



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS DG

Adaptability, Social Dialogue and Social Rights

INTRODUCTION BY DIRECTOR BERNHARD JANSEN TO THE FOURTH
EUROPEAN CONFERENCE ON PRIVATE SECURITY SERVICES:
"TOWARDS A EUROPEAN MODEL FOR PRIVATE SECURITY"
MADRID, 14 AND 15/10/04

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to be here today at the fourth European conference on private security services. By organising this conference, CoESS and UNI-Europa are contributing actively to enhancing social dialogue in the private security sector in the context of an enlarged Europe.

My presentation will focus on four aspects:

- 1- the references to social dialogue in the draft treaty establishing a constitution for Europe;
- 2- the recent achievements of the private security sectoral social dialogue committee;
- 3- the challenge of enlargement;
- 4- the latest Commission communication on social dialogue and the way forward.

1. SOCIAL DIALOGUE IN THE DRAFT TREATY ESTABLISHING A CONSTITUTION FOR EUROPE

The social model of the European Union is based on a combination of social cohesion, solidarity, economic performance and efficiency. In his latest book, Jeremy RIFKIN, president of the Washington-based Foundation on Economic Trends, calls this combination the "European dream". According to this author, it is the European social model which makes this region the most attractive global model for the coming century for generations "anxious to be globally connected and at the same time locally embedded"¹.

This afternoon, working session II will debate the meaning of "the European model from a social perspective". Indeed, CoESS and UNI-Europa already described the key principles underlying the European model in their code of conduct and ethics adopted in July 2003.

During the recent hearings at the European Parliament, the Employment and Social Affairs Commissioner designate, Vladimir SPIDLA, stressed that social dialogue is a key pillar of the European social model. It is based on the idea that economic and social progress go hand-in-hand.

As you know, the role of the social partners is foreseen in the Treaty. The Commission has the duty to facilitate the dialogue between management and labour and it has an obligation to consult them prior to proposing legislation. The Treaty also provides them with the option of negotiating agreements instead of Commission proposals.

This role is foreseen by the Treaty because of the fundamental role which the social partners play in the democratic functioning of European societies.

¹ RIFKIN Jeremy (2004) *The European dream. How Europe's vision of the future is quietly eclipsing the American dream*. Penguin.

The role of the social partners has been reaffirmed in the draft Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe. Social dialogue belongs indeed to the core values of the European Union as article 48 of Part I says:

"The Union recognises and promotes the role of the social partners at its level, taking into account the diversity of national systems. It shall facilitate dialogue between the social partners, respecting their autonomy (...)".

2. THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE PRIVATE SECURITY SSDC

The social dialogue between CoESS and UNI-Europa has many successes to its name.

As recalled by a recent study on sectoral social dialogue undertaken by the "Observatoire Social Européen" for the European Commission, social dialogue between the private security social partners goes back to the creation of an informal working group in 1993.

The same study points out that during the period 1997 - 2003, out of a total of 182 documents produced by 28 sectoral social dialogue committees, the private security social partners agreed on 9 documents, including useful tools such as the guide on the selection of best value in public procurement relating to private guarding services.

At the joint request of UNI-Europa and CoESS, this guide will be presented on the 15th of November 2004 to the Office for Infrastructure and Logistics, which is responsible, within the Commission, for the organisation of public procurement relating to private security services.

An important issue tackled by the private security social dialogue committee is the issue of human capital and job quality. In 1996 UNI-Europa and CoESS adopted a text on vocational training; in 2001 they produced a European vocational training manual for basic guarding; and in their 2003 code of conduct and ethics and the joint declaration to be signed tomorrow, they include provisions on vocational training..

The data on sectoral social dialogue activities collected by the OSE will have to be updated as a result of three recently completed projects.

The first project, which was undertaken this year, is a study on the regulations relating to cash-in-transit (CIT) within the EU-15². This study will be debated in working session I. It is a valuable tool not only for the sector, but also for the work being undertaken within the European Commission in its internal market and economic and financial affairs directorate generals.

A second project - which has been finalised this year - is the European training manual on the prevention of occupational hazards in the private security sector³. The manual was presented last month at the health and safety conference organised in Amsterdam by the Dutch Presidency.

A third achievement this year will be the signature tomorrow by CoESS and UNI-Europa of the joint declaration entitled "towards a European model of private security". In this text, the private security social partners renew their commitment to improving working conditions, to striving for quality and professionalism and to helping their members develop a constructive and fruitful social dialogue at all levels.

3. THE CHALLENGE OF ENLARGEMENT

As we have seen, social dialogue forms part of the institutional *acquis* since the process of autonomous social dialogue is guaranteed by the Treaty.

² The CIT-study has been realised with the financial support of the European Commission (budget line 04.03.03.01).

³ The European training manual on the prevention of occupational hazards in the private security sector has also been realised with the financial support of the Commission (budget line 04.03.03.01).

