

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



UNOFFICIAL ENGLISH SUM-UP

OPENING ADDRESS

HERMANN WIMMER

VICE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF WELS

Ladies and Gentlemen!

It is my pleasure to cordially welcome you on behalf of the city of Wels and to reassure you that I am very proud of the fact that a high-level event such as the European Security Conference Initiative is passing off in our city. When international experts from 11 countries discuss the truly worldwide theme of "security", this for sure speaks for Wels as a business location that is also attractive from an international perspective.

Therefore, first and foremost, it is important to me to express my thanks to all those who are responsible for the fact that the European Security Initiative, this year taking place for the third time, is our guest here in the city of Wels. My thanks go at first to WWEDU World Wide Education that has made its mark as an international distance-learning institution of higher education. Namely Dr. Martin Stieger opened up the opportunity for this conference to happen within the WWEDU framework, and I am cordially thanking him.

I want to as cordially express my gratitude to Professor Alexander Siedschlag, the Director of the Center for European Security Studies as the host and organizer of this conference. Welcome in Wels and I do hope that you are satisfied with the conditions for this conference and will be able to draw a positive balance after these two days.

Ladies and Gentlemen! "Security" has not only become a global theme after the devastating terrorist attacks of the infamous 11 September. If you google for a definition of the term of security, you get the sheerly unbelievable number of 3.95 million hits.

Security is prevention of crime as well as protection from the misuse of personal data, just to mention two out of many areas. Almost no day passes without extensive media reporting about security in which ever form. One point in your programme is dedicated to insights about security and safety during the only just finished UEFA EURO 2008. This illustrates one thing: The probably is no single dimension in human life that not has also to be regarded from a security perspective.

As a local politician and the financial officer of the city of Wels, it is important to me to indicate that one has to see security also from a financial perspective. It is a fact that

security is costly and that in times of stressed public budgets this also puts pressure on communal budgets. If I may illustrate that with an example:

Since a couple of years, the city of Wels has engaged a private security company to monitor playground and parks on a regular basis. The purpose is on the one hand to prevent vandalism and on the other to increase the feeling of security of passing-by citizens who may fear harassment. The costs incurred by this monitoring naturally must be born by the public authorities, in this case, the city of Wels.

I believe that security concerns all of us almost on a daily basis in some way. Requirements for security will increase during the years to come and increase the demand for new methods to maintain security, having our citizens in mind. Therefore, I deem this conference very important and would like to reiterate that the city of Wels is proud to be your host for the next two days. I would like to cordially welcome you once again, and I wish you a pleasant stay in Wels, as I wish the 3rd European Security Conference ESCI a successful progress.