

## How INTERPOL Can Protect Itself from Abuse by Corrupt Member Countries

By Michelle A. Estlund on July 28, 2011

How could INTERPOL shield itself from being used as a political weapon against a corrupt country's own people? In the last post, I referenced an article by CNN writer Libby Lewis entitled, "[Are some countries abusing Interpol?](#)" In the article, Lewis raises numerous questions, one of which is whether a more in-depth review process should occur prior to INTERPOL's acceptance of Red Notice requests.

As it stands, INTERPOL relies on member countries to be aware of and observe the rules requiring that Red Notice requests be made legally, in compliance with the country's own laws and INTERPOL's rules. A Red Notice request is processed with a presumption of validity and remains so unless it is challenged specifically, or otherwise brought to INTERPOL's attention as being improper.

Senator Jeff Sessions from Alabama reportedly requested a revision of that process, and his is a good idea. For INTERPOL, however, the thought may be rather daunting. Imagine having to review the validity of thousands of Red Notice requests, particularly when they originate from 188 countries across the globe, all with differing legal systems and law enforcement practices. Where is one to start?

Here's an idea. Start by amending the rules and governing texts of INTERPOL to allow for the existence, funding, and operation of a small human rights monitoring division. Charge that division with the limited duty of studying and documenting human rights violation activity among member countries. When a member country with a questionable history of violating human rights requests a Red Notice from INTERPOL, require additional information and checks from the country to guard against improper requests being granted.

All member countries must contribute financially in order to be members of INTERPOL, and as discussed [here](#) before, INTERPOL occasionally benefits from other monetary contributions. Funding such a division is within easy reach. An amendment providing for a human rights monitoring division, with the accompanying appropriation of funding, would allow INTERPOL to do the one thing that would allow it to continue serving as a law enforcement aid while maintaining a sense of integrity: trust but verify.

As always, thoughts and comments are welcomed.