

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PRESIDENTIAL TROIKA OF COSAC

Lisbon, Portugal, 27 May 2021

(held through videoconference)

PRESENT AT THE MEETING

CHAIRS: Mr Luís CAPOULAS SANTOS, Chairman of the European Affairs Committee, Portuguese *Assembleia da República*

Mr Markus TÖNS, Deputy Chairman of the Committee on the Affairs of the European Union, German *Bundestag*; Mr Marko POGAČNIK, Chair of the Committee on EU Affairs, Slovenian *Državni zbor*; Mr Bojan KEKEC, Chair of the Commission for International Relations and European Affairs, Slovenian *Državni svet*; Ms Roberta METSOLA, First 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 LXV COSAC
3. Presentation of the 35th Bi-annual Report of COSAC
4. Presentation of a letter from the Presidency
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 Luís CAPOULAS SANTOS, Chairman of the European Affairs Committee, Portuguese *Assembleia da República*, welcomed the delegations of the Presidential Troika of COSAC (hereinafter referred to as "the Troika"), and referred to the agenda of the meeting of the Troika, which was adopted without amendment.

2. Approval of the draft programme of the LXV COSAC

Mr CAPOULAS SANTOS then referred to the programme of the virtual COSAC, which would cover the following topics:

- Session I - The Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the EU;
- Session II: Social Europe: what model for the triple economic, digital and climate transition?;
- Session III: Implementation of the national recovery and resilience plans - the role of national Parliaments;
- Session IV: Conference on the Future of Europe: state of play.

Referring to the Conference on the Future of Europe, the Chair lauded the great cooperation and noted the first meeting to be held with a panel of citizens in Lisbon on 17th June, as well as the first plenary meeting of the Conference, to be held in Strasbourg, on 19th June, as decided at the Executive Board.

The draft programme of the LXV COSAC was thus approved without amendment.

3. Presentation of the 35th Bi-annual Report of COSAC

Mr CAPOULAS SANTOS referred to the 35th Bi-annual Report of COSAC, which was drafted based on replies to the related questionnaire circulated to national Parliaments/Chambers on 5 February 2021, with 9 March 2021 set as the deadline for submitting replies, and which consisted of three chapters: the first one dealing with action plan to implement the European Pillar of Social Rights; the second chapter focusing on the EU-Africa Strategy; the third chapter addressing the Next Generation EU and the scrutiny of national recovery and resilience plans and their implications for the European semester; and the fourth and final chapter dedicated to the Conference on the Future of Europe. Mr SANTOS showed a short video clip produced by the Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat, Mr Kenneth CURMI, showcasing some of the results of the report.

4. Presentation of a letter by the Presidency

Mr CAPOULAS SANTOS referred to the initiative of sending a letter by the Presidency addressed to the Institutions, instead of a Contribution, which, given the circumstances, the LXV COSAC would not be in a position to discuss and adopt. Mr CAPOULAS SANTOS recalled the importance of informing the European Institutions about the work developed during such an atypical semester, highlighting the several meetings held and the articulated positions that emerged. The Chair also informed participants that the letter, to be co-signed by the national Parliaments of the Presidential Troika, would possibly be subject to amendments following the plenary meeting of COSAC.

Mr Markus TÖNS, Deputy Chairman of the Committee on the Affairs of the European Union, German *Bundestag*, took the floor to express his gratitude for the letter drafted by the Presidency and for the procedure adopted, namely to wait for the outcome of the plenary and amend the draft accordingly.

Once again, Mr CAPOULAS SANTOS reiterated the way forward, namely to redraft the text as necessary following and according to suggestions received during the plenary.

Ms Roberta METSOLA, First Vice-President, European Parliament, lamented the fact that current circumstances meant that the COSAC plenary meeting had to be held via videoconference but congratulated the Presidency for delivering nonetheless through a fantastic presentation and a balanced letter.

5. Letters received by the Presidency

The Chair briefly referred to the letters requesting participation in the meeting received by the Presidency from the delegations of Switzerland, Norway and Iceland, Andorra, Georgia and Monaco, explaining the Presidency's decision to invite all delegations as they all had a reason to attend.

He went on to mention the following letters received by the Presidency:

- Letter from Sir William CASH, Chairman of the European Scrutiny Committee, UK *House of Commons*, requesting participation at the LXV COSAC.
- Letters from Mr Pere LÓPEZ, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Andorran Parliament; and Ms Fabrice NOTARI, Chair of the Committee on Negotiations with European Union, and Ms Stéphanie VALERI, President of the *Conseil National* of Monaco, requesting participation at the LXV COSAC.

- Letter from Mr Guido WOLF, Chairman of the Committee on European Union Questions of the German *Bundesrat*, notifying that he would be leaving his position as Chair.

Mr CAPOULAS SANTOS referred to the UK as an important partner and welcomed the conclusion of the negotiation as a positive sign. Regarding Georgia's request to participate as observer in this Conference, the Chair also referred to the importance of the Eastern Partnership, the stability and democracy in the neighbouring countries and the commitment of the Portuguese Presidency with this topic. On the extension of an invitation to Andorra and Monaco, the Chair highlighted the relationship of these countries with the EU and their involvement in regional cooperation projects.

Mr CAPOULAS SANTOS referred to a letter from Mr Guido WOLF noting that he was no longer the Chairman of the Committee on European Union Questions of the German *Bundesrat*, and wished him the best success for his future.

Mr TÖNS expressed his gratitude for the excellent cooperation experienced by his Parliament in the context of the Presidential Troika, in which he had great confidence with regard to deciding the way forward.

6. Any other business

Referring to the letter of intent sent earlier in the year, Mr CAPOULAS SANTOS welcomed the replies received from a number of Parliaments, and hoped that others would follow suit.