

20 years of CoESS

ACADEMIC SESSION

Rome – 30 September 2009

Opening Speech

Marc PISSENS

President of CoESS

Dear President, Luigi Gabriele,

Dear members of FederSicurezza,

Dear “warriors and veterans” of CoESS,

Estimated guests and colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As President of CoESS, it is my great pleasure to welcome you all to this academic session.

This session is of course a tribute to 20 years of activities of our confederation CoESS. But it is also much more than that. It is a celebration of 20 years of friendship. A celebration of 20 years of hard work and a celebration of 20 years of unique experiences and history.

Last year in September, when CoESS was holding its General Annual Meeting in Sophia, Bulgaria, it was decided to hold the CoESS 2010 General Meetings in Brussels. In a simple and straightforward way, as has been the tradition for several years now. And yes, we knew it was our 20 years celebration, and yes we would celebrate that in a modest way. So, the agenda's were fixed and we would see each other again in Brussels.

That was without counting with FederSicurezza, the Italian member federation of CoESS. Last November, FederSicurezza approached CoESS with a glorious initiative. Being of course Italians, FederSicurezza and its representatives felt it would be a crime not to bring CoESS back to its roots and to the place where it all started 20 years ago. They offered to host this year's General Meetings and combine it with a true celebration, Italian style and way. It did not take long to convince the CoESS Board to follow their enthusiasm and to give the green light.

So, here we stand, in the beautiful city of Rome. The birth place of CoESS. But also the cradle of the European Union. It could not have been more symbolic, now that we now that CoESS and the European Union are becoming so intertwined.

Before developing the achievements of our Confederation, let me first address some words of thanks and genuine gratitude.

Dear Luigi, without the brilliant idea of FederSicurezza, we would not be here. Therefore, a sincere thanks goes to you, to Antonello Villa, to your son Giuseppe, and to the whole team of FederSicurezza who have been very busy, over the last ten months, to prepare and organize these two very special days.

My thanks go also to all the people who over the last 20 years have been playing such an important role in bringing CoESS to where it stands today. We know that many of you have retired from CoESS, and from other professional activities. We appreciate very much that you were willing to be with us here today and that you have made the effort to travel to Rome. Without your presence, the celebrations would not have been complete. I am looking forward to catch up with you all over the next two days.

It is also an honor for CoESS to have in the audience representatives of private security federations and organizations from across the world (the US, South Africa, South America, Asia and Australia). They have accepted our invitation and have travelled a long way. I am really grateful to them. And it is my hope that over the coming days, we will be able to exchange some views on further cooperation. So, to all of you from outside Europe, thank you and welcome!

A warm welcome also to Mrs. Alice DALE, Head of the Property Services Sector within UNI Global Union. Your presence here is for CoESS a true sign of recognition of the constructive relations we always had with our trade union counterpart in Europe, UNI europa. As you will hear later on, the European social dialogue has not only been the activity through which CoESS first matured, it is still one of the priority themes on our agenda. We also welcome

Mrs. Rachel OWENS from the UNI europa secretariat in Brussels and responsible for private security.

The presence of high level representatives of the Ligue Internationale des Sociétés de Surveillance is equally rewarding for CoESS. **I would like to thank especially Mr. Nick Buckles, Chairman of the Ligue and Group Chief Executive of G4S, Mr. Alf Göransson, member of the Ligue Board and CEO of Securitas AB, as well as all the other Ligue representatives.** Within the spirit of mutual cooperation and support, so necessary in today's changing private security landscape, your presence means a lot to us. Thank you and welcome.

It would take me too long to name all others here present. Please know that the presence of each one of you of you is heartwarming and adds a very special flavor to this gathering. One person though deserves a very special welcome back: Jorma Hakala. For many years, Jorma has been the driving force for important work within CoESS, specifically in the Working Committee Guarding. While speaking – once again – enthusiastically on behalf of CoESS at the Joint CoESS-UNI europa conference last October, Jorma unfortunately encountered some serious health problems. A long recovery had to follow. So, Jorma, it is extremely good to have you amongst us again.

