

**3rd ESCI, 2-3 JULY 2008**  
**EUROPEAN SECURITY CONFERENCE INITIATIVE**  
MAIN THEME: SECURITY AND SOCIETY  
EVOLVING CHALLENGES AND COMPREHENSIVE RESPONSES



**CHAIRMAN'S OPENING ADDRESS**

**Alexander Siedschlag**

ESCI Chairman  
Director, WWEDU Center for European Security Studies

Mr. Governor,  
Mr. Vice Mayor,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome to the third European Security Conference Initiative, or ESCI!

This annual international conference reunites representatives from a wide range of the newly emerging security sector. The conference is also an endeavour to merge security-sector relevant knowledge from various areas and assemble results of academic as well as applied analysis.

It is the first time for ESCI to take place here in Wels, in Upper Austria, as the Center for European Security Studies moved from Innsbruck to Wels, now forming a part of WWEDU World Wide Education, an International Business and Governance School currently under review for accreditation as a private university – and I am also cordially welcoming you on behalf of WWEDU.

ESCI 2008 is building upon the success of the past ESCI conferences, which were focusing on European crisis management and on security policy in an era of transformation. Whereas the past ESCI's thus centered on the changing concept and practice of security mainly in the sense of international security studies, this year's conference is dedicated to security research in a comprehensive sense, reflecting transversal issues that cut across different dimensions of security on a broader scale. One feature of this comprehensiveness is the merging not only of norms and notions but also of perceptions and practices of both national and international security. "Security governance" is a term that has emerged to capture both dimensions – the internal or national and the external or international – of security in the early 21st century.

Security governance is more than security policy, as it actively includes society and citizens. We find this reflected in current concepts and initiatives, such as resilience, mitigation, community preparedness, awareness raising and civil protection as opposed to – for example – defence. Governance involves society and its citizens.

“Security and society” is the main theme of ESCI 2008, together with the endeavour to explore comprehensive responses to challenges that put societies and their citizens – rather than the state as an abstract collective – at risk. And “Security and society – evolving challenges and comprehensive responses” is much more than just a buzz phrase.

Citizen security is one of the mission areas that guide security research in the Seventh Framework Programme of the European Union. “Security and society” is a cross-cutting activity within that programme, combining research in technological solutions with investigation of socio-economic, political and cultural aspects of security, ethics and values, acceptance of security solutions, social environment and perceptions of security.

According to article 3 of the Lisbon Treaty, the aim of the European Union “is to promote peace, its values and the well-being of its peoples”. In addition to its common security and defence policy, the Union also seeks to realize this aim by taking steps towards the Europeanization of civil protection, which has now for the first time been dedicated an own title, title XIII, in the treaty: “The Union shall encourage cooperation between Member States in order to improve the effectiveness of systems for preventing and protecting against natural or man-made disasters.” It shall do so by supporting and complementing Member States’ action and promote consistency in international civil protection work.

It is true that at the same time, article 4 of the Lisbon Treaty stipulates that “national security remains the sole responsibility of each Member State”. However, even collective defence organizations such as NATO have recently changed their course from the defence of their member states, or their territories, respectively, to the mission of safeguarding their member states’ societies. Even in a classic alliance, military defence and civil security policy are becoming two sides on the same coin, if not melting together to become the material for a new coin.

So it is obvious that the main theme of ESCI 2008 reflects the reality of change in European security affairs. In many panels, you will find contributions from a science and technology perspective mixed with contributions from the humanities. This is precisely to reflect the new society-related approach of security governance. Security and also safety not only depend on objective scales but as well on public culture and on social effectiveness criteria for technological solutions. The same applies to the assessment of criticality of infrastructure, which necessarily has quantitative and qualitative dimensions. I am confident that the presentations and discussions we will have here at ESCI will demonstrate how these dimensions can be brought together in useful and usable reasoning.

I have been thinking about making a rudimentary suggestion for a working definition of “security” for the purpose of our conference.

I originally come from the field of strategic security studies and I have the feeling that much as we are talking about everything having changed after the Cold War, we in fact can still (or again) learn from definitions of security as they were developed during the extreme phase of the Cold War. Even then, in the face of a material threat posed by the strategic nuclear capabilities, classic writers insisted on society-related criteria for security: Walter Lipmann stressed a society’s “core values” as the foundation for the

definition of and response to threat. Arnold Wolfers stated that security measures both the “absence of threats to acquired values” and the “absence of fear that such values will be attacked.”

Correspondingly, ESCI 2008 has been organized in the conviction that security in the 21st century not only has to be conceived of in a comprehensive sense but that it forms a common good, or at least the idea thereof, which has to be comprehensively delivered to society.

We are very grateful for the instant interest and support that ESCI is credited by the Federal State of Upper Austria and the City of Wels. It is my honour to welcome the Governor of Upper Austria, Dr. Pühringer, and the Vice Mayor of Wels, Mr. Wimmer and sincerely thank them for their concern to extend their greetings to you in person and speak official opening words.