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REMOVAL OF AN INTERPOL RED NOTICE: A PRACTICAL METHODOLOGY

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Purpose of the document:
To develop an applied and legally sound model for challenging and removing an INTERPOL Red Notice, to identify the key legal grounds for finding data non-compliant with the Organization's rules, to describe the procedural logic of working with the CCF, and to propose a coherent defense strategy in cases where international search mechanisms are used as an instrument of pressure, extradition risk, or transnational reputational restriction.

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The removal of an INTERPOL Red Notice is, in practice, almost never a simple technical procedure. Formally, it concerns an assessment of whether the data complies with the Organization's rules. In reality, however, it is a complex legal process in which the defense must work simultaneously with several levels of risk: international search measures, possible extradition, restrictions on movement, banking compliance consequences, migration-related consequences, and reputational harm.

The widespread belief that a Red Notice is some sort of international arrest warrant is legally incorrect. INTERPOL itself expressly states that notices and diffusions are instruments of international police cooperation, and that their legal effect is determined by the domestic law of each individual state. At the same time, red diffusions and Red Notices are reviewed for compliance with the INTERPOL Constitution and the Rules on the Processing of Data, and red notices are subject to specific requirements concerning the seriousness of the offense, the quality of identifying information, the existence of a judicial decision or warrant, and the international interest of the case.

This leads to the main practical conclusion: the procedure for removing a Red Notice is not a forum for arguing guilt or innocence. The CCF does not reconsider the national criminal case on the merits

and does not replace a court or an extradition authority. Its role is limited to assessing whether the data held within the INTERPOL system is compatible with the Organization's Constitution, its rules on data processing, and the applicable human rights standards. INTERPOL expressly clarifies that the CCF does not decide whether extradition should proceed, does not terminate national proceedings, and does not deal with administrative matters such as visas or certificates of good standing.

That is why a strong deletion request is not built around the general proposition that "the case was fabricated," but around the demonstration of a specific incompatibility with INTERPOL rules. The most important lines of argument usually concern four main areas. First, the true nature of the case, where a criminal appearance conceals a political, private-law, corporate, family, or quasi-economic conflict. Second, violations of Article 2 of the INTERPOL Constitution, where international cooperation in the particular form at issue conflicts with the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Third, defects in data quality, procedural irregularities, lack of sufficient individualization of the applicant's role, weakness of the factual description, and disproportionality of the search request. Fourth, the absence of a genuine intention to seek extradition, or the non-cooperation of the relevant NCB, which the CCF's own practice has already treated as a serious ground for finding the data non-compliant.

INTERPOL's official materials confirm that this is not a theoretical framework. In 2024, the CCF received 2,586 admissible requests and closed 2,717 requests, which was a record. Of the 1,077 closed deletion requests, 703 were admissible requests from individuals whose data was in fact present in the INTERPOL system. In 50 cases, the data was found non-compliant specifically because of the total lack of cooperation from the source NCB, and overall a substantial share of deletion requests decided by the CCF ended with a finding of non-compliance. This demonstrates that removal practice is a real and effective mechanism, not a decorative procedure.

At the same time, the effectiveness of the procedure is limited both in time and in scope. INTERPOL indicates that access requests are generally examined within four months from the date the request is found admissible, while requests for correction and/or deletion are generally examined within nine months. Before a final decision is issued, correspondence takes place, consultations are conducted with the General Secretariat and, where necessary, with the source of the data. In practice, this means that even a strong deletion case does not instantly eliminate the risk of detention, border screening, secondary banking restrictions, or extradition pressure. Moreover, amendments to the Statute of the CCF approved in 2025 clarified, among other things, the limits of review concerning information circulated directly between NCBs, as well as the timelines of interaction between the General Secretariat and the Commission.

This report proceeds from the premise that a removal strategy must be built as a multi-layered defense rather than a single letter to INTERPOL. It must include an assessment of the legal nature of the case, the structuring of arguments under Articles 2 and 3 of the Constitution, work with the Rules on the Processing of Data, preparation of a compact but strong evidentiary package, coordination with national defense, assessment of extradition risk, and parallel work with migration and compliance consequences. Only under such an approach does a request to the CCF cease to be a desperate hope and become a manageable legal tool.

