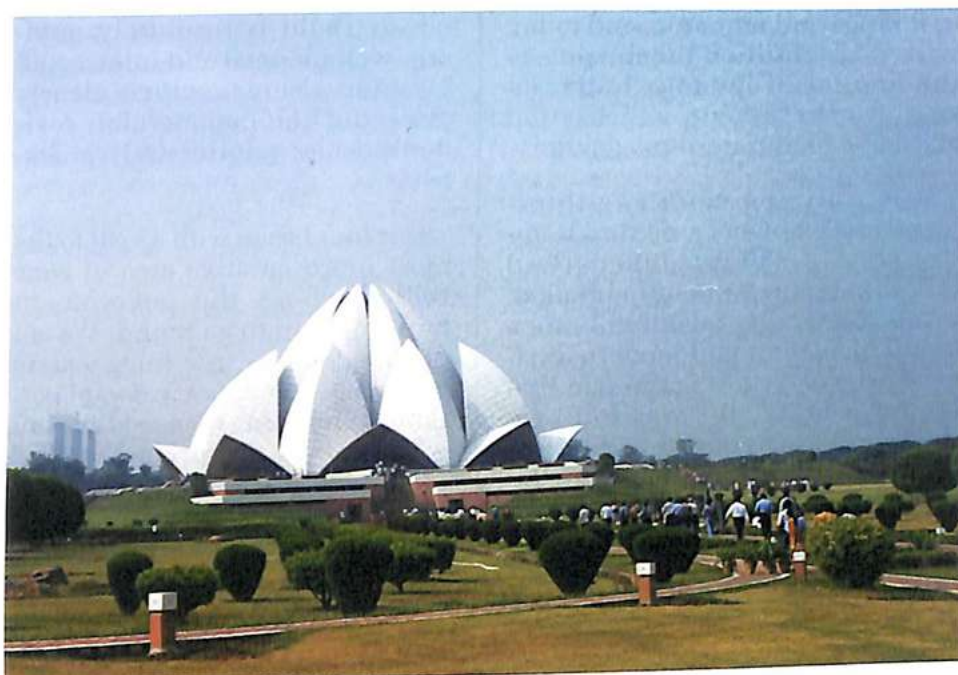


Photo: Véronique Castan

ing the First World War, during which over 70,000 soldiers died.

On our way to Old Delhi, we crossed Connaught Place, a vast square formed by three concentric circles crossed by eight streets called Radial Roads 1-8, each lined with white buildings housing travel agencies, hotels and shops, where everything can be found from everyday souvenirs to palm readers who can tell you your future.

We stopped by the banks of the Yamuna River to visit some monuments to the glory of a number of national heroes. The one to Mahatma Gandhi conjured up images of the not-so-distant past and Indian independence.

After crossing what remained of the ancient city of Ferozabad, the fifth of the eight cities on whose ruins Delhi was built, we came to Humayun's Tomb, the most beautiful example of Mogul funerary architecture in Delhi: built in the 16th century on the orders of Haji Begum for her husband, its elegant form is a precursor to that of the magnificent Taj Mahal in Agra. This graceful tomb, surrounded

by a large garden with ornamental lakes, canals and flowerbeds, is a perfect example of traditional Persian and Indian architecture. Although less imposing than the Taj Mahal, it is nevertheless remarkable.

Finally, we came to the awe-inspiring Qutb Minar minaret, possibly the city's most representative monument, situated just a few kilometres south of Delhi on the site of the first city of Indraprastha. The Qutb Minar was built to commemorate the Muslim victory over the armies of the last Hindu sovereign in 1193. It is an admirable example of Afghan architecture, measuring 72 metres high and 15 metres across the base, and has five floors each with a balcony, built over time by five different emperors. In 1803, an earthquake destroyed part of the tower, which was rebuilt in 1829.

Chandni Chowk

This is the most congested and most famous shopping street in Old Delhi. It is teeming with life day and night and offers the visi-

The Baha'i House of Worship shaped like a lotus flower

tor an amazing visual spectacle as well as a huge variety of things to buy, such as carpets, jewellery, articles in leather, wood and silk, and all at very reasonable prices.

The Red Fort

In April 1639, the Mogul Emperor Shah Jahan started the construction of Shahjahanabad — the seventh city to be built on the site of present-day Delhi — which reflects the full grandeur of the Empire at the time.

The Lal Qila (Red Fort), built in 1640, is an enormous Mogul-style fort which owes its name to the colour of the sandstone used for its construction. Shah Jahan had it built as a fort and citadel-palace. Standing between the city and the River Yamuna, Delhi's Red Fort is a copy of the one in Agra, in which the Emperor ended his days after having been dethroned by his son.

The Red Fort encloses several marble palaces, one of which, the Diwan-I-Khas (the Hall of Private Audiences), contained the famous "Peacock Throne", until Shah Nadir pillaged the place in 1793 and took it to Iran. The solid gold throne has figures of peacocks standing behind it, which were richly inlaid with precious stones of different colours, including a magnificent parrot carved out of a single emerald. The only thing that now remains of all the Hall's treasures is the white marble pedestal on which the missing throne used to stand. However, as a sign of how magical the place must have been, it is still possible to read the Persian couplet in-



Left: Ritual ancestral dances performed by a troupe from the national police, during the reception hosted by the Director of the Central Bureau of Investigation.

Right: A ritual dance performed at the reception hosted by the Vice-Governor of Delhi.

scribed on the walls: "If there is a paradise on earth, it is this, it is this, it is this".

Despite being stripped of its treasures, the Red Fort is still impressive for the luxury of its rooms and the beauty of its decorations, which give a clue as to the splendour of the time. Each evening there is a sound and light show in the gardens of the citadel relating events of India's history.

We left the fort through these gardens to go to see the last major work of Shah Jahan: the Jama Masjid.

Jama Masjid

This is the largest mosque in the old city, and probably in the whole of India. Construction began in 1644 and was completed in 1658. It has three main gateways, a tower at each angle, and two minarets standing 40 metres high and built of alternating red sandstone and white marble. The

mosque's vast courtyard can hold 25,000 people.

Before returning to the hotels, we made one final detour. The last but by no means the least interesting, this visit would be different from any we had made so far.

Baha'i House of Worship

Just after we had passed the Jantar Mantar observatory, an impressive group of red buildings arranged around an immense sundial, illustrating the importance of astronomy in 18th-century India, we spotted in the distance what looked rather like a white golf ball on a vast green.

But as the coach drew nearer, the blurred white shape gradually took on the form of a delicate lotus flower with its lower petals

open, its middle petals half-open and its upper petals modestly folded in, as if wishing to protect the spirit which lives inside, or to allow only what is spiritual to enter from this world.

This immaculate structure stands in the middle of a vast expanse of gardens and ornamental lakes, intersected by paths which all converge on it. Known as the House of Worship, it welcomes men and women of all faiths, and its grandeur and the purity of its form inspire meditation and prayer. This restful visit concluded our day out and we returned to our hotels tired, but extremely satisfied.

In the evening, the Director of the Central Bureau of Investigation invited the delegates to a highly colourful show of national music and dancing in the rooms of the luxurious Ashok Hotel.

This was followed by a superb buffet served by the poolside in the hotel gardens. Before retiring

