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Note on the appointment of the Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat and on the state of play of the co-financing issue

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Appointment of the Permanent Member

The present Permanent Member (Ms Loreta Raulinaityte) was appointed for two years from 18 February 2008 and formally took office on 15 April 2008.

In order to allow sufficient advance notice, the COSAC Chairpersons' meeting in Stockholm on 6 July 2009 decided that **the aim should be to appoint the Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat for the next term of office at the XLII COSAC** in Stockholm.

The Chairpersons' meeting also decided that the next term of office **should end on 31 December 2011**, to coordinate it with the co-financing scheme.

Following that decision, the Swedish Presidency sent out a letter, dated 16 July 2009, in which Ms Anna Kinberg Batra, Chairperson of the Committee on EU Affairs of the Swedish *Riksdag*, invited her colleagues to submit nominations for the post by 20 September 2009 at the latest. **A single nomination was received: The Lithuanian Seimas nominated Ms Loreta Raulinaityte for a second term of office.**

Rules of Procedure

The rules relating to the COSAC Secretariat are laid down in article 11 bis of the COSAC Rules of Procedure. The Secretariat is to be composed of officials from the Parliaments of the Presidential Troika, and a Permanent Member who supports the Secretariat in its activities.

The Permanent Member is to be an official of a National Parliament and will remain in office for two years with the possibility of one renewal. He or she is to be appointed by the COSAC Chairpersons on the proposal of the Presidential Troika.

Action to be taken

The matter is on the agenda for the meeting of the Presidential Troika on 4 October 2009. The members of the Troika will be able to **meet the nominee, and are expected to agree on a proposal** to the COSAC Chairpersons who will be taking the decision on the appointment. The proposal will then be presented to the COSAC Chairpersons' meeting in the afternoon of 5 October 2009.

State of play of the co-financing issue

Based on a report¹ of a COSAC Working Group, presented to the XXXVI COSAC in Helsinki on 20-21 November 2006, the co-financing scheme began in early 2008, when the present permanent member of the Secretariat took office.

Under this system, the parliament seconding the permanent member pays his or her basic salary and salary-related costs, while the **national parliaments that participate in the co-financing scheme share the additional costs** of maintaining a staff member in Brussels, as well as certain costs for running the COSAC office.

The scheme specifies that **commitments to participate are valid only if the national parliaments of at least 14 member states** (i.e. a majority of them) **do so**. As of September 2008, all (27) national parliaments had indicated their willingness to take part. However, most of them had only made a commitment for 2008-2009. Less than 14 had also made commitments for 2010, which meant that the co-financing scheme would cease to function unless a new decision was taken.

Therefore, the meeting of the COSAC Chairpersons in Stockholm on 6 July 2009 **agreed that the co-financing scheme should be continued until 31 December 2011**, and that national parliaments should be invited to send the COSAC Presidency-in-office a letter of intent indicating their willingness to participate.² Accordingly, the Swedish Presidency invited national parliaments to submit such letters, preferably before 30 September 2009 and in any case before the end of 2009.

Between mid-July and 20 September 2009, the Swedish Presidency received renewed commitments from a number of parliaments, taking **the total over the minimum of 14**. This means the scheme will be able to continue during 2010.

¹ Available at <http://www.cosac.eu/en/meetings/helsinki2006/ordinary/>

² For the proposal and its background, see the Presidency note on co-financing, available at <http://www.cosac.eu/en/meetings/stockholm/chairpersons/>

Further documentation

The situation as of 30 September will be shown in a separate document, which will be available at the XVII COSAC in Stockholm on 4-6 October 2009.