



Private Security Summit 'Private Security at the Crossroad of the EU's Future'

June 12, 2008 - CoESS (Confederation of European Security Services)

Welcome speech by Marc PISSENS President of CoESS

- Welcome to all participants, on behalf of CoESS (thanking CEPS for supporting, Security Europe for special support, all the sponsors and INTEREL)
- First of all, CoESS is very pleased, as the representative organisation of the European Private Security Industry, to welcome such a large audience, coming from different horizons. This interest shows that private security is being considered an essential part in overall strategies and policies, whether at company level, national level and European level. It proves that we were right to organize this meeting.
- Before starting today's proceedings, an important preliminary question must be raised: what do we understand by "private security"? Two key words, which both have their own importance. First of all, we represent some 35.000 **PRIVATE companies** throughout Europe employing some 1.4 million private security personnel. Secondly, the wide range of services we provide,

have one thing in common: **they all aim to secure goods, people, sites, events, procedures, processes, production, and services** (I would like to take the opportunity here to thank DG Enterprise of the European Commission for having started some important work focusing on how we, through our services, can create added value and a more sound competition for industry).

A third important element is that we are as such (private AND providing security services) **recognised by the national legislations regulating our activities**. It is on this basis that CoESS has been active and functioning since 1989, long before the EU or other international bodies took a specific interest in our industry. With its representative national member federations in some 30 European countries, CoESS will next year celebrate its twenty years of hard and intensive work, its many projects, its numerous tools and instruments developed and its close cooperation with the European institutions. Which other organisation can claim such an experience and representativeness? CoESS is proud of its achievements. But much more needs to be done.

- Over the last years, and this is a secret to no one, security in general has become the focus point of many new strategies, policies, research programmes and academic attention. At national level, and even more at EU level. This is as such a very positive development. CoESS has been witnessing it since the events in 2001, CoESS has been there with the necessary expertise and input. However, what we are equally witnessing today is a booming interest in security from other industries, and even a bigger interest in our core business which is the private security industry. Indeed, many industries seem to shift towards our industry, or, even more interesting, seem to claim private security as their own and core business. Within CoESS we have analysed this development and its causes. The conclusion is clear. What we witness today is that many of these industries -

with the shifting focus at EU and national level on security - are facing difficulties due to the decreasing scope of their own core business and the decreasing size of their traditional market. What we also see is that the traditional customers of these businesses (mostly national security authorities) are more and more inclined to hold defence companies responsible for the possible negative consequences of their technologies and products. **In other words, we witness today a shift by authorities from an unconditional acceptance of the role these industries towards a more conditional and critical approach.** It is therefore necessary for the industries concerned, to look for other markets, products and, above all, for a kind of legitimization and recognition of their activities. This, ladies and gentlemen, has been since its creation back in 1989 the driving force of CoESS: to take up the responsibilities given to us (and I refer again to the strict national legislative frameworks) and to share them with our customers through quality and professionalism.

- **Within the private security industry it is indeed our main and constant objective to search and create the RIGHT application and place for the services we provide.** Into the activities and core business of our customers and into the overall national and European approach to security as whole. And this - and I would like to underline this as a crucial point - without eroding or betraying or abusing our role.
- And let me now elaborate for a few minutes on our role and our unique contribution to security, which provides at the same time also our strength. We always have been, we are and we always be heavily relying on human input. Our staff plays the pivotal role in the services we provide. And yes, we do believe in technologies, fully. We invest in them, we develop them and we use them in an increasing way. **But we are strongly convinced that the input by the human element creates as much added value as the input by technology.** In the chain of the development, using and operating

technology, the human factor remains essential. And that is precisely our added value. No technology will ever be able to overpower the human added value in security, let alone replace it.

- That's why CoESS is reaching out to the technology oriented industries, including those which have traditionally been focusing on national defence related technology. That's why CoESS is reaching out to national and European authorities. Only together we will be capable of finding now and in the future the adequate and efficient solutions to the increasing threats to security in general. Only through this kind of co-operation will be able to provide RESPONSIBLE ways forward.
- I have been referring already briefly to the “booming” EU policies and strategies in the field of security. Many of them will be discussed in more detail later today, especially in the panel discussions this afternoon. **CoESS strongly believes that all these can only create an added value and a real progress in preventing risks of all kinds IF AND WHEN COORDINATED AND INTEGRATED.** CoESS therefore appeals to all EU decision makers to invest first of all in establishing a more overall and global framework. If the outlines are clear, it will become much more useful and efficient to develop specific strategies and approaches. It goes without saying that given the internationalisation and globalization of threats and risks, the EU must play this coordinating role. At a political level, at a strategic level, at a supporting and at a controlling level.
- This support must reach out, in a coordinated and integrated way, to ALL players in the delicate field of security and to ALL contributors (whether academic, technological, and human). Only through a combination and use of all the expertise, knowledge, best practices, investments and daily strive for quality, can the best approach be reached. **Moreover and again, every actor must take up his responsibility. Decision makers through sound and**

integrated policies and frameworks (including the rightful recognition and protection of our role and investments) and the providers through sound and integrated services. Then only a win-win situation will be reached to the benefit of the responsible authorities, the customers, the individual citizen and society as whole. This is CoESS' reason for existence; I can only hope it is being shared by all of you.

- Thank you for your attention.