

MINUTES OF THE COSAC PRESIDENTIAL TROIKA MEETING
Brussels, 4 July 2010

PRESENT AT THE MEETING:

IN THE CHAIR: Mr Herman DE CROO (*Chambre des représentants*, Belgium); Ms Vanessa MATZ (*Sénat*, Belgium)

Mr Miguel ARIAS CAÑETE (*Cortes Generales*, Spain); Mr Alex SÁEZ JUBERO (*Cortes Generales*, Spain); Mr Lajos MILE (*Országgyűlés*, Hungary); Mr Miguel Ángel MARTÍNEZ MARTÍNEZ (European Parliament); Mr Carlo CASINI (European Parliament)

AGENDA:

- 1. Adoption of the agenda for the Presidential Troika Meeting**
- 2. Adoption of the draft agenda for the Chairperson's Meeting**
- 3. Debate and adoption of the draft agenda for the XLIV COSAC Meeting**
- 4. Adoption of the Outline of the Fourteenth Bi-annual Report**
- 5. Letters received by the Presidency**
- 6. Any other business**

PROCEEDINGS:

1. Adoption of the agenda for the Presidential Troika Meeting

The meeting was chaired by Mr Herman DE CROO, Co-Chairperson of the Federal Advisory Committee for European Affairs for the Belgian *Chambre des représentants* and Ms Vanessa MATZ, Co-Chairperson of the Federal Advisory Committee for European Affairs for the Belgian *Sénat*, who welcomed the Members of the Presidential Troika and thanked the Spanish delegation for their successful Presidency.

At the request of Mr Miguel Ángel MARTÍNEZ MARTÍNEZ, Mr Herman DE CROO explained the procedures and timetable for the constitution of the Belgian Federal Parliament and its bodies after the legislative elections of 13 June 2010. Concerning the parliamentary committees, their eventual establishment depends on the constitution of the Federal Government. If it takes too long to constitute a new Government, the committees may be established temporarily.

Following the explanation, Mr Herman DE CROO presented the draft agenda of the COSAC Presidential Troika meeting. The agenda was adopted as set out above.

2. Adoption of the draft agenda for the Chairpersons' Meeting

Mr Herman DE CROO presented the draft agenda for the Meeting of the Chairpersons of COSAC. The agenda was approved as proposed by the Presidency.

3. Debate and adoption of the draft agenda for the XLIV COSAC Meeting

The Belgian Presidency suggested three subjects for the Fourteenth Bi-Annual Report of COSAC. Two of them were already on the draft agenda of the XLIV COSAC meeting, namely Sustainable Development in the Europe 2020 Strategy and Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Common Security and Defence Policy (henceforth “CSDP”). The third subject, namely the Future role of COSAC after the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon, was a continuation of the debate of the XLIII COSAC meeting in Madrid. The Belgian Presidency suggested adding it to the agenda of the XLIV COSAC meeting depending on the timing of the speech of the President of the European Commission Mr José Manuel BARROSO.

Mr Carlo CASINI pointed out that if Mr José Manuel BARROSO and Mr Herman VAN ROMPUY, President of the European Council, were invited, it might be a good idea to invite also Mr Jerzy BUZEK, the President of the European Parliament, to offer parity to the three European Union institutions.

Mr DE CROO explained that if Mr Jerzy BUZEK would be invited that would shorten even more the time allocated for the debates of COSAC. The Chairman also pointed out that there was a significant difference between the European Parliament on the one side and the European Council and the European Commission on the other, as the European Parliament was a Member of COSAC.

Mr Miguel ARIAS CAÑETE agreed with the Presidency and pointed out that the draft agenda of the XLIV COSAC meeting, like the agenda of the XLIII COSAC meeting in Madrid, was already quite heavy. Mr ARIAS CAÑETE expressed his support for the presented draft agenda.

Mr Miguel Ángel MARTÍNEZ MARTÍNEZ proposed that a Member of the European Parliament presented one of the subjects of the Fourteenth Bi-Annual Report of COSAC as a keynote speaker.

Ms Vanessa MATZ explained that the Belgian Presidency planned not to have keynote speakers at the XLIV COSAC meeting in order to give more time for debates. The proposal of the Presidency was accepted by the Members of the Presidential Troika.

Taking into account the above mentioned adaptations, the draft agenda of the XLIV COSAC meeting was approved as presented by the Belgian Presidency.

4. Adoption of the Outline of the Fourteenth Bi-annual Report

Mr Herman DE CROO presented the draft outline of the Fourteenth Bi-annual Report of COSAC.

Mr Miguel ARIAS CAÑETE pointed out that in his opinion the outline established a precedent by taking one of the themes of the Presidency’s programme for the Bi-Annual Report of COSAC. He underlined that he was not against the proposed subjects but that the Chairpersons of COSAC had to be made aware that the subjects had been proposed by the Presidency and approved by the Presidential Troika.

