

COSAC CHAIRPERSONS MEETING LONDON JULY 2005

NOTE BY THE UK PRESIDENCY

NOTE ON SPECIAL GUESTS TO COSAC (INTERPRETATION OF ARTICLE 4.3 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE)

Introduction

The UK Presidency has prepared this paper to facilitate the debate on the interpretation of Article 4.3 of the Rules of Procedure. The debate arises following discussion at the Luxembourg COSAC on the request from the Polish delegation, with the support of other delegations, for the parliament of Ukraine to be afforded a status at COSAC.

Article 4 of COSAC's Rules of Procedure (*Composition*) reads as follows:

4.1. Ordinary and extraordinary meetings

Each national Parliament shall be represented by a maximum of six members of its Community and European Affairs Committee(s). The European Parliament shall be represented by six Members. Each Parliament shall determine the composition of its own delegation.

4.2. Observers from the Parliaments of applicant countries

Three observers from the parliaments of each applicant country shall be invited to ordinary and extraordinary meetings.

4.3. Other observers, specialists and special guests

The Presidency shall invite observers from the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union and the European Commission, and it may invite observers from the embassies of the Member States of the European Union, and, after consulting the Presidential Troika, specialists and special guests.

Article 4.3 was agreed in 1999 and came into force on 1 January 2000. A short history of COSAC's rules of procedure on observers and special guests, showing how this rule has been developed over time, is provided in the Annex to this note. The development of the rules of procedure appears to show that it is observer, rather than special guest, status which has been used to facilitate the attendance of applicant states at COSAC.

Who has been invited to COSAC meetings under Article 4.3?

A list of individuals¹ who have been invited to attend COSAC meetings since 2000 appears in the Annex. The following categories of individuals have regularly done so:

- Heads of State or Government,
- Speakers of the host parliament,
- Ministers from the host member state (often providing COSAC with information from their position as Presidency of the Council), and
- Commissioners.

Since 2000 the following categories of people have occasionally been invited to attend COSAC meetings:

- Members of Parliament from countries outside the EU that are not official applicant countries², and
- members of other parliamentary bodies³.

Do other parliamentary bodies have a rule that is comparable to Article 4.3?

A list of rules on observers/special guests from other organisations is presented in the Annex. There are many different practices and in the view of the UK Presidency no general conclusion can be drawn.

Request from the Presidents of the Regional Partnership Parliaments regarding participation in COSAC by the parliaments of Southeast Europe

The Presidents of the national parliaments of the Republic of Austria, the Czech Republic, the Republic of Hungary, the Republic of Poland, the Slovak Republic, and the Republic of Slovenia met in Bled, Slovenia on 10-11 June 2005 for the 4th time as the Presidents of the Parliaments of the Regional Partnership. Together with the Guest Presidents from the national parliaments of the Republic of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and the State Community of Serbia and Montenegro, they issued a Joint Statement. Paragraph 11 of this statement says:

"The Presidents of the Parliaments of the Regional Partnership call upon COSAC to invite the parliaments of the countries of Southeast Europe as "Special Guests" whenever subjects of their interest are debated within COSAC."

1 This does not include members of COSAC, observers from parliaments of applicant countries, and observers from the Council and Commission.

2 Members of the Parliaments of Croatia, FYR Macedonia and the Ukraine attended the XXXI COSAC in Dublin; a Member of the Parliament of the Ukraine attended the XXX COSAC in Rome

3 3 representatives of CALRE attended the XXX COSAC in Rome; the President of the Assembly of WEU attended the XXIX COSAC in Athens

Request from the President of COSAP regarding participation in COSAC by the parliaments of Southeast Europe

COSAP - the Conference of the Parliamentary Committees for European Integration/Affairs of the Countries participating in the Stabilization and Association Process of South East Europe (namely, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, FYR Macedonia, and Serbia and Montenegro) - met for the first time on 16-18 June 2005 in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Paragraph 2 of the final conference conclusions reads:

"The presiding country of the Conference will, on behalf of the Conference, address a letter to COSAC, informing it of its constitutive meeting and asking COSAC to consider giving the Conference an observer, in accordance with its rules."

Consequently, the Chairperson of the Joint Committee for European Integration of the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina wrote to Ben Fayot, Chairman of the Committee for Foreign and European Affairs, for Defence, for Cooperation, and for Immigration, of the Parliament of Luxembourg on 28 June 2005, asking for the Conference to be assigned "a special status" in COSAC.

