

International Criminal Police Organization – Interpol

History

In the beginning of XX century the core objective of European Criminal Police Units was to create an organization which would be able to coordinate various countries' law enforcement agencies' combat against crime on international level.

The Second International Criminal Police Congress held in 1923 in Vienna, Austria, which was attended by representatives of 20 countries from all over the world laid the basis for creation of the International Criminal Police Commission. The statute of the organization was adopted on the same day. The organization was headquartered in Vienna owing to the fact that the Austro-Hungarian Empire Files comprising approximately entire South-East Europe were kept in the very city.

The first president of International Criminal Police Organization became the main initiator of establishing the organization, Dr. Johannes Schober – President of Vienna Police.

In 1938 after hijacking Austria by the Nazi Germany the headquarters of International Criminal Police Organization moves to Berlin.

After World War II the organization renovated its functioning with headquarters in Paris. Besides this, provisional regulations on objectives, goals and functions of the organization had been adopted. It is noteworthy that by that time the Organization had already determined its firm domain, namely, International Criminal Police Organization was prohibited to intervene in any decision connected to military offences.

1956 is a year of great importance in Interpol history as on the 25th Session of International Criminal Police Commission the Organization's constitution, which is still valid today, was unanimously adopted and under which the organization assumed the name of International Criminal Police Organization – Interpol. Later the provisions provided in the constitution enabled Interpol to be recognized as a reliable international intergovernmental organization.

According to the constitution Interpol's aims are:

1. Facilitate international police co-operation within the limits of existing laws in different countries and in the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
2. Establish and develop institutions likely to contribute to the prevention and suppression of ordinary law crimes.

One of the main principles in Interpol constitution of 1956, still valid today with some

amendments in it, provides the interdiction for the organization not to intervene in any kind of military crime. Article 3 of the constitution imperatively prohibits “any intervention or activities of a political, military, religious or racial character”. Despite the authoritative nature of the principle, Interpol’s scope of action widened as time passed by and finally the organization resolved to respond to activities violating the norms of International Humanitarian Law notwithstanding Article 3 of the Constitution.

International Criminal Police Organization – Interpol has its firmly interconnected functional structure comprising:

1. General Assembly;
2. Executive Committee;
3. General Secretariat;
4. National Central Bureaus;
5. Advisers;

National Central Bureaus perform an important role in ensuring a constant and active cooperation of Interpol member countries with one another and General Secretariat. As defined in Article 32 of the Constitution : “In order to ensure the co-operation, each country shall appoint a body which will serve as the National Central Bureau and shall ensure liaison with: a) The various departments in the country; b) Those bodies in other countries serving as National Central Bureaus; c) The Organization’s general Secretariat.