



Center for Strategic & International Studies
Washington, DC

Convergence of Organized Crime and Terrorism

**A Dialogue with Ronald Kenneth Noble
Secretary General of Interpol**

July 17, 2003

Interpol Secretary General Ronald Noble visited CSIS on July 17, 2003 to conduct a breakfast meeting sponsored by the Transnational Threats Initiative (TNT). Interpol is based in Lyon, France and counts 181 member countries. Notably absent is North Korea, along with Turkmenistan and Tajikistan. Interpol's annual budget is \$31 million with headquarters staff numbering 400 people from 60 nations. At CSIS Mr. Noble spoke to various representatives of think tanks, private sector firms, the US government, and foreign embassies. Earlier in the week he spoke to the American Bar Association's Standing Committee on Law and National Security and testified before the House International Relations Committee on the threat of intellectual property crime (IPC) and its connection to terrorism.

Mr. Noble gave a brief overview of Interpol and its interaction with other law enforcement agencies. He then spoke about the threat of bio-terrorism, placing particular emphasis on educating law enforcement and intelligence communities on what is the most serious potential terrorist threat to society. Mr. Noble also addressed the convergence of organized crime and terrorism, specifically IPC and terrorist financing. IPC is defined as the counterfeiting or pirating of goods for sale where the consent of the rights holder has not been obtained. Mr. Noble warned that IPC is becoming a preferred method of funding for many terrorist groups as it is a low risk/high return crime and stated that it is not a victimless crime. Groups such as the IRA and the Kosovo Liberation Army are two notable examples of this phenomenon. Mr. Noble emphasized the importance of information sharing among law enforcement agencies as well as tracing the proceeds of counterfeiting, rather than simply seizing the goods and arresting those involved.