

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PRESIDENTIAL TROIKA OF COSAC

Budapest, 29 May 2011

PRESENT AT THE MEETING:

IN THE CHAIR: Mr Richárd HÖRCSIK (*Országgyűlés*, Hungary)

Mr Lajos MILE (*Országgyűlés*, Hungary), Mr Stanisław RAKOCZY (*Sejm*, Poland), Mr Andrzej GAŁAŻEWSKI (*Sejm*, Poland), Mr Edward SIARKA (*Sejm*, Poland), Mr Edmund WITTBRODT (*Senat*, Poland), Mr Miguel Ángel MARTÍNEZ MARTÍNEZ (European Parliament), Mr Carlo CASINI (European Parliament)

AGENDA:

1. Adoption of the agenda for the meeting of the Presidential Troika of COSAC
2. Approval of the draft programme of the XLV COSAC
3. Fifteenth Bi-annual Report of COSAC
4. Amendments to the Rules of Procedure of COSAC
5. Draft Contribution and Conclusions of the XLV COSAC
6. Letters received by the Presidency
7. Any other business

PROCEEDINGS:

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

The meeting was chaired by Mr Richárd HÖRCSIK, Chairman of the Committee on European Affairs of the Hungarian *Országgyűlés*, who welcomed the Members of the Presidential Troika of COSAC (hereinafter referred to as "the Troika") and expressed the hope that the meeting would be fruitful. He presented the draft agenda of the meeting of the Troika, which was adopted unanimously.

2. Approval of the draft programme of the XLV COSAC

Mr Richárd HÖRCSIK informed the Troika that Mr André FLAHAUT, Speaker of the Belgian *Chambre des représentants*, cancelled his participation on the planned briefing concerning the outcome of the Conference of Speakers of the Parliaments of the European Union (hereinafter referred to as "the Speakers' Conference") which took place in Brussels on 4-5 April 2011. The Chairman informed the participants of the meeting that Mr André FLAHAUT would not come to Budapest and that there was no one to replace him on this point of the agenda of the XLV COSAC meeting. Mr Richárd HÖRCSIK suggested that he

himself would give a brief summary on the outcome of the Speakers' Conference and would then open the debate on the subject as foreseen in the draft programme.

Mr Miguel Ángel MARTÍNEZ MARTÍNEZ noted that there was a problem concerning differences between the French and English versions of the Presidency Conclusions of the Speakers' Conference. The French text, according to Mr MARTÍNEZ MARTÍNEZ, stated that the meeting was unable to find a consensus on the establishment of an interparliamentary conference for common foreign and security policy and common security and defence policy, while the English text stipulated that Speakers had not reached an agreement on all aspects of the establishment of such a conference. Mr MARTÍNEZ MARTÍNEZ underlined that, according to his understanding, there was no consensus on the establishment of that body.

Mr Richárd HÖRCSIK informed that the Belgian Presidency adjusted the two language versions which had been available on the IPEX website. The Chairman reassured Mr MARTÍNEZ MARTÍNEZ that the next day he would emphasize that there had been no overall consensus on this topic.

Mr Stanisław RAKOCZY mentioned that he had participated in the Speakers' Conference. He remembered well that there had been some intention to set up the aforementioned conference, but finally no consensus was reached. Speakers in Brussels agreed that they would do their best to obtain consensus during the Polish Presidency. Mr Stanisław RAKOCZY added that during the COSAC debate the following day, the participants' opinions could contribute to the work done in the framework of the Speakers' Conference in order to reach an agreement on the parliamentary scrutiny of common foreign and security policy and common security and defence policy.

Mr Richárd HÖRCSIK noted that the COSAC debate was to facilitate the efforts of the Polish Presidency of the Speakers' Conference to come closer to the final agreement.

Mr Edmund WITTBRODT confirmed the usefulness of the upcoming COSAC debate.

Next Mr Richárd HÖRCSIK informed about a letter of Mr William CASH, Chairman of the European Scrutiny Committee of the UK *House of Commons*, in which Mr CASH suggested placing a debate on the Proposal for a Council directive on a Common Consolidated Corporate Tax Base (CCCTB), COM(2011) 121 on the agenda of the XLV COSAC meeting. Mr Richárd HÖRCSIK asked whether it was acceptable to the Troika to include this in point 2 of the agenda on economic governance, the Europe 2020 Strategy and the European Semester.

Mr Richárd HÖRCSIK confirmed that Prime Minister Mr Viktor ORBÁN would report on the State of play of the Hungarian Presidency of the Council of the EU.

Finally, Mr Richárd HÖRCSIK referred to the first ever debate on the State of the Union within the framework of COSAC and thanked Mr Carlo CASINI for the idea to include this point in the agenda.

With these amendments the draft programme of the XLV COSAC was approved.

3. Fifteenth Bi-annual Report of COSAC

Mr Richárd HÖRCSIK was pleased that almost all national Parliaments (except the Irish *Houses of the Oireachtas* due to recent general elections) and the European Parliament had

sent their replies to the questionnaire for the 15th Bi-annual Report. He was convinced that this report would add value to the debate of COSAC.

