

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PRESIDENTIAL TROIKA OF COSAC

Riga, Latvia, 1 February 2015

### PRESENT AT THE MEETING

CHAIR: Ms Lolita ČIGĀNE, Latvian *Saeima*.

Mr Marc ANGEL, Chair of the Committee on Foreign and European Affairs, Defence, Cooperation and Immigration, Luxembourg *Chambre des Députés*, Mr Ramón Luis VALCARCEL SISO, Vice-President, European Parliament; and Ms Danuta Maria HÜBNER, Chair of the Constitutional Affairs Committee, 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 meeting of the Chairpersons of COSAC
3. Debate on the draft programme of the LIII COSAC
4. Approval of the outline of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Bi-annual Report of COSAC
5. Letters received by the Presidency
6. Any other business

### PROCEEDINGS

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

The meeting was chaired by Ms Lolita ČIGĀNE who welcomed the delegations of the Presidential Troika of COSAC (hereinafter referred to as "the Troika").

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 meeting of the Chairpersons of COSAC**

Ms ČIGĀNE referred to the two sessions that would take place the next day. The first one would include the priorities of the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union and Prospects for the European Union after the Election of the new European Commission and would be addressed by Ms Zanda KALNIŅA-LUKAŠEVICA, Parliamentary Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia, and Mr Frans TIMMERMANS, First Vice-President of the European Commission for Better Regulation, Interinstitutional Relations, the Rule of Law and the Charter of Fundamental Rights. The second one would focus on Eastern Partnership and Challenges Ahead and would be addressed by Mr Urban AHLIN, Speaker of the Swedish *Riksdag*, Mr Edgars RINKĒVIČS, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia, and Mr Ostap SEMERAK, First Deputy Chairman of the Committee on European Integration of the Ukrainian *Verkhova Rada*.

Ms ČIGĀNE said that, during the opening session, two short presentations would be made. Mr René LEEGTE, Dutch *Tweede Kamer*, would present the results of the informal meeting on the role of national Parliaments that had taken place on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2015 in Brussels. Lord BOSWELL, UK *House of Lords*, would present his discussion paper on the "green card" procedure.

The draft programme of the meeting of the Chairpersons of COSAC was approved without amendment.

### **3. Debate on the draft programme of the LIII COSAC**

Ms ČIGĀNE presented the topics on the draft programme, which included the following: 1. State of Play of the Latvian Presidency; 2. European Union Energy Policy: State of Play, Challenges and Opportunities; 3. The European Union as a Global Actor: EU Trade Policy for the next five years; 4. Future of the Parliamentary Scrutiny of the European Union Affairs.

Regarding the topic of European Union Energy Policy, Ms ČIGĀNE said that the Presidency had two confirmed keynote speakers; Mr Maroš ŠEFČOVIČ, Vice-President of the European Commission for Energy Union, and Mr Jerzy BUZEK, Chair of the European Parliament's Committee on Industry, Research and Energy. She also mentioned that the Presidency was planning to invite two additional speakers.

Referring to the keynote speakers on the topic of the European Union as a Global Actor, the Chair informed that Ms Cecilia MALMSTRÖM, Commissioner for Trade, had confirmed her participation. The Presidency, she added, envisaged inviting two additional speakers, a US Trade representative, as well as a representative of the European Parliament.

Ms HÜBNER took the floor and stated that the applicable rules governing the composition of the European Parliament's delegation could present a potential challenge to the choice of keynote speakers from the European Parliament. She explained that the European Parliament delegation would be composed of a Vice-President and the Chair of the Constitutional Affairs Committee plus four other members, from various political groups using the D'Hondt system, and that the European Parliament could finance only the participation of keynote speakers who were members of the delegation.

Ms ČIGĀNE said the Presidency had been aware of the issue and was taking note of it; she expressed hope that the Presidency and the European Parliament would closely cooperate when forming the European Parliament's delegation and that the delegation would be well representing the European Parliament's principles.

Mr ANGEL, referring to the proposed topic of EU Trade Policy, advised that the discussion on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) needed to include the issue of the investor-state-dispute-settlement (ISDS). Ms ČIGĀNE confirmed this issue was one of those to be tackled.

On the same topic, Ms HÜBNER suggested making TTIP visible in the title of the draft programme, as this was the very first discussion on TTIP organised between the European and national Parliaments. The Chair said the Presidency had taken note of the suggestion and would resolve the issue.

