



Transnational Organized Crime and Gun Violence: a Case for Ballistic Intelligence Sharing

White Paper

Pete Gagliardi
November 2010

Executive Summary

- National and international crime experts agree that transnational crime and its associated violence is a fast growing problem in the world today meriting the attention of the global law enforcement community.
- Credible researchers have suggested that transnational crime can be considered in the context of 1. Illicit markets, and 2. Criminal groups.
- Many illicit transnational markets are linked to firearms and violence (e.g. insurgency & terrorism, migrant smuggling, drug trafficking, and the poaching of endangered species). The same is true for many organized criminal groups (e.g. ethnic gangs/maras, drug cartels, regional criminal groups, outlaw motorcycle gangs, and fugitives).
- Police efforts in solving the types of violence associated with transnational crime are greatly hampered because, as criminals move, evidence of their crimes is scattered across national borders.
- Assuming that “every crime gun has a story to tell”, law enforcement can reap great benefits by taking a “presumptive approach” to the investigation of gun crime. This approach is based on the premise that: 1. Valuable information for law enforcement use can be extracted from crime guns and related evidence; and 2. People, processes, and technology are available to help sustain the production of actionable information from this data which can help police solve and prevent gun related crimes.
- The INTERPOL Ballistics Information Network (IBIN) can help police extend this “presumptive approach” across borders in an efficient and effective manner to address transnational crime and violence. IBIN was created in 2009 as a platform for the large-scale international sharing and comparing of ballistic data. Just as fingerprint data can link crimes and criminals across international borders, IBIN can identify matches between pairs of spent bullets and cartridge cases within minutes, thereby helping forensic experts give police investigators timely information about crimes, guns, and suspects.
- INTERPOL'S IBIN Program leverages the power of automated ballistics technology to provide the global law enforcement community with a “world-wide ballistics data sharing network”. With such a network in place, internationally mobile criminals who use firearms to further their illicit activities will find escaping detection increasingly challenging.
- In searching for efficient and effective processes to implement IBIN, one does not have to look much further than INTERPOL's front door. INTERPOL routinely formulates Field Operations Support Programs that target both illicit transnational markets and transnational criminal groups.

In conclusion:

- The public safety benefits of collecting and exchanging of ballistics data across nations are obvious and undeniable only when ballistic intelligence sharing is viewed from a proper law enforcement context and perspective.
- Cross-jurisdictional sharing of ballistics information not only makes sense when the distinctive circumstances of a case dictate it, but also when law enforcement and forensic organizations focus their efforts on the following sectors: 1. Specific border frontier regions, 2. Specific transnational illicit markets, and/or 3. Specific criminal groups.
- Finally, the true benefits of transnational ballistic intelligence sharing come to light when one considers the societal costs of gun violence. Every day that we wait, a criminal somewhere remains free to shoot and kill again... and the cost of crime on our global society rises ever higher.

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About the Author

Pete Gagliardi is a Senior Vice President at Forensic Technology Inc. the U.S. Subsidiary of the Montreal based parent company Forensic Technology Inc. WAI. The company provides field proven leading-edge products and services to help law enforcement agencies around the world better address the criminal misuse of firearms and more effectively manage information across the entire criminal justice system from the crime scene to judicial disposition.



In addition to his more than ten years in the ballistics technology field at Forensic Technology, Pete has thirty years of law enforcement experience at both the local and Federal levels most of which focused on the investigation of firearms related crimes. He retired as the Special Agent in Charge of the New York Field Division from the United States Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) following 24 years of service in 1999. As Special Agent in Charge of the New York Field Division, he was responsible for managing all of ATF's law enforcement and regulatory operations within the New York /New Jersey metropolitan area related to firearms, explosives, arson, alcohol, and tobacco. Pete also held other senior executive positions while assigned to ATF headquarters in Washington, DC. He has served as the agency's principal liaison to Congress, the Deputy Assistant Director of Science and Technology, the Deputy Assistant Director of Law Enforcement Programs, and the Chief of Strategic Planning.

As a result of these assignments, Pete has acquired and demonstrated a keen sense of awareness of the important factors to be considered in the design of effective violence reduction programs that provide substantial and sustainable benefits for the cop on the street – the policy maker – and the public at large. Pete Gagliardi can be reached by Email at: pete.gagliardi@contactFT.com

Introduction

A threat to the safety of citizens in any country, the criminal misuse of firearms present a wider danger to a nation's security, peace, stability and development. Moreover, firearm crimes bleed over into other criminal activities, from corruption and organized crime to human trafficking and terrorism. Firearms and their related evidence know no borders. It is not uncommon to find the murder weapon from a shooting in one city ending up in another city, country, or continent. No country remains unaffected by firearm violence.

This white paper describes how transnational organized crime and gun violence are interrelated, and makes the case for the international sharing of firearms forensic intelligence as an integral component of the fight against cross-border crimes.

The objectives of this paper are:

- To articulate the danger that transnational organized crime poses to victims, governments, and society.
- To provide examples of illicit transnational markets and criminal groups that are clearly associated with firearms and gun-related violence.
- To encourage collaborative discussions about IBIN (INTERPOL Ballistic Identification Network) participation among law enforcement agencies within the many regions affected by illicit transnational markets and criminal groups.
- To identify best practices and suggest a series of steps that are aimed at finding new ways to efficiently and effectively utilize IBIN as a tool for combating transnational organized crime and violence.

The Case for Action

The following text is an excerpt from the remarks made by Ronald K. Noble, INTERPOL Secretary General, at the Trans-Pacific Symposium on Dismantling Transnational Illicit Networks in Honolulu, Hawaii, on November 10, 2009.¹

In 1994, a Croatian man and two accomplices robbed the “Golden Boutique” inside the Moana Surfrider Hotel just a few blocks from here, making off with eight luxury watches. Ten years later, the man was arrested in California on separate charges of burglary and grand theft. He was using an alias at the time, but fingerprint checks by U.S. authorities revealed he was the subject of an outstanding federal warrant and he was removed to Hawaii. Now, fast forward to June 2009, three men claiming to be watch collectors visit several jewelry shops in Monaco. They arouse enough suspicion that police in Monaco detain them for conspiracy to commit robbery. It turns out they were, in fact, casing stores to rob.

This time, the fingerprint analysis of the criminal suspect included not only a check of the national database but also of INTERPOL’s global database via our secure global police communications system called I-24/7. And, guess what, this global check by Monaco revealed that one of the three men detained was implicated in the robbery right here in Honolulu that had occurred 15 years earlier! We now have a clearer picture of his activities during the 15 years separating his first and last known potential international criminal links: he was a central figure in an international network of armed jewelry robbers we call the Pink Panthers. We know the Pink Panthers are dangerous. In Dubai, they drove their cars through an enclosed shopping mall and crashed them into the front of the store. In Tokyo, they used tear gas on the store’s employees. In Europe, they brandished weapons.

