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Ljubljana, 16. december 2021

Spoštovane ekscelence,

pandemija covid-19 je zaznamovala tudi parlamentarno dimenzijo slovenskega predsedovanja Svetu EU. Vse medparlamentarne aktivnosti v okviru Konference odborov parlamentov EU za evropske zadeve - COSAC so se odvijale prek video povezav, kar pa nikakor ni okrnilo njihovih kakovosti in pogostosti. Izmenjava mnenj, izkušenj in dobrih praks med parlamenti EU, se je namreč v obdobju prehoda k bolj digitalni, zeleni in odporni postcovidni Evropi izkazala za še bolj koristno in potrebno.

Pod okriljem Odbora za zadeve Evropske unije Državnega zbora in Komisije za mednarodne odnose in evropske zadeve Državnega sveta, ki jima predsedujeva, sta v okviru Konference COSAC potekali dve srečanji: Srečanje predsednikov odborov COSAC 19. julija ter 29. in 30. novembra LXVI. plenarno zasedanje COSAC.

Na obeh srečanjih smo s predstavniki parlamentov EU in vabljenimi govorniki naslovili aktualne izzive, s katerimi se sooča EU in njeni državljani. Mednje sodijo tudi teme, ki jih je Slovenija kot predsedujoča Svetu EU uvrstila med svoje prednostne naloge: odpornost in okrevanje EU, krepitev varnosti v EU in njeni soseščini ter Konferenca o prihodnosti Evrope.

O prednostnih nalogah predsedovanja smo predstavniki parlamentov EU in gostje uvodoma razpravljali na julijskem Srečanju predsednikov odborov COSAC. Del srečanja smo namenili še kibernetiki varnosti v EU, ki je s pospešeno digitalizacijo postala ena izmed najpomembnejših komponent varnosti. Izmenjali smo poglede na oblikovanje usklajenega pristopa EU pri soočanju s skupnimi izzivi na področju kibernetike varnosti. Izražena je bila potreba po krepitvi odpornosti ter razvoju instrumentov za učinkovito odzivanje na kibernetike napade, zlasti na področjih

kritične infrastrukture in enotnega digitalnega trga.

Na pravkar končanem LXVI. plenarnem zasedanju COSAC je bilo predstavljeno trenutno stanje in dosežki slovenskega predsedovanja Slovenije Svetu EU.

V nadaljevanju smo naslovili izzive in priložnosti širitve EU na regijo Zahodnega Balkana, ki ni samo politična, temveč tudi geostrateška naložba v stabilno, močno in združeno Evropo. Strinjali smo se, da je potrebna nadaljnja krepitev političnega dialoga in poglobljanje sodelovanja pri skupnih izzivih, pri čemer igrajo pomembno vlogo tudi nacionalni parlamenti.

Predstavniki parlamentov EU smo razpravljali tudi o perspektivi mladih v odločevalskih procesih EU. Mladi bodo nedvomno krojili našo, skupno evropsko prihodnost in še posebej zaznamovali leto 2022, ki ga je Evropska komisija razglasila za evropsko leto mladih. Ključnega pomena je, da se mlade opolnomoči in angažira za demokratično in družbeno udejstvovanje.

Srečanje smo sklenili s panelom o Konferenci o prihodnosti Evrope, ki je edinstven demokratičen projekt, katerega namen je sooblikovanje skupne prihodnosti EU. Člani delegacij COSAC smo ponovno pozdravili vključenost nacionalnih parlamentov v Konferenco in poudarili njihovo pomembno vlogo pri naslavljanju in uresničevanju glavnih vprašanj o prihodnjem razvoju EU. Pozdravili smo začetek evropskih državljskih panelov in plenarnega zasedanja Konference ter v sklopu slednjega izpostavili potrebo po bolj odprti, pristni in interaktivni razpravi, da bo Konferenca prinesla pozitivne učinke in konkretne rezultate.

