

FOR UNCOPS 2026 New Zealand Police Commissioner intervention, Session 3

- *Session 3 will focus on strengthening international cooperation to confront complex transnational challenges like organized crime and climate-related conflict, emphasizing the need for shared expertise, legislative support and real-time information exchange. It will provide a platform for Member States to articulate how the UN system and its partners can better assist national law enforcement agencies in tackling these cross-border threats.*

Statement of New Zealand Police Commissioner Richard Chambers

Mr/Madam Chair

It is a pleasure to be here at my first UNCOPS Summit as New Zealand's Commissioner of Police.

I have been a Police officer for over 30 years and have had the privilege to be Commissioner for the last 18 months.

I am fortunate to come from a country which is relatively safe, and has a diverse but predominantly peaceful society.

New Zealand sits in the Pacific region. Our region has become a highway for drug traffickers and organized criminal groups who seek to profit from exploiting our people.

Transnational serious and organised crime is impacting on the security and way of life of communities in New Zealand and across the Pacific. Organised criminal networks that do not have respect for borders, for laws, or for the people they seek to exploit are a serious threat to the security of our region.

These criminal groups see us as lucrative markets – and easy targets.

It is our job to prove them wrong.

At this summit there is a wealth of law enforcement experience. I welcome the chance to engage with many of you and I thank UNCOPS for the opportunity.

We cannot counter organised crime by working alone. It requires a collective response which targets the enablers of transnational organised crime: technology, violence and corruption.

These criminal groups are increasingly sophisticated. The technology and tactics used to try to thwart law enforcement bodies require us to stay a step ahead.

That means investing in technology and sharing information. It means guarding against corruption at home and cooperating with each other.

It is encouraging to see this issue is being given increased priority by leaders and governments in many countries, including New Zealand.

It is also encouraging that law enforcement agencies are increasingly working together to combat it, globally, regionally, and in partnership with each other.

In May, the chiefs and commissioners of the Pacific came together at the Pacific Transnational Crime Summit in Nadi, Fiji.

We discussed what we were already doing across the region to disrupt organised criminal networks, and what more could be done.

There are opportunities to do more, particularly when it comes to maritime operations and tackling corruption. We committed to working together on this.

The problem of organised crime that is now impacting on the Pacific does not start in the Pacific.

That means we must look for opportunities to work with others - as New Zealand Police is doing with Colombia - to tackle this and disrupt criminal cartels at source.

New Zealand's long-standing work supporting our Pacific neighbours' law enforcement agencies is also a key part of our contribution to the region. It helps ensure the Pacific region is more resilient to the threat posed by transnational crime and its enablers.

Thank you.

ENDS