Minister Tuomioja's presentation

Ladies and Gentlemen,
As a concept the so-called "cartoon crisis" is a misnomer. Had it not been the unfortunate cartoons published in Jyllands-Posten, then, sooner or later, some other event could have ignited more or less the same kind of violent reactions we have now witnessed in many Muslim countries.

The tensions leading to this reaction have been building up for a long time, and with increasing force after September 11th. We are dealing with the results of years of accumulated frustrations in the Muslim world. These frustrations have their roots in the many unresolved conflicts affecting Muslims. Of these the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is by far the most serious, and one which has truly global implications. But there is also Iraq, there is Iran, there is the so-called War on terror. All of these send the message of the imposition of Western values and Western solutions, as interpreted through Westerns interests, and based on overwhelming Western military superiority, in particular of the world's only remaining superpower, the United States of America.
Pictures from Abu Ghraib, the West Bank or Guantanamo, and the whole thrust of the socalled War on Terrorism widely - however wrongly - lead it to being seen as a War on Islamic Terrorism. From this it is not a long step to a further misinterpretation of the War on Terrorism as a war on Islam. While accusations of double standards are often misused by those who do not share our common values, there are also enough real examples of Western double standards on human rights, the use of violence and nuclear issues to give these perceptions a semblance of credibility.

On other issues - economic, cultural and social - there are also many irritants originating from the West, which also fuel resentment and frustration in Muslim countries.
But not all causes of frustration are imported. There is a failure by all too many governments to deliver the reforms and improvements which their citizens have the right to expect in terms of democracy, respect for human rights and concrete economic and social development. But also these failures have served - sometimes though a deliberate policy to deflect criticism of their own failures by the governments responsible for them - to deepen the rift between the West and the Muslim countries. As the Deputy Prime Minister of Turkey HE Mr. Abdullah Gül said in his address in the EU Foreign Minister's meeting last weekend, quoting his speech of the OIC meeting in 2003 about his concern about the lack of vision, good governance, transparency and gender equality in the Islamic World. In his words he stressed the need to "put our houses in order". "I called for eradication of illiteracy, corruption and waste of human resources... These are the ills which strengthen the hands of the radicals and lead to violence. This is a serious threat to world peace. We strongly condemn such destructive actions".

Also in the so-called cartoon crisis we could see the hand of certain governments and of some extremist movements deliberately exploiting the situation and inciting people to violence. We have to be aware of this and, of course, also demand that such criminal activities be condemned and their perpetrators brought to justice. But to focus only on this aspect is to completely misread the situation and to ignore the real concerns and

grievances, that are shared by a significant part or even the majority of all Muslims, even if only a small minority approves the violent reactions to the publication of the notorious cartoons.

With this background introduction I want to remind us all, that we are not only talking about mutual understanding or misunderstandings between different cultures and religions, but also about the affects of very concrete issues in international politics, which have to be adressed. Neither are we talking about relations between the so-called West and the so-called Muslim world. These have never been clear concepts, and are much less so in today's globalizing world, where almost all countries are increasingly multicultural, multiethnic and multireligious in the composition of their populations.

Next I want to raise some issues related to European Muslim identity, diversity of political actors in the Muslim world and issues related to the "war against terror" which may have caused further radicalization amongst Muslims.

Over the past 20 years a profound change has been taking place among the younger generation of Muslims in Europe. Fifty years ago, most Muslims were immigrants who came looking for work and planned to return home as soon as they could. For the most part, this first generation came from economically disadvantaged background. They had made no great study of Islam and continued religious practices that remained heavily marked by their culture of origin, whether Indo-Pakistani, North African or Turkish. Assuming that their stay was temporary, parents at first tried to protect themselves from this unfamiliar European environment rather than integrate themselves into it. But most of these original immigrants never left. Their children were born in Europe, became fluent in their national language and became better educated than their elders. Their parents' dream of going home faded. The emergence of this new generation of European Muslims has resulted in a new way of thinking and talking about the nature of Islamic communities here.

