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Cover letter for Libby Kurien

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to set out my motivations for applying for the post of permanent member of the COSAC secretariat.

I have had a long relationship with the COSAC conference, attending it for the first time in 2005 in Luxembourg in support of the UK delegation. The same year I was heavily involved in the organisation of the COSAC conference in London. Since 2007 I have been following developments closely and supporting the UK delegation as the House of Commons representative to the EU in Brussels. I am therefore familiar with the conference, its rules of procedure, agendas, bi-annual reports, and all other aspects of the conference and I believe this extensive knowledge of the conference would be a significant advantage were I to become the permanent member of the secretariat.

My experience to date has combined almost a decade playing a variety of key roles within a national parliament with several years' experience working at the heart of different forms of interparliamentary cooperation, particularly in the EU. This gives me both a high level of expertise and the necessary institutional insights which I believe make me ideally qualified for the role. COSAC is one of the primary tools for effective interparliamentary cooperation and the exchange of best practice. Since the coming into force of the Lisbon Treaty the forum has been given greater impetus and it has been interesting to observe its ongoing evolution. I believe this evolution must and will continue and that the permanent member of the secretariat can help to facilitate this evolution. The post holder should bring continuity to an ever-changing team of officials with the ability to focus resources solely on the conference and development of its work. I would aim to facilitate the work of the Presidency parliament and be the bridge between the officials from the troika countries and the European Parliament. If I were to be successful in my application I would work hard to make a reality the ambitions of the Members of COSAC to deepen interparliamentary relations in the field of the EU.

My experience working as a Clerk for the UK Parliament for over 9 years has furnished me with many skills that are relevant for this application. During my time in the UK Parliament, I have had a varied career, with a focus on European

affairs and international relations. Through this I have gained an excellent grasp of the workings of a national parliament as well as an extensive knowledge of European Affairs and interparliamentary relations. More specifically in the field of European Affairs, I have worked for the European Scrutiny Committee in London and, most recently, in Brussels as the House of Commons Representative to the EU for 3.5 years (before recently taking maternity leave). Liaison with other representatives in Brussels gave me a good understanding of the workings of many other national parliaments and the European Parliament. The network of representatives is recognised by COSAC as a useful tool for exchange of information, something I worked hard to promote during my time as representative.

As well as my experience in the field, I have a number of transferable skills that I believe will be useful for the post in question. These include the ability to work well with and give impartial advice to Members of Parliament, the ability to be a good team leader or member as well as being able to motivate and effectively organize myself and others to work independently when required. I also possess the ability to find middle ground between two or more different positions particularly within the interparliamentary field. Throughout my career I have continually shown the ability to analyse complex information quickly and summarise it effectively in written or oral form. I have extensive experience of drafting clear and concise documents. These skills will be invaluable when drafting biannual reports and other documents related to the work of the secretariat that is often produced to a tight deadline. In addition, I believe that being a native English speaker, my language skills would be an additional help to the work of the secretariat. I have lived in Brussels for 4 years and so I also have a good understanding of the French language.

Over the past years I have enjoyed working in a international environment and believe that my experience as a Brussels representative and the skills and experience I have in the areas of European Affairs and interparliamentary relations make me a good candidate for the post.

Yours Sincerely,

Mrs Libby Kurien