

**Rules of Procedure of the Conference of ~~Community and European Affairs Parliamentary~~  
Committees for Union Affairs of Parliaments of the European Union**

(2008/C 27/02 .....)

**PREAMBLE**

These Rules of Procedure are designed to facilitate and improve the work of the Conference of ~~Community and European Affairs Parliamentary~~ Committees for Union Affairs of Parliaments of the European Union<sup>1</sup>, hereinafter referred to as COSAC, established ~~in Paris on~~ 16-17 November 1989 in Paris.

They may be applied to the meetings of other parliamentary Committees convened by the Parliament of the Member State holding the Presidency of the Council, hereinafter referred to as the Presidency ParliamentEU.

On the basis of the XXVII COSAC on 16-18 October 2002 in Copenhagen ~~from 16-18 October 2002~~ it was decided at the extraordinary XXVIII COSAC ~~in Brussels~~ on 27 January 2003 in Brussels to strengthen co-operation between the ~~n~~National Parliaments in the EU, to extend the ~~R~~ules of ~~P~~rocedure with new rules for voting and to adopt guidelines for effective parliamentary scrutiny of governments in connection with Community issues (Copenhagen Parliamentary Guidelines).

The members of COSAC intend to work in accordance with shall follow the Guidelines for interparliamentary cooperation in the European Union as adopted at the Conference of Speakers of the European Union Parliaments on 19-21 June 2008 in Lisbon and in accordance with their own parliamentary practice~~intend to work for the implementation of the Copenhagen Parliamentary Guidelines in accordance with their own parliamentary practice~~<sup>2</sup>. ~~The guidelines are laid down in a separate declaration.~~

These Rules of Procedure, ~~which were~~ adopted by the ~~XXIX~~..... COSAC on ..... ~~replace in Athens on 5-6 May 2003, replace the the R~~ules of ~~P~~rocedure that were adopted by the XXXVIII COSAC on 14-16 October 2007 in Estoril~~in Helsinki on 11-12 October 1999~~.

**1. TASKS AND COMPETENCES FOR COSAC**

**1.1.** COSAC enables a regular exchange of views, without prejudicing the competences of the parliamentary bodies of the European Union.

**1.2.** ~~Article 10 of t~~The Protocol on the Role of National Parliaments in the European Union to the ~~Amsterdam~~ Treaty of Lisbon amending the Treaty on ~~the~~ European Union, the Treaty~~ies~~ establishing the European Community~~ies and certain related acts~~, empowers COSAC to

<sup>1</sup> The term 'Parliaments of the European Union' refers to the national Parliaments of the Member States of the European Union (hereinafter ~~National Parliaments of the Member States of the European Union are further referred to as 'national Parliaments'~~) and the European Parliament ~~in the document~~.

<sup>2</sup> As stated in the ~~P~~protocol on the ~~R~~ole of National Parliaments in the European Union, the way in which n, it is up to each National Parliaments scrutinize their governments in relation to the activities of the Union is a matter for the particular constitutional organisation and practice of each Member State, to decide the extent to which the guidelines published as the 'Copenhagen Parliamentary Guidelines' in the Official Journal of the European Union C 154 of 2 July 2003 should be implemented.

**Kommentar [szk1]:** Throughout the whole document, the language of the Treaty of Lisbon is used.

**Kommentar [O2]:** OJ number to be defined later

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~~submit~~~~make~~ any contribution it deems appropriate for the attention of the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission institutions of the European Union and to promote the exchange of information and best practice between national Parliaments and the European Parliament, including their special committees. It may also organise interparliamentary conferences on specific topics, in particular to debate matters of common foreign and security policy, including common security and defence policy, examine Union legislative activities, proposals and initiatives.

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1.3. Contributions made by COSAC shall ~~not in no way~~ bind ~~n~~National Parliaments and shall not ~~or~~ prejudice their positions.

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## **2. FREQUENCY AND DATES OF ORGANIZATION OF MEETINGS**

### **2.1. Ordinary Plenary meetings**

One ~~ordinary plenary~~ meeting of COSAC shall be held during each Presidency ~~of the Council of the European Union~~ taking account of different parliamentary practices of Member States, of election periods and of the dates of public holidays in Member States. The date of the next meeting shall be fixed and announced by the date of the preceding meeting at the latest.

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### **2.2. Extraordinary meetings**

Extraordinary meetings of COSAC shall be held, if deemed necessary, by an absolute majority of the Chairpersons of the Committees for Union Affairs ~~Community and European Affairs Committees~~ of the ~~n~~National Parliaments and of the appropriate body of the European Parliament.

