



**Stortinget**

Mr. Richárd Hörsik  
Chairman of the Committee on European Affairs  
The Hungarian National Assembly - Országgyűlés  
Budapest

**Norwegian Parliament**

Date: 18 February 2011  
Our ref.:

Your ref.:

*Dear colleague!*

Dear Mr Hörsik,

I am addressing you in your capacity as chairman of the EU Conference of Community Affairs Committees of Parliaments of the European Union (COSAC).

As you might be aware, the Chair of the European Consultative Committee, of the Norwegian Parliament (Stortinget) has since the late 1990's, and at the discretion of the COSAC chair, regularly been invited as a "special guest" to the meetings of COSAC. This practice was introduced during the Finnish EU Presidency in 1999, and has later been adopted by most COSAC chairs. This has proven to be an arrangement of common value.

Though not a member of the European Union, Norway is closely associated with the Union through the EEA agreement implementing all internal market legislation (save for fisheries and agriculture). In addition, Norway is a fully fledged member of the Schengen cooperation and we are through bilateral arrangements taking part in several other EU activities, such as the cooperation on crime prevention and migration and asylum. Norway is also participating in most EU operations, and has been an active contributor to the operations in the Balkans and in Afghanistan, as well as to operation Atalanta off the Horn of Africa.

It would obviously facilitate our participation in and contribution to the broader European agenda if we could discuss with our EU-colleagues issues of common concern in such an important parliamentary forum as the COSAC. Moreover, following the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty, the parliamentary dimension of the European Union has become increasingly important. This development adds to the importance of maintaining close contacts between the National Parliaments of the European Union and the Parliaments of countries closely associated with it.

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I understand that the next meeting of COSAC is taking place, under your chairmanship, on 29 to 31 May 2011. I would highly appreciate if you could consider extending an invitation as "special guest" to me in my capacity as Chair of the European Consultative Committee, of the Norwegian Parliament (Stortinget).

Looking forward to hearing from you on this matter, I remain

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Ine Eriksen Søreide".

Ine M. Eriksen Søreide  
Chair of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence  
Chair of the European Consultative Committee