



KFLMUN'26

*Organised by Kocaeli Science High
School*

INTERPOL

Study Guide

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1. Letter from Secretariat

Dear Participants, welcome to KFLMUN'26!

It is our pleasure to welcome you all to our conference. No matter your role in this conference, as the executive team, we wish you an amazing experience in our conference. As much as we hope to have a great time socializing, we also look forward to finding great solutions regarding the news that we all see everyday.

As we all know, the future does not look pleasant for our world. Even though we say the world wars are behind us, we still are struggling to find peace in the globe that we live in and it is sad to say that we are on the luckier side at the moment. That is why we want to raise awareness about these ongoing wars. We also hope to protect the people and also us, because who knows what's next?

In this conference, our goal is to turn our words and thoughts to actions for those who are less fortunate and for those that sacrifice their lives to help others. We will work as a team to support our friends, brothers and sisters who are in need of hope and help.

While we continue on with our lives, the world is becoming a war zone. Around the world, INTERPOL plays a critical role at world peace, yet this system is being challenged increasingly. One of the most critical concerns is the misuse of INTERPOL Red Notices, which risks undermining the reputation of international law enforcement mechanisms. They also threaten the principle of neutrality and justice which INTERPOL is known for. We will debate on how to solve this issue, find solutions to potentially prevent countries' politicians from exploiting this, and much more.

We will also discuss another threat that the international community faces: state-sponsored transnational criminal networks. These networks operate across borders, exploiting weaker regulations by using advanced technologies. From financial crimes to cybercrime and organized trafficking operations, their activities shake the economies and societies in which they have touched upon during the operations. We will touch upon these strategies, how they can be prevented and much more—which will be available further into the study guide.

We expect productive ideas from you, our fellow delegates, on both issues.

While we prepare for KFLMUN'26 as the executive team, your chairboard will give the information as the time ticks. And if you have any further questions, feel free to check our contact page or e-mail me through ecrenakbas@gmail.com. Feel free to ask anything that is on your mind, we are here for you

2. Letter from the Chairboard

Distinguished Delegates,

First of all we would like to welcome you all to KFLMUN'26. And specifically, welcome to the INTERPOL committee. As your chairboard we are confident that we all are going to have a wonderful experience while trying to solve global problems of the modern era.

INTERPOL serves a vital role in international law enforcement cooperation, operating at the intersection of global security, legal frameworks, and mutual trust among states.

Throughout this committee, delegates will be expected to engage with two pressing agendas: the abuse of INTERPOL Red Notices for political purposes, and the growing influence of state-sponsored transnational criminal networks. Both topics highlight the delicate balance between safeguarding international security and upholding fundamental human rights, as well as the tensions that emerge when national interests intersect with global responsibilities.

These issues demand more than surface level analysis. Delegates must be prepared to question existing structures, evaluate their shortcomings, and propose solutions that are not only innovative, but also realistic and implementable within the framework of international cooperation. The ability to navigate these complexities with clarity, precision, and strategic awareness will be essential.

We strongly encourage all delegates to come well-prepared, to engage actively in both moderated and unmoderated sessions, and to contribute constructively to the development of comprehensive resolutions. And last but not least, we wish you a great time for these 3 days.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to ask us.

Best regards,
The Chairboard

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3. Key Terms

Justice: fairness in the way people are dealt with

Database: information stored in a computer in an organized structure so that it can be searched in different ways.

Fugitive: someone who is escaping or hiding from the police or from a dangerous situation.

Law Enforcement: the activity of making certain that the laws of an area are obeyed.

Constitution: the set of political principles by which a state or organization is governed, especially in relation to the rights of the people it governs.

Sui generis: not like anyone or anything else

Corruption: illegal, bad, or dishonest behaviour, especially by people in positions of power

Malicious: intended to harm or upset other people

Sovereignty: the power of a country to control its own government

4. INTERPOL (International Criminal Police Organization)

a. What is INTERPOL?

The International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) is an inter-governmental organization which has 196 member countries. INTERPOL helps police in all of the member countries to work together to make the world a safer place. To do this, INTERPOL enables them to share and access data on crimes and criminals, and they offer a range of technical and operational support.

INTERPOL connects all countries via a communications system called I-24/7. Countries use this secure network to contact each other. It also allows the countries to access databases and services in real-time, from both central and remote locations. INTERPOL also coordinates networks of police and experts in different crime areas, who come together through working groups and at conferences to share experiences and ideas.