We know that this transnational criminal network is mobile. Its members have carried out more than 160 confirmed armed robberies in the U.S., Europe, Japan, Thailand and the United Arab Emirates – 28 different countries in all. The estimated value of thefts they have

¹ www.interpol.int/public/ICPO/speeches/2009/SGHonolulu20091110.asp

committed is thought to far exceed 300 million Euros. And we know how to best fight this and any other transnational illicit network: by harnessing the relevant data, expertise and resources of law enforcement in INTERPOL's 188 member countries.

Operational meetings facilitated by INTERPOL have brought together investigators from countries hit by the Pink Panthers to share intelligence and have resulted in key breakthroughs. Previously unknown or unlinked DNA profiles and fingerprints submitted to INTERPOL databases by our member countries and disseminated to our global membership have led to the arrests of several suspected Pink Panthers. Could these same results have been achieved bilaterally? Absolutely not! Bilateral links allow more profound development of previously unlinked cases, but they cannot be used effectively to establish links between cases that appear unrelated at the start of an investigation. For example, when the Dubai police sent DNA profiles following the jewelry robbery that occurred in their shopping mall, they had no idea who the suspects were and they did not have bilateral relations with every country in the world.

When the criminals operate in multiple countries throughout the world, we must cast as wide a net as possible to catch those valuable pieces of information that will allow us to identify and apprehend those responsible. This is our best defense against transnational illicit networks, whether they are involved in armed robbery, drug trafficking, terrorism, human smuggling or any other crime. This is the power of our member countries working through INTERPOL.

Transnational organized crime is also a growing concern of the United Nations. In his preface to a recent report² on the globalization of crime, Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, Executive Director, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), makes the following observations:

- Organized crime has diversified, gone global and reached macro-economic proportions: illicit goods are sourced from one continent, trafficked across another, and marketed in a third.
- Drug cartels are spreading violence in Central America, the Caribbean and West Africa.
- Collusion between insurgents and criminal groups fuels terrorism and plunders natural resources.
- Smuggling of migrants and modern slavery have spread in Eastern Europe as much as South-East Asia and Latin America.
- In so many urban centers authorities have lost control to organized gangs.
- Without a global perspective there cannot be evidence-based policy.
- ...states have to look beyond borders to protect their sovereignty. If police stop at borders while criminals cross them freely, sovereignty is already breached – actually, it is surrendered to those who break the law.
- ...trans-border intelligence-sharing and law enforcement cooperation are essential.

According to the 2008 United States Department of Justice's Law Enforcement Strategy to Combat International Organized Crime: *International organized criminals have evolved toward loose network structures and away from traditional hierarchical structures.*³ This evolution is readily apparent in the proliferation of myriad types of criminal gangs over the last 20 years. Even more disturbing than their sheer numbers, the gangs of today seem determined to use extreme violence for societal domination.

² *The Globalization of Crime: A Transnational Organized Crime Threat Assessment*, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2010

³ U.S. Department of Justice, *Overview of the Law Enforcement Strategy to Combat International Organized Crime*, April 2008.

When the criminals operate in multiple countries throughout the world, we must cast as wide a net as possible to catch those valuable pieces of information that will allow us to identify and apprehend those responsible. This is our best defense against transnational illicit networks, whether they are involved in armed robbery, drug trafficking, terrorism, human smuggling or any other crime. This is the power of our member countries working through INTERPOL.
(Ronald K. Noble, INTERPOL Secretary General, 2009)

Dr. Thomas C. Bruneau, Distinguished Professor of National Security Affairs in the Naval Postgraduate School's Department of National Security Affairs, has researched and written about the subject of transnational gangs or "maras". He said that: "The maras [gangs] emerged out of the conflicts during the 1980s in Central America and are manifestations of our globalized world. In the context of the wars and insurgencies in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua, thousands of people fled North, a great many arriving as illegal aliens in Los Angeles, California. A certain percentage of these young men had been involved in the conflict, either on the side of the governments or the insurgents, and were familiar with guns and armed combat."⁴

Bruneau went on to say that the *maras* are transnational in terms of their ability to move at will, throughout entire regions such as Central and North America, including the United States and Canada. He wrote: ". . . if they are pursued in one country, El Salvador for example, they move to neighboring Guatemala or Honduras to escape capture ...In interviews in El Salvador I was told of how the MS-13 planned and carried out a murder in one country, by coordinating with their members in two other countries." Bruneau listed a number of threats or challenges to national security some of which have been summarized below. He said that gangs:

- . . . overwhelm governments, including the police and the legal systems, by their sheer audacity, violence, and numbers.
- [As to new democracies and maras] ...make a travesty of the state's supposed control and public service, can only further deteriorate the already low level of legitimacy.
- ...are already acting as surrogate or alternate governments in some areas, including in El Salvador and Guatemala. The governments have all but given up in some areas of the capitals, and the maras extract taxes on individuals and businesses. If people don't pay up, they are killed ...
- ...seek to penetrate the police and non-governmental organizations, and could theoretically be used by political groups.
- ...[skills and connections] could be used as well to move terrorists. For example, it is estimated that sixty-five percent of the maras deported from the United States return illegally. Since there is ample evidence that the maras are entrepreneurial, opportunistic, and unscrupulous, some officials are concerned that they will move terrorists or even weapons of mass destruction through the region and into the United States.

Bruneau concluded by calling upon all affected stakeholder countries to cooperate, increase awareness, develop the means to collect and share better intelligence through human and technical means to track and prevent these violent gangs from overtaking governments and disrupting societies. In *The Globalization of Crime: a Transnational Organized Crime Threat Assessment*, the UNODC suggests that there are two ways of viewing transnational organized crime: 1. by focusing on the illicit markets, and 2. by focusing on specific criminal groups.

The report advances the idea that in order to achieve a sustainable level of success in combating transnational organized crime, law enforcement agencies must address both the criminal groups and the illicit markets.

⁴ Thomas C. Bruneau, *The Maras and National Security in Central America*, Strategic Insights [Journal], Volume IV, Issue 5, May 2005

Illicit Transnational Markets are linked to Firearms and Violence

The following sections provide brief examples of illicit transnational markets and their association with firearm violence.

The Firearm Trafficking Market

The UNODC report⁵ indicates that gun traffickers circumvent laws and regulations to provide guns for use in crime and conflict situations. For example, in terms of crime, the guns that traffickers move (from the U.S. to Mexico, for instance) are used by drug cartels to advance their criminal enterprises through the use of deadly force. In conflict situations, traffickers provide arms (for example, guns from Eastern Europe to Africa) to insurgents and terrorists with political agendas.

Analysis: **WHERE DO THE GUNS COME FROM - TRANSNATIONAL GUNS SMUGGLED ACROSS EUROPE INTO THE UK**, www.ligali.org/article.php?id=1762, Dec. 2007

... On 17 July, 2006, police officers from Southwark Borough's Operation Hamrow seized a Fiat Punto car in Peckham. In the boot was a black rucksack containing a MAC 10 machine gun capable of firing up to 1000 rounds per minute, three pistols, silencers and ammunition including 62 'hollow point' bullets which are designed to explode on impact. Alongside this haul there was also a quantity of gunpowder, 60,000 fake ecstasy pills, a solid block of cocaine worth £5,200 and a Halloween mask, gloves and a balaclava. Forensic evidence led to the arrest of 25 year old African named Marlon 'The General' of Nutt Street, Peckham. In September 2007 he was sentenced to life imprisonment for possessing firearms and ammunition. So where did the guns and drugs come from? [MAC-10s are made in the US.]

