



Deutscher Bundestag



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Committee on European Union Affairs  
The Chairman

Commission des affaires européennes  
La Présidente

Dr Reinhold Lopatka  
Chairman of the Standing Sub-Committee  
on Matters of the European Union of the National Council  
Mr Christian Buchmann  
Chairman of the  
EU Committee of the Federal Council

20 June 2018

Dear colleagues,

The discussions which took place at our last conference prove the value of COSAC as a forum for interparliamentary exchange and for dialogue both between Members of national parliaments and with Members of the European Parliament.

Unfortunately, too little time was available for Members of Parliament to speak during each debate. Interpretation into all official languages is intended to enable us to respond to each other's points. However, with speaking time cut to one minute following the many long introductory statements, the speakers' contributions became mere fragments. This approach offers little scope for COSAC to fulfil its potential.

We would therefore welcome it if the time agreed for the individual debates could be divided up in such a way that sufficient speaking time is available for the Members of Parliament. Introductory statements can provide a starting point for debate and should therefore be short. The number of such statements should be designed to allow their substance to be taken up and discussed in the subsequent debate.

It is understandable that some speakers expressed disappointment that Prime Minister Borissov was not available to answer questions following his introductory statement. A dialogue also involves answers being given to questions raised by parliamentarians.

We welcome the Bulgarian Presidency's announcement that it plans to take up the suggestion of indicating, in future debates, the speakers' membership of one of the political families or – if this is not possible – indicating the parliamentary group of which they are a member in their national parliament, and we ask the Troika to implement this suggestion promptly. Providing this information will enhance transparency and make it easier to understand the substantive context of remarks, which is especially relevant given that the meetings are public. The information could be requested during the registration process or when a participant indicates their intention to speak in the debate.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to offer a reminder that there was a broad consensus in favour of including time on the agenda for discussion of highly topical issues. This should enable COSAC to better respond to topical political developments and reflect them in its discussions. We suggest that greater consideration should be given to this when drawing up the agendas for forthcoming meetings.

With regard to the contributions and conclusions, we believe it would be very helpful if a first draft could be sent to the parliaments early enough that it can, for example, be discussed in the committees.

We are convinced that these practical suggestions, which can be implemented without amendments to the Rules of Procedure, will enable us to revitalise the structure of the debates to the benefit of all participants.



Gunther Krichbaum



Sabine Thillaye