



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COSAC PRESIDENTIAL TROIKA

STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN, 29 JANUARY 2023

PRESENT AT THE MEETING

CHAIR: Mr Hans WALLMARK and Ms Matilda ERNKRANS, respectively Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee on European Union Affairs of the Swedish *Riksdag*;

Ms Susana SUMELZO, Chair of the Joint Committee for EU Affairs of the Spanish *Cortes Generales*, and Rubén MORENO, Member of the Joint Committee for EU Affairs of the Spanish *Cortes Generales*;

Mr Ondřej BENEŠÍK, Chair of the Committee on European Affairs of the Czech *Poslanecká sněmovna*; Mr Jiří DUŠEK, Vice-Chair of the Committee on EU Affairs of the Czech *Senát*;

Mr Othmar KARAS, First Vice-President, European Parliament; Mr Salvatore DE MEO, Chair of the Committee for Constitutional Affairs, European Parliament.

AGENDA

PROCEEDINGS	1
1. Adoption of the agenda of the Meeting of the Presidential Troika of COSAC	2
2. Approval of the draft programme of the Meeting of the Chairpersons of COSAC	2
3. Discussion on the draft programme for the LXIX COSAC Meeting	3
4. Approval of the Outline of the 39th Bi-annual Report of COSAC	3
5. Letters received by the Presidency	4
6. Any other business	5

PROCEEDINGS

1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA OF THE MEETING OF THE PRESIDENTIAL TROIKA OF COSAC

Mr Hans WALLMARK, Chair of the Committee on European Union Affairs of the Swedish *Riksdag*, greeted the delegations of the Presidential Troika of COSAC (hereinafter referred to as "the Troika"), together with Ms Matilda ERNKRANS, Vice-Chair of the same Committee, expressing his expectation of fruitful and productive work amongst the Troika.

Mr WALLMARK welcomed Ms Susana SUMELZO, Chair of the Joint Committee for EU Affairs of the Spanish *Cortes Generales*, and Mr Rubén MORENO, Member of the same Joint Committee, who were participating in the Meeting of the Troika for the first time as the incoming Presidency in the second semester of 2023. He also greeted Mr Jiří DUŠEK, Vice-Chair of the Committee on EU Affairs of the Czech *Senát*, who was also taking part in the proceedings of the Troika for the first time.

Mr WALLMARK then referred to the agenda of the Meeting of the Troika, previously circulated to all delegations, which was adopted without amendment.

2. APPROVAL OF THE DRAFT PROGRAMME OF THE MEETING OF THE CHAIRPERSONS OF COSAC

Mr WALLMARK alluded to the programme of the Meeting of the COSAC Chairpersons, previously circulated to all delegations, which would be divided into two sessions, besides the procedural and other general matters.

He also mentioned that Dr Andreas NORLÉN, Speaker of the Swedish *Riksdag*, would open the meeting. The first session would be dedicated to the topic of "What can the EU do in the area of organised crime?", with keynote speeches by Ms Ylva JOHANSSON, European Commissioner for Home Affairs, Mr Johan OLSSON, Head of National Operations Department, Swedish Police Authority, and Ms Anna Karin HILDINGSON BOQVIST, Secretary General, ECPAT Sweden. The second session would focus on the priorities of the Swedish Presidency of the Council of the European Union, presented by Mr Christian DANIELSSON, State Secretary to the Minister for EU Affairs of the Swedish Government, and would have as first speaker Mr Othmar KARAS, First Vice-President of the European Parliament. Mr WALLMARK also stated that Ms Jessika ROSWALL, Minister for EU Affairs and Nordic Cooperation of the Swedish Government, would attend the official dinner of the COSAC Chairpersons, later that day.

The draft programme of the Meeting of the Chairpersons of COSAC was approved without amendment.

