

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PRESIDENTIAL TROIKA OF COSAC
Rome, Italy, 30 November 2014**

PRESENT AT THE MEETING

CO-CHAIRS: Mr Vannino CHITI, Chair of the Committee on European Union Policies, Italian *Senato della Repubblica* and Mr Michele BORDO, Chair of the Committee on European Union Policies, Italian *Camera dei Deputati*.

Mr Ioannis TRAGAKIS, Deputy Speaker, Chair of the European Affairs Committee, Greek *Vouli ton Ellinon*; Ms Lolita ČIGĀNE, Chair of the European Affairs Committee, Latvian *Saeima*; Mr Ramón Luis VALCÁRCEL SISO, Vice-President, European Parliament, and Ms Danuta Maria HÜBNER, Chair of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs, European Parliament.

AGENDA

- 1. Adoption of the agenda of the meeting of the Presidential Troika of COSAC**
- 2. Approval of the draft programme of the LII COSAC**
- 3. Presentation of the 22nd Bi-annual Report**
- 4. Debate on the draft Contribution and Conclusions of the LII COSAC**
- 5. Letters received by the Presidency**
- 6. Any other business**

PROCEEDINGS

Mr Vannino CHITI welcomed the delegations of the Presidential Troika of COSAC (hereinafter referred to as "the Troika") and made some introductory remarks. He stressed the support of the Italian Parliament for strengthening interparliamentary cooperation, which could allow a deeper scrutiny of European dossiers and a better control of national Governments. He emphasised the crucial role of the European Parliament in identifying issues to be debated and focused on the importance of political dialogue with European Institutions. Recalling the European Commission's initiative in this field, he urged the European Parliament to adopt a similar initiative and to make available national Parliaments' contributions as meeting documents in the Committees. A stronger connection between the European Parliament and national Parliaments procedures would strengthen and consolidate the Euro-National parliamentary system.

Mr Michele BORDO, after welcoming the delegations, recalled the approach followed in preparing the meeting, in order to avoid self-referential debates on the marginal role of national Parliaments. The primary task of national Parliaments was, according to him, to define solutions in order to respond to citizens' expectations. Interparliamentary cooperation and COSAC had a meaning if they could help Parliamentary Assemblies to identify solutions and contribute effectively, in cooperation with European Institutions, to define strategic EU policies.

1. Adoption of the agenda of the Meeting of the Presidential Troika of COSAC

In the absence of any objection, the agenda of the meeting of the Troika was adopted without amendment.

2. Approval of the draft programme of the LII COSAC

Mr CHITI gave a brief outline of the plenary agenda.

He pointed out that the presence, in the different sessions, of many keynote speakers would ensure a wide and articulated debate. He added that the choice of inviting many national Parliamentarians as keynote speakers ensued the letter debated during the Chairpersons meeting on COSAC's procedure and practices.

In the absence of any objection, the draft programme of the meeting of the LII COSAC was approved without amendment.

3. Presentation of the 22nd Bi-annual Report of COSAC

Mr CHITI invited the Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat, Ms Christiana FRYDA, to give a short presentation of the 22nd Bi-annual Report of COSAC.

Ms FRYDA briefly presented the report, providing details on its four chapters dealing with Europe 2020, the future of the EU-EU Institutions and Parliaments, the Mediterranean and the role of EU Parliaments, and EU agencies and national Parliaments.

Mr TRAGAKIS, commenting on the outcome of the Bi-annual Report noted, on the one hand, that further measures had to be adopted in relation to employment, social exclusion and poverty indicators in Europe 2020 and, focusing on the migration flows in the Eastern part of the Mediterranean, pointed out, on the other hand, the need for additional funds for FRONTEX.

4. Debate on the draft Contribution and Conclusions of the LII COSAC

The Chair said that in mid-November the Presidency had distributed the draft Contribution and Conclusions of the LII COSAC.

