MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PRESIDENTIAL TROIKA OF COSAC
Warsaw, 10 July 2011

PRESENT AT THE MEETING:

CHAIR: Mr Edmund WITTBRODT (*Senat*, Poland) and Mr Stanisław RAKOCZY (*Sejm*, Poland)
Mr Andrzej GAŁAŻEWSKI (*Sejm*, Poland), Mr Janusz RACHOŃ (*Senat*, Poland), Ms Anne-Marie MELDGAARD (*Folketing*, Denmark), Mr Richárd HÖRCSIK (*Országgyűlés,* Hungary) and Mr Miguel Ángel MARTÍNEZ MARTÍNEZ (European Parliament)

AGENDA:

1. Adoption of the agenda of the meeting of the Presidential Troika of COSAC
2. Approval of the draft agenda of the meeting of the Chairpersons of COSAC
3. Debate on the draft programme of the XLVI COSAC
4. Approval of the outline of the 16th Bi-annual Report
5. Procedure for nomination of the next Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat
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 Edmund WITTBRODT, Chairman of the EU Affairs Committee of the *Senat* of the Republic of Poland, and Mr Stanisław RAKOCZY, Chairman of the EU Affairs Committee of the *Sejm* of the Republic of Poland.

Mr Edmund WITTBRODT welcomed the delegations of the Presidential Troika of COSAC (hereinafter referred to as "the Troika"). The Chairman extended special thanks to Mr Richárd HÖRCSIK, Chairman of the Committee on European Affairs of the Hungarian *Országgyűlés,* for a very successful Hungarian Presidency of COSAC and a warm welcome to the new Member of the Troika, Ms Anne-Marie MELDGAARD, Chairwoman of the European Affairs Committee of the Danish *Folketing*.

Mr Edmund WITTBRODT presented the agenda of the Troika meeting, which was unanimously adopted as set out above.

2. Approval of the draft agenda of the meeting of the Chairpersons of COSAC

Mr Edmund WITTBRODT outlined the draft agenda of the meeting of the Chairpersons of COSAC to be held the following day, 11 July 2011, in the plenary hall of the *Senat* of the Republic of Poland. Mr WITTBRODT drew the attention of the Troika to the three main topics of the draft agenda, i.e. the preparation for the XLVI COSAC, the priorities of the Polish Presidency of the Council of the EU and the EU institutions vis-à-vis conflicts at the EU's external borders. The first topic will be introduced by the Polish Presidency of COSAC, the second topic - by Mr Mikołaj DOWGIELEWICZ, Secretary of State for European Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland, and the third one - by Ms Cecilia MALMSTRÖM, Commissioner for Home Affairs.

Mr Richárd HÖRCSIK congratulated the Polish Presidency on the choice of topics for the meeting of the Chairpersons of COSAC, in particular on that of EU institutions vis-à-vis conflicts at the EU's external borders. Mr HÖRCSIK stressed that the Eastern Partnership was a very important priority of the Polish Presidency. He also regretted that the accession to the Schengen area by Bulgaria and Romania could not become a reality during the Hungarian Presidency and expressed the hope that in two to tree months it would materialise.

Mr WITTBRODT thanked Mr HÖRCSIK for his comments. The draft agenda was unanimously approved as proposed by the Polish Presidency.

3. Debate on the draft programme of the XLVI COSAC

Mr Stanisław RAKOCZY presented the draft programme of the XLVI COSAC to be held in the plenary hall of the *Sejm* of the Republic of Poland on 2-4 October 2011, just five days before the general elections in Poland foreseen on 9 October 2011. Mr RAKOCZY informed the Troika that the agenda of the meeting of the XLVI COSAC will focus on two main issues: the Multiannual Financial Framework for 2014-2020 (hereinafter referred to as "the MFF") and "Two years after the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon". The first issue will be dealt with from two perspectives: that of the EU budget and that of the cohesion policy. Therefore, the Polish Presidency suggested inviting Mr Janusz LEWANDOWSKI, Commissioner for Budget and Financial Programming, as a key-note speaker on the budget perspective of the MFF and Ms Elżbieta BIEŃKOWSKA, Minister of Regional Development of the Republic of Poland, on the cohesion policy perspective of the MFF.