... In December 2007, Lance Corporal Ross Phillips, Lance Corporal Ben Whitfield and Private Shane Pleasant were jailed their role in an illegal gun smuggling syndicate run by British troops in Iraq. The soldiers were from the 3rd Battalion, the Yorkshire Regiment. Sentencing, Judge Advocate General Colin Burn said the offences were "very serious" and that the men "to a greater or lesser degree were at the end of a chain which started with smuggling lethal weapons out of Iraq for profit.". The money-making plot to smuggle guns out of Iraq to organized crime syndicates in Germany saw at least one British soldier trade handguns such as Glock pistols for drugs on at least six occasions. The drugs were then sold onto other British soldiers serving in Iraq.

... In May 2006, three Lithuanian men caught smuggling an "assassin's armory" of converted tear gas guns into Britain. Andrius Gurskas, 26, of no fixed address, Orestas Bublilauskas, 34, of Chigwell, Essex and Darius Stankunas, 34, from Sheffield had hidden twelve Baikal semi automatic pistols fitted with silencers and a large amount of ammunition in the modified fuel tank of a Vauxhall Astra.

... In July 2007, two men were jailed for trying to smuggle two Czech assault rifles along with 460 rounds of ammunition into the UK. The guns which had been broken down into components were discovered during the search of a car at Dover.

News Report: **MAN JAILED FOR 21 YEARS FOR GUN SMUGGLING PLOT**

Police Service of Northern Ireland, www.psni.police.uk, June 29, 2010

A 36 years old man has received a 21 year jail sentence for his part in an international plot to smuggle guns from Holland to organized crime gangs in Ireland. Paul Edward Meehan, from County Kildare, was arrested after a protracted investigation by PSNI Organized Crime Branch, An Garda Siochana, and the Dutch police. Speaking outside Laganside Courts in Belfast, County Antrim, Detective Superintendent Essie Adair of the PSNI Organized Crime Branch, said a successful international law enforcement partnership ensured that the streets of Northern Ireland and Europe are safer with these guns out of circulation. "I am delighted that this very dangerous criminal has been sent to jail, for a very long time. "I think this sends out a very clear message that international organized crime will not be tolerated," he

⁵ *The Globalization of Crime: A Transnational Organized Crime Threat Assessment*, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2010.

said. Detective Superintendent Adair also paid tribute to his colleagues in An Garda Siochana (Irish Police) and in the Dutch police. "Without them and their co-operation the investigation could not have progressed and it shows that when we all work together, the results are significant," he said...

News Report: **57 FIREARMS, EXPLOSIVES SEIZED FROM CROATIA-TO-SWEDEN GUN RUNNING GANG**, BBC Worldwide Monitoring / HINA, Transcript, 25 May 2008

Zagreb police cracked down on a ring of arms producers and smugglers, and charged nine persons with having specialized in producing arms and explosives and smuggling them to western Europe, notably Sweden, the head of the Zagreb police, Marijan Tomurad, said at a news conference on Saturday. He stressed that the arms and bombs had been intended for clashed among underworld crime gangs and that the arms smugglers had no connections with any terrorist group. The... (GunPolicy.org).

The Insurgency and Terrorism Market

News Report: **FRENCH POLICE OFFICER KILLED IN 'ETA SHOOTOUT'**
By Al Goodman CNN Madrid Bureau Chief, March 17, 2010 – Updated 1227 GMT (2027 HKT)

Madrid, Spain (CNN) -- A French police officer has died in a shootout with suspected members of the Basque separatist group ETA near Paris, the Spanish Interior Ministry said Wednesday. It is the first time a French police officer has been killed by ETA, a ministry spokeswoman added. ETA is blamed for more than 800 killings in its long fight for Basque independence and is listed as a terrorist organization by the European Union and the United States.

French police responded to reports of car theft in a town near Paris late Tuesday and a shootout ensued with a group of alleged thieves. Most of them escaped but police captured one and he was later identified as a suspected ETA member, said the spokeswoman, who by custom is not identified. Spanish media reported that the shootout occurred in the town of Dammarie-les-Lys. The dead French policeman was wearing a bullet-proof vest but bullets struck fatally elsewhere on his body. He was reported to be in his 50s, and the father of four children.

ETA has traditionally used France as its rearguard logistics and planning base to prepare attacks across the border in Spain, officials say. But in recent years as Spain has enlisted increased cooperation from France in cracking down on ETA hideouts, there have been various exchanges of gunfire between ETA suspects and French police, wounding some officers...

News Report: **TERRORISTS SAID MOVING GUNS TO CROATIA FOR EASIER SMUGGLING INTO EUROPE**, 22 May 2008, SEESAC (Belgrade) / Blic Daily

Members and supporters of Al Kaida and Vehabias from Bosnia and Herzegovina have been transferring large numbers of weapons and explosives to Croatia, as stated by the intelligence agencies in BiH. The information held by the Independent paper ("Nezavisne novine") of Banja Luka, reads that they are taking advantage of the current political situation in BiH and involvement of the government in the current reform processes in order to transfer from BiH large amounts of... (GunPolicy.org)

The Migrant Smuggling Market

News Report: **VICTIMS OF MASSACRE IN MEXICO SAID TO BE MIGRANTS**
By Randal C. Archibold, Published: August 25, 2010

MEXICO CITY — The bullet-pocked bodies of 72 people, believed to be migrants heading to the United States who resisted demands for money, have been found in a large room on a ranch in an area of northeast Mexico with surging violence, the authorities said Wednesday.

The Drug Trafficking Market

News Report: **MEXICAN DRUG CARTELS EXPAND REACH IN CENTRAL AMERICA**
By Sarah Grainger - Guatemala City, Thu Aug 26, 2010 11:35am EDT

(Reuters) - Central America is struggling to contain rising violence as powerful Mexican drug cartels, facing an escalating government crackdown at home, expand southward and intensify operations in neighboring nations. For years Central America has been a transit

route for cocaine trafficked north from the Andes, but analysts and officials say Mexican cartels are now buying up land, storing arms and drugs, and hiring members of local criminal networks in Central America to help them move and sell drugs.

The southward push comes as Mexican President Felipe Calderon vows to push ahead with his military campaign against drugs and as turf wars between Mexican cartels turn bloody. More than 28,000 people have died in drug violence in Mexico since late 2006. It is also driven by the sheer profitability of a business believed to bring Mexican cartels up to \$40 billion a year. A report released in May by the Woodrow Wilson Center, a U.S. think-tank, and the University of San Diego showed that the Zetas, a brutal spinoff group of Mexico's Gulf cartel, were recruiting in Central America and training new members in camps in remote areas of Guatemala near the Mexican border.