Ms ČIGĀNE then presented the fourth session on the draft programme dealing with the Future of Parliamentary Scrutiny of the European Union Affairs to which the entire second day of the meeting would be dedicated. It would include three topics: 1. General overview of instruments aiming at increasing national Parliaments' involvement in the EU decision-making; 2. Political dialogue and the "green card" procedure; 3. Role of Parliaments in shaping the European Commission's Multiannual Work Programme. The Chair said that the Presidency envisaged a mix of representatives of national Parliaments, the European Parliament and possibly of the academia as keynote speakers.

Mr VALCARCEL SISO proposed, firstly, changing the title of the third topic to "The European Commission's Multiannual Work Programme and the Role of Parliaments", in order to avoid all ambiguity between national Parliaments and European Parliament's prerogatives. Secondly, he suggested changing the order of the topics under the fourth session of the LIII COSAC so as to discuss first the proposed "green card", the European Commission's Multiannual Work Programme and the role of Parliaments, and conclude with a general debate. Thirdly, he proposed Ms Maria João RODRIGUES, member of the European Parliament's Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, as a keynote speaker for the topic regarding the European Commission's Multiannual Work Programme.

The Presidency agreed with the proposed amendment of the draft programme of the LIII COSAC and proposed to keep the order of the topics under the fourth session and to amend the title of the first topic to read, instead of "General overview", "State of play of instruments aiming at increasing national Parliaments' involvement in the EU decision-making".

Ms ČIGĀNE also informed that, after a proposal of the meeting of the Chairpersons of the Committees of European Union Affairs of Parliaments of the EU South earlier in the afternoon to discuss the situation of ISIS and terrorism in the Middle East, the Presidency had agreed to hold a formal lunch debate on the topic.

#### **4. Approval of the outline of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Bi-annual Report of COSAC**

Ms ČIGĀNE briefly presented the outline of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Bi-annual Report. She reported that the first chapter would tackle the subject of European Union Energy Policy: state of play, challenges and opportunities. The second chapter would deal with the future of parliamentary scrutiny of European Union affairs. The third chapter would tackle the topic of EU Trade Policy and the role of national Parliaments. In addition, she explained that the intention of the Presidency was to include the input of the Bi-annual Report in the LIII COSAC. The Chair said that the questionnaire for the 23<sup>rd</sup> Bi-annual Report would be circulated in about two weeks' time mentioning the intended deadline of 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2015 for the replies.

The outline of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Bi-annual Report of COSAC was approved without amendment.

#### **5. Letters received by the Presidency**

The Presidency had received the following letters:

- Letters from Ms Anniken HUITFELD, Chair of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence of the Norwegian *Storting*, as well as from Dr Kathy RIKLIN, National Councillor/ President of the EFTA/EU Delegation of the Swiss *Assemblée fédérale*, regarding participation at COSAC. After consultation with the Troika, letters of invitation had already been sent to the Norwegian *Storting* and the Swiss *Assemblée fédérale*.
- Letters from Mr Vannino CHITI, Chair of the Committee on Policies of the European Union of the Italian *Senato della Repubblica*, and Mr Michele BORDO, Chair of the Committee on Policies of the European Union of the Italian *Camera dei deputati*, regarding their inability to participate in the COSAC Troika and Chairpersons meetings in Riga.
- A letter from Mr Malik AZMANI, Chair of the European affairs Committee of the Dutch *Tweede Kamer*, regarding Mr René LEEGTE's attendance at the meeting of the Chairpersons of COSAC.
- The reply of the European Commission to the Contribution of the LII COSAC.

- A letter from Mr Frans TIMMERMANS, First Vice-President of the European Commission, responding to Ms ČIGĀNE's letter on enhanced political dialogue between national Parliaments and the European Commission.
- A letter from Mr Kalle PALLING, Chair of the European Union Affairs Committee of the Estonian *Riigikogu*, proposing a common statement of the Chairpersons of COSAC on current events in Ukraine.

Mr ANGEL supported Mr PALLING's initiative regarding a common statement of the Chairpersons of COSAC on current events in Ukraine, proposing, nevertheless, balancing the content of the draft statement by adding a reference to the need for modernisation and continuation of reforms in Ukraine.

Mr VALCARCEL SISO suggested amending the second paragraph of the draft statement and proposed more moderate language reflecting the Foreign Affairs Council conclusions on Ukraine adopted on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2015. Mr ANGEL and Ms HÜBNER agreed, the latter underlining the need to ensure the consistency between the positions expressed by the EU Parliaments and by the Council of EU.

Following a proposal by the Presidency on the way to proceed, the Troika amended the draft statement that was going to be presented to the Chairs the next day.

## **6. Any other business**

No other business.