2. THE LEGAL NATURE OF A RED NOTICE AND THE LIMITS OF COMMON ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT IT

The first point that must be established in any report on Red Notice removal is the correct legal characterization of the instrument itself. A Red Notice is not an international arrest warrant. It is not

an autonomous quasi-judicial act, nor is it a supranational order binding on all states. INTERPOL characterizes notices and diffusions as channels of international police cooperation, while the legal consequences of any given publication depend on the domestic law of the state receiving the data.

At the same time, it would be naive to underestimate the practical effect of a Red Notice. Even if, formally, the notice does not create a universal duty to arrest, it may trigger a cascade of legal and factual consequences: detention at the border, provisional detention pending extradition, secondary migration restrictions, red-flag status in banking and KYC procedures, disruption of international travel, reputational pressure, and a reshaping of bargaining positions in a private or corporate conflict. That is precisely why removal practice is not optional, but a central component of international defense.

The legal logic of a Red Notice is structured around the Rules on the Processing of Data. For a red notice, at a minimum, the following elements are required: the offense must be sufficiently serious; if the individual is sought for prosecution, the maximum penalty must be at least two years' imprisonment or a heavier sanction; if the individual is sought to serve a sentence, there must be a threshold of at least six months' imprisonment or six months remaining to be served; the request must be of interest for international police cooperation; sufficient identifying information must be provided; and there must be an adequate judicial basis. At the same time, the Rules allow publication, in exceptional circumstances, even outside the standard threshold, where the General Secretariat, after consulting with the NCB, considers such a notice to be of special importance for international police cooperation.

This is where the first fundamental trap for the defense appears. Many applicants structure their case as if it were enough to prove that the national accusation is "unfair" or "incorrect." For the CCF, that is not enough. The Commission does not examine generalized moral unfairness, but the compatibility of the data with INTERPOL rules. Therefore, even a weak or questionable criminal case does not automatically disappear from the system. The applicant must show why the international processing of the data is incompatible with the INTERPOL Constitution, its neutrality, the requirements of lawfulness, proportionality, accuracy, fair processing, and the purposes of ordinary-law police cooperation.

From this follows a second important conclusion: a successful removal strategy always requires translating national defects into the language of INTERPOL rules. It is not enough to say "the trial was in absentia and unfair"; the stronger formulation is that "an in absentia judgment combined with the absence of reliable information about notification raises doubts as to compatibility with Article 2 and due process requirements." It is not enough to say "the case is commercial"; the stronger formulation is that "the factual core of the dispute indicates a private dispute or a corporate control conflict, which requires heightened scrutiny as to whether international search measures are appropriate at all." It is not enough to say "the authorities remain silent"; the stronger formulation is that "the lack of cooperation from the NCB undermines the reliability of the data and has already been treated by the CCF as a ground for non-compliance." In removal cases, the form of the argument is often as important as its substance.

3. THE NORMATIVE ARCHITECTURE OF DATA REMOVAL FROM THE INTERPOL SYSTEM

The normative basis for the removal procedure is built around several documents. First, there is the INTERPOL Constitution, above all Articles 2 and 3. Article 2 requires that the Organization's

activities be conducted in the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Article 3 strictly prohibits the Organization from undertaking any intervention or activities of a political, military, religious, or racial character. Second, there are the Rules on the Processing of Data, which establish the general principles of lawful and fair processing, purpose limitation, data quality, proportionality, access, supervision, and sanctions. Third, there is the Statute of the CCF and its Operating Rules, which define the Commission's powers, the admissibility of requests, the procedure for examining them, and the forms of decision available. INTERPOL's official FAQ expressly identifies these documents as the legal basis of the CCF's work.

The institutional role of the CCF is of particular importance. INTERPOL describes the Commission as an independent body responsible for ensuring that personal data processed through the Organization's channels complies with its rules. The CCF operates in two dimensions: a supervisory and advisory dimension, and a quasi-judicial dimension when it examines requests for access, deletion, correction, and revision. This means that a removal request within the INTERPOL system is not merely a complaint in the abstract sense, but a full procedural mechanism with its own logic of admissibility, consultation, and decision.