The report said members of the Sinaloa cartel, another major Mexican gang, were operating along Guatemala's Pacific coast and western border with Mexico, while the Zetas had set up bases along the Caribbean coast of Honduras and Guatemala. "They've subcontracted existing networks who are already involved in other kinds of trafficking -- of contraband, pirated DVDs and clothing," said report editor Eric Olson...

News Report: **CROSS-BORDER COMMUTERS VICTIMS IN MEXICO DRUG WAR**

By Colleen Long & Will Weissert, Associated Press, November 11, 2010

(AP) - Eder Diaz and Manuel Acosta were Americans whose lives straddled the border, business students attending classes at the University of Texas at El Paso but living in Ciudad Juarez amid family and friends. They had been on their campus, a peaceful enclave of grassy plazas flanked by breathtaking desert mountains, just hours before they were gunned down last week in Juarez, their car riddled with bullets as they headed home.

Commuting from Mexico to the United States was as natural to them as taking the Holland Tunnel from New Jersey into New York. It's a life many border residents continue to embrace even as the death toll from the drug war in Mexico continues to rise. Six Americans were killed in Juarez last week alone, and for the last several years Mexico's border region has been more dangerous for Americans than the rest of the country. In all of Mexico, 47 Americans were killed during the first six months of 2010, on track to pass the 79 homicides of U.S. citizens in 2009 and close to the 56 killings in all of 2008.

Roughly 1,400 of UTEP's 22,000 students live in Juarez and cross the border to go to class, even though many are Americans who could live in safety on U.S. soil. One is Ruben Tarango, a 21-year-old sophomore who was born in El Paso but lives with his parents and sister in Juarez. "I was born here. I'm an American. But really I'm Mexican," Tarango said. "I've got my whole life in Juarez." The international business major rides a bus to the border, walks across the bridge over the Rio Grande, then hops another bus to campus, a process that takes 45 minutes and would be longer if Tarango did not use the faster-moving immigration lines for Americans. Students who drive across the border daily say they often must endure lines of an hour or more. Tarango was mugged outside his family's home last year but still says he'd rather reside in Juarez than El Paso. Even the deaths of Diaz and Acosta haven't changed his mind. "If you aren't caught up in bad things, you'll be OK," Tarango said. "Of course, they weren't doing anything wrong. But it was just their destiny, their bad luck." Acosta, 25, had been on pace to graduate in May with a computer information systems degree from the College of Business Administration. Diaz, 23, had just declared his major - international business - and dreamed of becoming a Fortune 500 CEO.

On Monday, students gathered for a campus memorial service, some wearing black and others just happening by in jeans and Texas Longhorns T-shirts. Even casual observers fought back tears. Diaz's father, Armando Diaz Marinelarena, said he had urged his son to leave Juarez - to go to school in San Antonio, where he had a sister, or Las Cruces, N.M., with his brother. "He said, 'No,'" Diaz Marinelarena said, his voice cracking. Americans killed in Mexico have tended to be people who cross back and forth regularly. Some were with Mexican friends or relatives who were the targets. Others were hit by stray bullets.

More than 54 percent of the 384 Americans slain in Mexico from October 2002 to June 2010 died in border areas, and most of the border killings were in just three cities: Tijuana, with 90 dead; Juarez, with 53, and Nuevo Laredo, with 29. Mexico City, meanwhile, had just seven deaths of U.S. citizens in that time frame. Juarez is a city held hostage by a nearly three-year battle for control of drug smuggling routes between the cartel bearing the city's name and the Sinaloa cartel. More than 6,500 have been killed there since the start of 2008.

The Environmental Resource Trafficking Market

News Report: **POACHERS FEED THEN KILL TAME RHINOS**

By Elise Tempelhoff, Beeld – NEWS 24.com, 2010-08-25 10:13

Johannesburg – Two white rhinos, which were so tame that children could ride on them, were fed lucerne before being shot 17 times using assault rifles. Police in Limpopo are looking for a gang of between five and eight poachers, who shot and killed the two rhinos and sawed off their horns on Monday afternoon, on a farm between Vaalwater and Mookgophong (Naboomspruit).

Herman Lubbe of the Modimolle (Nylstroom) police's cattle theft unit said on Tuesday the attackers overpowered and tied up two workers on the farm Elandsfontein. According to police spokesperson Ronel Otto, the poachers presumably used R5 assault rifles to shoot them. "The police picked up 17 shells in the area where the animals were shot," said Otto.

Farmers on a neighboring farm said the animals were "executed" while they were peacefully eating lucerne. The owner of the rhinos, who reportedly only spends time on the farm over weekends and holidays, is apparently severely traumatized.

Dr Sam Ferreira, mammal expert at SANParks and one of the coordinators of the action group against rhino poaching which was launched on Monday, said this kind of poaching has a severely negative impact on civil society in South Africa. "It appears to be ordinary poaching, but in the context of broader society it can be linked to arms smuggling, prostitution and other crimes."

Transnational Organized Crime Groups Are Connected to Firearms and Violence

The following sections provide brief examples of transnational criminal groups and their association with firearm violence

Organized Crime Groups, Ethnic & Street Gangs

*Smart crooks carry mobile phone guns
(Hannah Cleaver in Berlin, 30 Nov 2000)
German police are being put on their
guard when dealing with criminals
carrying mobile phones after border
guards discovered some carrying "phone-
guns". They appear to be normal mobile
phones but can fire four bullets in quick
succession... Ten of the .22 caliber phone
guns were confiscated in **Germany** when a
Croatian gun dealer was arrested trying to
smuggle them into **Switzerland**. The gun's
bullets are fired by pressing the phone
buttons from five to eight."*

Perhaps one of the most telling examples of the capacity of gangs to commit senseless acts of gun violence and crisscross national boundaries is reported by Ana Arana, a journalist writing a Foreign Affairs article.⁶ She reported that: "...a bus driving through the northern city of Chamalecon in Honduras was stopped by gunmen. The assailants quickly surrounded the bus and opened fire with their AK-47s, killing 28 passengers. The attackers, police later revealed, had been members of a notorious street gang known as Mara Salvatrucha (or MS-13) and had chosen their victims at random. The slaughter had nothing to do with the identities of the people onboard; it was meant as a protest and a warning against the government's crackdown on gang activities in the country." The mastermind of the bus attack, Ebner Anibal Rivera-Paz was subsequently arrested in the Falfurrias, Texas.

As far back at 2005, MS-13 expanded beyond its roots in North and Central America to Europe, according to Assistant Director Chris Swecker, the head of the FBI's Investigative Division. Swecker appeared on the CBS television news show "60 Minutes"⁷ and said: "...with respect to MS-13, we don't look at them as a typical gang. MS-13 has two characteristics that give us great concern and have drawn our attention. 1. They are extremely violent, and they're proliferating around the country; 2. They're an international criminal

⁶ Ana Arana. *How the Street Gangs Took Central America*, Foreign Affairs. New York: May/June 2005. Vol. 84, Iss. 3; pg. 98

⁷ CBS – 60 Minutes Report "The Fight against MS-13", by Dan Rather, prod. by Daniel Schom, Dec. 4, 2005

organization. They're not confined in the United States. You can find them in five countries. And now even in Europe."

