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– PRESS RELEASE –

## **CoESS Seeks Harmonisation and Streamlining of Regulations Affecting the Private Security Sector**

**8 December 2010 - Stockholm** Marc Pissens, President of the Confederation of European Security Services (CoESS) and of the Aviation Security Services Association-International (ASSA-I), demanded a clearer and more transparent legal framework from EU policymakers and regulators, relating to the private security sector.

Speaking today at the CoESS/ALMEGA Second European Summit on Private Security, taking place in Stockholm, Sweden, under the auspices of the Swedish EU Presidency, Pissens stated that *“a growing array of European policies and initiatives is placing more security activities into the public field, with greater involvement from the private sector, and therefore increasing public-private security partnerships.”*

However, the current European framework brings with it the possibility of overlapping policies and confusion which could undermine service quality and the necessary guarantees of professionalism. CoESS believes that further harmonisation and streamlining of European policies and initiatives is necessary to develop a more coherent approach towards private security in the European Union.

The Summit, organised by CoESS and ALMEGA Private Security (its Swedish Member Federation), saw the public launch of the sector’s latest White Book ‘Private and Public Security in the Nordic Countries’, which lays out the Nordic perspective on public-private security partnerships. The report is a follow-up edition to the first White Book entitled ‘Private Security and its role in European Security’, which was presented on 15 December 2008 in Paris under the French Presidency of the European Union. It highlights best practice models and lessons learned over many years of creating and sustaining public-private security partnerships in the region.

The Swedish Prime Minister, Fredrik Reinfeldt, underscored the added value of the private security industry: *“The importance of private security is steadily growing. Today, it is not just a few private individuals who demand the services a private security company can offer; increasingly, businesses and government authorities are also relying on private security. As an important complement to the police authorities, security companies provide added value for the security of our fellow citizens”*.

Beatrice Ask, Swedish Minister of Justice, delivered the keynote speech on a Nordic public-private security model, which launched a series of debates on the new study, throughout the day.

Mrs. Ask told the Summit: *“The Nordic approach to public and private sector partnerships in the field of security has been developed in an incredibly challenging and changing environment both at a national and transnational level, in terms of policy and operational activities”*.

The growth of private and public security partnerships has to be viewed against the backdrop of a rapidly changing environment for the private security sector. Increased pressure on national states’ police and security services has led to a burgeoning role for the private security sector in recent years, either in collaboration with state officers or through wholly private sector operations.

The fact that EU citizens increasingly work, gather and travel through public spaces, such as airports, shopping arcades or public galleries and buildings, in an increasingly volatile security atmosphere, has also rapidly altered the scope, roles and range of the private security sector. The growth of transnational security threats has created a need for greater dialogue across borders between both private and public security operations.

Delegates at the Summit backed a call for greater European co-ordination and uniform regulations around the licensing of security companies, the vetting and approval of security guards and the training and inspection of security officials.

Speakers proposed to take stock of progress made in the Third Private Security Summit, which will take place in December 2010 under Belgian EU Presidency.