Mr CHITI pointed out that the content of the Contribution was limited to the topics on the agenda of COSAC, taking also into account the outcome of the Bi-annual Report; he added that the Conclusions referred to the fact that the Presidency, with the assistance of the Secretariat, had updated the document on practices regarding voting on Contributions, drafted by the Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat in 2012, following the draft letter circulated by some Parliaments/Chambers on the occasion of the Chairpersons Meeting in July.

Mr CHITI informed that the Presidency had received amendments from the Lithuanian *Seimas*, the Croatian *Hrvatski sabor*, the Irish *Houses of the Oireachtas*, the UK *House of Lords* and the Romanian *Camera Deputaţilor*.

The Chair submitted a modified text of the Contribution and Conclusions to the Troika, which incorporated some compromise proposals, some additions proposed by the Latvian delegation, and some linguistic changes.

Mr CHITI mentioned the letter sent by Mr Edmund WITTBRODT, Chair of the European Affairs Committee of the Polish *Senat*, and supported by Mr Gunther KRICHBAUM, Chair of the European Affairs Committee of the German *Bundestag* on the length of the Contributions of COSAC and their association with the agenda of the conference. In principle, the Italian Presidency agreed with those recommendations; however, Mr CHITI pointed out that in the last four Presidencies, starting from the COSAC meeting in Dublin, the final Contributions had been more comprehensive than in previous COSAC meetings and that their length was similar to the current draft. Concerning the second remark, he stressed that the draft contribution exclusively focused on topics on the agenda of COSAC. Mr CHITI added that, in line with this approach, amendments not related to topics in the agenda should not be taken into consideration. Mr TRAGAKIS, congratulating the Italian Presidency and the secretariat, noted that, for the sake of its legitimacy, the Contribution had to reflect national Parliaments' positions and the Presidency's priorities. He pointed out that it was the privilege of the Presidency to draw up the agenda and to manage the amendments submitted. He also congratulated the Italian Presidency and the COSAC Secretariat for their work in updating the document on practices regarding voting on Contributions, noting that the document was putting things into the right perspective by introducing best practices and not regulating procedures further than needed.

Mr VALCÁRCEL SISO congratulated the Italian Presidency for the outstanding quality of the draft Contribution and Conclusions. These documents, fully in line with the questionnaire, were endorsed by the European Parliament. Mr VALCÁRCEL SISO, expressed the European Parliament's opposition to the amendments submitted by the Irish *Houses of the Oireachtas* and the UK *House of Lords* on delegated acts and first reading agreements, which it deemed unacceptable and not in line with the treaties' provisions.

Following a detailed examination of each amendment proposed on each paragraph, the Troika drafted a modified text of the Contribution and Conclusions to be presented to the Chairpersons of COSAC the following day. Mr CHITI underlined that all modifications supported by the Troika had to be considered, together with all other amendments, at the Chairpersons meeting the following day.

5. Letters received by the Presidency

Mr CHITI informed the members of the Troika about the letters that the Presidency had received, mentioning specifically the following:

- Two letters, one from the Swiss and one from the Georgian Parliament, requesting to be invited as observers to the LII COSAC. The Italian Presidency had already proceeded with inviting them, after consultation with the Presidential Troika.
- Two letters, one from the Chair of the European Affairs Committee of the Polish *Senat*, Mr Edmund WITTBRODT, and one from the Chair of the European Affairs Committee German *Bundestag*, Mr Gunther KRICHBAUM, regarding the Contribution.

- A letter from the Chair of the Committee on European Affairs of the Hungarian *Országgyűlés*, Mr Richárd HÖRCSIK, regarding the conclusions adopted by the representatives of the EU Affairs Committees of Hungary, Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia (Visegrad group) on the EU 2020 Strategy and the 2030 Framework for climate and energy.

6. Any other business

Ms Lolita ČIGĀNE announced the dates and the agenda of the COSAC Chairpersons meeting, to be held in Riga on 1st and 2nd February, 2015.