DECLARATION
ON THE FOUNDING OF THE COSAC WOMEN'S FORUM

29 October 2013, Vilnius

We, women parliamentarians,

having been elected to national Parliaments of the European Union Member States and candidate countries and the European Parliament;

taking part in the inaugural Meeting of the COSAC Women's Forum held during the L COSAC Meeting on 27–29 October 2013 in the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuanian in Vilnius and

seeking more effective use of the existing forms of interparliamentary cooperation and more active engagement in the activities of COSAC;

recognising that sometimes women, at the beginning of their political careers and aspiring to implement their ideas and fulfil their expectations, lack self-confidence and support from experienced politicians;

support the initiative of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, as the Presidency Parliament, to set up the COSAC Women's Forum aimed at promoting more active involvement of women parliamentarians in the activities of COSAC; **and**

emphasise the necessity to highlight to the European political parties the issues of gender equality, equal opportunities policy, gender balance within society and more active participation of women in politics, thereby urging them to focus more on those matters; **and**

call on:

1) politicians to be actively engaged in meetings of the COSAC Women's Forum and to discuss the most relevant matters on the political agenda of the European Union;

2) leading women parliamentarians to widely communicate the achievements of women politicians, aiming to encourage women to be more ambitiously and actively engaged in politics and decision-making in the European Union;

3) women parliamentarians to contribute more actively to parliamentary scrutiny, which ensures democratic legitimacy and accountability, by focusing more on those areas which lack attention from governments; and

4) the upcoming Presidency Parliaments to take over and continue developing the initiative of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania of promoting engagement of women parliamentarians in the activities of COSAC.

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