Another essential institutional element is the Notices and Diffusions Task Force. INTERPOL states that this specialized multidisciplinary body has, since 2016, carried out a robust review of incoming notices and diffusions for legal and quality compliance, and that since 2018 its role has been expanded to include ongoing review of already existing Red Notices and wanted persons diffusions, including those published before 2016. In the course of such review, the Task Force checks compliance with the INTERPOL Constitution, the Rules on the Processing of Data, applicable General Assembly resolutions, and the Repository of Practice on Articles 2 and 3. If a given state systematically submits non-compliant requests, the General Secretariat may impose interim or corrective measures, including enhanced review, or partial or complete suspension of the right to process notices and diffusions.

For the defense, this means the following. Removal practice has two layers. The first is ex ante compliance review, which in theory should stop a weak or abusive request before publication. The second is the ex post remedy through the CCF, where the data is already in the system or where an individual suspects that it is and initiates an access/deletion strategy. In some cases, a preliminary request to the CCF before any data is known to exist is treated by INTERPOL as a "pre-emptive request." The Commission does not examine such a request as a full deletion case, but forwards the information to the General Secretariat so that it may be taken into account during any future compliance review.

Finally, an important recent development consists in the amendments to the Statute of the CCF approved by the 93rd General Assembly in 2025. INTERPOL reports that these amendments concerned the scope of review, the examination of requests, and misuse of proceedings. Among other things, it was clarified that the CCF does not review information circulated directly between NCBs, unless a serious breach of the rules is alleged and brought to the CCF's attention in a manner similar to that used to bring such issues to the General Secretariat. It was also established that the General Secretariat must notify the CCF within 45 days as to whether there is data concerning an applicant in the INTERPOL Information System. In addition, priority is now given to a compliance decision by the General Secretariat where an admissible request is received at the same time as an ongoing review of the same data. For removal practice, this is not a cosmetic update but an important guide to how the interaction between the applicant, the CCF, and the General Secretariat will actually be structured.

4. GROUNDS FOR CHALLENGING A RED NOTICE

4.1. Article 3: the political nature of the case or impermissible political instrumentalization

The best-known and most overestimated line of defense is reliance on Article 3 of the INTERPOL Constitution. Yes, the Organization is indeed prohibited from intervening in matters of a political character. However, in practice, not every abusive case falls neatly within Article 3. This is especially true in economic and corporate matters, where the external appearance of the charge may still look like an ordinary-law crime: fraud, embezzlement, abuse of trust, misappropriation, financial misconduct. Therefore, the political motive cannot simply be asserted; it must be demonstrated structurally: who the parties to the conflict are, what connection exists between the criminal prosecution and the public role of the person concerned, political opposition, an internal struggle for power, state capture, an inter-state dispute, or a broader repressive context. The Repository of Practice expressly states that INTERPOL must refrain from publishing a Red Notice where doing so would compromise the Organization's neutrality or otherwise conflict with its mission and the limits imposed by Article 3.

4.2. Article 2: incompatibility with the spirit of human rights and the principle of fair processing

For removal strategy, Article 2 is in many cases more important than Article 3. INTERPOL officially states that respect for fundamental human rights is one of the main principles applicable to the CCF's work. The Repository of Practice explains that even where a matter formally appears to be an ordinary-law case, a Red Notice should not be published if doing so would lead to a violation of fundamental human rights, particularly in the extradition context or because of serious defects in the proceedings. This opens a broad line of argument: unfair trial, lack of proper notification, an in absentia conviction without an effective retrial, procedural exclusion from the possibility of mounting a defense, a systemic risk of ill-treatment, obvious discrimination, or the use of criminal proceedings as an instrument of illegitimate pressure.

4.3. Private dispute, family matter, corporate control conflict

In economic matters, this is one of the most practical grounds for removal. The Rules on the Processing of Data and the Repository of Practice require that international cooperation concern ordinary-law crime, not a private-law core artificially dressed up in criminal form. In the CCF's practice, a distinct place is occupied by cases where the accusation conceals a family matter, debt enforcement, a contract dispute, an inheritance conflict, or a struggle for corporate control. In such cases, the defense must demonstrate that the criminal element is either secondary or artificially built over a primary civil-law or corporate conflict. It is precisely this transformation of a private dispute into an international search measure that renders the Red Notice disproportionate and questionable in light of the purpose of the INTERPOL system.

