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# Opening Speech - Energy and Security

- Député européen (Verts, France) - Mes initiatives - Sécurité collective et environnement -



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**It is my honour and a privilege to welcome you to this energy and security conference.**

**Energy policy is security policy, or to be more precise, what we want is peace policy. In the 21st century security policy is a cross-cutting task - and everything else but pure military policy.**

In view of the growing energy needs of the world (for example the developing economies in Asia), the demand will rise for the non-renewable resources oil and gas, and thus the competition over secured supplies will intensify. This implies new conflict potentials. Gas and oil are predominantly imported from potential crisis regions. Real alternatives do not exist since the natural deposits are unchangeably concentrated in those areas. Incalculable price developments, interruptions of the supply, or even longer supply failures are only few of the possible risks. Long transport routes and complicated transport systems are easy targets for asymmetric threats (such as piracy, terrorism at sea, interruptions of pipelines, etc), which exacerbate the set of problems. One should only imagine a several months long closure of the Suez Canal due to a terrorist attack and the consequences this would have for the Western energy markets.

Sadly it took a long time until this interconnectedness was finally recognised. We Greens have been debating this topic already for quite some time, as one can see *inter alia* from our flyer.

Energy security cannot be guaranteed by military means. The Commissioner of Foreign Affairs, Benita Ferrero Waldner and the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, have also recognised this and in March published a paper on this matter. It is among others a rejection to all ideas that want to safeguard pipelines and oil vessels with military means. Whoever believes that they could secure pipelines militarily from terror attacks is climbing up the wrong tree!

On other parts the paper is still relatively general and does not always draw the consequences of what it predicts, but the message is important: climate-change/environmental policy has a decisive influence on wars and conflicts worldwide. One can summarise the development in two ways, on one hand there are the steadily decreasing resources and worsening environmental conditions which lead to violent conflicts, on the other hand these conflicts exacerbate those problems further.

Exactly this should be the focus of today's conference.

To begin with we have to confront ourselves with the question of energy consumption. We cannot afford to continue to use our resources in such a wasteful manner. Still today 15% of the world's population use 60% of the crude oil and natural gas and more than half of the other limited resources. Furthermore, the hunger for energy in other aspiring countries will rise and not fall. Already today China consumes 25% of the world's basic metals. All people have an equally legitimate interest in natural resources and energy. An existing disproportionate level of consumption does not justify a disproportionate interest; instead it obliges to contribute more towards the saving of limited resources and to minimise the use to the benefit of others.

Only a few more remarks since many of these thoughts are also topics of discussion at the conference:

Climate change exacerbates already today global poverty by destroying livelihoods, forcing millions of people to flee, intensifying disputes surrounding distribution, and causing violent conflicts and rising costs. The availability of oil and gas concentrates itself geographically and economically in fewer and fewer countries and in the hands of corporations close to the state. In resource rich countries it is too often the case that the profits do not benefit the population but corrupt and/or repressive elites. Climate change and the resources crisis together endanger peace!

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The worldwide trade in weapons has increased, as peace research institutes have again just recently shown. Therewith arises the problem of worldwide available weapons, which by itself already constitutes a problem. What is new to consider are the effects on the environment: The number of worldwide engagements in civil and military missions has increased enormously. An evaluation of sufficient scope has so far not taken place. We say we want international engagements in order to protect people, but have we always accounted for the consequences of our actions? What impact does it have on the environment when thousands of aid workers/soldiers enter the country? In this area there are many aspects to be considered, which by far have not been extensively discussed.

The insight of knowing about the interrelatedness between environmental effects (resources and climate change) and security policy has so far not been reflected in coherent strategies nor is the knowledge being used to co-ordinate policy areas with each other in a consistent way. I would like to end my speech with the hope that today's conference will give further impulses, which may even be suitable to be integrated into our political actions. In that spirit I wish you/us a successful conference!