INTERPOL manages police databases with information on crimes and criminals (from names and fingerprints to stolen passports), accessible in real-time to countries. INTERPOL offers investigative support such as forensics, analysis, and assistance in locating fugitives around the world. Training is an important part of what INTERPOL does in many areas so that officials know how to work efficiently with their services. This expertise supports national efforts in combating crimes across four global areas they consider the most pressing today: terrorism; cybercrime; organized crime; and financial crime and anti-corruption.

Officials working in each specialized crime area run a variety of different activities alongside member countries. This can be investigative support, field operations, training and networking. Importantly, since crimes evolve, INTERPOL keeps an eye on the future through research and development in international crime and trends.

5. Introduction to Red Notices

a. What is the INTERPOL Red Notice

A Red Notice is a request to law enforcement worldwide to locate and provisionally arrest a person pending extradition, surrender, or similar legal action. It is based on an arrest warrant or court order issued by the judicial authorities in the requesting country. Member countries apply their own laws in deciding whether to arrest a person.

It contains two main types of information:

- Information to identify the wanted person, such as their name, date of birth, nationality, hair and eye colour, photographs and fingerprints if available.
- Information related to the crime they are wanted for, which can typically be murder, rape, child abuse or armed robbery.

Red Notices are published by INTERPOL at the request of a member country, and must comply with INTERPOL's Constitution and Rules. They are important, because they are used to simultaneously alert police in all member countries about internationally wanted fugitives.

Red Notices help bring fugitives to justice, sometimes many years after the original crime was committed.

 What is an INTERPOL Red Notice?

b. The Subjects of Red Notices and Conditions for Publication

Red Notices are issued for fugitives wanted either for prosecution or to serve a sentence in relation to serious ordinary law crimes such as murder, rape and fraud. This follows criminal proceedings in the country issuing the request. This is not always the home country of the individual.

When a person is sought for prosecution, it means the person has not been convicted and should be considered innocent until proven guilty. A person sought to serve a sentence means that this person has been found guilty by a court in the country that requested the publication of the Red Notice.

Article 83 of INTERPOL's Rules on the Processing of Data sets out the specific conditions for the publication of Red Notices.

Red Notices may be published only if the offence concerned is a serious ordinary-law crime. They may not be published for the following categories:

- offences that raise controversial issues in some countries relating to behavioural or cultural norms. For example, prostitution or offences related to damaging honour;
- offences relating to family/private matters. For example adultery, bigamy/polygamy or homosexual acts;
- offences originating from a violation of laws or regulations of an administrative nature or deriving from private disputes, unless the criminal activity is aimed at facilitating a serious crime or is suspected of being connected to organized crime. For example, traffic violations, defamation, or issuing unfunded cheques (unless there was a fraudulent or malicious intent at the time the cheque was issued).

INTERPOL's Rules on the Processing of Data:

https://www.interpol.int/content/download/5694/file/26%20E%20RulesProcessingData_RPD.pdf

6. Agenda Item 1: The abuse of INTERPOL Red Notices for political purposes

a. Constitution of the ICPO-INTERPOL

Adopted in 1956, the Constitution is INTERPOL's main legal instrument. It establishes the fundamental rules and principles by which the Organization operates. It defines the structure and roles of each INTERPOL body together with their mandate, which is:

- To ensure and promote the widest possible mutual assistance between all criminal police authorities within the limits of the laws existing in the different countries and in the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- To establish and develop all institutions likely to contribute effectively to the prevention and suppression of ordinary law crimes.

Four main principles established by the Constitution govern INTERPOL's action in the execution of their mandate: National sovereignty; Respect for Human Rights; Neutrality; and Constant and active cooperation.

“It is strictly forbidden for the Organization to undertake any intervention or activities of a political, military, religious or racial character.”

~Article 3 of INTERPOL's Constitution

Constitution of the ICPO-INTERPOL:

https://www.interpol.int/content/download/590/file/01%20E%20Constitution_2024.pdf

b. Historical Background on the Topic

INTERPOL was established in 1923; with the aim of facilitating international cooperation against crime, and from its inception it adopted the principle of refraining from involvement in offenses that are political, military, religious, or racial in nature. This principle was meant to prevent the organization from being used by states as a tool of political repression. Nevertheless, during the Cold War era, especially under authoritarian regimes, attempts were made to misuse the Red Notice system to target dissidents, labeling political exiles as ordinary criminals and requesting their international pursuit became some of the earliest and most recognizable examples of abuse. In the 1990s, as globalization increased and cross-border mobility expanded, the number of Red Notice requests grew, and with that growth came rising concerns that some governments were using the system to pursue critical journalists, activists, and business figures under politically motivated charges. The 2010s marked the height of these criticisms; international scholarship and human rights reports frequently cited politically questionable requests originating from countries such as Russia, Turkey, China, and Iran.