News Report: PNG MINISTER VOWS ACTION TO CURB GUN SMUGGLING

By Radio New Zealand International, www.rnz.com, 28 October, 2010

The Internal Security Minister in Papua New Guinea is promising action within months to stop guns flooding into the country. A transnational crime conference this week in Kokopo has been told gun smuggling is on the rise and this comes amid concern at the growing use of weapons by criminals, in tribal fights and in land disputes. The Internal Security Minister, Sani Rambli, agrees that the presence of guns is a growing threat and he wants something done about it. He's formed a parliamentary committee that's isolated 24 of the original ideas put forward by a gun control committee, including shutting down the smuggling of weapons into the country. "We strongly believe that a lot of logging companies are bringing in guns. There are a lot of guns that are crossing the border. It's not coming through international flights or international shipping but a lot of other shipping companies, they're engaged especially with the locals, are believed to be the people behind all of this. Like they are trading illegal drugs for firearms." Sani Rambli says he will be pushing for MPs to debate the gun issue before the end of this year or early next year.

News Report: RISE IN THE USE OF HEAVY FIREARMS BY ORGANISED CRIME GANGS

EUROPOL, The Hague, 15 July 2010

The Hague - The Netherlands. The rise in the use of heavy firearms in the EU, such as assault rifles (e.g. AK-47s) and explosive devices, calls for an integrated approach to further enhance intelligence and restrict the flow of illegally-trafficked weapons into and out of Europe. Organized crime groups and street gangs are routinely using firearms in populated areas, posing a significant threat to the general public and law enforcement personnel. Although handguns are generally their weapon of choice, there has been a marked increase in the use of heavy firearms, fuelled by the fact that a Kalashnikov assault rifle or a rocket launcher can be acquired for as little as €300-700 in parts of the EU.

Suppliers in South East Europe are currently meeting any rise in demand for these types of weapons. The establishment of firearms 'pools' in major cities in Western Europe has significantly increased the local availability of weapons to criminal hubs. This system of shared access gives criminals a rapid route to firearms that can be hired for a given period of time, as well as lowering the cost and the risk of being caught in possession. There is a significant intelligence gap regarding local demand, internal circulation and the import of heavy firearms. In an effort to fill intelligence gaps and facilitate an integrated approach to disrupting illegal trafficking of heavy firearms in the EU, Europol has identified several operational priorities, recommended to enhance EU law enforcement cooperation and knowledge-sharing in this area.

As well as the coordinated sharing and centralized analysis of intelligence at an EU level, recommended measures include joint investigations to focus on 'dedicated armourers' and specialist brokers of firearms in the EU, and specific efforts to investigate and monitor the flow of firearms entering Europe. Additionally, detailed recording of the quantity and types of illegal firearms seized in law enforcement operations, as well as those recovered from multi-commodity shipments, such as drug trafficking operations, will help to bridge gaps in intelligence.

Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs (OMG)

The Hells Angels Motorcycle Club (Hells Angels) is an OMG with between 2,000 and 2,500 members who belong to over 230 chapters in the U.S. and in 26 foreign countries. The Hells Angels pose a criminal threat on six continents. U.S. law enforcement authorities estimate that the Hells Angels have more than 92 chapters in 27 states with a membership in excess of 800 persons.

The Hells Angels are involved in the production, transportation and distribution of marijuana and methamphetamine. Additionally, the Hells Angels are involved in the transportation and distribution of cocaine, hashish, heroin, LSD (lysergic acid diethylamide), ecstasy, PCP

(phencyclidine) and diverted pharmaceuticals. The Hells Angels are also involved in other criminal activity including assault, extortion, homicide, money laundering and motorcycle theft.⁸

News Report: **RAPID EXPANSION OF OUTLAW MOTORCYCLE CLUB GANGS IN EUROPE**
EUROPOL, The Hague, 7 October 2010

Law enforcement specialists gathered in Croatia to discuss expansion of Hells Angels into South-East Europe and Turkey.

The Hague - The Netherlands. Europe is the continent with the highest increase in new Outlaw Motorcycle Club Gang (OMCG's) chapters. During the last five years Bandidos, Hells Angels and the Outlaws have opened more than 120 chapters which makes a total number of more than 425 chapters in Europe. The number of chapters for these three large groups in the United States and Canada are around 300. Europol is following the developments of the OMCG's as part of its responsibility to monitor the threat from organized crime and terrorism in Europe. The OMCG's are identified as a national threat and as a national policing priority in several EU countries. Because of a recent significant expansion of the presence of the Hells Angels into South-East Europe, Europol and the Croatian Ministry of Interior this week co-organized a seminar for law enforcement specialists in Dubrovnik. The seminar was financed by the European Commission's TAIEX programme and representatives from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Republic of Serbia and Turkey received presentations from expert speakers from Europol, Luxemburg, Norway and Spain. The aim of the seminar was to raise a national and regional awareness about the character of the OMCG's in South-East Europe and Turkey.

"Serious criminality is a feature of the activities of Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs in Europe. At Europol, therefore, we are worried about their expansion and are increasing our efforts to track their activities. Working with our law enforcement colleagues across Europe we are determined to bring to an end their illicit activities in society," says Rob Wainwright, Director of Europol. Europol offers support to the countries facing the challenge of dealing with OMCG gangs through its analytical and criminal intelligence-sharing capabilities and encourages the participating countries to establish a single point of contact within national law enforcement authorities.

Drug Cartels

News Report: **MEXICAN CARTEL BLOCKADES STREETS IN MONTERREY**
BBC News, 14 August 2010

So-called narco-blockades are becoming increasingly common in Monterrey. Police in Mexico say members of a drug cartel blocked off at least 13 major roads in Monterrey on Saturday. Drivers were dragged out of their vehicles by armed men and their cars used to cut off the roads in the north-eastern city. The blockade happened after a shootout between the Mexican army and alleged members of a drug cartel, in which four people were killed.

Police say the cartels blockade the streets as a show of force. Security forces said the shootout happened in the south of the city, when soldiers on patrol chased two armored cars they deemed suspicious. One of the armored cars crashed and its occupants opened fire on the soldiers. Four of them were shot as they tried to flee on foot, a fifth escaped.

Local media say one of those killed was the man known as El Sonrics, the alleged local leader of one of Mexico's most powerful and violent drug cartels. El Sonrics is said to have taken over as leader of Los Zetas in Monterrey after soldiers captured Hector Raul Luna in June. Monterrey, the richest city in Mexico and its industrial capital, has seen a sharp increase in crime since Los Zetas extended their operations there.

