

Contribution adopted by the XXIII COSAC

Versailles, 16-17 October 2000

CONTRIBUTION ADDRESSED TO THE INSTITUTIONS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

1. COSAC calls on the member states to reach an agreement, at the Nice European Council, on institutional reform, in the light of enlargement, that would ensure, from now on, efficient, transparent and legitimate institutions and allow the accession of new member states from January, 1st 2003. It expresses its strong support for the enlargement process and recommends the intergovernmental conference in its global agreement on the revision of the Treaties to safeguard the principles of solidarity, cohesion, subsidiarity and proportionality, which are necessary for a true Union of people and states.

2. COSAC takes note of the political agreement reached by the heads of state and government on the draft Charter of Fundamental rights of the European Union as drafted by the Convention. It calls on the Council, the Commission and the European Parliament to proclaim this Charter. It considers that the chosen procedure, involving representatives chosen by the heads of states and government, the Commission, the European Parliament and the national Parliaments, could be useful in the future.

3. COSAC stresses the Union's need to foster, in the spirit of the Lisbon European Council, the development of an economy of innovation and knowledge, ensuring policies actively promoting employment and combating unemployment and social exclusion. It calls on the European institutions to approve, during the French presidency, the "Social European Agenda" which will be a multiannual framework for social measures with due respect for the principle of subsidiarity. This new strategic objective should enable the reconciliation of the changes due to the new economy with the European social values and with the perspective of enlargement.

4. COSAC, in the light of the Tampere conclusions, calls upon the Union and the member states to create in cooperation with the candidate countries, an area of freedom, security and justice reinforcing fighting against terrorism and serious forms of transnational organised crime which, respecting the right to individual privacy, is based on practical measures in the fight against illegal immigration and common standards regarding external border checks as well as reinforced co-operation between the relevant enforcing authorities.

5. Considering that national Parliaments, together with the European Parliament, are a constituent element of the democratic legitimacy of the European institutions, COSAC urges the Inter-governmental Conference to modify part I of the Protocol on the role of national Parliaments as follows:

- All consultation documents and proposals for legislation from the European Commission, as well as proposals for measures under titles V and VI, should be transmitted by electronic means to each national Parliament as soon as they are adopted by the college of Commissioners;

- The six-week time period provided by para. 3 should also apply, except in urgent cases, to proposals for measures to be adopted under titles V of the Treaty on European Union as well as to proposals regarding interinstitutional agreements to which the Council is a party ;

- A minimum 15-day time period, or one week in urgent cases, should be observed between the final reading of a text by COREPER and the Council decision.

COSAC recalls that no provision of this protocol can jeopardise the competences and prerogatives of each national Parliament as provided by its national constitutional arrangements.