

**MINUTES OF THE COSAC PRESIDENTIAL TROIKA MEETING
Madrid, 4 February 2010**

PRESENT AT THE MEETING:

IN THE CHAIR: Mr Miguel ARIAS CAÑETE (*Cortes Generales*, Spain)

Ms Anna KINBERG BATRA (*Riksdag*, Sweden); Ms Christina AXELSSON (*Riksdag*, Sweden); Ms Vanessa MATZ (*Sénat*, Belgium); Mr Herman DE CROO (*Chambre des Représentants*, Belgium); Mr Miguel-Ángel MARTÍNEZ-MARTÍNEZ (European Parliament); Ms Silvana KOCH-MEHRIN (European Parliament).

AGENDA:

- 1. Adoption of the agenda for the Presidential Troika Meeting**
- 2. Adoption of the draft agenda for the Chairperson's Meeting**
- 3. Debate and adoption of the draft agenda for the XLIII COSAC Meeting**
- invitation of special guests
- 4. Adoption of the Outline of the Thirteenth Bi-annual Report**
- 5. Update on the subsidiarity check on the Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on jurisdiction, applicable law, recognition and enforcement of decisions and authentic instruments in matters of succession and the creation of a European Certificate of Succession**
- 6. Proposal for academic research co-operation with COSAC**
- 7. Letters received by the Presidency**
- 8. Any other business**

PROCEEDINGS:

1. Adoption of the agenda for the Presidential Troika Meeting

The meeting was chaired by Mr Miguel ARIAS CAÑETE, Chairman of the Joint Committee for the European Union of the Spanish *Cortes Generales*, who welcomed the Members of the Presidential Troika and presented the draft agenda of the COSAC Presidential Troika meeting.

The agenda was unanimously adopted as set out above.

2. Adoption of the draft agenda for the Chairperson's Meeting

3. Debate and adoption of the draft agenda for the XLIII COSAC Meeting

4. Adoption of the Outline of the Thirteenth Bi-annual Report

Mr Miguel ARIAS CAÑETE outlined the draft agenda of the COSAC Chairpersons' Meeting as prepared by the Spanish Presidency. The Chairman informed the Members of the Presidential Troika that Mr Ludek SEFZIG, Chairman of the EU Affairs Committee of the Czech *Senát*, and Mr Harm Evert WAALKENS, Chairman of the Standing Committee on European Affairs of the Dutch *Tweede Kamer*, had asked the Presidency to include an

additional point on the agenda of the Chairpersons' Meeting on the future role of COSAC. The Chairman explained that the Presidency would prefer having a structured debate on the future role of COSAC and on the new model for relations between national Parliaments and the European Parliament after the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon during the XLIII COSAC Meeting on 30 May - 1 June 2010. The debate would be based on the Thirteenth Bi-annual Report. The Report would analyse the opinions of national Parliaments and the European Parliament and would be a starting point for the thorough debate on the future of COSAC and on the relations between national Parliaments and the European Parliament. A questionnaire prepared by the Presidency and the COSAC Secretariat would be sent to national Parliaments and the European Parliament in preparation for the Thirteenth Bi-annual Report. Therefore, Mr Miguel ARIAS CAÑETE proposed to present to the Chairpersons' Meeting the following day the draft agendas of the COSAC Chairpersons' Meeting and the XLIII COSAC Meeting as well as the Outline for the Thirteenth Bi-annual Report as a package.

Ms Anna KINBERG BATRA supported the Presidency's proposal to postpone the debate until May and stated that the debate on the future role of COSAC should be seen in a broader context. This issue would also be discussed at the EU Speakers' Conference on 14-15 May 2010 in Stockholm. It was important that the COSAC debate was well structured.

Ms Silvana KOCH-MEHRIN agreed that it was important to have a well-structured debate based on information collected from national Parliaments and the European Parliament.

Mr Miguel ARIAS CAÑETE outlined the draft agenda of the XLIII COSAC Meeting.

Mr Miguel- Ángel MARTÍNEZ-MARTÍNEZ underlined that this was a starting point of a new chapter in the relations between the European Parliament and national Parliaments. He said that mechanisms to implement the Treaty of Lisbon had to be developed and that COSAC was one of the good instruments serving that purpose. COSAC had proved its relevance and now had to adapt to new requirements. The European Parliament was ready to reflect on this evolution.

As to the draft agenda of the XLIII COSAC Meeting, Mr Miguel-Ángel MARTÍNEZ-MARTÍNEZ suggested inviting two more speakers for the agenda point "The new model for relations between national Parliaments and the European Parliament after the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon" in order to better reflect overall political balance.

Mr Herman DE CROO suggested that the two additional speakers be representatives of national Parliaments.

Mr Miguel ARIAS CAÑETE explained that the two proposed speakers, Mr Elmar BROK and Mr José María GIL-ROBLES Y GIL-DELGADO, had not been selected on the basis of their political affiliation. The Chairman agreed to enlarge the panel with two members of national Parliaments belonging to the liberal and the socialist political families.

Ms Anna KINBERG BATRA proposed to invite to the XLIII COSAC Meeting the Speaker of the Swedish *Riksdag*, Mr Per WESTERBERG, who is also the Chairman of the EU Speakers' Conference to present the results of the Stockholm meeting. The aim was to have more coordination between the consultation opened by the EU Speakers' Conference and the debates in COSAC. This was agreed.

