



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COSAC PRESIDENTIAL TROIKA

MADRID, SPAIN, 17 SEPTEMBER 2023

PRESENT AT THE MEETING

CHAIR: Mr José Ignacio LANDALUCE CALLEJA, Member of the Spanish *Senado*, and Susana SUMELZO JORDÁN, Member of the Spanish *Congreso de los Diputados*;

Mr Gaëtan VAN GOIDSENHOVEN, Co-Chair of the Federal Advisory Committee on European Affairs, Belgian *Sénat/Senaat*;

Mr Othmar KARAS, First Vice-President, European Parliament.

(Ms Eliane TILLIEUX, Co-Chair of the Federal Advisory Committee on European affairs, Belgian *Chambre des représentants/Kamer van Volksvertegenwoordigers*, Mr Hans WALLMARK, Chair of the Committee on European Union Affairs of the Swedish *Riksdag*, and Mr Salvatore DE MEO, Chair of the Committee for Constitutional Affairs, European Parliament, were unable to attend).

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PROCEEDINGS

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

Mr José Ignacio LANDALUCE CALLEJA, Member of the Spanish *Senado*, and Ms Susana SUMELZO JORDÁN, Member of the Spanish *Congreso de los Diputados*, greeted the delegations of the Presidential Troika of COSAC (hereinafter referred to as "the Troika"), expressing their wishes for a fruitful and productive work amongst them.

Mr LANDALUCE CALLEJA welcomed Mr Gaëtan VAN GOIDSENHOVEN, Co-Chair of the Federal Advisory Committee on European Affairs, Belgian *Sénat/Senaat*, who was participating in the Meeting of the Troika for the first time as the incoming Presidency in the first semester of 2024. He also emphasised that this was one of the first meetings of the Parliamentary dimension of the Spanish Presidency of the Council of the EU.

Ms SUMELZO JORDÁN recalled that Spain held a general parliamentary election on 23 July 2023 and that the parliamentary Committees, including the Joint Committee for European Union Affairs, were yet to be established. She acknowledged the limitation imposed by this circumstance on the preparation of the Presidency, expressing her belief that the cooperation within the Troika would help overcome any difficulties.

She then referred to the agenda of the Meeting of the Troika, previously circulated to all delegations, which was adopted without amendments.

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

Ms SUMELZO JORDÁN alluded to the programme of the Meeting of the COSAC Chairpersons, previously circulated to all delegations, which would be divided into three sessions, besides the procedural and other general matters.

She mentioned that the opening session of the meeting of the Chairpersons would have an intervention by Mr. LANDALUCE CALLEJA, Member of the Spanish *Senado*, followed by welcome remarks by both Ms Francina ARMENGOL SOCÍAS, Speaker of the Spanish *Congreso de los Diputados*, and Mr Pedro ROLLÁN OJEDA, Speaker of the Spanish *Senado*.

The first session would be dedicated to the presentation of the priorities of the Spanish Presidency of the Council of the European Union, by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation, Mr José Manuel ALBARES BUENO, followed by an intervention by Mr Othmar KARAS, First Vice-President of the European Parliament. The second session would focus on the topic of "The future of Ukraine in Europe", with a speech by the Chair of the Parliamentary Committee on Ukraine's Integration into the European Union, Ukraine *Verkhovna Rada*, Ms Ivanna KLYMPUSH-TSINTSADZE

and an intervention by the Chair of the Committee on European Union Affairs of the Swedish *Riksdag*, Mr Hans WALLMARK.

Regarding the third session, devoted to "*Current affairs in the European Union*", Ms SUMELZO JORDÁN pointed out that the Presidency wished to offer the Chairpersons an opportunity for a broader and timely debate on current affairs of special relevance to the European Union. Amongst other topics, it could be approached as a follow-up to the [State of the Union](#) address by the President of the European Commission, Ms Ursula VON DER LEYEN, which took place on 13 September 2023 in the [Plenary Session](#) of the European Parliament, in Strasbourg. To some extent, this initiative followed the precedent of a debate on current affairs held during the German Presidency of COSAC in 2020. In this session, there would be some introductory remarks made by the Presidency to introduce the debate, and a summary of the main ideas addressed at the end.

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

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

Ms SUMELZO JORDÁN then referred to the draft agenda of the LXX COSAC Plenary scheduled for 26 to 28 November 2023, in Madrid. She further clarified that, once the Joint Committee for European Union Affairs would be established, some adjustments to the draft programme could occur, which would in any case be communicated to the Troika in a timely manner.

The draft programme circulated was composed of five thematic sessions which would be covered during the LXX COSAC:

- A review of the Spanish Presidency of the Council of the EU;
- The Pact on Migration and Asylum of the EU;
- The energy crisis and green transition;
- The situation in Ukraine and relations with the European Union;
- The EU's open strategic autonomy and relations with Latin America.

