



INTERPOL hosts police chiefs meeting to combat 'Ndrangheta

24 June 2020

Global initiative targeting the mafia-style organization brings countries together to set operational blueprint

LYON, France – Police chiefs from around the world held their first meeting under the INTERPOL Cooperation Against 'Ndrangheta (I-CAN) project, a joint initiative with Italy to combat the global threat of mafia-type crime.

The COVID-19 pandemic has made the need for cooperation in tackling this threat a greater priority, with the 'Ndrangheta modus operandi designed to thrive in today's financial landscape of recession, liquidity crunch and mobilization of public funds.

The danger already existed, as mafia organizations have long invested in essential activities such as the agro-food sector, the supply of medicines and medical equipment, road transport, funeral services, cleaning services and waste disposal.

Although the features of the different 'Ndrangheta networks are fundamentally similar, there are also differences as each group adapts to more effectively infiltrate a national economic infrastructure.

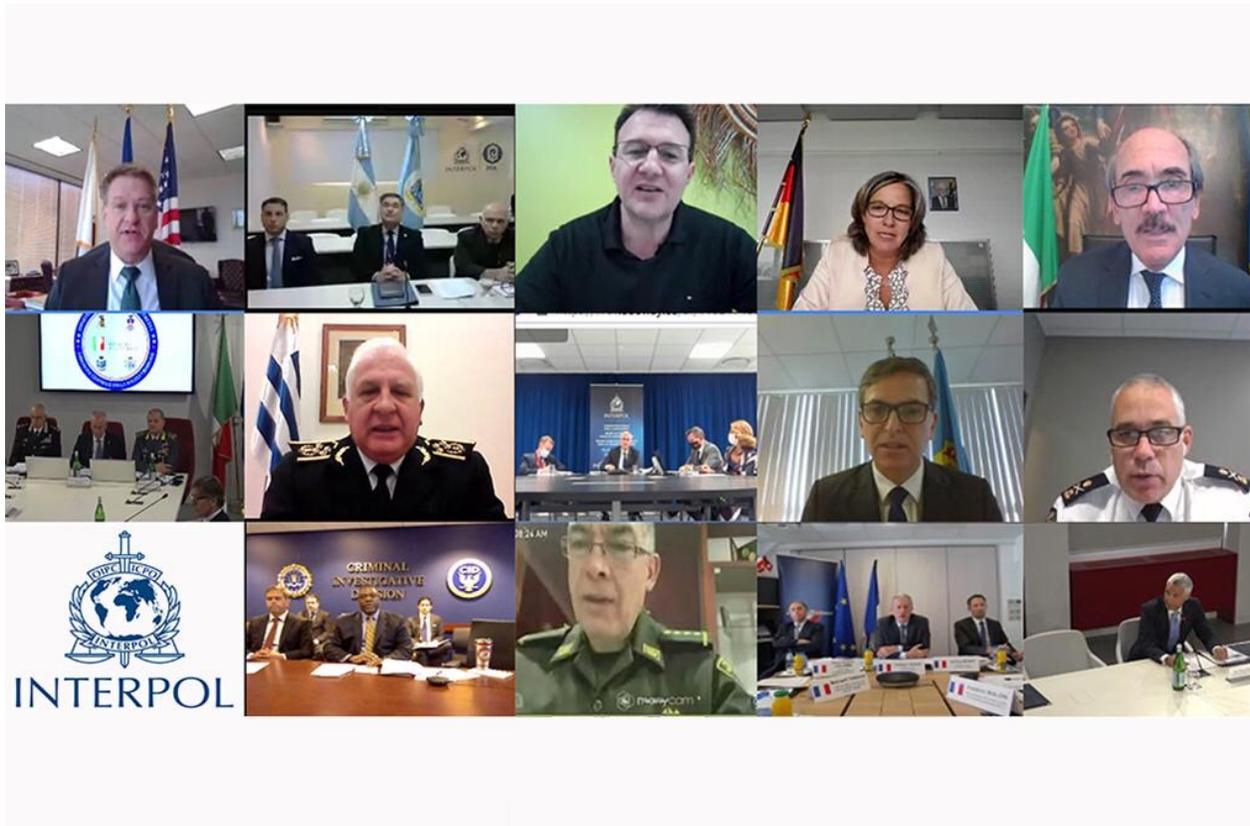
— Infiltrating economies

Police chiefs shared their own countries' experiences in tackling these criminal networks with a particular focus on financial crimes.

"COVID-19, which for the whole world represents the most tragic and sudden pandemic of the modern era, could become an extraordinary opportunity for 'Ndrangheta, and for organized crime in general, to conquer new markets and launder money," said Italy's Chief of Police, Prefect Franco Gabrielli.

"Italy, together with INTERPOL, is rising to this challenge. We need to act immediately to anticipate the threat and counter the mafia's flexibility to rapidly adapt to changes and exploit new socio-economic frameworks," added Prefect Gabrielli.

One of the three pillars of the I-CAN project is the coordination of national investigations via INTERPOL to identify and arrest individuals wanted for 'Ndrangheta-linked activities. The police chiefs meeting was also an opportunity to develop a first general mapping of cross-country flows of fugitives between the 11 participating countries.



INTERPOL Secretary General Jürgen Stock said I-CAN will build a global early warning system to help member countries tackle this insidious threat.

“The 'Ndrangheta is an invisible threat and a dangerous criminal business partner. This is how their cycle feeds itself across more than 30 countries. A cycle we must act to stop - now.

“Through the I-CAN initiative INTERPOL will support a ‘whole-of-policing’ effort against this very old, and very strong enemy, its affiliates and its profits,” said the INTERPOL Chief.

— Prime targets

The amount of cash capital available to the 'Ndrangheta means they are well placed to offer assistance to large, medium and small companies which may be struggling with payments. They can guarantee a payment or offer loans as part of their efforts to infiltrate the legitimate economy.

Families under financial distress, seasonal or undeclared workers are also prime targets for loan sharking by mafia-type organizations.

The 11 pilot countries in the I-CAN project funded by the Italian Department of Public Security, are: Australia (Australian Federal Police), Argentina (Argentinian Federal Police), Brazil (Brazilian Federal Police), Canada (Royal Canadian Mounted Police), Colombia (Colombian National Police), France (National Police and Gendarmerie), Germany (German Federal Criminal Police - BKA), Italy (Italian State Police, Carabinieri and Guardia di Finanza), Switzerland (Fedpol), United States (Drug Enforcement Administration and the Federal Bureau of Investigation) and Uruguay (Uruguayan National Police).

COUNTRIES INVOLVED

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CANADA	COLOMBIA	FRANCE
GERMANY	ITALY	SWITZERLAND
UNITED STATES	URUGUAY	

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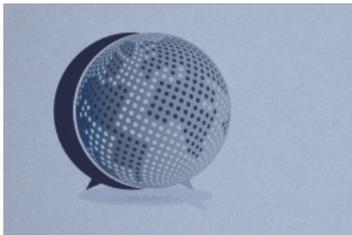
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