

STRATEGIC AND CORPORATIVE PRIORITIES IN THE ACTIVITY OF THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF INTERPOL – CRIMINAL POLICE

Vladimir STERPU¹

¹Researcher, Institute of Legal and Political Researches, Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Moldova
Corresponding author: vladimir.sterpu@gmail.com

Abstract

A substantial contribution to strengthening international security is provided by the International Criminal Police Organization Interpol, which is developing a number of strategic and corporate priorities oriented to fight crime but which affect the economic and social foundations of human social life. In the context of the activities of international organizations, Interpol has proved highly effective in ensuring security cooperation worldwide.

Keywords: *international organizations, the International Criminal Police Organization Interpol. Strategic priorities, corporate priorities, international crime.*

As observed, the XXth century brought about new challenges, determined mainly by the globalization processes we are all facing. Modern world has been never so interdependent and, at the same time, so fragile. Under the new conditions manifested at global level, the international organizations appear as an opportunity, their role in the society becoming more and more important. Their main concerns refer to assuring and safeguarding collective and financial peace and security, as well as to dealing with the social and humanitarian aspects requiring prompt solutioning.

In recent years, an immense number of studies has been devoted to the role that different types of international organizations are expected to play, to the norms, rules and various aspects of global management. Researches studying the elements of global and regional administration focus on the notions of legality, coordination and subordination, and efficiency.

By now, the international organizations represent more than an instrument to be applied on interstatal level. The innovative vision is that their bureaucracy has already gained the right of establishing the rules of the game and of

exercising their power. Nevertheless, there appears the risk that such international administrations should be exclusively concerned with their own rules, which are not reflecting the reality, are inefficient and alter the results. There already exist different interpretations on certain activities of the international organizations, such as, for example, the intervention of the International Monetary Fund in national economies, the incompetency of the UNO subdivisions in elaborating recommendations and in rapidly intervening and solving the crises manifested at international level. The influence of such international organizations should not be limited to the expertise they have accumulated, it should also have the capacity to determine the issues, to discuss them promptly and to provide the intellectual technologies for solving them. (Barnett & Finnemore, 2004)

The international organizations are more and more present within the global system, which imposes a careful analysis of their interests and objectives. Once known that they are created and backed up by the economically developed countries, it goes without saying that lobby is made in favour of their interests on international level. As a result, the increased dynamics of global bureaucracy and its impact upon democratic processes are more and more frequently approached in theoretical-empiric investigations. (Karns & Mingst, 2009)

At the same time, the international organizations and global management appear as a fragmented and dispersed reality, which should be viewed as a whole for understanding the mechanism of its functioning.

The evolution and development of INTERPOL - the International Organization of Criminal Police - appears as an illustrative example of a common effort of the international community, the result of an insistent and prolonged activity meant at successfully facing the challenges of our times.

At present, INTERPOL is confronted with the major dangers and menaces of the epoch. The General Secretary of Interpol, Ronald K. Noble, considers that: "the organization has directly faced all these challenges due to the opportunities offered by its global partnership and common commitment of all its members of making the world a safer place to live in."

According to the annual Interpol Report 2013, the 190 Central National Offices working in each member country form the backbone of the global Interpol network, which links together the national policy organs. Together with the 6 regional departments situated in Argentina, Camerun, Ivory Coast, El Salvador, Kenya and Zimbabwe, and with the liason office from Thailand and its representative structures at the United Nations in New York and at the European Union in Brussels, respectively, the INTERPOL reinforces its activity at worldwide level. [3, p.38]

An ample set of strategic and corporative priorities show the organization system of all INTERPOL activities, as synthesized in the annual Interpol Report 2013. Among these new objectives, special mention should be made of:

Interpol Foundation for a safer world. To benefit from the total support of partners and to encourage public involvement in issues of global safety, the Executive Committe has unanimously approved creation of the Interpol Foundation for a safer world, Mr. Elias Murr, ex-Viceprime-minister, Minister of Home Affairs and Minister of Defense of Liban being elected as its president. The foundation aims at promoting the activities of Interpol by combating organized cross-border crime, by developing research activities and specific programs for crime combat, organizing local campaigns for increasing public involvement on international safety and by establishing partnerships with similar entities, organizations and structures.

An essential objective of the foundation is that of bringing together partners from the public and

private sector, interested in attaining the main objective of Interpol: that of making the world a safer place. By the involvement of all structures interested in fighting against cross-boredr criminality, the foundation aims at developing a global network of supporters, collaborating and sharing all available resources, information and experience. It will also mobilize the public support for the initiatives of Interpol and of its partners, granting to all citizens an active part in global safety. (INTERPOL, 2013, p.16)

The Turn Back Crime Campaign is meant at making conscious and at involving the public opinion at worldwide level, highlighting the dangers represented by organized criminality and their impact upon the everyday life of citizens. The campaign is meant at educating and correctly orienting the public, for not supporting - contrary to their wishes - the networks of cross-border organized crime and the unexpected manner in which they may affect our daily activities.