Last but not least, a big thanks to the CoESS secretariat's team in Brussels. With their usual energy and positive spirit, they took up the challenge of organizing this event. I am sure that all the hard work they put in it will hardly be visible today and tomorrow; it is the proof that they succeeded. Thank you Leen, Roxanne, Briec and Patricia.

A special thanks goes also to the CoESS General Secretary, Hilde. The impact of her work and investment into CoESS has been enormous. It is therefore not a secret that my Presidency of and engagements towards CoESS has been closely linked and dependent upon her work and expertise.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Twenty years ago, **on 26th of October 1989** to be exact, Presidents and representatives of six national private security federations gathered here in Rome to sign the official establishment of the Confederation of European Security Services. The countries they represented were France, Italy, Germany, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Spain. Some of the participants at that historical meeting are with us today. I can only applaud their vision, their audacity and their pioneer spirit. Twenty years ago, the landscape of private security was totally different than the one we are all operating in now. The European Union was still in full development and private security was absent from the European agenda. Furthermore,

Europe back then was not the Europe of today. Europe was still divided into a West and an East, bringing along all the implication we have witnessed. At national level, not many legislative frameworks for private security existed, and national politics had no or a very negative perception of our industry. Companies had to make the best of it, often confronted with many “cowboys” ruining the market, a negative attitude from public and authorities and no or little guidance on how to run a high quality business. Structural relations with trade unions and employee representatives were almost non-existent.

It is therefore all the more exceptional what the founders of CoESS decided and launched in 1989. Although the CoESS Statutes have been modified over time, the essence of our work of today was already embedded in those very first Statutes. The goals that have been set in 1989 are still the basis of CoESS: a permanent strive for higher quality and professionalism, cooperation between countries, support to members, exchange of good practices, sound relations with the trade unions, etc.

It was thanks to that sound and correct vision laid out in 1989 that CoESS has been able to grow and to develop into what is today.

We have come a long way over the last 20 years. A detailed overview of all CoESS’ achievements and activities would not be possible here and today. Allow me thus to take you – unfortunately in a too quick and concise way – through some major developments.

1. CoESS has grown tremendously in numbers and in size.

Today, our confederation counts 31 national member federations, representing 28 countries inside and outside the European union. It aims to defend the interests of some 50.000 companies, representing some 1.7 million personnel.

Two independent associations joined CoESS as corresponding members. ESTA, the European Security Transport Association, takes the lead as far as cash-in-transit is concerned. ASSA-International, the Aviations Security Services Association-International, provides CoESS with the expertise on airport and aviation security.

As mentioned before, CoESS has also a very fruitful relation with the Ligue, who also acts as a contributor to CoESS working costs.

Our secretariat is now headed by a permanent general secretary, a full time assistant and administrative support. It is based in Brussels, at the heart of the EU decision making processes.

Although our budget has increased over the years, it is still way to insufficient to cover in a decent and efficient way all the activities CoESS must undertake if it wants to fully play its role.

2. CoESS has also developed a very extended network of relations and contacts

Today, CoESS is recognized as the official or privileged partner and stakeholder with many European Institutions, ranging from most of the Directorates-General of the European Commission, to the European Parliament and the Council.

But our cooperation is not only limited to the EU institutions. CoESS is also a member or stakeholder in CEN, the European Standardization Institute, in its counterpart CENELEC for electro-technical standardization, in the European Business Services Round Table, in the European Employers Network. It has a strong and efficient European Social Dialogue with UNI europa.

CoESS maintains contacts with other security related organizations such as EURALARM and the more recently established EOS, the European Organization for Security, originated out of the defense industry.

It is also important to keep in touch with European Confederations in other services sectors such as commerce and retail, banking, health care, cleaning industry and temporary work. Regular meetings take place and joint projects are being developed.

