

**CoESS/ALMEGA Second European Summit on Private Security
December 8, 2009
Stockholm, Sweden**

**Opening speech by Marc Pissens,
President of CoESS**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of CoESS, the Confederation of Private Security Services, it is my pleasure to welcome you all at this Second European Summit on Private Security. I take this occasion to thank **Lars O Molin, President of Almega Private Security**, our Swedish member federation, and **Marcus Lindström, Secretary-General of Almega Private Security**, for hosting this event and for the excellent way they have prepared this day. It shows, once again, that the strength of CoESS is carried by its member federations!

It is also heart-warming to know that we are gathered here with the full support of the Swedish Presidency of the European Union. Its support for the theme of today – **public-private cooperation in security responses to ever increasing needs for security** – demonstrates that the private security services sector has indeed earned its visibility. It also shows that public-private cooperation in security matters is fully on the agenda, not only in Europe, but also at national level.

CoESS is proud that it is able to see you all at this **Second Summit**, after the kick-off First Summit we organized one year ago, in Paris, with the support of

the French EU Presidency, the participation of the French Minister for the Interior and a foreword by President Sarkozy in our first White Book.

I am also very proud to announce that the **Third Summit** will take place in December 2010, in Brussels. CoESS has already obtained the support of the future Belgian Presidency of the EU and of the Minister for the Interior.

Needless to say that we will try our best to have also our newly nominated EU President, Mr. Herman Van Rompuy, to support that Third Summit.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Is CoESS entitled to be recognised as a full partner when it comes to cooperation between public authorities and our services providing

companies? The answer is without any doubt and without any hesitation: “yes”!

CoESS is the only representative European organisation that can claim to speak on behalf of the private security services providers. We represent in Europe - in and outside the European Union - member federations in 30 countries. Our members act on behalf of 50,000 private security companies which in turn employ some 1.7 million security guards. Their total yearly turnover is estimated at 15 billion Euros.

And yes, notwithstanding the economic crisis, we ARE a sector with growth potential. Security is an item on the national and the European agenda that will only gain more and more importance and attention. Combined with the proven development that our services are more and more being called upon to guarantee overall national and European policies in the field of security, our responsibilities, tasks and role will only increase.

What is more, we are not a new and recently established confederation. A couple of months ago, we celebrated our twentieth anniversary. We have been there for a long time, well before the September 11th events in 2001, well before the Madrid and London bombings, long before the development of European policies regarding our industry. And it is a good thing that we laid the foundations for our work already twenty years ago. Two decades of intensive work and investment in key elements of our services have brought us to where we are today: a mature sector, with a clear vision on quality and professionalism, with high attention for our employees who are at the heart of our activities. **We have made a positive future for private security services possible.** We have earned our stable place in the European debate. We have become a force to reckon with.

It is therefore no surprise that we have witnessed, over the last years, a multitude of organisations claiming to represent the private security industry. Who are they? Mostly they emerge from other (and often small) industry segments related in one way or another to security. They certainly have a reason to exist. The **defense industry** with its producers and manufacturers of equipment that can be deployed in overall and integrated security solutions, is facing a serious decline and is looking for new markets. Its future is certainly not so sure. **IT security** – which has also emerged over the last years - is an important player in a very specific branch and will certainly develop in the coming years and decades. **Clients and end-users** of private security services are not to be ignored and have a serious impact on our business.

But – and I want to put all the necessary stress on this – **these segments are NOT the private security services sector.** They can therefore, NOT, IN ANY POSSIBLE WAY, claim to represent our business and our achievements. Let it be

very clear, CoESS has always offered cooperation with other players in the greater security debates and discussions. It is our point of view that technology and equipment would have no meaning without the necessary trained and authorised people to use them. We are talking about our staff. Clients and end-users need our services. IT security also needs a strict legal framework and will always have to be combined with other forms of security services. Cooperation and integration will therefore only enhance and strengthen the larger private security added value.

And when we discuss **added value**, we automatically have to consider public-private cooperation. It is the theme of our European Summit and it is becoming a core business of our companies.

The second White Book presented to you today - which is a continuation of last year's first White Book – focuses on public and private security in the Nordic countries. For very long years, the rest of Europe jealously turned to this region when public-private cooperation was at stake. The Nordic countries have been pioneers in calling upon private security services to support the public authorities and hence, in bringing private security companies into the public space. Preconditions for this have been an open political climate, the right vision of the decision-makers and seriousness of the private providers.

However, the second White Book teaches us that even in the Nordic countries, public-private cooperation in the field of security has encountered its (provisional – question mark) limitation: national legislations and a regulatory framework that run behind the reality and the needs of all parties involved.

This development demonstrates once more what CoESS is fighting for and what remains high on its agenda: **private security services need the right and adapted regulatory framework**. Not only at national level, as this White Book

shows, but also at European level where we witness similar developments. As the range of European policies and initiatives calling upon us to perform more and more security activities in the public field becomes wider and larger, the need for a clear, unique and transparent legal framework becomes essential. Without such a framework, we are heading for confusion, overlapping of policies and conditions to fulfil and hence, a risk for quality and necessary guarantees of professionalism.

This, Ladies and Gentlemen, is the main and key message CoESS wants to disseminate. Through our daily work, through our input to European policies and today through our Second European Summit, we call upon the European regulators and policymakers to streamline their initiatives, to harmonise their policies, to provide us with a single starting and entrance point.

In this regard, we were very pleased when European Commission President José Manuel Barroso unveiled his new team of Commissioners two weeks ago. Among the new portfolios created is **the portfolio of Home Affairs**, to be headed by **Swedish Commissioner-Delegate Mrs. Cecilia MALMSTRÖM**. This new portfolio will undoubtedly open perspectives for a more integrated European approach towards our sector. And I am sure that our Swedish member federation ALMEGA will certainly be called upon by CoESS to assist us with lobbying a Swedish Commissioner!

I am looking forward to the debates of today and I wish you all a very fruitful and interesting exchange of views!