

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PRESIDENTIAL TROIKA OF COSAC

Vilnius, Lithuania, 27 October 2013

PRESENT AT THE MEETING

CHAIR: Mr Gediminas KIRKILAS, Deputy Speaker of the *Seimas* of the Republic of Lithuania and Chair of the Committee on European Affairs.

Mr Petras AUŠTREVĪČIUS, Deputy Speaker, Deputy Chair of the Committee on European Affairs, *Seimas* of the Republic of Lithuania, Mr Dominic HANNIGAN, Chairman of the Joint Committee on European Union Affairs, Irish *Houses of the Oireachtas*; Mr Ioannis TRAGAKIS, Chairman of the Committee on European Affairs, Greek *Vouli ton Ellinon*; Mr Konstantinos MOUSSOUROULIS, Vice Chairman of the Committee on European Affairs, Greek *Vouli ton Ellinon*; Mr Miguel Ángel MARTÍNEZ MARTÍNEZ, Vice-President, 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 L COSAC
3. Presentation of the 20th Bi-annual Report of COSAC
4. Interview with the candidates for the post of the Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat for 2014–2015 and proposal of the candidate to the Chairpersons of COSAC
5. Debate on the draft Contribution and Conclusions of the L 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 Gediminas KIRKILAS who welcomed the delegations of the Presidential Troika of COSAC (hereinafter referred to as "the Troika"). He reminded the Troika that the draft agenda of the Meeting of the Presidential Troika of COSAC was distributed on 28 August 2013 and proposed it to be adopted. The agenda of the meeting of the Troika was adopted as proposed by the Lithuanian Presidency.

2. Approval of the draft programme of the L COSAC

Mr KIRKILAS presented the updated draft programme of the L COSAC, which was distributed to the delegations on 24 October 2013, and proposed it to be approved. The draft programme of the L COSAC was approved without amendment as proposed by the Lithuanian Presidency.

3. Presentation of the 20th Bi-annual Report of COSAC

Mr KIRKILAS presented the 20th Bi-annual Report of COSAC. Forty one Chambers provided information and their views and positions for drafting the 20th Bi-annual Report, which consisted of three parts.

Mr Miguel Ángel MARTÍNEZ MARTÍNEZ expressed his satisfaction with the 20th Bi-annual Report. The answers of the Parliaments depended on questions and that is why, he said, the Presidency should be congratulated for drafting the questionnaire. Mr MARTÍNEZ asked that ways of disseminating the 20th Bi-annual Report on a larger scale be considered as it contained a lot of valuable information.

Mr KIRKILAS thanked the current Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat, Ms Libby KURIEN, and the other members of the COSAC Secretariat for their work on the 20th Bi-annual Report.

Mr Ioannis TRAGAKIS also thanked the Presidency for the Report. He said that the expectations of citizens should be considered. He stressed also the lack of awareness-raising and the domination of national politics over European issues, especially in the context of the economic crisis. Mr TRAGAKIS suggested discussing issues related to the European elections, in particular changing voting systems and ways of attracting wider citizens' interest in European issues. Another important matter, according to Mr TRAGAKIS, was the rise of Euroscepticism and of radical parties.

Mr KIRKILAS thanked colleagues for their very valuable remarks and noted that many of these issues would be addressed during the L COSAC.

4. Interview with the candidates for the post of the Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat for 2014–2015 and proposal of the candidate to the Chairpersons of COSAC

Mr KIRKILAS noted that the term of the current Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat, Ms Libby KURIEN, was coming to the end on 31 December 2013. He thanked Ms KURIEN for her excellent work and the UK *House of Commons* for delegating Ms KURIEN to this post.

Mr KIRKILAS stated that Letters of Intent concerning the co-financing of the Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat and related office costs for 2014-2015 had been received from 40 Chambers of 27 national Parliaments.

