

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY
EMBARGO APRIL 26, 2005, 13.00 PM

Mr Erkki Tuomioja, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland
Statement at the EAPC Senior Civil Emergency Planning Committee
Helsinki, 25-26 April 2005

Mr Chairman, Ministers, Chairpersons of the NATO Planning Boards and Committees, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to have the honour to deliver the concluding words at the EAPC Senior Civil Emergency Planning Committee, meeting in plenary session at the Finlandia Hall in Helsinki. This is the fourth time that the plenary is gathering outside Brussels, and I am sure you have had a fruitful meeting here in Helsinki.

Civil emergency planning activities is a growing sector of the NATO Partnership for Peace and the only sector that is almost entirely open to the partner countries.

Like Sweden, Finland has actively contributed to the further development of the sector. In her speech at the EAPC Summit in Istanbul last year, President Halonen confirmed that Finland considers NATO's activities in the Civil Emergency Planning sector useful and very important also in the EAPC-context. Finland's interests and commitment to the civil emergency planning were reaffirmed in the Government's recent Report on Finnish Security and Defense Policy that was approved by Parliament last December.

Civil Emergency Planning is a forum where Finland as well as the other PfP countries can bring a tangible contribution to the Partnership for Peace

programme and where it is possible to learn and profit from the expertise and knowledge made available to partners. I am sure that this meeting has provided all participants, and not least the partners, with useful and concrete advice and guidance.

Finland contributes to and benefits from the opportunities provided by European integration and the enlarging zone of established democracy. At the same time, Finland, like any other country, encounters the formidable challenge of new cross-border security threats that are felt globally, regionally and locally. Terrorist attacks, such as the one in Madrid a year ago, warrant the enhancement of our international cooperation and contacts.

We have noted that civil emergency planning concentrates more and more on WMD issues, on the protection of societies and civilian populations and on after-care and rehabilitation. This meeting has proved that this observation holds true. In its broad sense, preparedness covers strengthening of our critical infrastructure and the security of supply.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Security is indivisible. The capacity to respond to changing security threats and challenges calls for access to a variety of tools. In crisis management, civilian and military means should be combined in a coherent manner. Turning this principle into effective action is one of the most demanding tasks that we face today, and all international actors and individual states are trying to work out solutions to the dilemma. It is clear that planning for crisis situations requires a very broad, well co-coordinated and optimally resourced focus, including recognition of the value of NGOs and other non-state actors.

NATO and the EU are in many ways complementary organizations. NATO's strengths lie especially on the military side, whereas the EU is mostly a civilian organization. As both organizations operate also on fields where the other one is strong, close contacts and taking into account what the other one is doing is obviously needed to avoid overlap. It seems to me that this division of work has in practice worked quite well. However, as both organizations continue to evolve, we should keep an eye also on this aspect.

Finally Ladies and Gentlemen, I would like to thank you for participating in this EAPC Senior Civil Emergency Planning Committee in plenary session in Helsinki. It has been a success in terms of the number of participants, and I hope and trust that it has been successful also in enhancing cooperation in EAPC Civil Emergency Planning.