

CONTRIBUTION OF THE XLV COSAC

Budapest, 29-31 May 2011

1. The way to recovery: Economic governance, Europe 2020 Strategy and the European Semester

- 1.1. COSAC supports the efforts of the European Union institutions to strengthen economic coordination within the European Union and for the sake of faster recovery and sustainable growth underlines the need to streamline these efforts within the Europe 2020 Strategy.
- 1.2. COSAC affirms that the package of six legislative proposals on economic governance is essential to ensure fiscal discipline and to avoid excessive macroeconomic imbalances as stated in the conclusions of the European Council of 24-25 March 2011. Therefore COSAC invites all EU institutions concerned to take each necessary measure in order to adopt the above mentioned proposals by June 2011. In this respect, COSAC highly appreciates the efforts of the Presidency-in-office to find a compromise between the EU institutions.
- 1.3. COSAC invites the Governments of EU Members States to facilitate the involvement of Parliaments in the European Semester, in order to respect the budgetary powers of Parliaments. COSAC reaffirms that Parliaments intend to actively participate in this new initiative using their traditional means of parliamentary involvement including through their scrutiny of national reform programmes.
- 1.4. COSAC welcomes the initiative of a possible annual interparliamentary conference on budget and calls on the EU institutions to actively contribute to the substantial discussion to be held in this framework.
- 1.5. COSAC acknowledges the efforts of several Member States aiming for closer cooperation in the economic, fiscal and monetary policy fields and urges all Member States to exploit the possibilities for closer cooperation provided by the Treaties with special respect to the internal market.

2. Parliamentary scrutiny of the common foreign and security policy (CFSP) and the common security and defence policy (CSDP)

- 2.1. COSAC takes note the ongoing discussion in the framework of the Conference of Speakers of EU Parliaments concerning the future of parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP and CSDP and notes the progress achieved during the Brussels Speakers' Conference. COSAC considers that the conclusions adopted at this meeting constitute a good starting point for future debates and final decisions concerning the parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP and CSDP. We look forward to a new meeting to continue this scrutiny work being convened at the earliest opportunity.
- 2.2. COSAC notes that following the termination of the WEU Assembly a framework for the parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP and CSDP should be found in conformity with the provisions of the Lisbon Treaty.
- 2.3. Given the special nature of this policy area, COSAC underlines the crucial role of national Parliaments in the parliamentary scrutiny of the common foreign and security policy as well as the common security and defence policy.
- 2.4. Hence COSAC requests all concerned institutions, with special regard to the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, to cooperate closely with Parliaments and properly inform them on developments in the policy fields of CFSP and CSDP in order to fulfil the provisions of the Treaty of Lisbon.

3. The State of the Union

- 3.1. In accordance with the Preamble of the Treaty on the European Union COSAC underlines that the Treaty of Lisbon marks a new stage in the process of European integration. It reaffirms the need to implement the provisions of the Treaty on effective cooperation between national Parliaments and the European Parliament.
- 3.2. COSAC welcomes its first debate on the State of the Union in its framework. It invites the European Commission to take the views of parliaments into

consideration when elaborating its own evaluation of the State of the Union and also when preparing the Commission Work Programme

- 3.3. With respect to the further developments within the European Union, COSAC underlines the importance of better communication with the citizens of the EU, not exclusively, but also by means of communicating the European Union through the Parliaments.

4. Cooperation with the institutions of the European Union

- 4.1. COSAC welcomes the new quality of cooperation between national Parliaments and the European Commission as well as the European Parliament respectively established in the framework of the Treaty of Lisbon.
- 4.2. COSAC welcomes the active work of national Parliaments in scrutinizing the subsidiarity principle according to Protocol 2 of the Treaty of Lisbon. National Parliaments have adopted different procedures concerning the practical implementation of the subsidiarity checks. COSAC considers that the existing practices and the experiences on the application of the Protocol 2 should be shared by Parliaments and EU institutions and the application of Protocol 2 should be clarified further on by means of continuous dialogue between all concerned stakeholders.
- 4.3. In order for national Parliaments to be able to carry out subsidiarity checks in accordance with the aim of the Treaty of Lisbon, it is a prerequisite that the European Commission's proposals are thoroughly explained. COSAC recognizes the ongoing efforts of the European Commission to meet this demand, but underlines the importance for the Commission to continue and extend this work further.