



## **UNI-Europa – CoESS Joint Declaration**

### **on the role of the private security sector in light of the increasing number of refugees in Europe**

February 2016

Europe has been increasingly faced by an unprecedented and historic refugee flow. A phenomenon that has had a very important impact; in particular, in those countries that have been faced with the arrival of a higher number of asylum seekers.

The private security industry has been obligatorily coping with a sudden increase of requested security services to be provided in the refugee camps created in some countries, quite often, in an unstructured and ill-defined manner. Conditions for the provision of these services should be clearly established by the competent authorities in order to better serve society, and through this the guaranteed legal protection of workers.

The private security industry is playing a crucial and critical role in delivering security across European countries. This role is demonstrated in public-private partnerships and the clear contribution of the private security employees and companies to the general welfare of society. They can also be clearly shown in the field of critical infrastructure protection that also faces the heightened threat further to the recent terrorist attacks. The new challenges that the public security forces are currently facing could also lead to the increase of private security services in an additional number and variety of locations.

UNI Europa, the European Services Workers Union and CoESS, the Confederation of European Security Services agree on the need to emphasize that the provision of private security services cannot be made at any price. Both organizations believe that the basic principles that must always drive the industry are more than ever applicable to these new situations. In particular:

- a) Both organizations emphasize the need to strictly abide by the legal requirements specifically applicable to the provision of private security services. Strict respect of

human rights is a precondition of the licensing systems in the vast majority of European countries. As needed, adaptation of the national legal frameworks to the specific nature of the services to be provided should be adopted, as long as these changes would be necessary. In no case should the requirements of the national licensing systems be made less stringent. Vetting and screening in accordance to national provisions is more than ever necessary.

- b) In addition to the principles stipulated by the European Commission Communication on Public Procurement rules in connection with the current asylum crisis, published in September, 2015, more than ever the introduction of quality criteria in the awarding process of the security services is essential. Contracts in relation to the protection of refugees should never be awarded just on the basis of price considerations. Only specialised, competent, and reliable companies should be involved in the provision of these services. Full respect of the national labour provisions and collective agreements should be more than ever requested and verified.
- c) Workers must receive the adequate training and have the necessary skills to provide the different range of services linked to this phenomenon. Should additional training be necessary, it should be provided to the employee before taking up the new tasks and adequately compensated to the provider.
- d) The health and safety of workers involved in the provision of services in this particular environment should be strictly respected. Depending on the national conditions, a minimum number of guards should be clearly established. Additional health and safety requirements must be considered by the client in the contract budgetary provisions.

CoESS and UNI Europa commit to exchanging the good practices of their national members in the provision of these services and encourage their national members to follow up, in accordance with the national conditions, context and legal framework, the respect of these basic principles. UNI Europa and CoESS offer their assistance and expertise to the competent authorities responsible for managing this situation.