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PRESS RELEASE

COSAC: Political will to reform COSAC

Copenhagen - At the XXVIIth meeting of COSAC a decision in principal regarding the systematic reform of COSAC was taken. Broadly speaking the aim of the reform is to involve national parliaments to a greater extent in national EU decisions, and thus ensure a firmer democratic foundation for future EU co-operation.

The Danish Presidency had put forward an ambitious draft proposal to reform COSAC at the biannual COSAC meeting held in Copenhagen on the 16th-18th of October 2002. The meeting demonstrated that there exists a positive attitude towards substantial changes in COSAC amongst the delegates from the EU Member States and the applicant countries.

Danish chair, Social Democrat Mr. Claus Larsen-Jensen, considered the meeting a political break-through. To avoid any misunderstandings, Mr. Larsen-Jensen underlined that the meeting declared the idea of a second chamber or a Congress as dead.

At the meeting it was decided to change COSAC's rules of procedure concerning majority decisions and to establish a secretariat for COSAC.

A working group was given the task to draft proposals on how to change the rules of procedure and on how to establish the secretariat. Other topics for the working group to discuss are *a new and more understandable name for COSAC, how to involve the sectoral standing committees, the establishment of a code of conduct for effective national parliamentary scrutiny of governments, the setting up of mechanisms to ensure that future EU legislation complies with the principle of subsidiarity and a new strategy for IT and administrative co-operation.*

The working group shall consist of the Chairmen of the Committee of European Affairs for each Chamber in the Parliaments of the Member States and members of the European Parliament. The Chairmen of similar Committees in the applicant countries will be invited as observers to the meetings of the working group.

The first meeting of the working group will take place in Copenhagen on the 17th-18th of November and a second meeting is planned in December 2002. An extraordinary meeting of COSAC might be held in January 2003.

For further information, please contact:

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