4.4. Insufficient seriousness and absence of proper international interest

The Rules on the Processing of Data expressly establish thresholds of seriousness and international interest. But the problem is not simply one of the maximum statutory penalty. Even formal compliance with the penalty threshold does not remove the question of the real gravity of the conduct, the degree to which the applicant's role is individualized, and the proportionality of international search measures. In removal cases, the defense often neglects this argument, focusing only on politics or the private nature of the dispute. Yet it may be persuasive before the CCF to argue that the criminal qualification is artificially inflated, and that the international search is disproportionate to the actual

facts, particularly where the conduct is local, old, described only in vague terms, or lacks any clear transnational dimension.

4.5. Absence of a valid judicial basis or defects in the judicial data

The Repository of Practice expressly states that a Red Notice cannot be published in the absence of a valid arrest warrant issued by competent national authorities. For removal purposes, this means that the defense must analyze not only the formal existence of a judicial act, but also its procedural nature, its continued validity, its current status, and its consistency with the stated status of the applicant and the chronology of the case. Sometimes, at the rhetorical level, everything looks severe, but the judicial basis has already been revoked, expired, does not cover all the alleged conduct described, or does not correspond to the information transmitted to INTERPOL. In such situations, the removal request should attack the legal basis of the notice itself, not merely the general unfairness of the case.

4.6. Data quality: vague facts, weak individualization, contradictions, incompleteness

One of the most underestimated yet effective areas of argument concerns data quality. In its FAQ, INTERPOL expressly lists accuracy, proportionality, lawfulness, fairness, and non-discrimination among the core principles of its data protection system. The Notices and Diffusions Task Force reviews notices under Articles 82 to 99 of the Rules, including identity details, judicial data, purpose, and other criteria. If the description of the applicant's role is vague, if there is no clear timeframe, if the alleged damage is abstract, if it is not explained what specific acts are attributed to the applicant, if the material is internally contradictory, or if what is presented as a criminal narrative is really just a collection of generalized statements without proper individualization, then the problem is not merely that the case is weak. It is a defect of data compliance.

4.7. Lack of extradition intent and the misuse of the notice as an instrument of pressure

INTERPOL emphasizes that a Red Notice is intended to locate and provisionally arrest a person with a view to extradition or similar lawful action. If, in practice, the state has no real intention of seeking extradition, if it takes no meaningful action after detention, or if the notice is effectively used only to restrict movement and exert pressure, then the question arises whether the purpose requirement is being respected. In removal cases, this argument is particularly important where a request remains active for years but the will to pursue extradition is absent or merely symbolic. Here, the defense must demonstrate that international search measures have become a self-standing punitive or coercive instrument.

4.8. NCB non-cooperation as an independent ground

The CCF Annual Activity Report for 2024 is of particular value for removal practice. It expressly states that in 50 requests, data was found non-compliant because of the total lack of cooperation from the source NCB. Moreover, the CCF notes that among requests found non-compliant were cases where the violation stemmed either from a clear rule or practice, or from non-cooperation that prevented confirmation of whether the data was lawfully justified. This is an important signal: the source of the data cannot hide indefinitely behind confidentiality while continuing to impose restrictive consequences on the person concerned. If the NCB cannot support its own request, this can and should weigh in favor of deletion.

5. PROCEDURE BEFORE THE CCF: LOGIC, ADMISSIBILITY, TIMELINES, AND LIMITS

The CCF operates through a written procedure. INTERPOL expressly states that the Commission examines requests on the basis of written submissions and supporting documentation, and does not hold oral hearings except in exceptional circumstances. This means that the whole case must be packaged properly in writing from the outset: facts, legal arguments, evidence, translations, structure, and procedural precision are all critical. There will be no lawyer's charisma in a courtroom here, only a written file, and that file either holds together or it does not.

5.1. Admissibility

According to the CCF Procedural Guidelines for Applicants, at the admissibility stage the Commission checks whether the basic conditions have been met: a letter or application form signed by the applicant; use of one of INTERPOL's working languages; submission by the individual concerned or a duly authorized representative; an attached readable and unedited identity document; and, for deletion/correction requests, a summary of arguments with specific reference to the attached documents, together with a power of attorney and proof of authority where a representative is acting. INTERPOL separately emphasizes that inadmissible requests are not stored or processed further, and that the applicant must submit a new, corrected package.