3. CoESS has been the driving force for national, European and international integration

Thanks to the efforts and the support of the Confederation, the private security industry in several countries has moved towards integration and a unique representation. I mention as examples Ireland, Italy, the Czech Republic, Poland and Romania. It is also my pleasure to announce that the private security industry in France, one of the founding countries and driving forces for many years, after a rather difficult period, is now again seriously heading towards a more unique representation of the industry.

One of the most fundamental changes over the last ten years has certainly been the integration into CoESS of a long series of federations from the new EU member States and even from countries that are still EU candidate member states.

We now equally have a high representation from the Balkan countries and non EU members such as Turkey, Switzerland and Norway are full represented within CoESS.

CoESS has signed cooperation agreements with the World Security Federation, with the Russian Association of Security Industry and with the Security Industry Alliance of South Africa. Also with other continents, contacts are being developed.

4. CoESS has been able to be regularly and more increasingly in the spotlights

Many of you will remember our 5 European Conferences, organized jointly with UNI europa, in London in 1996, in Berlin in 1999, in Brussels in 2001, in Madrid in 2004 and last year again in Brussels. Each one of them, co-financed by the European Commission, has highlighted fundamental aspects of our activities such as licensing, training, best value, the European model of private security, harmonization and the implementation of our European Social Dialogue at national level.

In September 2007, CoESS and the Ligue organized an important joint seminar where the basis for closer cooperation was laid down.

In June 2008 CoESS took the initiative to organize a First private security summit which brought together for the first time many representatives of the European Institutions. Open and frank discussions on how private security is being approached by these institutions took place.

An even more important process was started up last December. With the support of President Nicolas Sarkozy, as President at that time of the European Union, and the French Minister for the Interior, a sensibilisation campaign was launched to draw the attention of the EU on the growing impact of the private security sector in many parts of national and public security and to influence the EU to take these developments into account in its decisions and legislation. I am proud to announce that a next conference will take place in December 2009 in Stockholm, organized together with our Swedish member ALMEGA and supported by the Swedish Presidency and Minister of Justice. I am equally proud to inform you that in my own country, a third conference will take place in December 2010, patronized by the Belgian EU presidency, our Prime minister and our Minister for the interior. It will be our Belgian member federation APEG-BVBO that will organize this conference.

And, of course, many of you who are national representatives, know well the many national seminars and round tables on specific topics that CoESS organized jointly with your federations.

5. CoESS has evolved in its structures and specific projects

Within CoESS, 8 Working Committees are active. They are composed of experts in different fields. Each one of these working committees – guarding, cohesion, airport security, cash-in-

transit, maritime security, social dialogue, critical infrastructure protection, electronic surveillance – deals with a large number of issues, mostly linked to ongoing developments and policies at EU or European level. They meet regularly and are at the core of all our activities. They develop issues and define the way forward. Just to name a few of their results: policy and position papers, projects, white books, guidelines and tools, training manual, data collection etc.

You all know that also our secretariat has changed drastically. It has a larger staff. It is responsible, apart from the daily management of the Confederation, for the monthly CoESS Newsflash, the bi-annual activities report, the recently published CoESS Facts and Figures (the sole overview of the sector in Europe!), the website, the permanent contact and lobbying with EU and other institutions and bodies and the permanent information flow between members. It is also the backbone of the work of the Working Committees, the Board of Directors and the General Assembly and it gives all the necessary input regarding policy and strategy.

6. Present challenges

I have mentioned, in a nutshell, the many activities and topics CoESS is dealing with on a daily basis. I think it is useful to highlight a few items that are today the most important challenges CoESS has to face and to deal with in the appropriate way. As you will see, they are often linked to EU policies.

- The European Directive on Services in the Internal Market

For the time being, our industry has been excluded from the scope of this Directive, meaning that national legislation still fully applies. However, the European Commission is obliged to make an assessment with the goal of deciding whether or not our sector should be regulated, at EU level, by a vertical directive, introducing common EU rules for our activities. It goes without saying that CoESS must be fully prepared for such a possible decision. This implies that it must have a possible answer ready and that it must be treated by the European Commission as THE privileged partner in discussions and preparatory work. Only in this way will we be able to guarantee, if it has to be done, a fully upward harmonization.