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### **2.3. Meetings of the Chairpersons**

A preparatory meeting of the Chairpersons of the Committees for Union Affairs ~~Community and European Affairs Committees~~ and of the representative(s) of the European Parliament shall be held prior to ~~each ordinary plenary~~ meetings of COSAC, in agreement with the ~~P~~residential Troika of COSAC. Each delegation consists of two ~~M~~members of its Parliament.

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### **2.4. Extraordinary meetings of the Chairpersons**

Extraordinary meetings of the Chairpersons of the Committees for Union Affairs ~~Community and European Affairs Committees~~ and the appropriate body of the European Parliament shall be held, if proposed, by the Presidency Parliament, after consulting the Presidential Troika, or, if deemed necessary, by an absolute majority of the Chairpersons of the Committees for

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~~Union Affairs Community and European Affairs Committees~~ of the ~~n~~National Parliaments and of the appropriate body of the European Parliament.

## 2.5. The Presidential Troika of COSAC

The Presidential Troika of COSAC consists of the ~~delegations of the national Parliaments of~~ the Presidency, the preceding Presidency, the ~~next following~~ Presidency, and the European Parliament. Each delegation consists of two ~~M~~members of its Parliament.

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~~Agendas for Troika meetings shall be circulated to all National Parliaments and to the European Parliament not less than two weeks before meetings, and minutes of Troika meetings shall be circulated to all the National Parliaments and to the European Parliament not more than two weeks after such meetings.~~

## 2.6. Working groups

COSAC may decide to set up a working group to study a particular issue linked with the activities of the European Union. Such a working group shall also be set up, if deemed necessary, by an absolute majority of the Chairpersons of the ~~Committees for Union Affairs Community and European Affairs Committees~~ of the ~~n~~National Parliaments and of the appropriate body of the European Parliament. The Chairperson of the ~~Committee for Union Affairs Community and European Affairs Committee~~ of the ~~Presidency~~ Parliament ~~of the Member State holding the Presidency~~ shall act as the Chairperson of the working group. The ~~s~~ecretariat of the ~~Presidency~~ Parliament ~~of the Member State holding the Presidency~~ shall provide the secretariat for the working group.

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## 2.7. Documentation of the meetings

~~Agendas for all the above mentioned aforementioned meetings shall be circulated to all national Parliaments and to the European Parliament not less than two weeks before the meetings, and minutes of those meetings shall be circulated to all national Parliaments and to the European Parliament not later than two weeks after the meetings.~~

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## 2.8. Place of the meetings

Meetings shall take place in the Member State holding the Presidency. Extraordinary meetings, meetings of the Chairpersons, meetings of the Presidential Troika of COSAC and meetings of working groups may be held elsewhere.

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## 2.9. Convocation

Plenary COSAC meetings, meetings of the Chairpersons of Committees for Union Affairs, ~~extraordinary meetings and meetings of working groups shall be convened by the Presidency Parliament.~~

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## 2.10. Preparation of the meetings

The delegations may send letters/documents relating to items on the agenda to the secretariat ~~of the Presidency Parliament and the Presidency Parliament may also draw up discussion documents for the conference.~~

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## 2.7811. Planning of the meetings

COSAC shall establish a rolling, long term, calendar of its meetings.

## 3. PLACE OF MEETINGS

~~3.1. Meetings shall take place in the Member State holding the Presidency. Extraordinary meetings, meetings of the Chairpersons, meetings of the Presidential Troika and meetings of working groups may be held elsewhere.~~

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## 43. COMPOSITION

### 43.1. Ordinary-Plenary and extraordinary meetings

Each ~~n~~National Parliament shall be represented by a maximum of six ~~M~~members of its ~~Committee(s) for Union AffairsCommunity and European Affairs Committee(s).~~ The European Parliament shall be represented by six Members. Each Parliament shall determine the composition of its own delegation.

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### 43.2. Observers from the Parliaments of applicant-candidate countries

Three observers from the Parliaments of each ~~applicant-candidate~~ country shall be invited to ~~ordinary-plenary~~ and extraordinary COSAC meetings. ~~Two observers from the Parliaments of each candidate country shall be invited to the meetings of the Chairpersons of Committees for Union Affairs.~~

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### 43.3. Other observers, specialists and special guests

The Presidency shall invite observers from the General Secretariat of the Council ~~of the European Union~~ and the ~~European~~ Commission, and it may invite observers from the embassies of the Member States of the European Union, and, after consulting the Presidential Troika, ~~other national Parliament~~, specialists and special guests.

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#### 43.4. Public access to meetings

Meetings of COSAC shall be public, unless otherwise determined.

