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Parliamentary Dimension of the Estonian Presidency of the Council of the European Union

PLENARY MEETING OF THE LVIII COSAC
26–28 November 2017, Tallinn

Conclusions of the LVIII COSAC

1. 28th Bi-annual Report of COSAC

1.1. COSAC welcomes the 28th Bi-annual Report of COSAC prepared by the COSAC Secretariat and warmly thanks the Secretariat for its excellent work. The Report provides useful information on the future of the European Union and on bringing the EU closer to its citizens. It also explores ways to enhance the Digital Single Market and examines the digitalisation of parliamentary procedures and the Digital Single Market Strategy initiatives.

1.2. COSAC, inviting all Parliaments to make the outcome of the COSAC work more visible, encourages all Parliaments to actively share examples of best practices highlighted by the Report within the Parliament and to the wider public if possible.

2. Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat

2.1. COSAC notes that the term of office of the Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat will end on 31 December 2017.

2.2. COSAC welcomes the decision taken by the Chairpersons of COSAC held in Tallinn on 26 November to appoint Mr Kenneth CURMI as Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat for 2018-2019. COSAC is certain that the newly elected Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat will successfully continue to manage the work of the COSAC Secretariat and contribute to the effective development of the COSAC activities.

2.3. COSAC expresses its gratitude to the Maltese House of Representatives for seconding Mr Kenneth CURMI as Permanent Member for 2018-2019.

2.4. COSAC warmly thanks Ms Christiana FRYDA, whose term of office as Permanent Member expires on 31 December 2017, for her committed and productive work.

2.5. COSAC extends its gratitude to the European Parliament for hosting the COSAC Secretariat in Brussels.

3. COSAC web-page and cooperation with the IPEX platform

3.1. COSAC takes note of the letter sent on 24 October 2017 by the Chair of the IPEX Board, as a response to the letter sent on 3 October 2017 by the Estonian Presidency, which proposes interconnecting the COSAC web-page and the IPEX platform. COSAC acknowledges that the IPEX platform is offering the possibility to host information from the COSAC website forthwith and all the information provided by the COSAC website after an in-depth analysis.

3.2. COSAC encourages the COSAC Secretariat and the IPEX Board to cooperate towards increasing the interconnection between the COSAC website and the IPEX platform.

3.3. COSAC invites the IPEX Board to present, in close cooperation with the COSAC Secretariat, to the COSAC Presidency an analysis of the possibilities and technicalities pertaining to the integration of the COSAC website into the IPEX platform at its earliest convenience.

3.4. In addition, and in order to determine the best and most cost-efficient way forward, COSAC invites the COSAC Secretariat to analyse and propose ways and related costs for renewing the COSAC website at its earliest convenience.

4. Task Force on Subsidiarity, Proportionality and "Doing Less More Efficiently"

4.1. COSAC takes note of the letter sent on 14 November by the President of the European Commission, which informs COSAC about the establishment of a Task Force on Subsidiarity, Proportionality and "Doing Less More Efficiently". COSAC acknowledges the request of the Commission to nominate three candidates representing national Parliaments in this Task Force by the end of 2017.

4.2. COSAC regrets that the letter in question was sent at such a late stage in the preparations for the COSAC plenary, giving national Parliaments limited time to process the request. COSAC expresses its surprise at the size of the Task Force and the limited timeframe to present its work. National Parliaments do not constitute a singular institution and the proposed number of representatives does not reflect proportionality. Additionally, the Rules of Procedure of COSAC include no applicable provisions for the appointment of a representative for an external forum.

4.3. Nevertheless, COSAC acknowledges the value of this exercise and seeing as there exists in COSAC an established practice of consulting the Presidential Troika, COSAC therefore proposes for the national Parliaments in the Presidential Troika to represent national Parliaments in the Task Force. In order to have the necessary input, the Presidential Troika will take its cue from and report to the COSAC Chairpersons.

4.4. COSAC invites the next Presidency to set up a working group under point 2.6 of the Rules of Procedure of COSAC in order to facilitate regular and comprehensive discussions related to the work of the Task Force.

4.5. Furthermore, COSAC believes that the Task Force should be complemented by three additional members of national Parliaments, which are elected in an open selection process, provided that the Commission agrees to increase the number of representatives. COSAC also believes that the timeframe is insufficient and should be extended until the end of 2018. COSAC asks the Presidential Troika to approach the President of the European Commission on both matters.