As to the issue "Two years after the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon", Mr RAKOCZY confirmed that Mr Maroš ŠEFČOVIČ, Vice-President of the Commission for Inter-Institutional Relations and Administration, had kindly accepted the invitation of the Polish Presidency to speak on this issue which will include national Parliaments' opinions on the practical implementation of Protocol 2 of the Treaty of Lisbon, on the informal political dialogue between national Parliaments and the European Commission which originally started in 2006 as a result of COSAC debates and on delegated acts under Article 290 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (hereinafter referred to as "the TFEU").

The aforementioned topics will be analysed in two chapters of the 16th Bi-annual Report which will serve as a background document for the debates at the XLVI COSAC meeting.

In addition, Mr RAKOCZY drew the attention of the Troika to two traditional items on the agenda, i.e. an exchange of views on the state of play of the Presidency of the Council of the EU and a debate on the adoption of the Contribution and Conclusions of COSAC.

Finally, Mr RAKOCZY expressed hope that the XLVI COSAC will take a decision on the next Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat (for 2012-2013), as the term of office of the current Permanent Member, Ms Loreta RAULINAITYTĖ, expires on 31 December 2011.

Mr Miguel Ángel MARTÍNEZ MARTÍNEZ expressed his support for the relevant and timely subjects of the proposed agenda of the XLVI COSAC meeting and suggested inviting two more key-note speakers to the meeting. Mr Jerzy BUZEK, President of the European Parliament, former Prime Minister of Poland, could intervene on the item of "Two years after the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon". He had preliminarily accepted the proposal to speak at the XLVI COSAC meeting in Warsaw. The second proposed speaker was Mr Salvador GARRIGA POLLEDO, Member of the European Parliament and rapporteur on the MFF. Mr MARTÍNEZ MARTÍNEZ underlined that the report of the European Parliament on "Investing in the future: a new Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for a competitive, sustainable and inclusive Europe" (2010/2211(INI)) had served as a source of inspiration to the Commission as it had been adopted on 26 May 2011, a month before the Commission adopted its package of proposals on the MFF for 2014-2020.

As the agenda of the XLVI COSAC was already full, Mr MARTÍNEZ MARTÍNEZ suggested holding COSAC debates on the following four subjects, possibly during the Danish Presidency in the first semester of 2012: i) reinforced cooperation of the European Parliament and national Parliaments on EU economic governance and the European Semester, ii) parliamentary scrutiny of Europol and Eurojust, iii) the European citizens' initiative, and iv) the European electoral law.

Mr Richárd HÖRCSIK supported the agenda item on the MFF, as an issue of utmost importance not only during the Polish, but also during the Danish and Cypriot Presidencies, underlining the need to create a policy-driven multiannual EU budget.

Ms Anne-Marie MELDGAARD agreed that the focus on the next MFF at the XLVI COSAC was the right one and was convinced that COSAC will have a substantial debate on the topic.

Mr Stanisław RAKOCZY thanked the delegations for their comments and suggestions, especially for proposing the additional interventions by Mr Jerzy BUZEK and Mr Salvador GARRIGA POLLEDO. With these amendments the draft programme of the XLVI COSAC was approved.

4. Approval of the outline of the 16th Bi-annual Report

Mr Stanisław RAKOCZY presented the draft outline of the 16th Bi-annual Report of COSAC. The Presidency suggested that the report would consist of two chapters. The first chapter would focus on the role of national Parliaments in the context of the new MFF for Europe 2020. The second chapter would deal with parliamentary experience two years after the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon, in particular the impact of reasoned opinions issued under Protocol 2 of the Treaty of Lisbon, the evaluation of the informal political dialogue between national Parliaments

and the European Commission and the implementation of Article 290 of the TFEU on delegated acts.

Mr RAKOCZY also drew the attention of the Troika to the intention to have a set of questions addressed specifically to the European Parliament, *inter alia*, to find out how reasoned opinions and contributions of national Parliaments are dealt with in the European Parliament.

Finally, Mr RAKOCZY asked the COSAC Secretariat to do a comparative analysis on whether reasoned opinions of national Parliaments are timely and duly published on IPEX, a tool for exchanging information on EU parliamentary activities.

Mr Miguel Ángel MARTÍNEZ MARTÍNEZ noted that the planned deadline for the replies to the questionnaire for the 16th Bi-annual Report, i.e. 26 August 2011, coincided with the parliamentary summer recess and therefore could be problematic not only to the European Parliament, but also to many national Parliaments. He suggested that the deadline be extended until 8 September.

