



**PLENARY MEETING OF THE LXX COSAC**

**Madrid, 26–28 November 2023**

**Contribution of the LXX COSAC**

(C/2024/848)

**Ukraine**

- (1) COSAC reiterates the statements made in its meetings held in Prague and Stockholm of firm and strong condemnation of Russia's unprovoked, unjustified and illegal invasion of Ukraine, its war of aggression against Ukraine as well as temporary occupation and attempted annexation of some parts of Ukraine's territories, which represents a blatant violation of the United Nations Charter.
- (2) COSAC reiterates its demand for an unconditional and immediate cessation of Russia's illegal military actions, the withdrawal of all its forces and military equipment from Ukraine's territory, within its internationally recognized borders, and an immediate end to the use of force or any other form of aggression against Ukraine.
- (3) Once again, COSAC expresses its unwavering support to the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders, as well to this country's inherent right of legitimate defence against Russia's aggression.
- (4) COSAC calls on the European Union and its Member States to continue providing a robust political, diplomatic, economic, military, technical and humanitarian support to Ukraine and to its population for as long as it takes to end Russia's war of aggression and to restore the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. In terms of military support, it looks forward to continuing military assistance on the bilateral tracks as well as through the European Peace Facility, in particular, accelerating the deliveries of missiles and ammunition under the one million rounds of artillery ammunition initiative and air defence systems to protect the Ukrainian people and its critical and energy infrastructure. This shall not prejudice the specific character of the security and defence policy of certain Member States.
- (5) COSAC reiterates its satisfaction and support to the European and international efforts in favour of the repair, recovery and reconstruction of Ukraine. It calls on EU institutions and Member States to accelerate the work aimed at using Russia's immobilised assets to support Ukraine's recovery and reconstruction.
- (6) COSAC welcomes the ongoing diplomatic efforts to secure the widest possible international support to the main principles and objectives of the Ukraine Peace Formula. It stresses its support to the implementation of the Peace Formula and to the organization of a Global Summit for Peace, recalling that a comprehensive, fair, and lasting peace in Ukraine must be cemented on the full respect of its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, within its internationally recognized borders. Achieving this goal would be a significant contribution to strengthening international peace and security.
- (7) COSAC welcomes the fact that the European Council of October 2023 reiterated its commitment to secure a stable, predictable and sustainable financial support to Ukraine in the coming years and encourages it to adopt the financial assistance package i.e. Ukraine Facility in its December meeting.
- (8) COSAC considers it necessary to hold Russian leaders accountable for the aggression war against Ukraine as well as any individual having participated in or perpetrated war crimes or other serious crimes and fully supports the investigation of the International Criminal Court in Ukraine, as well as any other initiative aimed at preventing such crimes from going unpunished, notably establishing a tribunal for the prosecution of the crime of aggression against Ukraine and the establishment of a future compensation mechanism.