Nadalje je slovensko predsedstvo v 36. polletnem poročilu COSAC zbralo in analiziralo stališča ter dobre prakse nacionalnih parlamentov o nekaterih temah, obravnavanih na srečanjih COSAC. Poročilo naslavlja teme digitalizacije parlamentov v času pandemije in digitalnega prehoda, participacije mladih v odločevalskih procesih EU ter Konference o prihodnosti Evrope; ponuja pa tudi vpogled v izkušnje in dileme posameznih nacionalnih parlamentov ter medparlamentarnega sodelovanja.

V okviru parlamentarne dimenzije predsedovanja Svetu EU sta Državni zbor in Državni svet nadaljevala z neformalnimi video srečanji predsednikov odborov COSAC z evropskimi komisarji, saj so se ta srečanja v času nemškega in portugalskega predsedstva izkazala kot dobra priložnost za izmenjavo informacij in mnenj o aktualnih zadevah EU. Tovrstna izmenjava mnenj krepi politični dialog med Evropsko komisijo in nacionalnimi parlamenti ter predstavlja pomemben prispevek k poglobljeni razpravi o različnih aktualnih temah na ravni EU.

Na prvem srečanju sva oktobra gostila izvršno podpredsednico Evropske komisije Margrethe Vestager, s katero smo udeleženci srečanja izmenjali mnenja o predlogu akta o digitalnih trgih in akta o digitalnih storitvah ter o drugih vprašanjih s področja dela podpredsednice. Pozdravili smo predloga Evropske komisije ter se strinjali, da je regulacija digitalnih storitev bistvena za varstvo temeljnih pravic potrošnikov oziroma državljanov in demokratičnih procesov.

Novembra pa smo imeli z evropsko komisarko za energijo Kadri Simson priložnost razpravljati o področju energetike, ki je v luči podnebnih sprememb in zelenega prehoda ter ob aktualnem porastu cen energije nedvomno precej aktualno. Poslanke in poslanci smo pozdravili prizadevanja Evropske komisije za skladen in pravičen energetski prehod, vendar ob tem poudarili, da mora biti EU pri doseganju zelenih ciljev pozorna na spremembe socialnega položaja svojih državljanov.

Številne aktivnosti parlamentarne dimenzije predsedovanja, ki se odvijajo navkljub spremenjenim in oteženim okoliščinam, ki jih je povzročila epidemija covid-19, nedvomno kažejo na potrebo po ohranitvi in nadaljnji krepitvi vloge nacionalnih parlamentov v EU ter medparlamentarnega sodelovanja. Izmenjava mnenj med

parlamenti EU je namreč eden izmed ključnih dejavnikov pri zagotavljanju legitimnost demokratičnega procesa v Evropski uniji.

Prejmite, vaše ekselence, izraze najinega najglobljega spoštovanja.



Mag. Marko Pogačnik  
predsednik  
Odbora za zadeve Evropske unije  
Državnega zbora



Bojan Kekec  
predsednik  
Komisije za mednarodne odnose in  
evropske zadeve  
Državnega sveta

REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA  
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY  
NATIONAL COUNCIL

COURTESY TRANSLATION

**President of the European Parliament  
David Maria Sassoli**

**President of the European Council  
Charles Michel**

**President-in-Office of the Council of the European Union  
Janez Janša**

**President of the European Commission  
Ursula von der Leyen**

Ljubljana, 16 December 2021

Dear Excellencies,

The COVID-19 pandemic has also left its mark on the parliamentary dimension of the Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the EU. All interparliamentary activities, organised as part of the Conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs of Parliaments of the European Union - COSAC, were held as videoconferences. However, this in no way diminished their quality or frequency. The exchange of opinions, experiences, and good practices between EU parliaments has shown to be increasingly valuable and necessary as we transition to a more digital, green, and resilient post-COVID Europe.

We held two meetings as part of the COSAC Conference, organised with the support of the National Assembly Committee on EU Affairs and the National Council Commission for International Relations and European Affairs, which we chair. These were the Meeting of the COSAC Chairpersons on 19 July and the Plenary Meeting of the LXVI COSAC on 29 and 30 November.

