

Proposal from the European Affairs Committee of the Danish Folketing (February 2001)

**Chairman of the European Affairs Committee
Parliament of Denmark**

**Chairman of the Committee on European Union Affairs
Mr Sören Lekberg**

23 February 2001 Our ref. 6115/ls

Proposal from the European Affairs Committee of the Danish Folketing regarding the future COSAC work

Dear Sören Lekberg

The European Affairs Committee of the Danish Folketing has discussed the proposal from the COSAC-meeting to present ideas for the future organisation of the COSAC co-operation.

It is the attitude of the Committee that is of great importance to strengthen the COSAC co-operation thus strengthening the role of the national Parliaments both individually and by joint efforts in the EU-decision-making.

Specifically we have the following proposal to be discussed at the COSAC-meeting to be held on 20 - 22 May 2001:

We support that a permanent COSAC-working group is established in-between the COSAC-meetings. We have noted that for the preparation of the COSAC-meeting in May, a representative from the European Affairs Committees of each country has been invited to participate in a meeting on 8th and 9th April. The vice-chairman of the European Affairs Committee of the Folketing, Mrs Elisabeth Arnold will participate at this working group meeting. However, we do suggest that it is discussed which role the working group should have and if the working group should only consist of representatives from the troika countries or if all countries should be represented. In our opinion the question is connected to the question of which tasks the working group should have.

Through COSAC the opportunity for the European Affairs Committees of the national parliaments to exchange views, experiences etc. is safeguarded. Please refer to the agreed rules. Furthermore we suggest that the COSAC-co-operation should be extended to include the ground principals for a co-operation between the Standing Committees of the national parliaments (i.e. The Agriculture Committee, The Environment Committee, The Transport Committee etc.) in order to enable our parliament colleagues in the specific areas to meet frequently to exchange experiences, views etc. Hereby it enables us to strengthen the co-operation between the national parliaments in specific political areas in a structured way. It would heighten the integration of politics between national

parliaments and the joint EU initiatives.

An annual meeting for the relevant Standing Committees might be fitting. They should of course organise the co-operation according to their wishes and needs in the various specific political areas. Each national parliament co-ordinates themselves from its own national traditions among the respective European Affairs Committees and the Standing Committees.

The background for the proposal is that there is a great interest for this amongst Danish Members of Parliament in the Standing Committees. A couple of such cross-country meetings between the national Standing Committees has taken place to date. The wish is to have this co-operation structured.

Through such combination of strengthening the inclusion of the Standing Committees in European politics, and strengthening the cross-border co-operation between the Standing Committees - as a supplement to tasks of the national European Affairs Committees nationally and in COSAC - it is possible in our view to create an even stronger anchoring of the EU politics in the national democratic decision-making.

The proposal is therefore also a natural continuation of the intentions of the Nice Treaty to strengthen the role of the national Parliaments. The proposal does not take a position on what the answer is in connection with the inter-governmental conference 2004. Under any circumstances we find, that at this moment there is a need for such strengthening of the co-operation.

Yours sincerely,

Claus Larsen-Jensen