

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES

**THE EU NON-PROLIFERATION AND
DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE**

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INTRODUCTION

FRIDAY, 3 FEBRUARY 2012

MARK FITZPATRICK

**DIRECTOR, NON-PROLIFERATION
AND DISARMAMENT PROGRAMME, IISS**

Introduction to the Meeting

Mark Fitzpatrick, Director, Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Programme, IISS

Ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of the EU Non-Proliferation Consortium, I welcome all participants to this conference. You are all participants – nobody is here just as an observer. I do not have to encourage you to participate actively, but when you do participate I ask that you do with conciseness, because of the large number of participants; we would like everyone to have a chance. Over 200 of you are signed up for the conference. We had a couple of cancellations at the last minute because of snow and ice in Turkey and in northern Italy, but I am glad that the rest of you were able to come to Brussels to enjoy the sunshine. I will introduce our distinguished speaker welcoming you from the EU in a minute, but before doing so please allow me to make a couple of introductory remarks.

As you know, this conference is brought to you by the EU Non-Proliferation Consortium, a group that was formed a year ago by four think-tanks in Europe, which have special expertise in non-proliferation and disarmament subjects: the Fondation pour la recherche stratégique in Paris; the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt (PRIF); the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute and my own International Institute for Strategic Studies, based in London, which had the lead in organising today's conference.

The consortium forms the core of a wider network of European think-tanks and academic institutions that are engaged in research on non-proliferation and disarmament matters. This wider network now comprises 51 centres of research in Europe, all of which, I think, are represented here today.

The purpose of the consortium and of the broader network of institutes is to promote discussion of non-proliferation and arms-control issues; support the non-proliferation work of the EU, including by offering advice; promote the work that the EU and the institutes are doing in the field; and strengthen the bonds among us.

The European External Action Service (EEAS) and the consortium worked together to organise a kickoff meeting in Brussels last May and, just a couple of months later, organised a successful EU seminar to promote confidence-building and in support of a process aimed at establishing a zone free of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and means of delivery in the Middle East. These meetings both went off very well and we are being asked if we, as a consortium, can do even more to promote the WMD-free zone proposals.

The consortium has also developed a dedicated website – www.nonproliferation.eu – and a growing body of policy-oriented publications, including papers commissioned by the consortium, all of which are found on the website, and some samples are outside.

I now turn the floor over to Ambassador Maciej Popowski, Deputy Secretary-General of the EEAS, who came to the EU in 2008 from a distinguished career in the Polish diplomatic service. Our policy at this conference is to refer participants to the short bios in the conference packets that you have, so, with apologies, I will not give the usual introduction to our distinguished speaker but, without further ado, turn to Ambassador Popowski and thank him for kicking off the conference.