Allegations that individuals were targeted simply for being government critics or members of opposition groups fueled some of the most intense debates over INTERPOL's neutrality. In response to increasing pressure, INTERPOL introduced a series of reforms beginning in 2015; most notably, it strengthened the authority of its independent review body, the Commission for the Control of INTERPOL's Files (CCF), enabling faster dismissal of Red Notices deemed to have political characteristics. In 2017, transparency measures were expanded, pre-screening filters were tightened, and new rules were implemented to help identify politically motivated requests submitted by member states.

During the 2020s, digital screening systems and risk-based filtering tools were employed to further enhance the early detection of politically driven submissions. Despite these reforms, some states continue to issue requests aimed at dissidents, and even individuals whose notices have already been deleted sometimes face difficulties at border crossings due to residual data.

Human rights organizations argue that INTERPOL still needs stronger enforcement mechanisms against member states that misuse the system. Thus, although the organization has significantly reinforced its commitment to political neutrality, concerns about the abuse of Red Notices for political purposes persist and remain an active topic in international legal and policy discussions.

c. Deeper into the Topic

The use of Interpol's notice system against critics and opponents of autocracies has drawn growing public attention in recent years. The European Parliament has also debated the issue of Red Notices and highlighted the abuse by some member countries of INTERPOL's Notice System in violation of international standards of human rights. The use of INTERPOL against political dissidents represents an important and understudied aspect of today's globalized autocracy. Some authoritarian countries are known to issue Red Notices through the Interpol system in pursuit of their political enemies abroad. **There are currently no penalties for countries that misuse the system.** Because there are no penalties, abusing Red Notices is seen as "ok." if we look through the windows of authoritarian politicians. A senior research fellow at the Heritage Foundation, Theodore Bromund fears that abuse of the system may have also increased as authoritarian regimes have learned they can use it to disrupt the lives of dissidents and debtors outside of their borders, even if they're not ultimately extradited.

The increasing guilt rates in countries is not the main reason behind this increase, says the specialists. With rising social and political problems and wide spreading anti-democratic regimes in the world, fighting against crimes and criminals begin to change. In recent years, human rights and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), such as the Open Dialog Foundation, Fair Trials, and Centre for Peace Studies, regularly report on abuse of Red Notices against opposition politicians, journalists, human rights activists and businessmen.

Additionally, some countries are criticized for producing fake crimes against their own people and using this mechanism to destroy political rivals. If the crimes against people are not real, INTERPOL's own authority will be undermined while innocent people will be detained for months on end and separated from their families, reputations destroyed and lives ruined. When INTERPOL's channels are being misused by countries to track down political refugees or to silence peaceful campaigners, at the same time this will be unlawful and against international human rights.

Article 3 of INTERPOL's Constitution provides; "It is strictly forbidden for the Organization to undertake any intervention or activities of a political, military, religious or racial character." This article is supposed to guarantee INTERPOL's neutrality and prevent it from being used by repressive regimes to persecute their political opponents. But it is increasingly being subverted by autocratic regimes seeking to pursue their exiled political opponents.

The number of Red Notices increased tenfold in the past fifteen years. The Constitution's most-cited portions are its Article 2, which requires that international police cooperation be conducted within the "spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights," and is committed to fighting "ordinary law crimes." But over time, the definition of "ordinary law crimes" has been stretched to include acts normally seen as falling outside this domain. Bowing to pressure from certain members in 1984, INTERPOL passed two resolutions that brought under its mandate "violent crime commonly referred to as terrorism".

All INTERPOL activities, including all communications over its network, must respect its Constitution and subsidiary rules adopted by the General Assembly, including its “Rules on the Processing of Data” (RPD). The purpose of the Constitution and the subsidiary rules is to ensure that INTERPOL is used only against “ordinary-law crime,” and is not in any way involved in politics, or for purposes of a political, and therefore illegitimate, persecution. Although INTERPOL clearly states that it does not take political sides and that Red Notices are not tantamount to guilty verdicts against those targeted, authoritarian regimes consistently use the presence of dissidents on INTERPOL lists as proof of an international consensus regarding their guilt.

