

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am very pleased to welcome you all here tonight.

I should add in welcoming you here that not only am I pleased, but that I also feel unusually secure. I trust that you too all feel safe in Tallinn and in Estonia.

For a country, security and safety is an open-ended concept. One without a clearly defined moment where we can say now we have done our job and all is fine.

A democratic country that succeeds through the efforts of its law enforcement agencies in giving its citizens a sense of security cannot rest on its laurels; in security and public safety we never achieve an endpoint where we can say we have solved everything.

You know this all too well.

In today's globalised and often borderless world, enhancing security and public safety assumes what is best expressed by one of the most important messages of the International Association of the Chiefs of Police: International police co-operation. Not abstract or general co-operation, but co-operation rationally regulated by policy makers and at the same time based on the mutual trust of police institutions.

The workshops of your conference reflect the problems faced by the police forces of different countries in the modern world: Media and violence, IT-crime, Behaviour assessment (in the case of school shootings)...

All these phenomena are well-known also to the Estonian police. In fact, there are many examples of successful co-operation between the Estonian police and police forces in partner countries – hopefully, the details of such cases will sometime in the future be available for textbooks meant for police training.

Our experiences also confirm my long-held belief that police organisations cannot be divided into old and new, because the only real criterion by which we can evaluate police forces is the level of professionalism.

As a representative of the host country, I take the liberty of briefly mentioning cases where the Estonian police force was involved, and which bespeak the necessity of well-advised and efficient co-operation. Co-operation means also training and exchange of experience, which is especially vital with new developments in information technology and as consequence also new developments in IT-based crime, or cyber-crime.

It is precisely in the area of IT crimes that co-operation, international co-operation is the *sine qua non* of successful police work today.

Cyber-crime is almost by definition a cross-border phenomenon. You all know the meaning of

the terms “fishing” and “password harvesting”. These are new crimes, ones often impossible to solve.

In one case owners of US bank accounts fell victim to “password harvesting” by two residents of Estonia and as a consequence were robbed of at least ten million dollars. But a year-long joint investigation as co-operative effort between the Estonian Central Criminal Police and the Federal Bureau of Investigation in the US was successfully concluded by apprehending the criminals and proving their guilt in a court of law.

A second case involves co-operation between Estonian and Finnish police forces, where a joint investigation team was formed within seven hours of a crime to find a swift and professional solution to a blackmail case, which also involved the threat of hostage-taking.

A third case I would like to mention involving a joint operation of Estonian and Russian police forces, who after a long, time-consuming investigation and surveillance apprehended a group of smugglers involved in smuggling drugs as well as weapons and explosives.

All three cases prove that more than bureaucratic and occasionally over-regulated administration, it is ultimately mutual trust that counts, along with professionalism, which in addition often relies also on creative, ad hoc solutions – solutions whose value has been proven and justified by decades of hard work.

Those not involved in police work often fail to realise how much police professionals need to rely on creativity, on insights, on ingenuity.

After all, the criminals you must deal with today, especially when it comes to cyber-crime, are not stupid. Indeed they often are exceedingly clever and creative. Which means that you, our nations’ law enforcement agencies and officials need to be even more clever, even more creative.

And, thankfully, you are.

Directives composed by international organisations cannot suffocate or obstruct the creativity and intuition of police surveillance work. This should be one of the most important messages to politicians or administrators formulating policies. You can rest assured that the President of Estonia is one politician who listens to his law enforcement professionals.

And now, I wish to propose a toast to your collective professionalism and mutual co-operation, to our shared security.

Thank you!