

XXXV COSAC

The **35th COSAC in Vienna on 22-23 May 2006** put an emphasis on a stronger role of national parliaments on the basis of the existing *acquis communautaire*. Following the Conference on Subsidiarity in St. Pölten in April and the Joint Parliamentary Meeting on the the Future of Europe in Brussels in May 2006 this COSAC meeting took up the topic of the future of the Constitutional Treaty and subsidiarity review by national parliaments.

In this regard the COSAC contribution welcomed the commitment of the President of the Commission to transmit directly all new legislative proposals and consultation papers to national parliaments, inviting them to react so as to improve the process of policy formulation. Furthermore COSAC asked “the Commission to take into account comments from National Parliaments – in particular with regard to the subsidiarity and proportionality principles – and within an acceptable timeframe to acknowledge receipt and offer a reasoned response”. This commitment which also can be found in the communication of the Commission of 10 May 2006 (COM (2006) 211 final) was then welcomed by the European Council of 15-16 June 2006. The European Council reiterated the request to duly consider comments by national parliaments and encouraged national parliaments to strengthen cooperation within the framework of COSAC when monitoring subsidiarity.

An exchange of views with Federal Chancellor Wolfgang Schäussel on Europe – perspectives and pragmatism as well a discussion on the Western Balkans and the European Neighbourhood Policy with Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner and the Special Coordinator of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe Erhard Busek were additional point on the agenda.