5.2. Verification of the existence of data

Once admissibility is confirmed, the Commission consults the General Secretariat in order to determine whether any data concerning the applicant exists in the INTERPOL Information System. This is a basic point, but one often overlooked. Some defenses immediately start arguing for the deletion of a Red Notice without having confirmation that any such data is actually present. Procedurally, it is often more sound to build the strategy in two steps: an access request, or a combined access/deletion logic where the existence of data is not yet confirmed, and then a full deletion argument once the foundation is known. INTERPOL also indicates that, after the 2025 amendments, the General Secretariat must notify the CCF within 45 days whether there is data concerning an applicant in the system.

5.3. Timelines

INTERPOL states in its FAQ and on its "How to submit a request" page that access requests are generally decided within four months from admissibility, while requests for correction and/or deletion are generally decided within nine months after becoming admissible. It is also indicated that, once the decision becomes final, the applicant is informed within one month. In practice, this means that the deletion procedure is lengthy, and the defense must proceed not on the illusion of a rapid cancellation, but on the understanding that related risks must be managed in parallel.

5.4. Correspondence and additional information

INTERPOL explains that standard communication with the CCF includes confirmation of receipt, information about admissibility and the applicable procedure, and then the result of the examination. Where necessary, the Commission may request additional information, provide an interim reply about the status of the case, or notify the applicant that the case will be considered at the next session. For counsel, this means that a removal strategy must be designed not as a single letter, but as a series of

exchanges in which it is essential not to lose the central line of argument and not to drown in disorganized annexes.

5.5. Limits of the CCF's mandate

The crudest mistake is to ask the CCF for something it cannot give. INTERPOL's FAQ explicitly states that the CCF is not a substitute for judicial authorities responsible for extradition, does not determine whether national proceedings should be discontinued, and does not assist with visas or other administrative matters. Therefore, a submission framed as a request to "prevent extradition" or "terminate the criminal case" is procedurally weak. The correct focus is the compliance of data processing through INTERPOL channels. Everything else may form part of the surrounding context, but not the core of the relief sought.

6. EVIDENTIARY STRATEGY: HOW A STRONG DELETION REQUEST IS BUILT

A strong removal application is almost always more concise than the applicant would like, and more substantial than the opposing side would prefer. INTERPOL itself recommends submitting relevant information in a concise format. This does not mean "short at any cost." It means that the CCF values structure, readability, and a direct link between each argument and its supporting document. A pile of chaotic files does not strengthen a case. It simply creates the effect of informational noise.

6.1. The correct sequence

In practice, an effective structure for a submission usually includes the following: first, a brief procedural overview, identifying who is applying, in what capacity, and what is being requested; second, confirmation of the existence of data or an argument framed in access/deletion logic; third, a concise factual chronology; fourth, separate legal sections dealing with Article 2, Article 3, private dispute or corporate conflict, data quality, due process, extradition intent, and non-cooperation; fifth, the prayer for relief; and sixth, a systematic annex list.

It is precisely this sequence that prevents a removal request from turning into an emotional dossier on the theme of "I was treated unfairly." The CCF works with norms and criteria, not with an overall impression of injustice.

6.2. Chronology as a weapon

In removal practice, chronology is often more important than rhetoric. If one can show that the criminal prosecution began after a corporate conflict, after the termination of an agreement, after the person left the country, after a property dispute, after a political break, or after an unsuccessful attempt to exert pressure at the civil-law level, this significantly strengthens the abuse argument. The same applies in reverse to the procedural chronology within INTERPOL: when the data appeared, whether there were previous requests, whether there was earlier review, whether the status of the warrant changed, whether the state attempted to re-submit substantially similar data.

6.3. Proving the private-law nature of the dispute

Where the matter is economic, one of the strongest lines is re-characterization. The defense must demonstrate that what is at stake is not a classic criminal scheme, but a dispute over obligations,

investments, shares, fiduciary management, control of a company, inheritance, debt, or distribution of assets. Contracts, corporate records, correspondence, civil judgments, arbitral documents, and materials showing the commercial history of the relationship may all be especially important. But the key is not the mass of documents; it is the legal thesis: the criminal form here is secondary to a primary private dispute.