- (9) COSAC supports the measures aimed at weakening Russia's capacity to wage its aggression war, including the sanctions adopted by the European Union and calls for its full and effective implementation, and to step-up efforts, in cooperation with partners, to block any attempt to circumvent these sanctions. It calls on the EU Member States to accelerate the adoption of the next 12th package of sanctions to further raise the costs of Russia's aggression. It welcomes the European Parliament resolution of 9 November 2023 on the effectiveness of the EU sanctions on Russia, including the call for a full ban on the import of Russian LNG and liquefied petroleum gas into the EU and to prohibit the shipment of Russian oil and LNG exports through EU territory.
- (10) COSAC deplores the military, material and other type of support that certain countries continue to provide to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and urges them to put an end to such actions.
- (11) COSAC reiterates its firm condemnation of illegal deportations and transfers of children and other Ukrainian civilians to Russia and Belarus and demands that these countries guarantee their immediate and safe return.
- (12) COSAC condemns Russia's deliberate attacks against Ukrainian civil and critical infrastructure, including grain storage and export facilities, and its actions to hamper freedom of navigation in the Black Sea, which show that Russia continues to weaponize food, thus undermining global food security. It welcomes Ukraine's resolute actions in opening an alternative sea route to maintain grain exports after Russia's unilateral withdrawal from the Black Sea Grain Initiative. COSAC conveys its support to all efforts aimed at facilitating grain exports, particularly to those countries in greater need in Africa and the Middle East, and to enhance the capacity of the EU solidarity lanes and other export routes for Ukrainian grain. It is also important to foster resilience of agriculture in Africa.
- (13) COSAC reiterates its support to the ongoing enlargement process for Ukraine and Moldova based on the fulfilment of the requirements for their accession process to the European Union according to the Commission's 2023 Enlargement Package.
- (14) COSAC considers that, as stressed in the Granada Declaration issued by the EU leaders on October 6, 2023, enlargement is a geo-strategic investment in peace, security, stability and prosperity. It is a driver for improving the economic and social conditions of European citizens, reducing disparities between countries, and it must foster the values on which the Union is founded.
- (15) COSAC welcomes the Commission's 2023 Enlargement Package published on 8 November 2023 and the recommendations to open accession negotiations with Ukraine, Moldova and Bosnia and Herzegovina (once the necessary degree of compliance with the membership criteria is achieved), as well as to grant the candidate status to Georgia.
- (16) COSAC reiterates its support for the Western Balkans as it was expressed in the Thessaloniki Agenda 20 years ago; it supports their accession process and welcomes the Growth Plan for the Western Balkans presented recently by the Commission.
- (17) COSAC calls on aspiring members to step up their reform initiatives, with the assistance of the European Union, notably in the area of rule of law, in line with the merit-based nature of the accession process. In parallel, the necessary reforms must be conducted so that an enlarged European Union can continue to work effectively for the benefit of European citizens.

### **European Pact on Migration and Asylum**

- (18) COSAC recognizes that the discussion on the migration debate has regained relevance as a result of the last migration crises and the mounting pressure on EU external borders, as illustrated especially by the cases of the islands of Lampedusa and El Hierro.

- (19) COSAC considers that it is urgent to reach a balanced and viable political agreement as regards the Pact on Migration and Asylum guaranteeing solidarity and a fair sharing of responsibility. In this sense, COSAC urges the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission to intensify their efforts to conclude this dossier before the end of the European legislative term. In light of the latest alarming developments in the Middle East, COSAC calls for the EU to be proactive in addressing the possible new refugee flows and in providing support particularly to the front-line Member States.
- (20) COSAC recalls that the Pact on Migration and Asylum must articulate the two levels of the European migration policy. In the first place, the internal dimension, combining the management of migration, the efficient protection of external borders and the enhancement of police and judicial cooperation, with a correct functioning of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS). And, in the second, the external dimension, aimed at managing migration flows, fighting human trafficking and migrant smuggling, in cooperation with the main origin and transit countries, addressing the root causes of migration and providing opportunities for legal migration, as well as the integration of migrants and asylum seekers. COSAC calls for drafting and implementing more MOUs with third countries in an effort to tackle irregular migration and migrant smuggling. Furthermore, a more effective return policy is necessary, including measures to strengthen the legal and operational framework, to improve the quality and rates of returns, as well as reintegration programmes and cooperation with partner countries.
- (21) COSAC stresses the importance of the functioning of the Schengen Area for battling irregular migration and reiterates the call to approve Bulgaria and Romania's accession to Schengen without further delay.

### **Energy Crisis and Green Transition**

- (22) COSAC considers that curbing the climate crisis and environmental degradation is not only an unavoidable need, but also an opportunity to drastically increase the EU's strategic autonomy on energy and resources, making European businesses more competitive. The European Union must continue leading the global fight against climate change and the loss of biodiversity, creating wealth and new opportunities, taking care of and supporting the most vulnerable citizens, businesses and regions in the green transition and taking into account the collateral effects of the deployment of renewable energies, both from an environmental point of view and from the point of view of the new dependencies it is likely to engender. Hence, the relevance of dossiers such as the reform of the design of the electricity market, the hydrogen gas package, the regulation on nature restoration, air quality, the Net-Zero Industry Act, the Fit for 55 package, or the Critical Raw Materials Act. COSAC trusts that during the Spanish and Belgian Presidencies the said measures will be adopted to contribute to the objectives listed above as well as to help face future challenges.
- (23) COSAC stresses that the green transition must contribute to reducing the EU's energy dependence, while respecting the energy mix of each Member State, it must be inclusive, leaving no one behind and effectively tackling bottlenecks such as the shortage of skilled staff, proper infrastructure and storage of renewable energy.
- (24) COSAC welcomes the agreement reached at the Transports, Telecommunications and Energy Council held last October to amend the configuration of the EU's electricity market and encourages European institutions to conclude the necessary legislative actions to reduce the volatility of electricity, making it less dependent on the price of fossil fuels, thus protecting consumers and industry, and improving the functioning of the electricity market in the long term.
- (25) COSAC shares the view of the European Council of October 2023 in the sense of stressing the need to adopt effective measures to guarantee the security of critical infrastructures, within a comprehensive and coordinated approach to crisis response, ensuring that all sectors contribute to a preventive approach that takes all threats into account.

