

Minutes of the Meeting of the Presidential Troika of COSAC
Ljubljana, 17 February 2008

PRESENT AT THE MEETING:

Mr Anton Kokalj (Državni zbor, Slovenia), joint chairman; Mr Vincenc Otoničar (Državni svet, Slovenia), joint chairman; Mr Pierre Lequiller (Assemblée National, France); Mr Hubert Haenel (Sénat, France); Mr Vitalino Canas (Assembleia da República, Portugal); Mrs Martine Roure (European Parliament).

AGENDA

1. Opening of proceedings and adoption of the agenda of the Troika meeting
2. Adoption of the agenda of the COSAC Chairpersons' Meeting
3. Debate and adoption of the agenda of the XXXIX COSAC meeting
4. Adoption of the Outline of the 9th Biannual Report
5. Review of the proposals for the new subsidiarity check and selection of two legislative proposals for a subsidiarity check
6. Nomination of a candidate for the permanent member of the COSAC Secretariat for the period 2008 – 2010
 - Short interviews with candidates
 - Proposal of the Troika to the COSAC Chairpersons
7. AOB

PROCEEDINGS

1. Opening of proceedings and adoption of the agenda of the Troika Meeting

The meeting was chaired by Mr Anton Kokalj, Chairman of the Committee on EU Affairs of the National Assembly, and Mr Vincenc Otoničar, Chairman of the International Relations and European Affairs Committee of the National Council, who welcomed the delegations, especially the French delegation as the new member of the presidential Troika.

Mr Kokalj introduced the draft agenda of the Troika meeting. The agenda was unanimously adopted as set out above.

2. Adoption of the agenda of the COSAC Chairpersons' Meeting

Mr Kokalj outlined the agenda of the Chairpersons' Meeting in Ljubljana. He noted a final change to be made to the proposed agenda. Reference to Vice-President of the European Commission Mrs Margot Wallström, who was to have been the guest speaker under agenda item "Cooperation between the European Commission and national parliaments", was removed. Vice-President Franco Frattini was to attend in her place.

The draft agenda was unanimously adopted as amended.

3. Debate and adoption of the agenda of the XXXIX COSAC Meeting

Mr Kokalj introduced the draft agenda for the XXXIX COSAC meeting to be held in Bled on 6 to 8 May.

The Chairman informed the Troika that the Slovenian Prime Minister Mr Janez Janša had confirmed his participation at the meeting. He would present the state of play of the Slovenian Presidency. A discussion on cooperation between the European Union and the the Western Balkan countries in the field of Home Affairs would be introduced by the Slovenian Minister of Interior, Mr Dragutin Mate. One of the topics on the agenda would also be "Achieving the Goals of the Lisbon Strategy". The guest speaker for this agenda item would be the Commissioner for Science and Research Mr Janez Potočnik.

The draft was adopted unanimously.

4. Adoption of the Outline of the 9th Biannual Report

Mr Kokalj introduced the Outline of the 9th Biannual Report. Five chapters were suggested. Chapter one would discuss the involvement of national parliaments in the ratification process of the Lisbon Treaty, and would focus on dissemination of information among citizens. Chapter two would examine the provisions of the Lisbon Treaty concerning the role of national parliaments in the EU. Background information on the revised Lisbon Strategy, based on the conclusions of the March Summit, would be covered in chapter three. Chapter four would focus on the involvement of national parliaments in the decision-making process regarding the Schengen area, while chapter five would cover the role of national parliaments in accession talks with the candidate countries.

The Outline was endorsed by the Troika.

5. Review of proposals for the new subsidiarity check and selection of two legislative proposals for conducting a subsidiarity check

In accordance with the Estoril conclusions, national parliaments had been asked to submit their proposals for the Subsidiarity and Proportionality test. Proposals had been submitted by 24 chambers from 19 national parliaments. A suggestion from a unicameral parliament counted as one vote, as did a suggestion from one chamber of a bicameral parliament.

After deliberation, the Troika decided to submit to the chairpersons the following legislative proposals:

- a. *Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council on the applicable law, jurisdiction, recognition of decisions, and administrative measures in the area of successions and wills, which was the one most frequently suggested by national parliaments; and*
- b. *Proposal for a Directive implementing the principle of equal treatment outside employment.*

The latter was not the second most frequently suggested proposal. However the Troika decided unanimously that at least with one legislative proposal should be subject to the subsidiarity check during the Slovenian Presidency. As all other legislative proposals with a higher or equal number of votes were to be published during the French Presidency, it was agreed that this second proposal would be an appropriate choice.

The Troika also agreed that in the case of national parliaments conducting a subsidiarity test on any additional legislative proposal, they would be asked in advance to inform the other parliaments about the results.

6. Nomination of a candidate for the permanent member of the COSAC Secretariat for the period of 2008 – 2010

This was the first time that more than one candidate wished to be considered for the post of the permanent member of the COSAC Secretariat. The rules of procedure did not stipulate the nomination and selection procedure nor the criteria. In the absence of a defined procedure, the Troika determined the procedure itself.

Both candidates, Ms Loreta Raulinaitė and Mr Charles Roovers, had been asked to submit their Curricula Vitae and a motivation letter prior to the Troika meeting. It was also agreed that individual interviews with both candidates would be held at the Troika meeting.

The interviews were attended by members of the presidential Troika, each accompanied by one staff member; the current permanent member of the COSAC Secretariat; the Chairman of the Dutch Parliament who had proposed a candidate; and the candidate who was being interviewed.

After deliberation, the Troika proposed Ms Loreta Raulinaitė for the post of the permanent member of the COSAC Secretariat.

7. AOB

Mrs Martine Roure drew the Presidency's attention to the dates set for the XXXIX COSAC meeting in May, and noted that they coincided with a plenary session of the European Parliament. Mr Kokalj explained that the dates had been decided after a number of preparatory meetings with all participating parties, including the European Parliament and guest speakers. He stressed that Slovenia was a small country without many venues large enough to host such events. He expressed his hope and wish that the European Parliament would be able to find a suitable solution and would be able to attend the meeting.

Mr Kokalj informed the Troika of the letter received from the standing Committee on Foreign Affairs of the Norwegian parliament requesting to participate at the COSAC meeting under agenda item Cooperation between the European Union and the Western Balkan Countries in the Field of Home Affairs. Norway is a member of the Schengen area, but as explained by Mr Kokalj, this agenda item is not intended to focus on the cooperation between Schengen Countries and Western Balkan Countries.

It was decided unanimously not to extend the invitation to the Norwegian Committee.

Mr Kokalj also raised the question of other special guests being invited to the COSAC Meeting under the same agenda item.

After a thorough deliberation it was decided unanimously not to invite special guests.