In reports the states such as Russia, China, Egypt, UAE, Indonesia, Bahrain, Belarus, Venezuela, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Iran are presented as abusers of INTERPOL’s notice system to persecute dissidents. On the other hand, the use of INTERPOL to pursue critics abroad is not confined only to large or wealthy authoritarian states. Despite accounting for just 0.12 percent of the world’s population, Tajikistan has issued 2,528 Red Notices, or 2.3 percent of the total in circulation, including one against Muhiddin Kabiri, the leader of the country’s main opposition party . In short, if authoritarianism has gone global, then INTERPOL is one of a number of organizations that have facilitated this move. For instance, the other name is Dolkun Isa, a renowned activist and member of the World Uyghur Congress. After fleeing China, Mr. Isa has been subject to a Chinese Red Notice abuse since 2003. The resulting travel restrictions have hobbled his advocacy work to promote Uyghur self-determination. It is possible to mention various names from different countries in many reports.

Red Notices have a serious negative impact on the human rights of innocent persons, including the rights to liberty and security and the right to a fair trial. People accused by authoritarian states cannot successfully challenge Red Notices before any national or international courts. Such jurisdictional immunity can only be justified to the extent that an internal appeals mechanism provides an effective remedy within the meaning of applicable human rights standards. INTERPOL is not accountable to an international court, being a sui generis organization. INTERPOL has no executive powers of its own and depends on information of its members. The use of it against political dissidents represents an important and understudied aspect of today’s globalized autocracy (Diamond et al, 2016: 24). Attempts by autocrats to pursue their domestic political opponents through INTERPOL form part of this broader process of authoritarianism going global.

INTERPOL Public Red Notices:

<https://www.interpol.int/How-we-work/Notices/Red-Notices/View-Red-Notices>

7. Introduction to State-Sponsored Transnational Criminal Networks

State-sponsored transnational criminal networks are criminal organizations that operate across national borders while receiving direct or indirect support from a government. This support can include funding, intelligence, technology, safe territory, or legal protection, which allows the network to carry out activities such as cybercrime, smuggling, sanctions evasion, or illicit finance with greater scale and reduced risk. Unlike ordinary criminal groups, these networks function as extensions of state power, enabling governments -including countries like Russia, China, North Korea, and Iran- to influence global politics, gather intelligence, or generate revenue while maintaining plausible deniability. Their blend of state resources and criminal operations makes them especially difficult for the international community to detect, disrupt, and hold accountable.

Members of organized crime groups often share a common link, for example geographical, ethnic or even blood ties.

The roots of transnational criminal activity can be traced back to the late 20th century, when globalization was the priority of developing member states, increased international trade and advancements in transportation enabled criminal organizations to expand beyond national borders. During the Cold War, certain forms of state involvement in illicit activities were seen, as intelligence agencies and governments occasionally engaged in or tolerated illegal operations to serve strategic interests. However, the scale and complexity of such networks significantly increased after the 1990's, with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of new economic and political systems that created opportunities for organized crime. In the 21st century, the rapid development of digital technologies and the rise of the internet further transformed transnational crime, allowing networks to operate more efficiently through cybercrime, encrypted communication, and global financial systems. At the same time, allegations of state-sponsored or state-tolerated criminal activities became more visible, particularly in areas such as cyberattacks, illicit trafficking, and money laundering. This evolution has posed significant challenges to international organizations like INTERPOL, which rely on cooperation between member states that may have conflicting interests.

Today, combating state-sponsored transnational criminal networks remains a critical issue, as these networks continue to adapt to technological advancements and exploit gaps in international law enforcement, making coordinated global responses increasingly necessary.

8. Agenda Item 2: Combating State-Sponsored transnational criminal networks

State sponsored transnational criminal networks are one of the most complex and rising challenges in the modern day. These networks operate across national borders and are often involved in activities such as cybercrime, human trafficking, drug smuggling and money laundering. What separates them from traditional criminal networks is the level of support and protection provided from state actors, whether through direct involvement, deliberate negligence or strategic interest. This system considerably complicates international law enforcement efforts, as states themselves are taking part in the crime. As a result, INTERPOL faces limitations in addressing such threats due to its reliance on member state collaboration policy and lack of direct enforcement authority.