Mr RAKOCZY explained that because of the early date of the XLVI COSAC meeting, i.e. on 2-4 October 2011, it was important to ensure that the COSAC Secretariat had sufficient time to draft the report. Consequently, he suggested maintaining the 26 August deadline, with an in-built flexibility. This was agreed.

Ms Anne-Marie MELDGAARD supported the Presidency's choice of topics for the 16th Bi-annual Report and agreed that the MFF was the most important topic for the upcoming one and a half years. As to the second topic, Ms MELDGAARD was of the opinion that it was a good time to evaluate parliamentary activities under the provisions of the Treaty of Lisbon and to share information and experience on how to improve them. The Chairwoman also informed the Troika about a new and so far satisfactory procedure recently introduced in the Danish *Folketing* on the scrutiny of delegated acts.

Mr Andrzej GAŁAŻEWSKI informed the Troika that one of the aims of the next Bi-annual Report was to raise awareness of the Members of the European Parliament about reasoned opinions issued by national Parliaments. In addition to the Commission and the Council, reasoned opinions are also sent to the European Parliament which, as practice had showed, is not always aware of their existence and availability.

Following the debate, the Troika approved the draft outline of the 16th Bi-annual Report as proposed by the Polish Presidency.

5. Procedure for nomination of the next Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat

Mr Edmund WITTBRODT informed that the term of office of the current Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat, Ms Loreta RAULINAITYTĖ, expires on 31 December 2011 and that the Presidency aimed at appointing a new Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat during the XLVI COSAC meeting on 2-4 October 2011. The new Permanent Member would hold the office from 1 January 2012 until 31 December 2013.

Mr WITTBRODT reminded the Troika that during the Hungarian Presidency an overwhelming majority of national Parliaments had sent letters of intent on the co-financing of the Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat and the costs of running the office and website of COSAC for 2012-2013. He then reminded that under Article 11 *bis* of the COSAC Rules of Procedure the candidate to Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat was proposed by the Troika and appointed by the Chairpersons of COSAC. Hence, interviews of candidates were foreseen during the meeting of the Troika on 2 October 2011 and the appointment - during the meeting of the Chairpersons of COSAC on 3 October 2011.

Mr WITTBRODT drew the Troika's attention to the draft letter prepared by the Polish Presidency in which national Parliaments were invited to propose candidates for the post from their staff members until 16 September 2011. The Presidency also intended to ask for the candidate's CV. Mr MARTÍNEZ MARTÍNEZ suggested also requesting the candidate's motivation letter (cover letter) so that candidates could explain why they had been interested in getting such a significant job.

The Troika agreed with the suggestion of Mr MARTÍNEZ MARTÍNEZ to include in the Presidency's letter the requirement to submit a candidate's motivation letter (cover letter).

6. Letters received by the Presidency

Mr Edmund WITTBRODT informed the Troika that so far the Polish Presidency had not received any letters.

7. Any other business

Ms Anne-Marie MELDGAARD, on behalf of the incoming Danish Presidency of COSAC, informed the Troika that the XLVII COSAC meeting will take place on 22-24 April 2012 while the date of the meeting of the Chairpersons of COSAC in the first semester of 2012 was still under consideration. Ms MELDGAARD also noted the intention of the Danish Presidency to focus on political discussions, especially related to the 20th anniversary of the internal market which plays a key role in boosting European economy and creating more jobs. Final decisions on the COSAC meetings during the first semester of 2012 will be taken after the general elections in Denmark later this year.

When asked by Mr WITTBRODT about the position of the Danish Government on the Schengen area, Ms MELDGAARD explained that the Danish Customs Control Agreement had attracted a lot of attention both inside and outside the EU. She underlined that the agreement only related to customs control and that it was in full conformity with EU law and the Schengen regulation. The Danish Government is engaged in dialogue with the Commission and will regularly inform the Commission about its implementation until the beginning of 2014. The agreement provides for employing additional 98 customs officers and for building road facilities to ensure safety of road users and customs officers. Ms MELDGAARD underlined that her personal opinion on the agreement differed from that of the Government and that if the Government changes following the general elections later this year no new buildings would be built at the Danish borders.