Fugitives

News Report: **TAJIKISTAN HUNTS FOR ARMED FUGITIVES**
By Isabel Gorst in Moscow, Financial Times, August 23 2010 16:51

Emomali Rahmon, the president of Tajikistan, has launched a manhunt for more than a dozen armed fugitives who escaped from a detention centre after a shoot-out on Monday. Tajik security officials said five guards were killed in a gun battle with prisoners who seized

⁸ <http://www.justice.gov/criminal/gangunit/gangs/motorcycle.html>

firearms and explosives at a high security detention centre in Dushanbe, the capital of the central Asian country. At least 25 men escaped including Tajik, Russian and Afghan citizens handed long prison sentences last week for allegedly plotting a coup d'état.

The daring attack at the Tajik jail comes as governments in central Asia clamp down on what they see as an increasing threat of radicalism spilling over the borders from Afghanistan into the region. Kosim Gaffarov, first deputy head of the Tajik State Committee for National Security, said Tajikistan had asked special services in Afghanistan and Russia to help hunt for the fugitives who were suspected of belonging to an international terrorist group. "The fact that there were Afghan and Russian citizen's shows that the crime had a transnational character," he said. Security forces across Tajikistan were placed on high alert as the search for the fugitives got underway. Mr. Rahmon, who came to power during a violent civil war between government forces and the Islamist opposition in the early 1990s, ordered the interior ministry to form a special group to oversee the manhunt. Central Asian newswires said the fugitives were among 46 men handed long sentences by Tajikistan's Supreme Court last week for allegedly plotting to overthrow the government last year. All were arrested during a counter-terrorist operation in the Tavildara region of Tajikistan close to the Afghan border in July and August 2009.

Tajikistan, which shares a 1,340km border with Afghanistan, has blamed the rise in violence on the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), a militant Islamist group that has fought alongside the Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The IMU was founded in the 1990s with a goal to overthrow the government of Uzbekistan and found a Caliphate, or Islamist state, in central Asia. In a statement on an Islamist website last week, the IMU called on its followers to wage war in south Kyrgyzstan, the scene of violent ethnic clashes in July...

Regional Criminal Groups, Guerrillas & Militants

News Report: THE HUNT FOR THE PINK PANTHER GANG

By Giles Tremlett, The Guardian (<http://guardian.co.uk>), Monday 23 August 2010 21.00 BST

The eastern European thieves known as the Pink Panther gang have stolen millions of pounds' worth of jewelry in a series of audacious raids – and they're still on the run.

The fractions of seconds flicker past on the CCTV footage from the Exelco store in Tokyo's upmarket Ginza shopping district. As the clock races forward, an elegantly suited, tie-less western man enters through the front door and turns left towards a display cabinet. A second man walks in under an umbrella, his mouth and nose covered by a white anti-contamination mask. He reaches into a small rucksack and takes out a gun...

News Report: SUSPECTED IRISH GANG BUSTED ACROSS EUROPE

Reuters, 25 May 2010

In coordinated raids across Ireland, Britain and Spain police have arrested 32 suspected members of an Irish organized crime ring who allegedly were involved with arms dealing, drug trafficking and money laundering as reported by Reuters: "This network has been offering a global investment service, plowing hundreds of millions of pounds of dirty cash into offshore accounts, companies, and property on behalf of criminals,' Britain's Serious and Organized Crime Agency (SOCA) said in a statement.

News Report: PHILIPPINES SEIZES TURKISH SHIP IN GUN SMUGGLING

By Today's Zaman with wires, İstanbul, 22 August 2009

Philippine authorities seized a Turkish ship at a port west of Manila on Thursday, foiling what officials said was an attempt to smuggle crates of automatic rifles and assorted military accessories. The ship's South African captain and his 13 crewmen, mostly Georgians, were arrested and are undergoing questioning, said Chief Superintendent Leon Nilo de la Cruz, the regional police chief.

The seizure comes amid a police campaign to rid the country of unregistered firearms blamed for fueling crime, terrorism and insurgencies. The program is expected to recover only 3 percent of an estimated 1.1 million loose firearms -- a realistic target in a country with "cultural propensity" for gun possession, Philippine National Police Chief Jesus Versoza said Tuesday. The ship, M/V Captain Ufuk, arrived at a port in western Bataan province's Mariveles township from Turkey via Indonesia, de la Cruz said. The ship was en route to the port of Batangas City, just south of Manila. Police, coast guard and customs agents jointly inspected the vessel and discovered 50 Galil assault rifles and assorted

military accessories hidden in five wooden crates. Another 10 empty wooden crates were found aboard the ship, prompting a search that was still ongoing late Thursday. De la Cruz said there were suspicions the crewmen could have thrown some of their illegal cargo off the ship. "The ship was inspected amid suspicion it was carrying contraband," he added. De la Cruz said they were still investigating the incident but would file criminal charges against the ship's crew. He said they were still investigating who owned the ship. There was no statement from Turkish authorities, and no company immediately claimed ownership of the ship. Intelligence reports earlier pointed to possible arms smuggling in the area involving a foreign ship, officials explained. They said the guns may have been intended for Muslim militants, communist guerrillas or for the private armies of politicians gearing up for next year's election.

Common Threads in Transnational Organized Crime and Gun Violence

Whether investigating an illicit transnational drug trafficking market or a criminal group involved in cross-border gun trafficking, investigators are increasingly recognizing that illicit markets and criminal groups are closely associated with guns and violence. Firearms and their related materials, such as ammunition, can have two significant roles. They can a) be the primary commodity of the market itself; or b) the instruments that are relied upon by the criminal groups to exert the physical force required to direct and sustain their illicit markets.

"Organized crime has diversified, gone global and reached macro-economic proportions: illicit goods are sourced from one continent, trafficked across another, and marketed in a third ... trans-border intelligence-sharing and law enforcement cooperation are essential."

(Antonio Maria Costa, Executive Director, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2010)

The misuse of firearms by criminals operating within illicit markets clearly results in injury and death—not only to the confederates involved but to innocent bystanders as well. Society must act on behalf of these victims to stop armed criminals before they can shoot and kill again.

Every Crime Gun Has a Story to Tell

Working with the belief that "every crime gun has a story to tell"⁹, law enforcement greatly benefits by taking a "presumptive approach" to the investigation of crimes involving the misuse of firearms. This approach is based on the premise that:

- Valuable information for law enforcement use can be extracted from crime guns and related evidence.
- People, processes, and technology are available to help sustain the production of actionable information from this data which can help police solve and prevent gun related crimes.

Generally, the available data about guns falls into two broad categories: crime related and non-crime related.

- Crime related information triggers the moment the firearm is unlawfully possessed or used to commit a crime. It includes fired ammunition components—the bullets and cartridge cases discharged during the commission of the crime. Crime related information also includes other

⁹ The information in this section, "Every Crime Gun Has a Story to Tell", is taken from the book *The 13 Critical Tasks: An Inside-Out Approach to Solving More Gun Crime*, by Pete Gagliardi (ISBN:978-0-615-39145-8, Forensic Technology, 2010).

forensic data, such as DNA, fingerprints, and hairs and fibers which can help police identify the unlawful gun possessor.

- Non-crime related information is collected according to the law during the course of regulated commerce associated with the manufacture, distribution, sale, and transfer of firearms.

