

Check Against Delivery  
Seul le texte prononcé fait foi  
Es gilt das gesprochene Wort

**5. Opening speech of**  
**V.P. Verheugen**  
**at SRC 09**

**Putting EU Security Research**  
**in the right perspectives**

To the Swedish EU presidency I like to formally express the Commission's gratitude for organising the annual Security Research Conference.

I have been to many SRCs, starting in Vienna in 2006 and now here in this beautiful and historical city of Stockholm; I have always seen the security research conferences as a recognition of the work the European Commission did: 'Promoting research cooperation in the field of security, to aid the process of enhancing EU-security'.

During the Cold war, Sweden is well known for its official doctrine of 'neutral policy'. Firmly rooted in the history, this 'neutral' policy gave Sweden a special role to act as a negotiator, broker and moral conscience in the Cold War; a role that Sweden will surely continue pursuing today to advance Europe's new security concept.

The concept of security has dramatically changed since the end of the Cold War. Our common perceptions of security have changed:

- images of the destruction of the World Trade Centre in New York on 9/11 2001 are still vividly in our minds,
- the fall of the Berlin Wall causes a globalisation quantum leap, with all its effects. We celebrated the end of the cold war; we saw the globalisation of trade but also the globalisation of terrorism and crime.

As situations change over time, we constantly must evolve and improve our ability to face the new security challenges in the new context. The end of the cold war changed the bipolar structure of the international relations to an extent that few predicted and no country was prepared for. Instead bringing more stability and peace the collapse of the Soviet Union created a multi-polar world in which conflicts brutally emerge without any stable force ready to intervene.

- Europe had to learn the lesson of its own incapacity to guarantee security at its own doorstep during the Balkans War.
- Old conflicts like the Middle East remain unsolved and new challenges like the non-state based threat of terrorist attacks and piracy have evolved to menaces to our own societies.
- The possible extent of the consequences of the climate change is still unclear, but it is already now obvious, that it will have a disproportionate adverse impact on the world's poorest and most vulnerable populations.

The question is: how to preserve and develop the European values of justice, freedom and security whilst addressing the increasingly complex security challenges.

Man made accidents or natural disasters may disrupt basic economic infrastructures such as transport, energy and information networks. Moreover, they can cause major damage to human beings and the environment if they affect particular sensitive components of the industrial infrastructure such as chemical or power plants. Therefore, as our society becomes more dependent of technical systems, new more resilient infrastructures are needed.

The fight against terrorism and organised crime, the protection of the external European borders and civil crisis management have gained importance in our daily life. Climate change, if not properly addressed, could lead to a major increase of security threats at global scale. At the same time internal and external security are increasingly inseparable. Addressing them requires the use of modern technology.

At the same time and since security technologies are becoming more and more present in modern societies it is imperative to ensure ethical scrutiny and transparency of security research and development projects. Our security must be based on our European values. And vice versa security solutions are needed to protect our societal values.

A small yet novel contribution from the Commission's side in this direction is 'Security Research' in the seventh Framework Programme. Here, with a budget of over 1.4 Billion Euro, the European Commission is pursuing a vast amount of security research projects to improve the security of its citizens.

- Ranging from topics like the security of mass transportation or integrated border management, we are pursuing a comprehensive approach together with security efforts from member states for the security of EU citizen's.
- With projects allowing cooperation between Europe, Israel and Palestine on the needs for medical first responders in case of Disasters – the EC is not only promoting to improve security in Europe but also with its neighbours.

I also have to add, that research is not to be limited to technology but also need to address political, social and human factors relevant to European security. We also need to look at the acceptability of technologies and as to how that perception might need to be adaptable to the diverse cultural and institutional settings we have in the EU.

Furthermore, what we need is the EU Member States to enhance considerably their own capabilities on matters of security – in an EU context. At the same time, every Member States particular approach to this highly sensitive field of ‘security’ needs to be respected.

Another important contribution is the work of ESRIF. It is just over 2 years ago that I, together with the then responsible Commissioner for Justice, Liberty and Security - Franco Fratini-, welcomed a new forum: the European Security Research and Innovation Forum, the ESRIF. Work then continue with Vice President Barrot. ESRIF brings together security stakeholders at European level. It is an unprecedented highly ambitious and large sized European undertaking. The 64 members of ESRIF from 31 countries, assisted by more than 600 experts examined the full range of threats to central the EU's civil security missions and tried to map these to capabilities that the EU would need to respond.

ESRIF work has been arduous and laborious. But it has finally delivered good fruits. The executive summary is presented to you today and the final report has already been

I found that ESRIF's 'Key Findings' and 'Recommendations' are right on the spot. Please join me in congratulating the chairpersons of the forum: Gijs de Vries, Dragotin Mate, Jurgen Stock and Giancarlo Grasso. I like to applaud the ladies and gentlemen that have worked so dedicatedly and to debate such a difficult issue. An effort that plants the seeds for further actions for the years to come.

But ESRIF is not the end of the story rather the beginning of it. In the coming weeks the Commission will adopt a communication sponsored by Vice President Barrot and myself which will address ESRIF recommendations and outline how the Commission future lines of work in security research. Of course this will have to be completed by the next Commission.

Surely in the communication we will reflect upon valuable ESRIF recommendations, such as:

- The need to develop Common European Capabilities; indeed the EU must draw on its collective strength and develop capabilities through further transnational co-operation.
- The New Policy initiatives required, such as the creation of a lead market initiative, the Trans-European networks for security and an Internal Security Fund.
- An EU-wide integrated approach that addresses: Interoperability, Still today it is difficult for police forces from two neighbouring member states to communicate in border areas to enforce security; communication methods are not interoperable.
- Standardisation, certification and validation in the security area. Today we see a very fragmented market: for example there is no common certification system at EU level for airport scanners. This results in cases where the same scanner may be certified in one member state and not in another.

- ESRIF has also put a great emphasis on the societal dimension of security highlighting the need to address security already at the design stage of new security solutions

Evidently all this has to be put in a coherent industrial framework and for this we need to map first the industrial base to exactly the existing capacities identify possible synergies and existing gaps.

And indeed we need to be taking a global approach to security, promoting an attitude of collective responsibility touching government, societal organisations, industries and individual citizens.

Furthermore it is clear that policy makers have to maintain close consultations with those at the forefront of security. We need to understand as how future demand might develop. We need to check with the researchers and the industrialists as what will be technically feasible. And most important of all, we need to remain in touch with the ‘civil society’ group. Security solutions must at all times respect the personal interests such as privacy and liberty. To address similar circumstances I have established in the past an instrument called the High Level Group which encompasses a very restricted number of high level political, industrial and civil society actors driven by the commission . You might wish to consider a similar instrument which will keep the process started by ESRIF in the future.

## **Conclusion:**

While the obligation to provide **security to citizens** remains in the hands of Member States, more and more the EU has a role to play. Terrorism and organised crime does not stop at national borders. With the elimination of internal borders, external borders become an EU issue. Critical infrastructure becomes EU-wide interconnected and interdependent. New threats caused by the changing **environment** we are living-in are emerging. We see **Cyber-threat** that is ultimately border-less. Climate change has a serious impact in the availability of water, which again cause certain local food production to seize.

What we now need is a comprehensive security strategy, supported by an industry policy that helps tackle the wide spectrum of issues to allow for the EU to sustain a holistic approach.

We need to progress towards an industry policy that encompasses all relevant sectors, so to allow **supporting the EU's holistic approach to security**

Ladies and gentleman, thank you for your attention and I wish you a great conference.