- (26) COSAC emphasises that the legislative measures related to the Green Transition should comply with the EU Social Pillar and ensure economic and social sustainability, taking into account the needs of workers and businesses as well as the national specificities and the EU strategic autonomy.

### **Open Strategic Autonomy and relations with Latin America and the Caribbean**

- (27) COSAC welcomes the fact that the informal European Council held in Granada last October 6 addressed open strategic autonomy as one of the main discussion topics, and calls for parliamentary involvement and discussions on this issue.
- (28) The said matter, considered again at the European Council of October 26 and 27, represents one of the key elements for the present and future work of the European Union. Indeed, it sets out several lines of work and helps to define the parameters of the Union from the new institutional cycle scheduled from 2024 onwards.
- (29) COSAC reiterates the need for the Union to strengthen the economic and industrial base and the resources and capabilities necessary to ensure its strategic autonomy in an increasingly competitive and complex world, without renouncing the benefits of an open global economy.
- (30) COSAC welcomes that the concept of open strategic autonomy, which was initially more closely linked to security and defence, has today an economic scope. The recent Conclusions and Statements of the Leaders during this year of 2023, several of them on occasion of the Spanish Presidency, go in this same line, as well as the Resilient 2030 document, presented during the informal European Council of Granada.
- (31) COSAC encourages an internal strengthening of the Union, without renouncing a close relation with its partners. This is the case with Latin America and the Caribbean, a region with which, after 8 years without high level meetings, the III EU-CELAC Summit was held last July 17 and 18, which COSAC welcomes. A joint declaration was adopted at the said Summit structuring and regularizing the bi-regional relation between the two partners, establishing the commitment to hold regular Summits, as well as the setting up of a coordination mechanism with a road map for 2023-2025.
- (32) Likewise, COSAC welcomes the fact that the III EU-CELAC Summit has contributed to bolstering the EU-Latin America Digital Alliance, as well as to agreeing an ambitious investment agenda within the framework of the Global Gateway initiative. Moreover, this occasion contributed to making progress in matters of common interest and concluding cooperation agreements in key sectors such as energy, (with Argentina and Uruguay) or raw materials (with Chile).
- (33) COSAC shares the conclusions of the EU-CELAC Summit in the sense of calling for the ratification of the agreements signed and currently applied, welcoming ongoing processes, taking into account human, social and environmental rights, towards the signature of the modernised agreement between the EU and Chile and between the EU and Mexico in the coming months, and taking note of ongoing work between the EU and Mercosur.

### **Middle East**

- (34) COSAC expresses its support to the strong condemnation agreed in the European Council in its meeting of October 15, reiterated on October 26, of Hamas for its brutal and indiscriminate terrorist attacks across Israel. The use of civilians as human shields by Hamas is a particularly deplorable atrocity.
- (35) COSAC stresses Israel's right to defend itself in line with international law and international humanitarian law. It reiterates its call on Hamas to immediately release all hostages without any precondition.
- (36) COSAC reiterates the importance of ensuring the protection of all civilians at all times in line with international humanitarian law. It deplores all loss of civilian life.

- (37) COSAC expresses its gravest concern for the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Gaza and calls for continued, rapid, safe and unhindered humanitarian access and aid to reach those in need through all necessary measures including humanitarian corridors and pauses for humanitarian needs.
  - (38) COSAC recalls the need to avoid regional escalation and to engage with partners in this respect including with the Palestinian Authority.
  - (39) COSAC is ready to contribute to reviving a political process on the basis of the two-state solution, including through the Peace Day Effort, welcomes diplomatic peace and security initiatives and supports the holding of an international peace conference soon.
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