4. Amendments to the Rules of Procedure of COSAC

Mr Richárd HÖRCSIK firstly reminded that during this COSAC meeting the Hungarian Presidency would like to debate and find a consensus only on technical amendments to the Rules of Procedure of COSAC. Secondly, he presented the procedure. The Presidency sent its first proposal on 2 May 2011, requesting comments of COSAC delegations until 15 May 2011. After this deadline, on 26 May 2011, a consolidated version of the Rules of Procedure was sent to all Parliaments. However, some of the tabled suggestions included not only technical but also substantive amendments to the Rules of Procedure. All proposals were forwarded to the participants of COSAC and published on the COSAC website. The Chairman proposed that the Budapest COSAC would consider the consolidated version with exclusively technical amendments and that the remaining amendments would be dealt with by the incoming Polish Presidency of COSAC.

Mr Miguel Ángel MARTÍNEZ MARTÍNEZ expressed his gratitude for the efforts of the Hungarian Presidency as it was not a simple task to distinguish between technical and political amendments. The Vice-President then stated that the work done by the Hungarian Presidency was very much acceptable. Indeed, the consolidated version represented a consensus and the European Parliament was quite satisfied with it.

Mr Edmund WITTBRODT supported the proposal to adopt the consolidated text in Budapest and emphasized the need to continue the debate on further amendments during the Polish Presidency.

Mr Andrzej GAŁAŻEWSKI agreed that only the amendments included in the consolidated version should be discussed, while other substantive amendments, including those of the Danish *Folketing*, were to be considered at a later date, during the Polish Presidency.

Mr Richárd HÖRCSIK replied that the consolidated version contained technical amendments tabled by various Parliaments and that the remaining amendments were contained in a separate table.

The Troika agreed with the procedure proposed by the Presidency.

5. Draft Contribution and Conclusions of the XLV COSAC

Mr Richárd HÖRCSIK reminded that on 17 May 2011 the Hungarian Presidency sent a draft text of the Contribution and Conclusions of the XLV COSAC to COSAC delegations, inviting them to table amendments to the two drafts until 24 May 2011. On 26 May 2011, the Presidency informed COSAC delegations about the received amendments which it had grouped in a table presented in English and French. Additional proposals to amend the draft Contribution and Conclusions of the XLV COSAC were received after the 24 May 2011 deadline.

The Chairman then asked the participants of the Troika meeting to share their comments and amendments.

Mr Miguel Ángel MARTÍNEZ MARTÍNEZ informed that the draft Contribution and Conclusions as proposed by the Hungarian Presidency were in general acceptable to the European Parliament. In order to save time, he advised against treating every amendment separately.

Mr Richárd HÖRCSIK informed that the Hungarian Presidency would prepare an updated draft of the Contribution and Conclusions following the Chairpersons' meeting. He noted that the amendments of the Polish *Sejm* and the European Parliament were acceptable to the Hungarian Presidency. Moreover, he stated that every amendment would have to be considered separately.

Mr Edmund WITTBRODT noted that some amendments were contradictory and enquired whether the Troika would somehow highlight its preferences.

Mr Richárd HÖRCSIK replied that the amendments would be debated and voted at the Chairpersons' meeting the following day.

6. Letters received by the Presidency

Mr Richárd HÖRCSIK informed that the Hungarian Presidency had received a number of letters and that all of them were available on the COSAC website. The Chairman suggested not to discuss the letters dealing with the amendments to the Rules of Procedure of COSAC, as they already had already been considered in point 4. He then informed the Troika about the following letters:

- Letter from Ms Ine M. ERIKSEN SØREIDE, Chair of the European Consultative Committee of the Norwegian *Stortinget*, who asked for participation in COSAC as an observer - the Troika reiterated its support for the request;
- Letter from Mr William CASH, Chairman of the European Scrutiny Committee of the UK *House of Commons*, on adding a point on CCCTB on the agenda of the XLV COSAC - see point 2;
- Letter from the Chairmen of the Polish *Sejm* and *Senat* on the conclusions of the meeting of the representatives of the Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian and Polish Parliaments on 17-18 April 2011 in Warsaw - the Troika took note of the letter;
- Letter from the Chairmen of the Committees on European Affairs of the Czech *Poslanecká sněmovna* and *Senát* as well as the Slovak *Národná rada* on the practical aspects on the involvement of national Parliaments in the simplified method of amendments to the primary law of the EU - Mr Richárd HÖRCSIK suggested that this subject would be dealt with in the future in the framework of COSAC;
- Letter from Ms Rossana BOLDI, Chairwoman of the Committee on EU Policies of the Italian *Senato della Repubblica*, on delegated acts. Mr Richárd HÖRCSIK asked the Polish colleagues whether they would deal with this subject during the Polish Presidency. Mr Stanisław RAKOCZY and Mr

Edmund WITTBRODT agreed as the Polish Presidency wanted to focus in detail on the functioning of the Treaty of Lisbon.

7. Any other business

Mr Richárd HÖRCSIK informed that the mandate of the Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat and the co-financing of the Permanent Member and the costs of running the office and website of COSAC expire at the end of 2011. The Chairman appreciated the quick response from national Parliaments which resulted in 35 letters of intent to participate in the co-financing for 2012-2013 received by the Presidency. The Polish Presidency will see to it that a new Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat for 2012-2013 is appointed.