

Task h): " To consider whether there is a need to establish co-operation agreements with the EU's institutions.

Amended note¹

Note on co-operation agreements with the EU's institutions

COSAC stated at the meeting in Copenhagen from 16 – 18 October 2002 that the protocol on the national parliaments had not yet been fully implemented, and that the protocol contains opportunities and tasks for COSAC that should be used to the full.

The Convention's working group on the national parliaments also wishes to give the national parliaments a more active role in EU policy. This working group has proposed various measures, but these would first come into effect after an amendment of the Treaty.

In order to fully implement the protocol on the national parliaments and to initiate some of the measures that the Convention's working group has proposed now, agreements should be entered into between the national parliaments and the EU's institutions. The cooperation agreements should run until the entry into force of the new Treaty.

In order to ensure the greatest possible flexibility the proposal is to enter into agreements individually with each institution (the Council, the Commission, and the European Parliament).

1. Form and content of the agreements

The items in the agreements could be as follows:

1.1 Proposal for a co-operation agreement between the national parliaments and the Council

- A statement from the Council to the effect that its members will involve the national parliaments in EU policy as much as possible. The Council states in this connection that it will follow COSAC's instructive guidelines for relations between the national parliament and its government.

¹ Changes to the note are marked in the margin with a line .

- The introduction of a 15-day deadline from COREPER's treatment of a case up to its final adoption by the Council with the aim of giving the national parliaments sufficient time to consider EU issues. There was a proposal for the introduction of such a deadline at the COSAC meeting in Versailles (October 2000).
- The Council forwards relevant information to COSAC and the national parliaments, including agendas for forthcoming Council meetings and minutes of these. Documents could possibly be forwarded electronically.
- The inclusion of COSAC contributions in the Council's agenda as an orientation.
- Forwarding legislative initiatives as soon as they are finally adopted.
- Forwarding initiatives **from** member countries regarding common foreign policy and security policy, and regarding the legal area.

1.2 Proposal for a co-operation agreement between the national parliaments and the Commission

- Entrenching/defining clearly where the political responsibility for contacts between the national parliaments and Commission lies with the Commission.
- All green and white papers, reports regarding legislative initiatives, and Bills proper should immediately be sent direct to the national parliaments and to COSAC as soon as they are adopted by the Commission.
- The establishment of relevant and reasonable deadlines for statements on issues submitted for consultation from Parliaments or COSAC so that they could be included in preparations for Bills.

1.3 Proposal for a co-operation agreement between the national parliaments and the European Parliament²

- Orientation of the national parliaments and COSAC on the processing of cases by the European Parliament.
- COSAC's contribution regarding EU legislation should be placed on the agenda of the European Parliament.

²

When the main points of the COSAC secretariat have been fixed, an agreement laying down more specific guidelines for the secretariat's use of the European-Parliament's facilities may be reached with the European Parliament.

- Invitation of the national parliaments to relevant meetings in the European Parliament.
- Inclusion of members of the European Parliament to the extent possible in the work of the national parliaments on European policy.

2. Consequences for COSAC's rules of procedure

The above would not require changes to be made in COSAC's rules of procedure.