Mr KIRKILAS recalled the letters that were sent on 9 July 2013 inviting all national Parliaments to submit their candidates for the post of the Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat for 2014–2015 before 10 September 2013. The Presidency received four recommendation letters with proposed candidates from the Belgian *Chambre des représentants*, the Maltese *Kamra Tad-Deputati*, the Cyprus *Vouli ton Antiprosopon* and the Dutch *Tweede Kamer*.

Mr KIRKILAS drew attention to the fact that the Dutch *Tweede Kamer* presented their candidate only on 16 October 2013. He suggested that the Troika would interview this

candidate taking into consideration the important political reasons for the delay presented by the Dutch *Tweede Kamer*.

Mr MARTÍNEZ did not object however he stressed he was surprised that the Dutch *Tweede Kamer* has decided not to follow the rules presented by the Presidency. Failure to follow the rules could create a precedent for the future and later it would have some consequences.

Mr Dominic HANNIGAN did not object either and stressed that if the Dutch candidate would be accepted, he should be treated on the same basis as all other candidates.

Mr KIRKILAS concluded that there were no objections to the Dutch candidate.

Mr KIRKILAS presented the background note on the Appointment of the Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat, the Guidelines for the recommendation of the candidate for the Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat and the criteria for selection. To ensure fairness and transparency the four Chairpersons from the Chambers that submitted candidates were invited to observe the interviews. Each candidate was given 20 minutes for a presentation and interview. The selected candidate would be proposed to the Chairpersons of COSAC for appointment the following day.

As there were no objections the proposed procedure was unanimously accepted.

The candidates were interviewed following the order in which they submitted their applications: the Belgian *Chambre des représentants*, the Maltese *Kamra Tad-Deputati*, the Cyprus *Vouli ton Antiprosopon* and the Dutch *Tweede Kamer*. After the interviews deliberations took place between the members of the Troika delegations only *in camera*.

Following the interviews and deliberations all participants were invited back into the meeting room. Mr KIRKILAS then announced the decision taken unanimously by the Troika to propose the candidate from the Cyprus *Vouli ton Antiprosopon* – Ms Christiana FRYDA - to the Chairpersons of COSAC for appointment the following day as the Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat for the period 2014-2015.

5. Debate on the draft Contribution and Conclusions of the L COSAC

Mr KIRKILAS said that the draft Contribution and Conclusions of the L COSAC were distributed on 14 October 2013 and revised draft Contribution and Conclusions were distributed on 24 October 2013. Additional amendments to these two documents could still be presented until 12.00 p.m. the following day.

Mr KIRKILAS proposed submitting two additional amendments to the draft Contribution on behalf of the Troika: two new articles on the recent “yellow card” and one amendment on the digital agenda.

Mr MARTÍNEZ stressed that the draft Contribution and Conclusions of the L COSAC were exceptionally clear and uncontroversial. He welcomed the very serious effort of the Presidency in drafting them. There were only a few minor amendments to them

from Parliaments and he thought that draft Contribution and Conclusions of the L COSAC would find general support.

Mr TRAGAKIS expressed his full support for the amendments.

Mr HANNIGAN also supported the amendments and proposed to add a technical footnote with a reference to the document to which the “yellow card” was raised.

6. Letters received by the Presidency

Mr KIRKILAS presented six letters the Lithuanian Presidency had received from:

- The Polish *Senat* regarding the meeting of the parliamentary EU Affairs Committees of the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland and Hungary.
- The Latvian *Saeima* regarding the traditional informal consultations of the European Union Affairs Committees of the Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian and Polish Parliaments.
- The Chairman of the Constitutional Affairs Committee of the European Parliament Mr Carlo CASINI regarding his unavailability to attend the L COSAC meeting.
- The Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the Parliament of Ukraine Mr Vitaliy KALYUZHNYIY regarding his unavailability to attend the L COSAC meeting.
- The Former President of the Republic of Poland Mr Aleksander KWAŚNIEWSKI regarding his unavailability to attend the L COSAC meeting.
- The Vice President of the European Commission Mr Maroš ŠEFČOVIČ regarding the official reply to the Contribution of the XLIX COSAC.

7. Any other business

No any other business.