

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PRESIDENTIAL TROIKA OF COSAC Helsinki, Finland, 21 July 2019

PRESENT AT THE MEETING

CHAIRS: Ms Satu HASSI, Chair of the Grand Committee, Finnish *Eduskunta*.

Ms Gabriela CREȚU, Chairwoman of the European Affairs Committee, Romanian *Senat*; Mr Angel TÎLVĂR, Chairman of the European Affairs Committee, Romanian *Camera Deputaților*; Mr Domagoj Ivan MILOSEVIC, Chairman of the European Affairs Committee, Croatian *Hrvatski sabor*; Ms Mairead McGUINNESS, First Vice-President, European Parliament; Mr Antonio TAJANI, Chair of the Committee for 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 meeting of the Chairpersons of COSAC**
- 3. Debate on the draft programme of the LXII COSAC**
- 4. Approval of the outline of the 32nd Bi-annual Report of COSAC**
- 5. Co-financing and Appointment of the Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat for 2020-2021**
- 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

Ms HASSI welcomed the delegations of the Presidential Troika of COSAC (hereinafter referred to as "the Troika"), and outlined the agenda of the meeting of the Troika, which was adopted without amendment.

2. Approval of the draft programme of the Meeting of the Chairpersons of COSAC

Ms HASSI outlined the topics on the programme of the meeting that would take place the following day.

The first session would focus on the "priorities of the Finnish Presidency of the Council of the European Union" and would be presented by Ms Tytti TUPPURAINEN, Minister for European Affairs.

The second session would deal with the ongoing negotiations on the Multiannual Financial Framework, with Mr Alain LAMASSOURE, Former MEP and Former French Minister, as keynote speaker.

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

3. Debate on the draft programme of the LXII COSAC

Ms HASSI informed the Troika members that the LXII COSAC would take place on 1 – 3 December 2019 in Helsinki. She outlined the four sessions of the draft programme.

The first session would be presented by the Prime Minister of Finland, Mr Antti RINNE, and focus on the Finnish Presidency of the Council of the European Union; the second session would deal with Tampere acquis and the Charter of Fundamental Rights; the third session would address the European climate strategy; the fourth session would be a continuation of the debate; whereas the fifth and final session would analyse inter-parliamentary cooperation in the 2020s.

The Chair also proposed that the President-elect of the European Commission, Ms Ursula VON DER LEYEN, would be invited to address COSAC and that the decision would be recorded at the Chairpersons meeting. She also referred to a suggestion by the Dutch *Tweede Kamer* to devote a session to transparency during the plenary, whilst noting that no concrete proposal had yet been put forward. Nevertheless, the Chair sought the opinion of the Troika regarding this suggestion.

Ms McGUINNESS, European Parliament, expressed her appreciation of the programme and the emphasis that had been put on expert contribution to the meeting, but wanted to know more about the political side of the meeting. Regarding transparency, she said the Troika would need to know why it would be put on the agenda, as well as its format and objective. The European Parliament had done a lot of work on transparency and it would be good to acknowledge this rather than have the same subject come up without any conclusion.

With regard to the political side of the meeting, the Chair answered that political input would be provided by the participants after the experts delivered their keynote speeches, which should serve as an inspiration for the political debate that would ensue.

She agreed that a more detailed proposal on transparency was needed in order to be able to take it up as a separate agenda item.

Mr MILOSEVIC agreed with both.

Ms CREȚU questioned the need for a specific session on the topic.

Chair noted the agreement among participants.

The draft programme of the LXII COSAC was therefore approved without amendment.

4. Approval of the outline of the 32nd Bi-annual Report of COSAC

Ms HASSI outlined the structure of the 32nd Bi-annual Report of COSAC noting that it would be divided in three chapters, with the first chapter dealing with an overview of parliamentary activities; the second chapter dealing with inter-parliamentary cooperation in the 2020s; and, finally, the third chapter would be dedicated to an evaluation of the report itself.

The Chair noted that the idea behind this Bi-annual Report would be to get back to basics and evaluate how parliaments contributed to the European project and what improvements could be made in this regard. It would also question whether the Bi-annual Report was still needed in its current form. The questionnaire would be circulated on Wednesday 31 July 2019. Replies would be expected by September 20th.

The outline of the 32ndBi-annual Report of COSAC was thus approved.

5. Co-financing and Appointment of the Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat for 2020-2021

The Chair thanked all parliaments that had responded to the co-financing request and in particular the Romanian Parliament for its efforts and assistance on this matter during its Presidency. All but three Parliaments had sent their letter of intent, and the Chair proposed to note this during the meeting the following day.

With regard to the post of Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat, the term of the current Permanent Member, Mr Kenneth CURMI, was coming to an end. Under the Rules of Procedure, Mr CURMI could be appointed for a second term, but the Chair noted that there should be an open procedure in the spirit of transparency and fairness. She suggested to proceed as follows: a vacancy would be declared at the Chairpersons meeting with a follow-up letter sent after the meeting, asking Parliaments to nominate members. The Troika would then consider the way forward and try to reach an opinion by mid-October in order to allow the Chairs to make the final decision during the plenary meeting in December.

6. Letters received by the Presidency

Ms HASSI referred to the following letters received:

- Letters from Ms Áslaug Arna SIGURBJÖRNSDÓTTIR, Chair of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Icelandic *Althingi*; Mr Hans-Peter PORTMANN, President of the Swiss EFTA-EU delegation, Swiss *Assemblée fédérale*; Mr Tone Wilhelmsen TRØEN, President of the Norwegian *Stortinget*.
- A letter from Ms Blerta DELIU-KODRA, Chair of the Committee on European Integration of the Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo*.

The Chair also mentioned the letter from Mr Kristin VIGENIN, Bulgarian parliament, who had announced to the delegations he would be leaving COSAC to take up his position of Deputy Speaker. The Chair suggested to send him greetings of the COSAC Chair.

Mr MILOSEVIC said he was glad to receive a delegation from Kosovo during the plenary, and wished that they had also been present for the Chairpersons meeting.

7. Any other business

There was no other business.

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with Resolution 1244 of the United Nations Security Council and to the opinion of the ICJ on the declaration of independence of Kosovo.