

**XXth COSAC
in Berlin
from 31 May to 1 June 1999**

Conclusions of the Chair

1. During a lively and fruitful debate, participants at the XXth COSAC reaffirmed the need for institutional reforms which aim to improve the EU institutions' decision-making powers and scope for action, strengthen the EU's democratic legitimacy, and enhance transparency in decision-making processes.
2. To avoid delays in the enlargement process, the reforms should be confined to the issues described as "left-overs" from the Amsterdam Treaty: the size and composition of the Commission, weighting of votes in the Council, and the extension of qualified majority voting. Most Member States wish to send at least one representative to the Commission. With respect to the weighting of votes in the Council, a balance must be struck between the interests of the large Member States and protecting the small Member States. Majority decisions in the Council should become the norm. Unanimity should be retained solely for constitutional amendments and highly sensitive policy areas. Drafting a EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, and the further development of the second and third pillars, are other issues which must be addressed without delay. The European Parliament and national Parliaments should be involved to a greater extent than before in the reform process. COSAC also has an important role to play in this context.
3. As a trade power, the European Union faces new challenges associated with globalization. In their contributions, the COSAC delegates pointed out that trade policy dialogue - especially with Latin America and the ACP states - must be intensified in light of the forthcoming WTO Round in the USA. The issues which need to be resolved in this context include the liberalization of services, the protection of intellectual property, consumer protection, and agricultural products as a whole.
4. There was broad agreement that the EU - a major economic player - will increasingly be called upon to "speak with one voice" on political issues in the international arena as well. Delegates agreed that the Kosovo conflict had revealed lamentable shortcomings in the

EU's current actions. The instruments and options available under the Amsterdam Treaty must now be deployed resolutely; there must be better coordination of joint efforts by Member States, and new structures must be created. In particular, there are high expectations of the WEU's integration into the EU, the forthcoming appointment of the High Representative for the CFSP, and the establishment of a Policy Planning and Early Warning Unit - which must be equipped with all the necessary resources - in the General Secretariat of the Council. The European Commission's expertise and resources must also be utilized.

5. COSAC participants reaffirmed that security in Europe is not divisible, and that the Europe of the EU Member States is an area of lasting peace. Against the background of the Kosovo conflict, it is therefore even more apparent that EU enlargement will help to promote peace and stability in this region as well. Once the South-Eastern European countries have been drawn closer to the prospect of full integration into the EU structures within the framework of a long-term Stability Pact, they must have a genuine prospect of accession. In this context, Poland and Hungary, in particular, reminded delegates of the need to state a specific date for accession to candidate countries soon.
6. Enlargement means that there is an even more pressing need for the EU's institutional reforms to be completed. The Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe is intended to counteract atavistic and aggressive nationalism by offering its antithesis - a Europe founded on integration and the rule of law.
7. The outcomes of the Berlin Agenda 2000 Summit were welcomed as a viable compromise. Delegates agreed that it had equipped the European Union for enlargement in key policy areas.
8. Delegates paid tribute to the work of the German Presidency, which took place against the background of major domestic and external problems. The reform of the structural funds, agreed at the Berlin Agenda 2000 Summit, was a first step towards cutting unemployment. An effective coordinated employment policy continues to be an important task for the future.

9. Participants agreed to set up a working group to draft revised Rules of Procedure at the XXIst COSAC, which will take place in October 1999 during the Finnish Presidency.
10. In an Appeal to Voters, COSAC members called upon every citizen in the European Union to vote in the fifth direct elections to the European Parliament from 10-13 June 1999.