Ms Anna KINBERG BATRA also brought to the attention of the presidential Troika that, based on the experience of the XLII COSAC Meeting in Stockholm, there might be a need to allocate more time to the political family meetings. It was agreed that the political family meetings on 31 May 2010 would start at 8.00 a.m. rather than at 8.30 a.m.

The Presidential Troika agreed to suggest to the Chairpersons' Meeting to adopt the draft agenda of the COSAC Chairpersons' Meeting, as presented by the Presidency, the amended draft agenda of the XLIII COSAC Meeting, and the Outline for the Thirteenth Bi-annual Report as a package.

Mr Miguel ARIAS CAÑETE informed the Presidential Troika that the Presidency had received two requests for invitations to the XLIII COSAC Meeting as special guests: one from Mr Árni Þór SIGURÐSSON, Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the Icelandic *Alþingi*, and the other from Mr Vladimir DANCHECV, Head of the Regional Secretariat for Parliamentary Cooperation in South East Europe in Sofia, on behalf of the Conference of the European Integration Parliamentary Committees of the States participating in the Stabilisation and Association Process in South East Europe (COSAP). The Chairman recalled that traditionally special guests could be invited to the COSAC meetings when there was a related point on the agenda of the meeting. As there was no point on the agenda of the XLIII COSAC Meeting concerning the Balkan region, the Chairman suggested declining the COSAP request. On the other hand, the Chairman suggested extending an invitation to the Icelandic *Alþingi*, because Iceland had applied for EU membership, and it was highly probable that by the next COSAC meeting it would have been granted candidate country status.

It was agreed to suggest to the COSAC Chairpersons' Meeting the following day to decline an invitation to the COSAP and to extend an invitation to the Icelandic *Alþingi* to the XLIII COSAC Meeting.

5. Update on the subsidiarity check on the Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on jurisdiction, applicable law, recognition and enforcement of decisions and authentic instruments in matters of succession and the creation of a European Certificate of Succession

Mr Miguel ARIAS CAÑETE asked Ms Loreta RAULINAITYTE, the permanent member of the COSAC Secretariat, to introduce the Note on the COSAC-coordinated subsidiarity check on the Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on jurisdiction, applicable law, recognition and enforcement of decisions and authentic instruments in matters of succession and the creation of a European Certificate of Succession. Ms Loreta RAULINAITYTE explained the unique situation in which this subsidiarity check had taken place. It had started on 20 October 2009, before the Treaty of Lisbon entered into force and the eight week period ended on 17 December 2009, with the Lisbon Treaty in force. A record number of national Parliamentary Chambers participated in this check, i.e. 35 Chambers out of 40 from 25 Member States. A full report on the subsidiarity check would be presented to the XLIII COSAC Meeting.

6. Proposal for academic research co-operation with COSAC

Mr Miguel ARIAS CAÑETE presented a proposal received by the Presidency from a group of academics working on the role of national Parliaments in the European Union for academic research cooperation with COSAC on the "Europeanisation of parliamentary behaviour".

After a debate, the Presidential Troika agreed to suggest to the Chairpersons' Meeting to refer the academics to the European University Institute in Florence in order to promote cooperation between various academic circles dealing with similar subjects. Mr Miguel ARIAS CAÑETE suggested writing a letter on the proposal to the new President of the European University Institute, Mr Josep BORRELL FONTELLES.

7. Letters received by the Presidency

Mr Miguel ARIAS CAÑETE informed the Presidential Troika about a letter received from Mr Michael CONNARTY, the Chairman of the European Scrutiny Committee of the UK *House of Commons*, concerning the interpretation of the extent of the new powers granted to the national Parliaments by the Treaty of Lisbon. In his letter Mr CONNARTY expressed concern that the new powers could be subjected to a restrictive interpretation.

After a debate, it was decided to suggest to the Chairpersons' Meeting to include this question into the questionnaire for the Thirteenth Bi-annual Report and to ask the Presidency to seek a opinion on this matter from the European Commission, the European Parliament and the EU Council's legal services.

Mr Miguel ARIAS CAÑETE also presented a letter received by the Presidency from the Chairpersons of the Public Expenditure Committee, the Committee on Finance and the Committee on European Affairs of the Dutch *Tweede Kamer* on accountability of EU budgetary funds. The authors of the letter informed the Presidency about an Interparliamentary Conference on improving national accountability of EU funds held on 28-29 January 2010 in The Hague and asked this issue to be put on the agenda of COSAC.

During the debate attention was drawn to the fact that there would be no discussions on the EU budget before this summer and, therefore, it was too early to discuss this matter during the next COSAC meeting. In addition, the main focus of the XLIII COSAC Meeting should be the future role of COSAC and the relations between national Parliaments and the European Parliament. It was decided to suggest to the Chairpersons' Meeting not to include this issue on the agenda of the XLIII COSAC Meeting.

8. Any Other Business

Mr Herman DE CROO informed the Presidential Troika that recently he had been made aware of the differences concerning the status of the representatives of the national Parliaments in Brussels. After a brief exchange of views, Mr Miguel ARIAS CAÑETE proposed to ask the COSAC Secretariat to draft a non-paper on the status of the representatives of the national Parliaments in Brussels. This was agreed.