Now a silent revolution is taking place. Old concepts that divided the world into two hostile camps-Islamic vs. non-Islamic abode -are outdated and need to be reviewed. Religious principles should not be confused with culture of origin: European Muslims should only be Muslim instead of forever remaining North African, Pakistani or Turkish Muslims. Active citizenship has to be encouraged and a European Islamic culture needs to be created. But how?

Mentalities are changing fast. Islamic associations are active at the local level, building bridges and encouraging Muslim citizens to vote. New artistic voices are being heard. Although this energy and vitality are particularly visible in countries with the oldest Muslim presence, the same phenomenon is underway elsewhere too, here in Finland as well where the Muslim community is currently trying to organize itself. But numerous challenges remain and the day when Muslims and their fellow-citizens can live together in harmony is still far-off. A series of stumbling blocks exist both with the majority culture as well as within Muslim communities themselves.

Last December the European Union adopted a Strategy for combating Radicalization and Recruitment to Terrorism. The key message in this strategy was to ensure that voices of mainstream opinion prevail over those of extremism and we took upon ourselves to promote yet more vigorously security, justice, democracy and opportunity for all. We also took upon ourselves to create conditions for a structured national dialogue between the Muslim community and the authorities. This is a task that we should examine more closely here in Finland as well.

There are a range of conditions in societies which create an environment in which people can more easily be radicalized. Such factors do not necessarily lead to radicalization, but may make the radical message more appealing both to these who suffer them and those who identify with their suffering. These conditions may include poor or autocratic governance; states moving from autocratic control via inadequate reform to partial democracy; rapid but unmanaged modernization; and lack of political and economic prospects, unresolved international and domestic strife; and inadequate and inappropriate education or cultural opportunities for young people. Within the Union, most of these factors are not present, but within individual segments of the population they may apply and there may also be issues of identity in immigrant communities. As the Deputy Prime Minister Gül also stated last weekend: "It is time for Europe to focus on major problems of the world, and not let itself be lost in the web of problems less relevant in the global context. Rather, its problems like poverty, radicalism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia which urgently require Europe's' undivided attention".

Ladies and Gentlemen,
The issue of identity becomes crucial. In a rapidly globalizing world we all are experiencing a change of identities. Our previously rather monolithic identifies have become more complex, fragmented, multiple and sometimes contradictory. If this is happening to the core population with a relatively stable background we should have more understanding of the identity pressures experienced by people who try to cling on to several perceived realities without being a full fledged member of either the past of present society. Many do not feel allegiance to their parents or grandparent's' countries of origin, religion or cultural background, and thus can only really be part of the country where they have grown up and live, but yet they may sometimes encounter discrimination within these societies, often due to their cultural, linguistic, religious, national and physical differences.

The resulting alienation from both parental roots and country of origin and the society in which they live, can lead to a desire to identify with a more motivating or powerful locus of identity. When you add to this cocktail the perceived sense of humiliation of the entire Muslim Ummah, you have an explosive cocktail at hand. It seems to be a combination of all these factors that gives a strong motivating force for many to become involved in organizations with strong beliefs who wish to avenge certain people or society in general. Problems of discrimination in housing or the workplace should not be taken as "attacks on Islam" but as the effects of social policies that we must commit ourselves to changing, as citizens demanding equal rights for all. The Muslim community must not fall into a "victim mentality" and the misuse of the alibi that Islamophobia is preventing them from

flourishing. It is also up to Muslims themselves to assume their responsibilities, construct clear arguments, engage in dialogue both within their own communities and with others fellow citizens, and reject the simplistic vision of "us vs. them." We should promote common values of equality, justice and respect in the name of a shared "ethic of citizenship". The Muslim community must do away with the temptation to shut themselves off as an isolated minority for otherwise they offer encouragement to those extremist voices.

We all need to accept that Europe's population has changed, that it no longer has a single history and that the future calls for mutual understanding and respect. We need to face up to ignorance and reject the clichés and prejudices that surround Islam. We must start discussing the principles, values and forms that will enable us to live together. The new Muslim presence poses a series of unavoidable questions to all the citizens of Europe, Christian, Muslim as well as those who do not confess to any religion. Are we prepared to study the history of civilizations that is present in your lives and which forms part of your pluralistic society? Do we sincerely believe that Muslims-with their spirituality, ethics and creativity-have a positive contribution to make?