Historically, policy makers have viewed regulatory controls (i.e.: registration programs) as a means of preventing or minimizing the misuse of firearms. The regulatory systems that support these controls collect an enormous amount of information which can also be of significant value to police in developing tactics and strategies to deal with gun related crimes. It is the ability of law enforcement to legally and efficiently access this non-crime information which provides the ability to trace the history of legal transactions in what is commonly referred to as a "gun trace pursuant to a criminal investigation".

However, once the trace has been conducted, the trace information then falls into the category of crime related information and must be efficiently and effectively managed in order for it to be of tactical or strategic law enforcement value in gun related investigations. Some countries are taking steps to capture ballistic data from non-crime related guns as part of the firearm regulatory process. This data becomes an additional identifier to be linked with the other non-crime related information required in the normal course of legal firearm commerce.

Where Can the Data Be Found?

The information can be found in two places: inside the gun and outside the gun. From the inside of the gun comes ballistic data in the form of unique markings left on fired ammunition components by the internal working parts of a gun. From the outside comes identifying data in the form of make, model, and serial number that can be used to track the transactional history of the gun. For example, every gun made in the U.S. since 1968, by law, must bear certain identifying information that is visible on the outside, such as the name and location of the manufacturer and a unique serial number. In addition, gun manufacturers and dealers must keep certain records documenting their firearm acquisition and disposition transactions in the regular course of their business.

Performing what is called a crime gun trace, police can trace the history of a recovered crime gun by backtracking along the "paper trail" of firearm transactions from the day the gun was manufactured to its first retail sale. In addition, other valuable forensic data, such as DNA, fingerprints, and trace evidence, which can help police identify the gun possessor, can be found on the surface bearing areas of the firearm and ammunition components.

How Can Data Inside and Outside the Gun Be of Value?

The information from inside and outside a gun can have crime solving tactical and strategic value.

- Tactical information is, for the purposes of this discussion, information that is generated over the short term which has immediate relevance and value to a particular event or series of related events.
- Strategic information is information that is collected over the long term which can be used to identify patterns and trends for quantification and targeting purposes, informed decision making, and resource alignment.

For example, ballistic data from inside the gun can link a gang member's weapon to a crime or series of crimes. It can also link crimes in which the same firearm was used so that police can leverage the information known

about each crime to generate additional investigative leads. Crime gun trace data from outside the gun, such as a serial number, can be used tactically to help police identify the first legal purchaser of the firearm, which in turn can lead them to the person who misused it in a criminal act. It can also be used strategically to identify patterns and trends in crime gun markets. DNA and fingerprint data from outside the gun can help police identify the actual possessor when there is more than one possibility. For example, consider the common police motor vehicle stop in which a crime gun is seized from under the front seat of a car occupied by four people. The question is: who actually possessed the firearm—one, two, or all four? Obviously, this information is important in sustaining a conviction when the possession of the firearm is unlawful. However, if the ballistic data was to tie the gun to a previous murder, the answer to the question of possession rises to an even higher level of importance.

From practical experience, one thing is clear, unless we are able to collect and analyze accurate information about the criminal misuse of firearms across a city, state, province, or country, we cannot begin to apply effective law enforcement tactics and design new strategies to address the problem. Without this critical information gathered in a timely manner, we are destined to use inefficient work processes resulting in misdirected and wasted resources. Without timely information from which we can generate actionable intelligence, we are left blindfolded, with one hand tied behind our backs.

Leveraging and Increasing Cross-border Data Sharing Using IBIN

IBIN: INTERPOL Ballistic Information Network

IBIN was created in 2009, providing a platform for the large-scale international sharing and comparing of ballistic data. Just as fingerprint data can link crimes and criminals across international borders, IBIN can identify matches between pairs of spent bullets and cartridge cases within minutes, thereby helping forensic experts give police investigators timely information about crimes, guns, and suspects. The initiative was launched in February with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between INTERPOL and Forensic Technology Inc. An IBIN steering committee was established, comprising laboratory and National Central Bureau (NCB) representatives from six member countries, followed by the launch of a pilot network. By the end of 2009, IBIN contained in excess of 71,000 ballistic records.¹⁰

Forensic Technology is the developer of the Integrated Ballistics Identification System (IBIS®) which has been adopted by over 50 countries around the world as their ballistics identification technology standard. Through the use of IBIS technology, INTERPOL created a network that enables any INTERPOL member country that is equipped with IBIS, to share and compare ballistic data.¹¹ This network, IBIN, is the only international ballistic data sharing network in the world that is able to facilitate and sustain the large-scale cross-border exchange of ballistic data. As with any tool,

¹⁰ INTERPOL Annual Report 2009, www.interpol.int

¹¹ INTERPOL, in collaboration with Forensic Technology Inc., is currently investigating the possibility of allowing member countries not yet equipped with IBIS to share and compare ballistic data (on a limited basis) with other member countries that have implemented IBIS and are active participants to the IBIN program.

IBIN is maximized when using an established set of processes designed to leverage its effectiveness in transnational crime solving investigations.

Valuable crime solving technology like IBIS® exists today. These can help police process a firearm that has been seized for cause during a routine car stop to a series of prior murders. Fired bullets and cartridge cases collected at one crime scene can be linked to a series of previous crimes. The police can then combine and leverage the pieces of information known about each crime. With more “pieces of the puzzle” in hand, police can see a clearer picture of what transpired, helping them find a suspect more quickly. For decades, automated ballistic identification systems have been carefully studied and have proven valuable in helping solve gun related crimes, particularly crimes lacking suspects or leads. When networked, these systems enable the quick searching of multiple ballistic databases across local, regional, and international jurisdictions, helping to produce leads that would have otherwise remained undetected.

**A Platform
Enabling the
International
Sharing and
Comparing of
Ballistics Data**

INTERPOL'S IBIN Program leverages the power of automated ballistics technology to provide the global law enforcement community with a “world-wide ballistics data sharing network”. This powerful network has the sustainable capacity to link evidence from gun crimes and test fires from guns seized by police across any illicit transnational market and from any transnational criminal group. As the preceding articles have underlined, ballistics data has been proven to routinely generate actionable information for crime solving and criminal tracking purposes.¹² With such a network in place, internationally mobile criminals who use firearms to further their illicit activities can no longer escape detection.

Speaking before a large group of police executives at a forum on guns and crime, Kenneth Melson, then Acting Director of the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), spoke highly of IBIS technology and its use in the National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN). The NIBIN network is comprised of 200 ATF-managed IBIS systems that are used by law enforcement agencies across the United States. Mr. Melson referred to NIBIN as a “... tremendous investigative tool ...” and added “We in the law enforcement community need to recognize that NIBIN is to firearms what fingerprints were to personal identification over 100 years ago.”¹³

In the “Case for Action” section of this white paper, INTERPOL Secretary General Noble is quoted as saying: “When the criminals operate in multiple countries throughout the world, we must cast as wide a net as possible to catch those valuable pieces of information that will allow us to identify and apprehend those responsible. This is our best defense against transnational illicit networks, whether they are involved in armed robbery, drug trafficking, terrorism, human smuggling or any other crime.” The IBIN Program brings INTERPOL and its member's one step closer to realizing the Secretary General's vision—IBIN is an example of how crime solving power can be leveraged by member countries working through INTERPOL. In light of the crime threats facing the world today, efficient and effective processes must be established to maximize the investigative potential of tools like IBIN. The

¹² Research Report, Dr. Anthony Braga, *Gun Enforcement and Ballistics Imaging Technology in Boston*, John F. Kennedy School of Government, 2008

¹³ Critical Issues in Policing Series, *Guns and Crime: Breaking New Ground By Focusing on the Local Impact*, Police Executive Research Forum, May 2010.

results produced through IBIN will contribute to not only the safety of our hometowns but to the security of our homeland as well.