### 5. CONVOCATION

~~5.1. Ordinary COSAC meetings, and meetings of the Chairpersons of Committees for Union Affairs and meetings of working groups shall be convened by the sSecretariat of the PresidencyParliament of the Member State holding the Presidency.~~

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~~5.2. Extraordinary meetings shall be convened by the sSecretariat of the Presidency Parliament of the Member State where the meeting takes place.~~

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### 64. DESIGNATION OF MEETINGS

~~64.1. The designation of plenary ordinary-and extraordinary meetings shall be 'Conference of the Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs of Community and European Affairs Committees of European Union's NParliaments of the European Union - COSAC', with the name preceded by a the Roman numeral number of the meeting in sequence, followed by the date and the place of the meeting.~~

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### 75. AGENDA

~~75.1. Before the last ordinary-plenary meeting of each year the delegations shall indicate the subjects they propose be dealt with the following year. This matter shall be discussed at the end of the meeting. The Presidential Troika, paying due account to the provisions of Article 10 Part II of the Protocol to on the Role Amsterdam Treaty on the Role of National Parliaments in the European Union to the Treaty of Lisbon, proposes, at the beginning of each Presidency, one or several subjects drawn from the working programme of the Council of the European Union, the European Parliament, and the European Commission, or from proposals made by the members of COSAC during the meeting referred to above.~~

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~~75.21. A- The principal business on every draft Aagenda shall be derived from the role of COSAC 's role-as a body for exchanging information and best practices between national Parliaments and the European Parliament, in particular on the practical aspects of parliamentary scrutiny.~~

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~~75.23. A draft agenda shall be drawn up by the Chairperson of the Committee for Union Affairs Community and European Affairs Committee of the host Presidency Parliament, after consulting the Chairpersons of the Committees for Union Affairs Community and European Affairs Committees and the representative(s) of the European Parliament. The National delegations may propose to the Presidency Parliament that a specific item is put on or removed from the draft agenda.~~

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~~75.34. The meeting itself shall decide on its final agenda.~~

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## 8. PREPARATION OF MEETINGS

~~8.1. The national delegations may send documents relating to items on the agenda to the secretariat of the host Presidency Parliament.~~

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~~8.2. The national delegation of the Member State holding the Presidency Parliament Presidency may draw up discussion documents for the conference.~~

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## 96. LANGUAGES

~~96.1. Each delegation is responsible for translating any document, which it submits into English and/or French.~~

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~~96.2. Participating Parliaments will receive conference documents in English and/or French. Each Parliament is responsible for translation into its official national language(s).~~

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~~96.3. Simultaneous interpretation into the official languages of the EU is provided during the ordinary plenary in the meetings.~~

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~~96.4. The contributions of COSAC are drawn up in a single original in English and French, each of these texts being equally authentic.~~

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## 107. COSAC CONTRIBUTIONS

~~107.1. COSAC may address contributions for the attention to the institutions of the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission Union pursuant to the Amsterdam Treaty Protocol on the Role of National Parliaments in the European Union to the Treaty of Lisbon.~~

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~~107.2. Each national delegation may propose that a cContribution be adopted by COSAC. A draft contribution shall be drawn up if proposed by the Presidency Parliament, after consulting the Presidential Troika, or if deemed necessary by an absolute majority of the Chairpersons of the Committees for Union Affairs Community and European Affairs Committees of the nNational Parliaments and of the appropriate body of the European Parliament, or if decided in a meeting of COSAC.~~

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~~107.3. The draft of a contribution shall be communicated to the delegations in good time in good time before the relevant meeting of COSAC to give them a reasonable period for scrutiny and remarks.~~

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~~107.4. The final draft of a contribution shall be prepared at the preparatory meeting of the Chairpersons preceding during the relevant meeting of COSAC. It shall embrace the observations and remarks by all delegations, including possible declarations concerning the vote.~~

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~~107.5. In general COSAC shall seek to adopt contributions by broad consensus. If this is not possible, contributions shall be adopted with a qualified majority of at least 3/4 of the votes~~

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cast. The majority of 3/4 of the votes cast must at the same time constitute at least half of all votes.

107.6. Each delegation has two votes.

107.7. After adoption, the contribution is published in the Official Journal of the European Union.

107.8. After adoption, the Presidency Parliament shall send the contribution to the Presidents of the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission inviting them to respond to the contribution.

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#### 118. ROLE OF THE PRESIDENCY PARLIAMENT

118.1. The ~~Committee for Union Affairs Community and European Affairs Committee~~ of the ~~Presidency Parliament Member State holding the Presidency of the Council of the European Union~~ shall hold the Presidency of COSAC during that Presidency.

118.2. The secretariat of the ~~host-Presidency~~ Parliament shall prepare the documents for the meetings. It shall be assisted by the COSAC Secretariat.

118.3. The Chairperson of the ~~Committee for Union Affairs Community and European Affairs Committee~~ of the ~~host-Presidency~~ Parliament shall open the debate.

