

Madrid, February 2nd 2010

Mr. Harm Evert Waalkens
Chairman of the Standing Committee on European Affairs
House of Representatives of the Netherlands

Dear colleague,

First of all, allow me to agree with you on the importance of the future of COSAC and of the need to deal with the issue of the new powers of the National parliaments after the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon, as underlined in the letter that a number of Committee chairs forwarded to me in December. As a result of this, the Spanish Presidency has decided that the next Bi-annual report will thoroughly analyse both issues.

If the Chairpersons' meeting adopts the report's outline that the Spanish Presidency has submitted to COSAC, a systematic questionnaire will be sent to the National parliaments during the month of February. On the basis of this questionnaire, a report will be drafted which will then be used to provide a framework for the debates on the future of COSAC and on the relations of the National parliaments and the European Parliament that the Spanish Presidency wishes to include in the XLIII COSAC in May, as you have seen from the draft agenda of the meeting.

Debating COSAC without this report, whose aim is to provide an overview of all the opinions of the different parliamentary Chambers, would be a pointless exercise.

I hope you will agree with me that the debate on the future of COSAC is thus extensively covered during the Spanish Presidency, and, for that reason, I have considered it more useful to deal with less COSAC-centred issues during our first meeting in February 2010.

In compliance with the wishes expressed by your staff, I have asked the COSAC Permanent Member to publish on the COSAC website your e-mail, together with my answer.

Yours sincerely,

Miguel ARIAS CAÑETE
Chair of the Joint Committee for the European Union
Cortes Generales