- Standards for security services

Although the EU is increasingly regulating in different specific fields of our activities (aviation security, maritime security, critical infrastructure security, supply chain security just - to name a few), no attention in those policies is given to quality standards. This is one of the main challenges for CoESS: developing quality standards with the ultimate goal to turn them into binding legislation (either at EU or at national level). The fact that CoESS is presiding a present project of CEN of the development of standards for airport and aviation private security services is a capital step forward. If a good result can be achieved, these standards

can easily open the way for standards for the whole of our sector, and, eventually, become binding rules.

- Continuation of a fruitful European social dialogue

Our industry remains highly human driven. Our staff is therefore essential to our activities. If one says staff, one says training, licensing, working conditions, health and safety, career perspectives, just remunerations. It is only through a good understanding with the European trade union, UNI europa, that our industry can achieve the highest possible social standards, taking into account the economic and customer-related realities.

- The present economic crisis

All the on-going efforts by CoESS and its member federations over the last years have resulted in instruments that are now, given the economic and financial context, of good use. An economic crisis, in the long run, cannot be overcome by dumping of prices, concessions to quality or exploitation of staff. Although short-term, hard and difficult measures must be taken, the long term vision must remain standing, in line with the objectives, values and principles CoESS has always worked towards.

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is good and it is useful and it is very pleasant to celebrate an anniversary. Especially when the 20 years we are celebrating today have been so rich and efficient and constructive.

But a celebration has also another and higher purpose. It forces us to look at what is still to come and what we will find on the way to another twenty years.

Some future developments in or with an impact on our industry have already started and will intensify over the next years:

- an increasing attention of European Institutions and organizations to our sector, leading to an increasing number of regulations and legislative acts
- an increasing impact of technology on our services, leading to a higher integration of human and technological input
- an increasing public-private partnership, leading to specific sets of rules
- an increasing specialization of our activities
- an increasing internationalization of the services of many of our companies
- an increasingly integrated Europe, where different national visions and legal frameworks of private security will have no option than to develop towards each other and become interdependent
- an increasingly public attention to security that will force our sector to provide the right answers and solutions

Other future developments are not to be foreseen and will have to be adequately dealt with at the appropriate time.

The fundamental question therefore remains: will CoESS be able to handle the next 10 or 20 or more years?

I strongly believe that we can. It will not be easy. CoESS will have to become even more flexible and pro-active than it is today. In order to do so, a few delicate but fundamental questions must be answered (and will be raised at tomorrow's general meeting):

- How can we increase our budget and financial means?
- How can we strengthen the impact and the role of the large multinational companies within the national CoESS member federations (still at the heart of CoESS)?
- How can we increase our influence with the European and international decision making bodies?
- How can we integrate more and better different national contexts of private security?
- **How can we build stronger partnerships with representative bodies of our industry in other parts of the world? As I have stated before, it is our pleasure to have today and tomorrow representatives of private security organizations of the US, Australia, Asia and South-Africa. We are pleased that they have responded to my invitation. It is therefore my strong hope that we will be able, before we all go home again, to establish the foundations and the ground work for a worldwide organization. CoESS is certainly willing to take the lead in this.**

These questions must be addressed and the right answers must be found soon. CoESS stands at the dawn of a new era regarding private security where challenges will be major and the right solutions critical.

We have the incredible legacy of our founding fathers who in 1989 made the right choices. We have twenty years of learning and of experience. We have the commitment and the expertise of 31 national member federations. We have the commitment and expertise of our corresponding members ESTA and ASSA-I. We have the support of the Ligue. We have already come closer to other parts of the world. CoESS is therefore blessed and rich.

The challenge for all of us is now, without any concessions, to use the last 20 years as the basis for the next 20 years. With new ideas to come, new people to work with, hopefully greater resources to allow us to do so, and above all, with clear engagement of making the next 20 years as fruitful, as exciting and as positive as the last 20 years. As President of CoESS, I invite you all to join and to support us in this new part of our adventure.

Thank you for your attention.

