



**ASSEMBLEIA DA REPÚBLICA
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Mr. Miguel ARIAS CAÑETE
Chairman of the Joint Committee
for the European Union
Congreso de los Diputados
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SPAIN

19 de Fevereiro de 2010

Dear Mr. Chairman

Firstly, I would like to congratulate you for the excellent organization of the COSAC Chairpersons Meeting held on 4th and 5th February, in Madrid, where we had a very fruitful exchange of interesting ideas concerning the future role of national Parliaments and COSAC itself following the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon.

Therefore, and following my intervention at the Chairpersons Meeting, I take this opportunity to highlight some of the issues that I consider to be of crucial importance for our common work together in the framework of COSAC, in order to fully implement the new powers to be wielded by national Parliaments under the Treaty of Lisbon.

First of all, we should carefully assess the content of the letter addressed by the President of the European Commission to national Parliaments on 1st December 2009, in order to take advantage of the possibilities it foresees. This letter encourages national Parliaments to issue their opinions referring not only to the subsidiarity principle, but also to the content of the proposals, its legal basis or the compliance with the principle of proportionality. This should be done in the framework of the political dialogue between national Parliaments and the Commission, which is to be kept alongside with the mechanisms envisaged by the Treaty of Lisbon. Hence, COSAC should discuss the ways to deepen our common work with this regard, in a coordinated and efficient manner.

Secondly, COSAC should look into other issues besides the compliance of the legislative proposals with the subsidiarity principle. For instance, the Spanish government has recently presented a proposal to amend Protocol 36 of the Treaty of Lisbon, with regard to the composition of the European Parliament. Thus, we must debate how can Parliaments deal with such matters and what kind of contribution can we put forward.

Finally, I believe COSAC should debate another issue of the utmost importance: how will national Parliaments wield their powers when it comes to legislative initiatives presented by European institutions other than the European Commission, as foreseen by the Treaty of Lisbon (e.g. the *Initiative for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the rights to interpretation*



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and to translation in criminal proceedings¹ and the Initiative for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Protection Order²). In this context, COSAC might consider proposing or suggesting some procedural rules, based upon the experience gathered so far with the subsidiarity checks conducted within the framework of COSAC, avoiding the adoption of a multiplicity of different procedures.

As President in office of COSAC, I would like to draw your attention to these three issues, hoping that they can be addressed in the next Biannual Report and discussed amongst ourselves in the XLIII COSAC meeting in Madrid, next May.

May I take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation for the excellent work the Spanish Presidency has done so far in conducting our common work and emphasize that the European Affairs Committee, which I am honoured to chair, is fully committed to the challenges we face and prepared for the mutual cooperation required to build a more democratic and prosper Europe.

Yours sincerely,

(Vitalino Canas)

Chairman on the European Affairs Committee

¹ PE-CONS 1/10

² PE-CONS 2/10