3. DISCUSSION ON THE DRAFT PROGRAMME FOR THE LXIX COSAC MEETING

Mr WALLMARK then referred to the draft agenda of the LXIX COSAC Plenary, scheduled for 14 to 16 May 2023, Stockholm, introducing the four thematic sessions which would be covered during the meeting:

- the first session would be dedicated to an overview of the Swedish Presidency of the Council of the EU;
- the second session would discuss the 30 years of the Single Market;
- the third session would be dedicated to the EU's path towards a green transition;
- and the fourth and final session would focus on Ukraine.

Mr WALLMARK mentioned that the speakers to be invited should ensure an adequate balance among experts, representatives from the EU institutions and from Parliaments, stating the Presidency would welcome any suggestions from the Troika with that regard.

Mr Othmar KARAS, First Vice-President, European Parliament, extended best wishes for the Swedish Presidency, also on behalf of Roberta METSOLA, President of the European Parliament, appreciating the good atmosphere and the work done so far. Regarding the draft presented, Mr KARAS noted that the European Parliament would be available to contribute with suggestions for suitable keynote speakers for the sessions mentioned.

Mr WALLMARK also expressed his appreciation for the good work done so far within the Troika and, since there were no additional remarks, he ended this debate by noting the support of the Troika for the proposed draft agenda for the LXIX COSAC.

4. APPROVAL OF THE OUTLINE OF THE 39TH BI-ANNUAL REPORT OF COSAC

Mr WALLMARK presented the outline of the 39th Bi-annual Report of COSAC, which would be divided into three parts: the first chapter would be dedicated to the role of Parliaments/Chambers in the handling of the Fit for 55 package; the second chapter would focus on the role of the Parliaments/Chambers in the accelerated decision-making processes in response to crises; and, finally, the third chapter would look at the best practices for information exchange between Parliaments, including the use of IPEX.

The questionnaire would be sent to the delegations on 15 February at the latest, with replies expected by 16 March 2023, so that the Bi-annual Report for the scheduled COSAC plenary in May could be drawn up on time.

The draft outline of COSAC's 39th Bi-annual Report was therefore approved.

5. LETTERS RECEIVED BY THE PRESIDENCY

Mr WALLMARK referred to the following letters received by the Presidency requesting invitations to attend the COSAC meetings:

- Mr Benedikt WÜRTH, President of the Swiss delegation for relations with the European Parliament, Swiss *Assemblée fédérale*;
- Mr Masud GHARAHKHANI, President of the Norwegian *Stortinget*;
- Lord Charles KINNOULL, Chair of the European Union Committee, UK *House of Lords*;
- Bjarni JÓNSSON, Chair of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs of the Icelandic *Althingi*;
- Ms Maka BOTCHORISHVILI, Chair of the Committee on European Integration of the Georgian *Sakartvelos p'arliament'I*;
- Ms Rrezarta KRASNIQI, Chair of the Committee on European Integration, Kosovo¹ *Kuvendi i Kosovës*.

Mr WALLMARK said that, following consultation with the Presidential Troika of COSAC, invitations had been extended to all the above-mentioned Parliaments to take part in the forthcoming Meeting of Chairpersons of COSAC, and they would also be invited to the LXIX COSAC in May.

He also mentioned a letter sent by Satu HASSI, Chairperson of the Grand Committee of the Finnish *Eduskunta*, addressed to the COSAC Chairpersons, to inform that she would not be running in the upcoming elections in Finland, scheduled for April 2023, and therefore the current COSAC Chairpersons meeting would be the last COSAC meeting she would attend. Mr WALLMARK informed the Troika that he would take the opportunity at the COSAC Chairpersons to thank Ms Satu HASSI for the excellent cooperation during the last few years.

Mr WALLMARK then referred to a letter sent to the Presidency and to the Troika by Mr Jean-François RAPIN, Chair of the European Affairs Committee of the French *Sénat*, proposing to add an item to the agenda of LXIX COSAC to discuss how to improve the rules of ethics and transparency governing the activities of the European institutions.