6.4. Due process package

Where the argument is built under Article 2, it is not enough merely to state that “the trial was unfair.” Specific elements must be shown: lack of proper notice, inability to participate in proceedings, absence of an effective retrial, purely formal defense, judicial acts that do not satisfy basic fairness requirements, lack of access to the case file, or an in absentia conviction without real knowledge of the proceedings. The Repository of Practice and the CCF’s official materials show that it is this kind of concrete description of legal guarantees, rather than political slogans, that gives real force to the argument.

6.5. Attack the data, not only the story

The defense often becomes absorbed in refuting the accusation on the merits and forgets to attack the data layer. Yet in removal practice, the following types of questions must be asked: are there sufficient identifiers; does the role attributed to the applicant correspond to the acts described; are there contradictions between the judicial act and the notice; has the warrant expired; is there an active extradition request; have the elements of the offense been distorted; has the international interest been explained; is generic language being used instead of concrete facts? All of this moves the dispute into a domain where the CCF is entitled and obliged to act.

6.6. Working with non-cooperation

If the NCB does not respond, responds only formally, fails to produce documents, or does not confirm key elements, this cannot be treated as just an unpleasant detail. It must become a separate pillar of the strategy. The CCF itself found non-compliance in 50 requests in 2024 specifically because of the total lack of cooperation from the source NCB. This is a rare case in which an official annual report directly helps the defense. Such material should be used not as decoration, but as a practical argument: the INTERPOL system should not sustain restrictive consequences where the source authority cannot or will not defend its own file.

7. TYPICAL APPLICANT MISTAKES AND WEAK POINTS IN THE DEFENSE

The first typical mistake is to confuse a removal request with a national appeal. Before the CCF, it is pointless to dispute every piece of evidence in the criminal case unless the argument is translated into the language of INTERPOL rules. A submission in the style of “I am innocent, the investigation is lying” without reference to Article 2, Article 3, data quality, proportionality, and purpose will often fail not because the applicant is wrong, but because the argument is not addressed to the proper forum.

The second mistake is to overload the case with materials but without structure. When hundreds of pages are dumped into a request without an index, without a narrative summary, and without clear references showing which annex supports which point, this weakens the defense. INTERPOL explicitly requires a summary of arguments with specific reference to attached documents. In other

words, the CCF is not obliged to excavate the truth archaeologically from a pile of papers. That work must be done by the applicant.

The third mistake is to rely only on Article 3. This is especially common in economic cases. Where the political element is not obvious and the applicant ignores Article 2, private dispute analysis, and data quality defects, the submission becomes fragile. In practice, it is almost always stronger to work cumulatively: Article 3 where available, but also Article 2, compliance with the Rules on the Processing of Data, seriousness, judicial basis, due process, proportionality, and non-cooperation.

The fourth mistake is to ignore the time lag. Filing with the CCF does not automatically make a person “safe.” Before a decision is made, travel, stops, extradition measures, and compliance consequences may still occur. INTERPOL itself expressly warns that the CCF does not provide opinions on extradition and does not resolve administrative issues. Therefore, a removal request should never be filed in isolation from travel strategy, extradition counsel, and migration counsel.

The fifth mistake is to fail to prepare a Plan B in the event of partial success or refusal. Even if a Red Notice is deleted, there may still be other forms of data in INTERPOL files, national warrants, renewed attempts to re-submit the matter, or diffusions. Conversely, even if deletion is not achieved at the first stage, that is not always the end: revision may be available where a new fact emerges that would likely have led the Commission to reach a different conclusion, and the FAQ establishes a six-month period from the discovery of such a new fact for making that application.

8. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DELETION PROCEEDINGS AND EXTRADITION, ASYLUM, MIGRATION, AND COMPLIANCE

It is dangerous to treat removal strategy as a self-contained bubble. In practice, it almost always intersects with other legal regimes.

8.1. Extradition

INTERPOL emphasizes that the CCF does not replace authorities responsible for extradition. This means that deletion of a Red Notice and extradition defense must proceed in parallel. Extradition proceedings will focus on issues such as the applicable treaty framework, local criminal procedure, prison conditions, fair trial guarantees, refugee status, specialty, dual criminality, and other matters with which the CCF does not deal. At the same time, a removal request may significantly strengthen the position in extradition proceedings if it successfully demonstrates that the international processing of the data itself is defective.