During both events, we discussed the current challenges faced by the EU and its citizens with representatives from EU parliaments and guest speakers. These also include topics the Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the EU included amongst its priorities: EU resilience and recovery, strengthening security in the EU and its neighbourhood, and the Conference on the Future of Europe.

Representatives of EU parliaments and invited guests first discussed the priorities of the Presidency at the Meeting of the COSAC Chairpersons in July. Part of the meeting also touched on cybersecurity in the EU, which, because of accelerated digitalisation, has become one of the key components of security. We exchanged views on shaping a coordinated EU approach to tackling common challenges in cybersecurity. Participants

expressed the need for strengthening resilience and developing instruments for effectively responding to cyberattacks, especially those targeting critical infrastructure and the single digital market.

During the recent Plenary Meeting of the LXVI COSAC, we presented the current state and achievements of the Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the EU.

We then addressed the challenges and opportunities of EU enlargement to the Western Balkans, which is not only a political, but also a geostrategic investment into a stable, strong, and united Europe. We agreed on the need for further improvements in political dialogue and enhanced cooperation on common challenges, where national parliaments also play an important role.

Representatives of EU parliaments also discussed the future role of young people in EU decision-making processes. Young people will undoubtedly shape our European future and play a prominent role in 2022, which the European Commission has designated the European Year of Youth. It is essential young people be empowered and encouraged to become democratically and socially engaged.

We concluded the meeting with a session on the Conference on the Future of Europe, a unique democratic project which seeks to help shape our common European future. As COSAC delegation members, we once again welcomed the participation of national parliaments at the Conference and highlighted the important role they play in addressing and resolving the key questions concerning the future development of the EU. We welcomed the start of the European citizens' forums and the Plenary Meeting of the Conference. During the latter, we pointed to the need for a more open, genuine, and interactive debate to ensure the Conference produces positive outcomes and concrete results.

In the 36th Bi-annual Report of COSAC, the Slovenian Presidency collected and analysed the views and good practices of national parliaments on certain topics discussed during COSAC meetings. The Report examines the digitalisation of parliaments during the pandemic and the digital transition, the participation of young people in EU decision-making processes, and the Conference on the Future of Europe. It provides a glimpse into the experiences and dilemmas faced by specific national parliaments and interparliamentary cooperation.

As part of the parliamentary dimension of the Presidency of the Council of the EU, the National Assembly and National Council continued the practice of holding informal videoconference meetings with European commissioners. These were shown to be a good opportunity for exchanging information and views on current EU affairs during the German and Portuguese presidencies. By exchanging views in this way, we strengthen political dialogue between the European Commission and national parliaments, significantly contributing to discussions on various current EU-related issues.

At the first meeting in October, we hosted the Executive Vice-President of the European Commission, Margrethe Vestager. Together with the other participants, we exchanged views on the proposed Digital Markets Act and Digital Services Act, as well as on other issues in the purview of the Vice-President. We welcomed the European Commission proposals and agreed that regulating digital services is essential for protecting the fundamental rights of consumers and citizens, as well as democratic processes.

In November, we had the opportunity to talk about energy policy with the Commissioner for Energy, Kadri Simson. In light of the climate change, the green transition, and the present growth in energy prices, this is undoubtedly a very current topic. As members of parliament, we welcomed the European Commission's efforts in striving for a consistent and fair energy transition, but also emphasised that the EU must consider the welfare of its citizens when pursuing green objectives.

The number of activities of the parliamentary dimension of the Presidency, which are taking place despite the changed and difficult circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, undoubtedly show that the role of EU national parliaments and interparliamentary cooperation must be maintained and further strengthened, as the exchange of views between EU parliaments is one of the cornerstones of the legitimacy of the democratic process in the European Union.

Yours sincerely,

Mag. Marko Pogačnik  
Chair  
Committee on EU Affairs  
National Assembly

Bojan Kekec  
Chair  
Commission for International Relations  
and European Affairs  
National Council