

**MARITIME POLICIES FOR A PROSPEROUS AND SECURE EUROPE  
Towards a 21st century comprehensive civil-military approach**

***Closing Remarks.***

**Sr. Constantino Méndez Martínez.**

The sea is an area where frontiers dissolve and numerous actors converge, some of them – like in Somali waters – posing a serious threat to our security. They threaten some of the most important sea lines of communications, hinder the distribution of humanitarian aid and fishing activities, and jeopardise the lives of our fellow citizens. Those risks are real, both in national and international waters, and it is necessary to neutralise them.

The Ministry of Defence, within the framework of the Spanish Presidency of the European Union, has organised this seminar to ponder on how to tackle globally the new risks and threats to maritime security. Among the most significant challenges are drugs and weapons trafficking, illegal migration, smuggling, environmental damages, terrorism and, of course, piracy.

Many national and international initiatives have arisen in the last decades to try and deal successfully with the issue of maritime security.

We are nowadays fully aware that the problems of maritime security can only be solved with coordination at all levels. It is of paramount importance to assure cooperation in the following fields:

- Among peoples;
- Among organisations;
- Among governments;
- Between civilian and military establishments;

- Between private and public sectors; and
- Between national and European police departments.

The Spanish Government has been especially sensitive with this issue. For years, we have been encouraging policies and instruments to enhance maritime security around the world. And now, from the EU rotating Presidency, Spain is trying to promote the existing initiatives within the Union.

To this end, the Spanish Ministry of Defence has drafted a document that the Minister will present to her European counterparts during the informal meeting to be held in Palma de Mallorca on February 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. This document deals with three main objectives:

- The design of a common concept framework for European maritime security;
- Information exchange among the different actors with maritime responsibilities; and
- Organisation of efficient military operations on maritime security with full respect of the European Commission and EU agencies' responsibilities and taking into account the principle of subsidiarity.

In the coming months, Spain will therefore pay special attention to the two great European policies on this matter; namely, the Integrated Maritime Policy and the Common Security and Defence Policy. Good coordination of both initiatives will be a key factor to guarantee safe seas.

The implementation of the Treaty of Lisbon is especially favourable, allowing for the execution of new instruments for cooperation.

It is worth underlying that we are dealing with an extremely complex issue whose results will only be noticed in the long run. We are therefore starting a process

for dialogue and cooperation. The final success will depend on the continuity given by subsequent Presidencies, as well as on the efforts of the different European institutions and actors.

To sum up, we are faced with the challenge of enhancing maritime security from an integral perspective, but we also have a great opportunity to attain such a goal – the Treaty of Lisbon – for more efficient policies and instruments.

Before concluding, let me thank your presence in this seminar. The participation of the executive directors of some of the most important European agencies with maritime responsibilities, as well as the attendance of the Chiefs of Staff of the Navies of France, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, Portugal and Spain, underlines the importance the European Union attaches to this issue.

I am especially grateful to the Minister Gustavo Suárez Pertierra for having presided over this seminar, and all panellists and moderators who have also taken part.

I am convinced that the excellent results obtained in this seminar will greatly contribute to endow with substance and essence the working documents we will present the coming months within the framework of our Presidency of the European Union.