8.2. Asylum and international protection

In reviewing notices and diffusions, the Notices and Diffusions Task Force, according to INTERPOL’s official description, takes into account external sources and relevant information, including the status of the person, for example whether the person is a political activist or a refugee. The INTERPOL General Assembly has also adopted resolutions interpreting Articles 2 and 3 with specific regard to refugees. It follows that recognized refugee status or international protection may be not merely a secondary circumstance, but a central argument in a removal case.

8.3. The migration dimension

Even where a notice has not yet led to arrest, it may affect residence permits, border checks, visa renewals, naturalization applications, and the general assessment of reliability. At the same time, the CCF expressly states that it does not deal with visas or administrative assistance. This means that counsel should not wait for INTERPOL to “save” the migration situation. A separate line of communication with migration authorities is necessary, often involving explanation that CCF proceedings are ongoing.

8.4. Banking compliance and de-risking

This is the most underestimated aspect. Formally, INTERPOL does not require banks to close accounts. But in practice, KYC and AML systems react extremely nervously to adverse information and law-enforcement flags. Therefore, a removal request often needs to be accompanied by a careful compliance strategy: disclosure that the matter is being challenged, explanation of the legal nature of a Red Notice, and clarification that it is not a conviction and not an international arrest warrant, but a contested data-processing measure. Otherwise, even after successful deletion, the person may spend months dealing with the lingering effects of automatic de-risking.

9. A PRACTICAL DEFENSE MODEL: FROM INITIAL ASSESSMENT TO POST-DECISION STRATEGY

Stage 1. Diagnosis

The first step is to determine whether there is any data in the INTERPOL system at all, what type of data it is, what the national basis is, whether there is an active warrant, where travel risks may arise, and how the criminal, corporate, political, and migration dimensions of the matter relate to one another.

Stage 2. Qualification of the ground

Next, the leading legal logic must be identified: an Article 3 case, an Article 2 case, a private dispute case, a due process case, a data quality case, a lack-of-extradition-intent case, a refugee-protection case, or a combination of these. A strong defense is usually multi-layered, but with one dominant line.

Stage 3. Construction of the written case

A concise but strong submission is prepared:
a short statement of facts;
a legal grounds;
the references to annexes;
power of attorney;
identity documents;
and, where necessary, translations.

Stage 4. Parallel risk management

Before the CCF issues a decision, travel discipline, extradition preparedness, migration positioning, and compliance communications must be put in place. This is the tedious but life-saving part. People

like to believe that a letter to INTERPOL immediately restores freedom of movement. Unfortunately, the world is not so considerate.

Stage 5. Responding to communications from the CCF

Requests from the Commission and interim communications must be answered quickly, precisely, and without damaging the coherence of the defense. Any additional explanation should strengthen the structure of the case, not create a new theory on the fly.

Stage 6. Decision strategy

If the data is deleted, the scope of implementation must be verified: what exactly was removed, whether any other files remain, whether there are continuing national consequences, and whether clarification is needed for banks, employers, migration authorities, or courts. If deletion is refused, the possibility of revision on the basis of a genuinely new fact must be assessed, within the six-month period from discovery of that fact.

Stage 7. Long-term protection

In high-risk cases, one victory is not enough. Monitoring is needed for re-submissions, new diffusions, national relaunchees of the case, or changes in legal qualification. It is precisely here that removal practice connects with a broader strategy of international legal protection.

10. CONCLUSION

The removal of an INTERPOL Red Notice is not a technical “request to lift a search measure,” but an independent form of transnational defense with its own legal logic, its own language of argument, and its own limits. It is a mistake to treat it either as a magic button or as a mere formality. In reality, it is a procedure in which the fate of the case is determined not by pathos and not by the number of complaints submitted, but by the ability to translate a concrete injustice into the precise categories of INTERPOL law: neutrality, human rights, data quality, proportionality, purpose, and procedural fairness.

INTERPOL’s official materials demonstrate two things at once. First, the system does in fact contain mechanisms for correction and deletion of data, and the CCF is not a merely formal body, but a functioning remedial mechanism. Second, the system is overloaded, limited by its mandate, and dependent on the quality of interaction with NCBs and the General Secretariat. In 2024, the CCF closed a record number of cases, and dozens of requests ended with findings of non-compliance, including because of the total lack of cooperation from the source authority. This confirms a simple truth: removal is possible, but never automatic.