Ms SUMELZO JORDÁN concluded this point by noting the support of the Troika for the proposed draft agenda for the LXX COSAC.

4. APPROVAL OF THE OUTLINE OF THE 40TH BI-ANNUAL REPORT OF COSAC

Ms SUMELZO JORDÁN presented the outline of the 40th Bi-annual Report of COSAC, which would be divided into three parts: the first chapter would be dedicated to the role of Parliaments in relation to the European goal of open strategic autonomy;

the second chapter would focus on the role of Parliaments in handling the energy policies: renewable sources of energy; and, finally, the third chapter would look at the role of the Parliaments when confronted with Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The questionnaire would be sent to the delegations on 20 September 2023, with replies expected by 20 October 2023, so that the Bi-annual Report for the scheduled COSAC plenary in November could be drawn up on time, to be presented by the Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat at the LXX COSAC.

The draft outline of COSAC's 40th Bi-annual Report was approved.

5. APPOINTMENT OF THE PERMANENT MEMBER OF THE COSAC SECRETARIAT FOR THE PERIOD 2024/25

On the appointment of the Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat, the Chair referred to Rule 9.3 of the Rules of Procedure of COSAC and said that the term of office of the current Permanent Member, Mr Bruno DIAS PINHEIRO was expiring on 31 December 2023 and that the appointment for the period of 2024/25 would be made by the COSAC Chairpersons at the LXX Meeting, in November 2023.

Ms SUMELZO JORDÁN noted that the Presidency aimed at having a transparent and impartial procedure and then alluded to the previous methodologies followed in the appointment of the Permanent Member for a second term, namely:

- by the Finnish Presidency in 2019: despite the fact that the Maltese *Kamra tad-Deputati*, which seconded the then Permanent Member, had expressed its support for a second term, the Presidency declared the vacancy of the post, with a follow-up letter asking Parliaments to nominate candidates within a set deadline;
- by the Luxembourgish Presidency in 2015 that proposed an immediate and automatic renewal of the post, following the expression of interest by the Parliament seconding the Permanent Member (Cyprus *Vouli ton Antiprosopon*).

In both cases, the Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat (Mr. Kenneth CURMI, for the period 2020/21, and Ms Christiana FRYDA, for the period 2016/17) were reappointed for a second term.

On the current procedure of appointment for the period 2024/25, Ms SUMELZO JORDÁN informed the Troika of a letter addressed to the Presidency by Mr Luís CAPOULAS SANTOS, Chair of the European Affairs Committee of the Portuguese *Assembleia da República*, recommending a renewal of the current Permanent Member's term, Mr Bruno DIAS PINHEIRO. She also emphasised the good functioning of the Secretariat, together with the need to preserve its stability, and highlighted the work of the current Permanent Member with that regard.

Therefore, the Chair suggested that the procedure for this appointment should be as follows: the Troika would take note of the need to appoint the Permanent Member for the period of 2024/25 at the LXX COSAC meeting in November, by the Chairpersons; the Presidency and Troika would support the renewal of the current Permanent Member for the said period; simultaneously, and as a matter of transparency, the Presidency would inform all the Chairpersons of this procedure and of this support, giving delegations until 5 November 2023 to convey to the Presidency any comments deemed relevant with this regard, so that the decision could be taken at the LXX COSAC, to be held from 26 to 28 November.

Mr VAN GOIDSENHOVEN, expressed his appreciation for the work of the Secretariat and of the Permanent Member and supported the methodology proposed by the Presidency.

In relation to the co-financing of the cost for seconding the Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat and other technical costs, foreseen by Article 9.5 of the Rules of Procedure of COSAC, Ms SUMELZO JORDÁN recalled that under the previous Swedish Presidency, all Parliaments had agreed to continue with the co-financing for the period 2024-25.

6. LETTERS RECEIVED BY THE PRESIDENCY

Ms SUMELZO JORDÁN referred to the following letters received by the Presidency requesting invitations to attend the COSAC meetings:

- Ms 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 Peter RICKETTS, 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'arlament'i*;
- Ms Rrezarta KRASNIQI, Chair of the Committee on European Integration, Kosovo¹ *Kuvendi i Kosovës*;
- Mrs Brigitte BOCCONE-PAGES, President of the Monaco *Conseil national*, and Mr Régis BERGONZI, National Councillor, President of the Commission for monitoring the negotiations with the European Union.

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.

Ms SUMELZO JORDÁN informed 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 LXX COSAC in November.

Mr KARAS took the floor to wish the Presidency much success, ahead of the European elections of 2024. He supported this approach of an inclusive COSAC, advocating for these invitations to be extended and generally endorsing the transparent procedures put forward by the Presidency at the meeting of the COSAC Presidential Troika, for this and the previous agenda items.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business and both Mr LANDALUCE CALLEJA, and Ms SUMELZO JORDÁN concluded the meeting by thanking their colleagues for the participation and for the good cooperation within the Presidential Troika of COSAC.