Even if the new Member States have achieved a great deal of progress in integrating this *acquis*, significant weaknesses remain as social dialogue is rather weak in these countries. Indeed bipartite social dialogue is a new phenomenon and sectoral dialogue is rare. Trade unions have been experiencing declining membership, and as there was no tradition of autonomous employers' organisations, they have had to be set up from scratch.

UNI-Europa and CoESS have realised the importance of promoting social dialogue in the acceding and candidate countries. At the 1999 Berlin conference, the European private security social partners adopted a joint declaration on the future enlargement of the European Union to include the Central and Eastern European Countries. In this text, CoESS and Euro-FIET (the predecessor of UNI-Europa) declared that they would organise regular monitoring of the private security sector in this region in order to develop their contacts with the Central and Eastern European social partners.

Since then, CoESS and UNI-Europa have made efforts to integrate representative organisations from the new Member States in their structures, notably thanks to the organisation of the 2002 Vilnius enlargement conference. We hope that similar actions will follow.

Even if the Commission recognises the efforts made so far, it is concerned by the fact that not all new Member States are represented in the private security sectoral social dialogue committee. In particular, as discussed at the last Liaison Forum, UNI-Europa has not so far managed to integrate representative private security trade unions in the Czech Republic, Latvia, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. CoESS has a similar problem with regard to Latvia. Some solutions to tackle this problem will hopefully be identified in working session III.

At the enlargement conference organised in Ljubljana in January 2004, former Commissioner Anna DIAMANTOPOULOU recalled that:

"History has shown us what social partners and their representatives can achieve through strong partnership. Over twenty years ago, the struggle against totalitarianism started in the Gdansk shipyards. Labour unions united workers and paved the way for some of the most significant events in European and world history.

Now we need a revolution. We need a revolution in our ways of thinking about the governance of our economies, but on a solid partnership for progress".

4. THE LATEST COMMISSION COMMUNICATION ON SOCIAL DIALOGUE AND THE WAY FORWARD

The Commission refers to the challenge posed by enlargement to European social dialogue in a communication adopted on the 12th of August 2004. This communication is entitled "Partnership for change in an enlarged Europe: enhancing the contribution of European social dialogue"⁴.

In this communication, the Commission calls on the social partners to continue their initiatives to assist capacity-building in the new Member States. The Commission also commits itself to increasing its support to the European social partners in order to deal with the consequences of enlargement.

More specifically, the current proposal on the new European Social Fund (ESF) regulation, if adopted by the Council of Ministers and by the European Parliament, will allow at least 2 % of the ESF resources under the "convergence" objective to be allocated to capacity-building and activities jointly undertaken by the social partners, in particular relating to the adaptability of workers and enterprises.

More generally, the latest social dialogue communication calls on the social partners to reach negotiated solutions on the three main topics identified in the November 2003 report of the Employment Taskforce chaired by Wim KOK, namely:

- improving adaptability;
- investing in human capital and job quality;
- and attracting more people to the labour market.

⁴ COM(2004) 557 final

As mentioned before, the private security social dialogue committee has already undertaken some important work on the issue of human capital and job quality.

However, given the importance of education and life long learning in the European Employment Strategy, more needs to be done. Indeed, investment in human capital is a determining factor of growth and of productivity but investment in training by European companies accounts for hardly 2% of the wage bill while the Commission would like to establish an objective of 5%⁵.

With a view to improving the impact and effectiveness of the social dialogue, the latest communication on social dialogue stresses the importance of maximising synergies between the European social dialogue and other levels of social dialogue, in particular the national, sector and company levels.

The Commission calls on the social partners to optimise these synergies, among others:

- by raising awareness of their texts at national and company level;
- and by improving the transparency and effectiveness of their texts via more consistent terminology, detailed follow-up provisions and regular reporting on progress.

I would therefore like to take this opportunity today to urge you to disseminate the texts adopted by CoESS and UNI-Europa as widely as possible, in particular the 1996 text on vocational training, the 2003 code of conduct and ethics as well as the joint declaration to be signed tomorrow.

I also encourage you to organise - within the framework of the sectoral social dialogue committee - regular reporting on the follow-up given to your mutual commitments at national and company level. What this means in practice is that the real work actually begins after the signature of common texts.

To conclude, I would like to refer to the latest issue of the Commission publication on Employment in Europe which reveals that, in 2003, the EU employment rate stagnated at around 63%. To hit the Lisbon targets of 70% of employment overall, the European Union must increase its adaptability. The social partners are the best placed actors to find solutions for managing change and for reconciling the need for both flexibility and security.

I would like to finish this presentation by thanking Vincent ANCORA and Claude LEVY. Vincent and Claude took the decision to retire this year after many years spent working for the European secretariats of UNI-Europa and CoESS. Both of them have been important driving forces in the smooth functioning of the private security sectoral social dialogue committee.

I wish them both the best of luck for this new chapter in their lives. However, before they embark on their respective retirements, we will benefit from their participation in working sessions I and II.

I wish you all a very productive and successful conference.

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