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UNICRI IPO Closing Speech
Sandro Calvani, Director

Your Excellency, honored guests, ladies and gentlemen, Good afternoon and welcome to the culmination of this event. This International Permanent Observatory Seminar marks the final event, in a series of meetings that The United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute has convened in support of the efforts of the People's Republic of China for the Olympic Games that will take place in Beijing in 2008.

I would first like to extend my most gracious gratitude to Under-Secretary-General for the United Nations Department for Safety and Security, Sir David Veness, for having Chaired this event. Your unwavering strategic support for UNICRI's activities is highly valued.

I would like to take this opportunity to show our appreciation to Compagnia di San Paolo, a Turin-based Foundation, for contributing to the IPO Programme as its main donor, and providing the financial support to make this event possible.

To the officials who have traveled from near and far to impart their knowledge of security during major events onto those responsible for the security of the Beijing Olympic Games, thank you.

Finally, to the People's Republic of China, the Beijing Public Security Bureau, and in particular General Ma Zenchuan, we are honored that you have chosen UNICRI to assist in the delicate planning of the security for the Olympic Games in Beijing 2008. For those who may not be aware the number 8 in China is an auspicious one – this carries great meaning for the Olympic Games. The Chinese authorities maintained that the 2008 Olympics should commence in the luckiest way possible, so rather than have the games begin towards the end of August as previously planned, the launch 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing will be on August 8th 2008 at 8:08:08 pm. Perhaps is it not only luck that has brought UNICRI and China together, but also a strong will to work collectively to prevent grave crimes at major events.

We at UNICRI are aware that the 2008 Olympic Games is not merely a sporting event. An occasion of this magnitude draws scores of spectators, athletes and officials from every corner of the earth – it is a cultural and a geo-political event that requires meticulous planning.

The knowledge that has been shared and the exchange of information among the participants of this event have been invaluable. The success of IPO is due to precisely this – the fact that representatives from many countries found a common ground, were offered important resources, and decided to sit around a table and put concrete actions in place.

As a strategic partner of UNICRI, we are confident that after the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, China can transfer the intelligence and knowledge gained through the security preparations for the Games, onto other countries in Asia and around the world. The 2nd

Annual IPO Conference might be an ideal opportunity to present to the international community the possible set of best practices that the experience of Beijing 2008 will develop. UNICRI convened the first IPO Conference at the United Nations Headquarters in New York in December 2006. It was the first time that the issue of Major Events Security was specifically addressed at the UN Headquarters.

I now take this opportunity to ask all of you, specifically those who have participated in the IPO events for the first time, to adopt the IPO spirit and expand our community of experts and institutions willing to support the goal of enjoying safe major events, protected from violence, be it by organized crime, public disorder or terrorism. This is necessary to support the legacy of the IPO, where reciprocal help is available, without any distinction between donors and beneficiaries.

We are now expanding IPO through a number of regional initiatives such as IPO Americas – mainly focusing on Latin America and the Caribbean. We are doing this in cooperation with the Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism (CICTE), which is an agency of the Organization of American States (OAS). UNICRI is currently developing a network of National Focal Points on Major Event Security within the Americas in view of setting up a regional mechanism, within the framework of IPO, to facilitate technical, cross border cooperation in relation to major event security. In the following year, the National Focal Points will meet together for the first time in a regional conference convened by UNICRI and supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of the Interior of Spain. This initiative is the second regional programme launched by UNICRI, the first was the 'Coordinating National Research Programme on Security

During Major Events in Europe' (EU-SEC), which in a few weeks, will bring together 24 EU Member States plus EUROPOL.

Stepping forward in this field, UNICRI will convene at the beginning of next year, a conference in North Africa, which will include, inter alia, the participation of the donor community. I would like to take this opportunity to extend an early invitation to this event to all of the participants of this seminar.

In conclusion, I would like to again, express my gratitude to all of the participants in this Seminar who thought it beneficial to share their knowledge so that the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing will be a successful, safe event.

Once again, Sir David Veness, please accept my deepest appreciation for Chairing this event.

Finally, we are deeply honored that the People's Republic of China has selected and entrusted UNICRI with assisting in the security preparations for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, and we hope to continue a fruitful relationship with China, even after the close of the Olympic Games.

THANK YOU.