The future of Europe-with a flourishing Muslim presence and an open European identity will be built by all those who accept this challenge. It will be based on self-criticism, lasting and demanding dialogue, respect for diversity and the expression of common values. The path leads from simple integration to mutual enrichment. It's going to take time and, above all, it means that we're going to have to start trusting each other. After Sept. 11, I think that's the biggest single challenge we face.

Ladies and Gentlemen,
I think that one of the reasons why the cartoons created so much anger in the Muslim world was the perception my many Muslims that after to the spectacular and violent events of 9/11 many Western observers and policy makers have tended to lump all forms of Islamism together, and brand them as hostile. Islamic terrorists have no monipoly on terrorism. All major religions have had and continue to have their fundamentalist extremists, who have been responsible for terrorist atrocities. There are also many forms of secular terrorism as well.

Indeed, Western policy makers have been unable to see that as with other religions Islamism - or Islamic activism has a number of very different streams, only a few of them violent and only a small minority justifying a confrontational response. I believe that we need a discriminating strategy that takes account of the diversity of outlooks within political Islamism. Many of these movements have a strong anti-western agenda, particularly with regard to the present conflicts in the Middle-East and how the "war against terror" is being conducted. Taking a critical view on these issues does not make these movements anti-democratic. Indeed, there is a diversity of movements that are nonviolent and which subscribe to democratic processes and methods in politics. They advocate their policies by taking part in elections, where possible.

By adopting an approach that fails to differentiate between modernist and fundamentalist

varieties of Islamism, policy-makers risk provoking two equally undesirable outcomes; either:
- including the different strands of Islamic activism to band together as a reaction, attenuating differences that might otherwise be fruitfully developed;
- or causing the non-violent and modernist tendencies to be eclipsed by the jihadists.
One of the reasons why the cartoons raised such uproar may be the fact that it has been difficult in the counter terrorism activity to distinguish between the legitimate security interests of the state and those of the individuals. The Muslim community has often pointed out that there are certain double standards as to how the West has approached the issue of human rights. I think certain legitimate claims have been made in this respect.
I feel that it is important to combat totalitarian terrorism with means of a constitutional democracy. If the moral foundation of western societies is breached with regard to human rights, we play into the hands of the extremists/terrorists. In the long run counter terrorism activity has to be based on a realistic legislative framework, which takes due account of human rights and which seeks an engagement and dialogue with the local Muslim community to promote understanding and respect between different parts of the population.

Mr. Chairman,
In short, the EU should seek to engage itself in a dialogue with mainstream Muslims both internationally as well as nationally. If we wish our voice to be heard by the Muslims we will have to listen to Muslims abroad as well as domestically. In the international fora in the post caricature world we have to seek engagement with governments and intergovernmental bodies, the civil society, religious and spiritual leaders as well as intellectuals. It is also important that we develop a non-emotive lexicon for discussing the issues in order to avoid linking Islam to terrorism.
We have several existing co-operative mechanisms that should be used in this respect. The Barcelona Process and various EuroMed fora; Here I would like draw your attention to the Foreign Ministers meeting of the Barcelona Process which will be held in November in Tampere; The enhanced co-operation between the EU and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), The ASEM Summit meeting which is going to be held in Helsinki in September, the UN and other important actors. Later this afternoon we will hear how the Spanish-Turkish initiative on "Alliance of Civilizations" can act as a bridge builder. Within the Helsinki Process HRH prince Hassan has agreed to convene a round table event with the working title "Participation as an alternative to Extremism". I also commend the positions of religious and spiritual leaders around the world who have multiplied their efforts to bring about mutual understanding, respect and harmony. While political and religious leaders play an important role in reconstructing bridges we should not forget that the "cartoons crisis" has touched ordinary people around the world. It is not only to them, but with them we should be talking. A good example of this is the interfaith forum "Religions in a pluralistic world - unity and Diversity", organized by the Finnish civil society which will be organized later this year in Espoo, Finland.

Mr. Chairman,
It is a task for us all to be able to see the diversity in the Muslim world and seek allies amongst Muslims with the view of reinforcing moderate voices on all sides.