A Best Practice Model: The INTERPOL Field Operations Support Programs

In searching for efficient and effective processes to implement IBIN, one does not have to look much further than INTERPOL's front door. INTERPOL routinely formulates Field Operations Support Programs. These support programs have targeted both illicit transnational markets and transnational criminal groups. In addition to operational support, they also contain elements of education and training to help ensure sustainable results.

Examples of Field Operations Support Programs Applied to Illicit Transnational Markets¹⁴

- FUSION TASK FORCE (FTF) – INTERPOL: A Field Operations Support Program, the Fusion task Force (FTF) is made up of six projects, each focusing on a specific geographical region. The FTF's primary objectives are to identify members of groups involved in international terrorist activity and to provide a searchable database of wanted or suspected terrorists. At the end of 2009, 121 member countries were contributing to the terrorism-related matters, with 218 designated contact officers forming a global network of specialists in this area.
- COSTA – INTERPOL: A Field Operations Support Program involving the countries of Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda. Program's key characteristics: Two days in duration; Seizure of more than two tons of illegal ivory; Arrest of more than 100 people; Firearms, ammunition, vehicles and other illegal wildlife seized.
- ABICOKE – INTERPOL: A Field Operations Support Program involving Côte d'Ivoire and France. Program's key characteristics: One year duration; Arrest in Abidjan of the two main suspects in a network responsible for trafficking huge quantities of cocaine from Côte d'Ivoire to Europe.
- CANS – INTERPOL: A Field Operations Support Program involving the countries of Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Switzerland, and Turkey. Program's key characteristics: One month duration; Dismantled international drug market; Arrest of two major drug traffickers in Nigeria and two in Europe, & drug couriers.

Examples of Field Operations Support Programs Applied to Transnational Criminal Groups¹⁵

- THE PINK PANTHERS GANG – INTERPOL: A Field Operations Support Program targeting a group responsible for armed jewel robberies worth millions of Euros committed across the world. Program's key characteristics: Rifat Hadziahmetovic, a national of Montenegro and subject of an INTERPOL Red notice, was arrested by Cypriot police after an identity check against INTERPOL databases revealed he was travelling on a forged passport, fingerprint checks confirmed his identity; Two other individuals were arrested in Paris in collaborative efforts between the Swiss and French authorities following a jewelry raid in Lausanne, Switzerland.
- INFRA-RED – INTERPOL: A Field Operations Support Program involving the countries of Australia, Belgium, Canada, Colombia, Jamaica, United Kingdom, and United States. Program's key characteristics: One month duration; 45 fugitives, wanted for serious crimes such as murder, rape and drug trafficking, were either located or arrested worldwide.

¹⁴ INTERPOL Annual Report 2009, www.interpol.int

¹⁵ Ibid.

End Note

The public safety benefits of the transnational collection and sharing of ballistics data are quite clear when framed in the proper context and viewed from the proper perspective. Why? Because suitable **context** and **perspective** are essential in order for policy makers to have intelligent discussions on matters affecting public safety. Without these crucial elements, issues get examined through a filtered optic and narrow viewpoint, and public policy debates inevitably spin out of control and fail to produce the desired outcomes.

Obviously, the transnational collection and exchange of ballistics data can facilitate the cross-jurisdictional efforts in situations where the need has been determined by the circumstances of the case itself. But more importantly, the proper **context** for transnational collection and sharing of ballistics data is one which focuses law enforcement and forensic efforts in three major areas where gun crime and violence is most likely to occur:

- **Specific border frontier regions:** for example, populated geographical areas in proximity to borders such as the South-West border between Texas and Mexico, or the North-East Basque region of Spain neighboring the French South-West border, or the North-South Finland-Russia border, etc;
- **Specific transnational illicit markets:** for example, the trafficking of drugs, arms, or the illegal poaching activities, etc;
- **Specific criminal groups:** for example, the transnational gangs, drug cartels, or terrorists groups, etc.;

The correct context for the transnational collection and sharing of ballistics data is not and never was about gun crime at a macro-level. The fact that ballistic identification networks such as IBIN can today facilitate the exchange of ballistics data across several countries is not the mission espoused herein. The goal of the transnational collection and sharing of ballistics data is to facilitate information exchange among the law enforcement stakeholders affected by the "regional environments" described under the three contexts provided above in order to provide a substantial return on resource investment.

"I am confident of the potential for success associated with the transnational collection and sharing of ballistics data because, in my 24 years with the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) where as an investigator, first-level supervisor, senior executive and Special Agent in charge of the New York Division, I saw a smorgasbord of criminal types from first timers to career kingpins engaged in the illicit trafficking and use of all types of firearms into and out of the U.S. and other countries in every corner of the world as well. In addition to my 30 years of total law enforcement experience, my ten plus years in the ballistics data sharing business has taught me that: criminals move and so do guns – it all depends upon the demographics, the illicit markets and the criminals involved."

(the Author)

The proper **perspective** on the transnational collection and sharing of ballistics data can only be achieved through the direct involvement of high-level law enforcement, public policy and academic experts. People like those identified in this paper who, through their global experience and research, have developed the capacity to view transnational crime issues from a wide

perspective and who are competently dedicated to a primary responsibility of proposing sound public policy.

Based upon convincing viewpoints provided by international experts identified in this paper, and from his own personal experience, the Author believes that transnational collection and sharing of ballistics data can most certainly be applied within a number of appropriate contexts to give the

international law enforcement community an effective new crime fighting tool.

The more ballistic data that is collected and shared over time, the more opportunities police forces will have to generate actionable intelligence for crime solving and prevention. The more crimes that are solved and prevented through ballistic intelligence sharing, the more value that is generated in terms of peace and justice for all, and the more social benefits derived from the lowering of the overall economic impact of gun violence.

For example, in their book entitled "**Gun Violence: the real costs**¹⁶", well known researchers Phillip J. Cook and Jens Ludwig demonstrate that the cost of gun violence in the United States alone is of the order of \$100 billion per year. They conclude by saying that: "Gun violence can be reduced, and many of the interventions designed to separate guns from violence essentially pay for themselves."

Every day that we wait, a criminal somewhere remains free to shoot and kill again... and the cost of crime on our global society rises ever higher.

¹⁶ "Gun Violence : The Real Costs". Oxford Univ. Press (2000), P.J.Cook & J.Ludwig. ISBN 0-19-513793-0