State sponsored transnational crime (SOTOC) is not a new phenomenon. Letters of marque for privateers date back centuries and constitute a concerted effort by states to leverage criminal elements against their enemies. The state was not merely endorsing these criminal activities. Rather, the state was actively directing them, falling squarely into the SOTOC category. Similarly, France actively engaged in opium smuggling to support its colonization of Indochina. Smuggling of illicit goods, particularly arms, remains the most widely reported form of SOTOC.

The Iran-Contra Affair is a particularly notable example, wherein the US executive branch violated domestic and international laws to provide weapons to Iran and funding and weapons to the Contra insurgency in Nicaragua. Today, state-operated cybercrime is becoming increasingly ubiquitous and includes influence operations, espionage, sabotage, and profit-motivated cybercrime such as extortion via ransomware.

All these forms of SOTOC have similar motivations as any other asymmetric means of conflict. States that are willing to leverage all instruments of power through creative means can overcome a conventionally more powerful opponent. States that are militarily weaker in a conventional sense sometimes turn to state-sponsored or state-operated terrorism to provide an offsetting capability. Similarly, states can leverage TOC to offset disadvantages in the security and economic realms. Also like terrorism, this can be done via proxy or with varying levels of state support and state direction, and this phenomenon is observed in several South American countries, most notably Venezuela and Suriname.

However, the single most extreme example of a state actively operating as a transnational criminal organization (TCO) is the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). In fact, the DPRK may be more actively engaged in criminal activity than any other nation. By comparison, while the Chinese government may turn a blind eye toward some counterfeiting activity that occurs within its borders and narcotics traffickers partner with some South American governments, the DPRK's government takes an even more active role in these activities, directs their execution, and can even be credited with the initial establishment of its criminal enterprises. This state-controlled crime purportedly occurs across a wide portfolio

that includes drug manufacturing and trafficking; weapons trafficking; counterfeiting of goods, pharmaceuticals, and money; endangered species trafficking; insurance fraud; and human trafficking, though some are more clearly linked to the regime than others.

Reports of the DPRK's drug production and trafficking are fairly extensive prior to 2003, with large shipments of methamphetamine and heroin seized and linked directly to the DPRK over the preceding three decades. Since 2003, however, there have been no direct links established between the DPRK and drug shipments. This may be a direct result of the seizure of drugs on the DPRK-flagged vessel *Pong Su* that occurred that year, after which the DPRK government may have reduced its drug activity to avoid further sanctions and scrutiny. However, it may also be a result of partnerships with Chinese criminal organizations that may now be facilitating the movement of drugs, adding an additional layer of obfuscation and making it more difficult to link the drugs to the DPRK. Additionally, the overall shift toward horizontal integration among narcotics traffickers seen around the world may have influenced a change in how the DPRK conducts its own trafficking operations, shifting it from a purely state-owned enterprise to a state-sanctioned one.

Although DPRK is a vast example on the topic, many states tolerate, sponsor, or even partner with transnational criminal organizations. This condition of the state as the criminal organization poses a unique challenge to the international community, requiring a different approach for analyzing and combating the problem. Some tactics, like improving cybersecurity and cutting off the supply of counterfeit currency while improving detection and removal of that which is already in circulation are fairly straightforward at addressing cybercrime and monetary counterfeiting, respectively. Unfortunately, many of the other counter-TOC strategies become much more difficult or entirely ineffective when confronted with SOTOC. Attempting to reduce corruption in the host nation is a key tactic in combating TCOs but is entirely controversial in the context of the state acting as the TCO. Corrupt officials are not the problem, since the state apparatus as a whole is conducting these operations. Therefore, such a tactic would be like trying to combat a drug trafficking cartel by reducing corruption in the cartel, a tactic unlikely to have any effect other than, possibly, making the organization even more capable. *Partnering with other nations to present global solutions is still possible and will likely have an effect.*

9. Questions to be Addressed

1-Should INTERPOL have stronger authority to reject member states' requests on Red Notices?

2- What mechanisms or international enforcement measures could be created to hold countries accountable when they misuse the system, given that no penalties currently exist?

3-Should there be an independent human right review body before issuing Red Notices?

4-What can be done in order to ensure trust in international cooperation when some states are themselves complicit in criminal activity?

5- What tools can be developed in order to combat state sponsored transnational criminal networks?

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