

DNA software for international detective work

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Interpol is going to use software based on research by Radboud University Nijmegen and marketed by spin-off company SMART Research BV. The program, called Bonaparte, is able to identify people from their relatives' DNA.

The Netherlands Forensic Institute (NFI) has already used Bonaparte with success: to identify the [victims](#) – the majority of whom were Dutch – of the 2010 Tripoli airplane crash, and in 2012 to find out who had murdered a young Dutch woman, Marianne Vaatstra, in 1999. In addition to the plans to use Bonaparte for tracing the identities of

criminals and victims of crime and disaster on an international level, the program is also planned to help identify unnamed victims of the 1953 flooding that was so disastrous for the southwest of the Netherlands. The program was developed following research carried out by the Dutch Foundation for Neural Networks at the university in Nijmegen.

Yesterday, Interpol announced its intention to apply the Bonaparte system to its DNA database for family analysis. Willem Burgers from SMART Research will soon be travelling to Lyon to install the software and make it compatible with Interpol's system.

'You never know for sure, but perhaps the French find the program extra attractive because it's called Bonaparte. Napoleon made sure everyone was given a surname, and with our Bonaparte program nameless victims get their name back.'

Interpol's Secretary General Ron Noble announced the collaborative arrangement in a speech in which he explicitly thanked the NFI and SMART Research for their contribution to enhancing Interpol's options for using DNA in their detective work. It should be added that Interpol employs DNA investigation not only for identifying *human* victims.

SMART Research BV applies advanced statistical methods and logical techniques from machine learning to solve various complex problems – such as determining how many copies of a national newspaper should be printed, giving advice on wine and food pairings and making identifications using DNA profiles.

More information on: www.smart-research.nl/

Provided by Radboud University Nijmegen

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