

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PRESIDENTIAL TROIKA OF COSAC

Malta, 28 May 2017

PRESENT AT THE MEETING

CHAIR: Mr Angelo FARRUGIA, Speaker of the Maltese *Kamra tad-Deputati*

Mr Martin KLUS, Vice Chair of the European Affairs Committee, Slovak *Národná rada*, Mr Toomas VITSUT, Chair of the EU Affairs Committee, Estonian *Riigikogu*, Mr Jaak MADISON, Vice Chair of the EU Affairs Committee, Estonian *Riigikogu*; Ms Danuta HÜBNER, Chair of the Committee on 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 LVII COSAC meeting
3. Presentation of the 27th Bi-annual Report of COSAC
4. Debate on the draft Conclusions of the LVII COSAC meeting
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

Mr Angelo FARRUGIA, Speaker of the Maltese *Kamra tad-Deputati*, welcomed all the delegations of the Presidential Troika of COSAC (hereinafter referred to as "the Troika") participating in the Troika meeting.

In the absence of any objection, the agenda of the meeting of the Troika was adopted without amendment.

2. Approval of the draft programme of the meeting of the LVII COSAC

Mr FARRUGIA gave a brief outline of the programme of the LVII COSAC meeting.

The five sessions of the LVII COSAC would focus on: 1) the reflections on the Maltese Presidency of the Council of the European Union; 2) the role of national Parliaments in the future of the EU; 3) the outcome of the UK referendum - state of play; 4) expanding the Blue Economy - towards a more sustainable EU integrated maritime policy; and 5) migration - combatting human smuggling and trafficking and establishing a humane and effective return and readmission policy.

The draft programme of the LVII COSAC was approved without amendment.

3. Presentation of the 27th Bi-annual Report of COSAC

Mr FARRUGIA invited the Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat, Ms Christiana FRYDA, to give an outline of the presentation of the 27th Bi-annual Report of COSAC.

Ms FRYDA briefly referred to the three chapters of the 27th Bi-annual Report of COSAC. The first one dealt with scrutiny procedures and practices enabling national Parliaments to scrutinise the government and EU proposals during the legislative phase; the second one focused on the outcome of the UK referendum and the future of the EU; and the third one concentrated on migration, combatting human smuggling and trafficking and establishing a humane and effective return and readmission policy.

4. Debate on the draft Conclusions of the LVII COSAC meeting

Mr FARRUGIA explained that the Maltese Parliament had been dissolved and that a general election had been called for 3 June 2017. In view of Malta's Constitutional provisions, Members of Parliament, with the exception of the Speaker who remained in office until the first sitting of the new Parliament, effectively lost their seat upon dissolution. Despite these circumstances, the Maltese Parliament remained committed to its obligations arising from Malta's EU Presidency. The Speaker explained that he would be chairing the LVII COSAC, but that there would be no Maltese delegation at the meeting.

Due to these exceptional and unforeseen events, it was not deemed possible for the Presidency to present a Contribution for adoption. The Presidency was, however, proposing the adoption of brief Conclusions not comprising political statements. The draft text of the Conclusions was circulated to delegations on 15 May 2017.

Ms HÜBNER stated that the European Parliament fully understood the situation and the exceptional circumstances under which the meeting would be held. Nevertheless, underlining the importance of the Contributions adopted by COSAC as part of a political process, she warned against following the same direction of not adopting Contributions in the future.

Acknowledging the importance of the topics chosen for discussion by the Maltese Presidency, she also invited the Estonian Presidency to pick up on those topics during the LVIII COSAC. Mr VITSUT responded that migration, Brexit and the role of national Parliaments would feature on the programme.

Stressing the importance attributed to cohesion policy by the meeting of the European Affairs Committees of the Visegrad Group countries held in Bratislava on 21-23 May 2017, Mr KLUS requested that the topic be introduced on the programme of the LVIII COSAC. Mr VITSUT responded that the request would be discussed in his Parliament.

The Troika, in line with the Presidency's proposal, agreed to submit the text of the Conclusions, as presented by the Presidency, to the Chairpersons of COSAC the following day.

5. Letters received by the Presidency

The Chair referred to the following letters:

- Letter from Ms Jóna Sólveig ELÍNARDÓTTIR, Chair of the Standing Committee of Foreign Affairs of the Icelandic *Althingi*, regarding participation in COSAC. After consultation with the Troika, a letter of invitation had been sent out.
- Letter from Mr Jean-Charles ALLA VENA, Head of the Foreign Affairs Committee, and Mr Christophe STEINER, Speaker of the National Council of the Principality of Monaco,

regarding participation in COSAC. After consultation with the Troika, a letter of invitation had been sent out.

- Letter from Mr Carles ENSENAT, Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Consell General of Andorra, regarding participation in COSAC. After consultation with the Troika, a letter of invitation was extended.
- Letter from Mr Pedro AGRAMUNT, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), regarding participation in COSAC. After consultation with the Troika, a letter of invitation had been sent out.
- Letter from Ms Mariia IONOVA, Deputy Chair of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, regarding participation in COSAC. After consultation with the Troika, a letter of invitation had been sent out.

In addition, the Presidency had received from the Slovak *Národná rada* the conclusions of the meeting of the European Affairs Committees of the Visegrad Group countries held in Bratislava on 21-23 May 2017.

6. Any other business

Mr FARRUGIA announced that the Presidency had received 23 letters of intent from 20 national Parliaments regarding the co-financing agreement for the Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat for 2018-2019. The next day he would encourage Parliaments to send the remaining letters as soon as possible. The term of the current Permanent Member would expire at the end of 2017 and the Estonian Presidency was tasked with the selection of the next Permanent Member to be appointed at the LVIII COSAC in Tallinn.