Buying of a counterfeit product in the street, at a much lower price than that of a genuine one, might seem a profitable business, however such merchandise might be sold by a criminal group, which will use the money for financing criminal activities, e.g. traffic of humans or drugs. Also, buying of cheap electronic productse might affect our health, as they had not been subjected to safety tests.

The Turn Back Crime campaign will focus on the utilization of social networks for increasing awareness towards such hidden dangers and for offering advices for the way in which people can remain safe and not involved - without knowing it - in organized crime.

By means of YouTube, Twitter, Facebook and other media, the campaign provides safety recommendations and encourages the public, the companies and the governments to fight together against organized crime. A site of the campaign displays the practical measures people can take for protecting themselves, whilst the police forces from all over the world will disseminate such information in their communities. (INTERPOL, 2013, p.18)

Integrity in sporting activities. Two important international conferences, organized in Rome - Italy, and Kuala Lumpur - Malaysia, invited

about 350 representatives from 102 countries to debate the threatenings caused by the competitions with pre-established results and the modalities for their prevention and investigation. National and regional workshops devoted to such aspects have been organized in Algeria, Austria, Brasil, China, Columbia, Japan, Russia, Slovenia, South Africa, Turkey, Ukraine and USA, and special meetings for instructing the sportsmen, referees and police officers were held in Austria, South Africa, Great Britain and Zimbabwe. All in all, 590 participants from all over the world have been informed and instructed on such topics.

The practice of faking the result of a sporting competition appears as a severe threat for the integrity of all sporting activities. To intensify the collaboration of policemen on international level during the struggle against organized criminal networks involved in illegal wagers, the Interpol mandate of the Working Group for the identification of fake matches has been extended for better supporting any cross-border investigation. As a network of specialized inquirers, the group provides a forum for exchange of information – in real time – on faked matches, which assures better cooperation at all levels. (INTERPOL, 2013, p.26)

Environmental criminality. An initiative taken at worldwide level for detecting and combating criminality in fish trade was the Interpol project entitled *Scale*, launched in 2013 by several partners, among which the Norwegian Agency for development and cooperation. The project coordinates operations against illegal fishing, attempting at bringing together the national and regional efforts undertaken for the application of the legislation in force, along with the struggle against fishing infringements. The activities include gathering and analysis of information regarding all types of offences related to illegal fishing.

The Interpol created a group of investigative assistance in several countries of East Africa for supporting the current inquires related to the ivory traffic in the region. For obtaining and analyzing the information related to important ivory captures, the Interpol delievers assistance in the regions in which criminal networks active in Africa, Asia and Middle East had been identified.

Interpol, together with its partners all over the world, produced a guide for the application of the laws in relation with the potential of delinquents of exploiting the markets of carbon l transactions at worldwide level. The Interpol guide on such transactions analyzes the industrial areas which may be manipulated by offenders, through fraud, licences, delapidation, money laundering and informatic criminality. It also evaluates the present-day vulnerabilities of the carbon market, offering information for supporting the national authorities in taking the most adequate measures and policies. (INTERPOL, 2013, p.29)

Five Interpol operations against environemntal criminality referred to the following types of criminal activities which jeopardize our plannet: traffic of ivory, illegal forest exploitation and trades with tigers and other animals in danger of being extincted. Operation *Wendi* led to the confiscation of almost 4,000 ivory products and 50 elephant tusks, as well as to 60 arrestings, whereas operation *Lead* confiscated illegally cut wood of about 40 million dolars in Costa Rica and Venezuela, which means about 19,500 wood trucks. (INTERPOL, 2013, p.41)

Develompent of a strategy for envoronmental criminality combat. The environmental program developed by Interpol in cooperation with the United Nations permitted organization of the first meeting of the Executive Committee, meant at sanctioning and applying the environmental norms established in Nairobi, in November, the main scope had in view being the development of a common international strategy for combating environmental offences in all their forms, along with increasing the awareness upon the dangers represented by this type of criminality. The main topic discussed in common by agencies and intergovernmental organizations referred to the strict application of the laws in force, and to the practical development of the operations necessary for the accomplishment of such objectives. (INTERPOL, 2013, p.42)

The strategic and corporative priorities for combating international criminality, promoted by Interpol, are meant at organizing and orienting the international cooperation of all authorized structures. The scope of the organization is of contributing to an international cooperation of

the police, even in the absence of diplomatic relations established between the involved countries. Another observation to be made refers to the quantitative and qualitative development of the available investigation instruments, special stress being laid on technological development, establishment of partnerships in all sectors, improved training programs and the ability to offer services to all the 190 member states when confronted with any type of challenge.

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