118.4. The Chairperson of the ~~Committee for Union Affairs Community and European Affairs Committee~~ of the ~~host-Presidency~~ Parliament shall propose a timetable for the meeting and the length of speeches, which shall be four minutes, unless the meeting determines otherwise.

118.5. The ~~s~~Secretariat of the ~~host-Presidency~~ Parliament shall draw up brief minutes of the meeting. The draft is provided by the COSAC Secretariat.

118.6. The Chairperson of the ~~Committee for Union Affairs Community and European Affairs Committee~~ of the ~~host-Presidency~~ Parliament shall present the debate's conclusions, as drawn up by the Presidential Troika.

118.7. The secretariat of the ~~Presidency~~ Parliament ~~holding the Presidency~~ shall provide the secretariat for the activities of COSAC during its term. The ~~COSAC Secretariat s of National Parliaments and of the European Parliament~~ shall provide assistance.

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#### 11 bis. 129. THE COSAC SECRETARIAT

129.1. The COSAC Secretariat shall be composed of officials from the Parliaments of the Presidential Troika, and a ~~P~~ermanent ~~M~~ember who supports the Secretariat in its activities.

129.2. The officials from the Parliaments of the Presidential Troika shall be appointed by each of the relevant Parliaments for a non renewable period of eighteen months.

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~~129.3.~~ The ~~P~~permanent ~~M~~member shall be appointed by the COSAC Chairpersons on the proposal of the Presidential Troika. He or she shall be an official of a National Parliament and shall remain in office for two years with the possibility of one renewal.

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~~129.4.~~ The COSAC Secretariat shall assist the Presidency ~~Parliament and the secretariat of the host Parliament~~ in all its tasks. The members of the COSAC Secretariat shall perform their duties under the political responsibility of the COSAC Presidency and the Presidential Troika or according to the decisions taken by COSAC meetings. The ~~P~~permanent ~~M~~member shall coordinate the activities of the COSAC Secretariat under the direction of the ~~Presidency Parliament holding the Presidency~~.

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~~129.5.~~ The cost for seconding the ~~P~~permanent ~~M~~member of the Secretariat to Brussels and other necessary technical costs of the Secretariat are jointly borne by Parliaments wishing to contribute. The amount and the terms of payment for the co-financed expenditure are defined in an agreement among the participating Parliaments.

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### ~~121310. COSAC DEBATE CONCLUSIONS AND COMMUNIQUE~~

~~1310.1.~~ If ~~COSAC the meeting~~ decides to ~~adopt conclusions or~~ issue a communiqué, a draft, ~~annexed with possible contributions adopted~~, shall be drawn up by the Presidential Troika~~at~~ Troika.

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~~1310.2.~~ The draft of the conclusions ~~or of the communiqué~~ shall be communicated to the delegations in good time before the relevant meeting of COSAC to give them a reasonable period for scrutiny and remarks.

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### ~~13. ECIPENTS OF COMMUNIQUE~~

~~1310.3.~~ Conclusions and/or cCommuniqués shall be sent to the ~~national~~ Parliaments, ~~of the Member States and the European Parliament, to the Council of the European Union, and to the European Commission~~ by the secretariat of the ~~host~~ Presidency Parliament.

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### ~~1411. REVISION OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE~~

~~1411.1.~~ Proposals for a revision of the Rules of Procedure must be sent, in writing, from one or several delegations of one or several Parliaments to all ~~n~~National Parliaments of the Member States and to the European Parliament at least a month before the meeting of COSAC.

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~~1411.2.~~ Proposals for a revision of the ~~R~~rules of Procedure should be put on the agenda of the first meeting of COSAC following the presentation of the proposal.

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~~1411.3.~~ Adoption of the proposal requires unanimity between the delegations present at the meeting. Abstentions by delegations shall not prevent the adoption of the proposal.

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~~1411.4.~~ Quorum is at least 2/3 of the delegations.

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~~1411.5.~~ Each delegation has one vote.

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## **1512. ENTRY INTO FORCE**

**152.1.** These Rules of Procedure shall enter into force as soon as they are published in the Official Journal of the European Union. They are drawn up in a single original in English and French, each of these texts being equally authentic.

**152.2.** The text of these Rules of Procedure shall, for the authentication thereof, be drawn up in Bulgarian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Irish, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Maltese, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovenian, Slovak, Spanish and Swedish. The translations shall be agreed between the nNational Parliaments using those languages and the European Parliament. In any question relating to the interpretation of these Rules of Procedure only the English and French versions shall have official status.

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*APPENDICES*

**Declaration by the European Parliament on Rule 107.5 of the Rules of Procedure**

The European Parliament can abstain in any vote on a contribution which is also addressed to it.

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