In practical terms, this means that the best Red Notice removal strategy is a combined one. It includes correct qualification of the main ground, disciplined written presentation, a compact but strong annex package, synchronization with extradition and migration defense, and readiness to work not only before the decision but also after it. Only in this form does the CCF procedure cease to be a reaction of desperation and become a manageable legal tool.

APPENDIX A. TERMINOLOGY

Red**Notice**

An INTERPOL notice intended to locate a person and provisionally arrest that person for the purpose of extradition or similar lawful action; it is not an international arrest warrant.

Diffusion

A more decentralized mechanism for sending information directly from one NCB to other states; red diffusions are also reviewed for compliance with the Constitution and the Rules on the Processing of Data.

CCF

The Commission for the Control of INTERPOL's Files, an independent body that ensures that personal data processed through INTERPOL channels complies with the Organization's rules and examines requests for access, deletion, and revision.

Article**2****case**

A situation in which the processing of data through INTERPOL is incompatible with the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the requirements of fair, lawful, and proportionate processing.

Article**3****case**

A situation in which international cooperation acquires a political, military, religious, or racial character, which is expressly prohibited by the INTERPOL Constitution.

Non-cooperation**of****an****NCB**

A situation in which the source national bureau fails to respond or fails to substantively support its request, which may lead to a finding that the data is non-compliant.

Revision**application**

An application for reconsideration of a CCF decision on the basis of a new fact that would probably have led to a different outcome if it had been known earlier.

APPENDIX B. DELETION STRATEGY MATRIX

Ground	How it appears	What to rely on	Practical aim
Political element	The prosecution is connected to opposition activity, a public conflict, or state pressure	Article 3, Repository of Practice	To obtain a finding that the notice is incompatible with neutrality
Human rights violation	Trial in absentia, lack of notice, risk of unfair trial	Article 2, due process logic, Repository	To show incompatibility with the spirit of the UDHR
Private dispute	Debt, investment, corporate control, inheritance	Ordinary-law threshold, private dispute logic	To show that the criminal form is secondary
Insufficient seriousness	Weak gravity of conduct, inflated search measures	RPD requirements for red notices	To cast doubt on proportionality
Poor data quality	Vague facts, contradictions, weak individualization	Data quality principles, Articles 82-99 RPD	To undermine the legal basis of processing

No real extradition intent	The notice survives on its own, while no one is genuinely pursuing surrender	Purpose of the Red Notice	To show coercive misuse
NCB non-cooperation	The source does not respond and does not confirm documents	CCF 2024 Activity Report	To obtain a non-compliance finding
New material fact	New status, new court ruling, refugee recognition	Revision rules	To open the way for reconsideration

OFFICIAL SOURCES

1. **Constitution of the ICPO-INTERPOL** - the legal basis of Articles 2 and 3, which establish the framework of neutrality and human rights.
2. **INTERPOL's Rules on the Processing of Data (RPD)** - the key document governing Red Notice requirements, judicial data, purpose, seriousness, identifiers, and proportionality.
3. **About Notices** - the official explanation of the nature of notices and diffusions.
4. **Compliance and review - Notices** - a description of the role of the Notices and Diffusions Task Force, the scope of review, and corrective measures against problematic NCBs.
5. **About the CCF** - the official description of the Commission, its structure, legal basis, and the updates to its Statute after the 2025 General Assembly.
6. **Frequently Asked Questions - CCF** - the limits of the CCF's mandate, timelines for access and deletion requests, and the standard for revision.
7. **How to submit a request** - the official procedure for filing, admissibility requirements, the written nature of the proceedings, and pre-emptive requests.
8. **CCF Procedural Guidelines for Applicants (February 2024)** - practical requirements for admissibility, supporting documents, and the format of argumentation.
9. **Repository of Practice on Articles 2 and 3** - the most useful official material for substantive legal arguments on neutrality and human rights.
10. **Activity Report of the Commission for the Control of INTERPOL's Files for 2024** - statistics on deletion requests, non-compliance findings, and non-cooperation by source NCBs.