He mentioned that the proposed topic was interesting and that the Presidency would be open to having a broad discussion on ethics and transparency, which are key issues for all Parliaments. Therefore, the Presidency proposed to convene a videoconference on the matter, possibly in April, organised in the same format as the previous informal exchanges held by former COSAC Presidencies, and with the intention of inviting the European Commissioner responsible for these issues to participate. Hence, this would

¹ This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244(1999) and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

allow for an exchange of views between national Parliaments and the European Parliament on these issues.

Since there were no additional remarks on that issue, the Presidency will therefore inform delegations on the way forward regarding this request from the French *Sénat*.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr WALLMARK referred to the fact that a decision was pending at COSAC regarding the old COSAC website (and the cosac.eu domain), giving the floor to the Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat, Mr Bruno DIAS PINHEIRO, to introduce the topic.

Mr DIAS PINHEIRO started by recalling that the Conference of Speakers of the Parliaments of the EU had outlined the purpose of establishing IPEX as the “one stop shop” for interparliamentary exchanges on EU affairs and documents, including hosting the information related to all interparliamentary Conferences. Furthermore, COSAC had expressed its support for the IPEX platform to host the COSAC website, merging the two environments, specifically in the Conclusions of the LVIII COSAC held in Tallinn, in December 2017, of the LIX COSAC, held in Sofia, in June 2018, of the LX COSAC, held in Vienna, in November 2018, and of the LXII COSAC, held in Helsinki, in December 2019.

Mr DIAS PINHEIRO noted that while the migration of the data was being done, the information pertaining to COSAC was accessible on both platforms, i.e. the COSAC website (www.cosac.eu) and IPEX. After the official launch of IPEX Version 3, in October 2021, this transitional period was over and the merging had been successfully concluded, with all the relevant information available on the IPEX platform.

He added that the existence of two websites had a financial cost, since the domain and the hosting of www.cosac.eu were still being paid for every year, and a cost in terms of quality of the information, since the www.cosac.eu website, although it was obsolete and no longer updated since 2019, was still active and could easily be found via any web search engine.

Consequently, a decision needed to be taken by COSAC regarding this matter, and it was proposed that, on the initiative of the Presidency and the Troika, it should be deemed that the www.cosac.eu website/domain was no longer needed to be active and, therefore, there was no need to renew its yearly subscriptions.

If no objections to end the payment of the website were communicated to the Presidency by 10 May, the payment would be terminated in 2023. Finally, the Conclusions of the LXIX COSAC Plenary would take note of the decision to end the old website, and the COSAC Secretariat would be tasked with implementing that decision, effective in 2023.

Mr WALLMARK noted there were no comments and therefore concluded that the Troika adopted the recommendation made by the COSAC Secretariat.

On another topic, Mr WALLMARK reminded the Troika of the procedure for co-financing the Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat and the costs of running the office of COSAC, which would be initiated for the coming two years (2024/25). He alluded to point 9.5 of the Rules of Procedure of COSAC, which reads *"the cost of seconding the Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat to Brussels and other necessary technical costs of the COSAC Secretariat are jointly borne by parliaments wishing to contribute. The amount and terms of payment under the co-financing procedure are defined in an agreement concluded amongst the participating parliaments. The Secretariat is hosted by the European Parliament in its offices in Brussels."*

The current co-financing period was running from 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2023, covering the usual two-year period, and was co-financed by all Parliaments of the EU countries. Therefore, and to ensure the continued co-financing for the post of the Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat, the Swedish Presidency would launch the procedure to renew the current co-financing agreement for the period from 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2025. For that purpose, a letter would be sent by the Presidency to all Parliaments/Chambers in the beginning of February, in order to collect the necessary letters of intent and gather the required threshold for the enforcement of the agreement to fund this post.

Mr WALLMARK concluded the meeting by thanking colleagues for the participation and for the good cooperation within the Presidential Troika of COSAC.