Mr Herman DE CROO agreed that the subjects on the Europe 2020 Strategy and on the parliamentary control of the CSDP were linked to the priorities of the Belgian Presidency. According to the Mr DE CROO, it was time for COSAC to explore novel subjects rather than the traditional ones, for instance, the application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality.

Mr Miguel Ángel MARTÍNEZ MARTÍNEZ agreed that the proposed subjects were important and predicted that it might not be easy to chair the debates on these subjects as there would be a lot of interest and new ideas on these subjects. Mr MARTÍNEZ MARTÍNEZ pointed out that the Chairpersons could still amend the proposed outline.

Mr Herman DE CROO agreed and summarised the debate by stating that the Presidential Troika would present a common proposal, based on the proposal of the Presidency and that the Chairpersons would take the final decision on the outline of the Fourteenth Bi-annual Report.

Mr Herman DE CROO then presented the subjects for the Fourteenth Bi-Annual Report more in detail. As there were no comments or suggestions to amend the first chapter on "Sustainable development in the Europe 2020 Strategy" the outline for this chapter was approved.

Mr DE CROO informed the Members of the Presidential Troika that the second chapter would deal with the "Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Common Security and Defence Policy" and that the European Parliament had presented a number of amendments for the outline of this chapter.

Mr Miguel Ángel MARTÍNEZ MARTÍNEZ explained the proposed amendments of the European Parliament:

1. In paragraph 2, since the WEU could not be considered to be the interparliamentary body dealing with CSDP, it was proposed to delete the second part of the first sentence.
2. In paragraph 5, where reference was made to Article 10 of Protocol 1 of the Treaty of Lisbon, it was proposed to also quote Article 9 of Protocol 1 on interparliamentary cooperation between national Parliaments and the European Parliament.
3. In paragraph 6, it was proposed to insert the words "even more so" before the word "defence" to underline that security remains to a large extent national policy and even more so defence.
4. In paragraph 8, it was proposed to add a sentence, stating that "Other national Parliaments have expressed other views" than the French *Sénat* on the creation of a new structure for the scrutiny of CSDP.

After an exchange of views, it was decided that all the amendments of the European Parliament with slight modifications, except the first one, were acceptable. It was decided:

1. To modify paragraph 2 stating that the WEU was one of the interparliamentary bodies dealing with security and defence policy in Europe.
2. To quote Article 9 of Protocol 1 in paragraph 5 instead of paragraph 4.
3. To accept the third amendment as proposed by the European Parliament.
4. To add to paragraph 8 a sentence stating that "Some Members of COSAC have expressed different opinions."

Mr Herman DE CROO after having checked with the Members of the Presidential Troika stated that the proposed changes in the draft outline had been agreed on.

Chapter 3 of the Fourteenth Bi-Annual Report was on the Future role of COSAC after the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon, as the discussion in Madrid was not closed. No comments or suggestions for amending this chapter had been expressed and therefore the outline for this chapter was approved as proposed by the Presidency.

Mr Herman DE CROO summarized the discussion on this point of agenda and proposed that at the meeting of the Chairpersons of COSAC the following day he would propose the three subjects for the Fourteenth Bi-Annual Report with the amendments agreed by the Presidential Troika and would explain the procedure used to reach this decision. This was agreed upon.

5. Letters received by the Presidency

No letters were received.

6. Any other business

Mr Herman DE CROO asked the European Parliament delegation about the plans concerning the interparliamentary meeting organised by the European Parliament Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET) and its Subcommittee on Security and Defence (SEDE) on 28-29 of September 2010.

Mr Miguel Ángel MARTÍNEZ MARTÍNEZ explained that the committee had wished to co-organise this meeting with the Belgian Presidency, but this was not feasible as the committees in the Belgian Parliament were not yet constituted. It would be preferable to have a joint organisation of this meeting.

Mr Herman DE CROO stated that it should be possible to co-organise this meeting, even if the Belgian Federal Parliament is not fully functional.

Mr Miguel Ángel MARTÍNEZ MARTÍNEZ pointed out that the European Parliament would applaud this as the meeting could then be far more effective. Moreover, as the theme of parliamentary scrutiny of the CSDP would be taken up by other interparliamentary meetings and it would be most appropriate to have this meeting co-organized with the Belgian Presidency.

Mr Herman DE CROO pointed out that the Belgian Parliament could designate Members, even if its committees were not yet constituted. He considered that it would be possible to have the European Parliament and the Belgian Parliament co-chair the meeting. If by the time of the meeting no parliamentary committees were constituted and no committee Chairpersons were elected, the Parliament could designate a Chair.

Mr Carlo CASINI pointed out that the European Parliament Committee on Constitutional Affairs (AFCO) planned to hold an interparliamentary meeting on 30 September 2010 on the European electoral reform and the citizens' initiative. If possible, he would like to have this meeting also as co-organized with the Belgian Presidency.

Mr Herman DE CROO responded that even if the committees of the Belgian Parliament were not constituted, the Parliament could designate participants to this interparliamentary meeting as well.