Matters for discussion

The Chairpersons are asked to consider the following options (others may be proposed during the debate):

- Whether COSAC should be invited to formalise Rule 4.3 with a more specific definition of special guests
- Whether COSAC should be invited to amend Rule 4.3 in accordance with the proposal from the Presidents of the Regional partnerships parliaments to include the words "and COSAC shall invite the parliaments of the countries of Southeast Europe as "Special Guests" whenever subjects of their interest are debated within COSAC"
- Whether COSAP should be afforded permanent Special Guest status

JIMMY HOOD MP, Chairman European Scrutiny Committee House of Commons

LORD GRENFELL, Chairman European Union Committee House of Lords

11 July 2005

ANNEX

1 A history of COSAC's rules of procedure on observers and special guests

Two types of observers: people from embassies and experts

COSAC's first rules of procedure, adopted in May 1991 in Luxembourg, provided for the possibility to invite observers from embassies of the then 12 EC Member States and from the Commission if explicitly decided by the "preparatory meeting of the presidents of the European affairs committees". "Experts" could also be invited to attend COSAC meetings on the same conditions:

Paragraph 4 provided "the possibility to invite observers from embassies of the European Community's Members States, of the EC Commission as well as experts, if decided expressly during the preparatory meeting."

The addition of observers from the parliaments of the candidate states

In 1994 COSAC extended the possibility to participate as observers to representatives of the national parliaments of the candidate states. A maximum of three observers from each Member State was set. But instead of getting permission from the preparatory meeting of the chairpersons of the European affairs committees, the COSAC Presidency was now empowered to invite observers after having consulted the Presidential Troika and the European Parliament. Only parliaments from states with whom accession negotiations had officially been opened could participate as observers:

«Trois observateurs au maximum des Parlements des pays candidats à l'adhésion sont invités par le Président en exercice de la Conférence, après consultation de la Troïka et du Parlement européen, à condition que les négociations concernant leur adhésion à l'Union européenne soient déjà officiellement commencées et que le Parlement intéressé ait introduit une demande à titre officiel de participation à la Conférence ».

[Text not available in English.]

The addition of observers from the Council and the Commission and the creation of the category of "special guest"

In 1999 COSAC made it mandatory for the Presidency to invite three observers from the parliaments of each candidate state to ordinary meetings provided that EU had officially opened discussions and/or negotiations aimed at accession with the country concerned and that the parliament concerned had officially requested to participate in COSAC. The possibility was created for such observers to be invited to extraordinary COSAC meetings. Consultation of the Troika and the European Parliament was no longer required.

The rule change also obliged COSAC to invite observers from the General secretariat of the Council and the Commission. Observers from the applicant states were granted the right to take the floor on specific items on the agenda if determined by the meeting. The already existing possibility for the COSAC Presidency to invite experts (now referred to as "specialists") after consulting the Troika was extended by adding the possibility to invite special guests:

Three observers from the Parliaments of each applicant country shall be invited to ordinary meetings, and may be invited to extraordinary meetings, provided that the European Union has officially opened discussions and/or negotiations aimed at accession with the country concerned and that the Parliament concerned has made an official request to participate in COSAC. These observers shall have the right to participate in debates on specific items on the agenda determined by the meeting.

The Presidency shall invite observers from the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union and the European Commission, and it may invite observers from the embassies of the Member States of the European Union, and, after consulting the Presidential Troika, specialists and special guests.

In 2003 COSAC finally adopted the existing rules, which amended 4.2 by removing reference to how observers from the candidate states shall participate and by making it obligatory for them to be invited to extraordinary meetings:

Three observers from the parliaments of each applicant country shall be invited to ordinary and extraordinary meetings.

2 Individuals from outside COSAC who have attended COSAC meetings since 2000

XXXIII COSAC Luxembourg (May 2005):

Mr Lucien Weiler, President of the Chamber of Deputies, Luxembourg

Mr Jean-Claude Juncker, Prime Minister, Luxembourg

Mr Lucien Lux, Minister of Transport, Luxembourg

Mr Jeannot Krecké, Minister of Economy and Foreign Trade, Luxembourg

Mr Marcel Glesener, Vice-President of the Assembly of Western European Union and Member of the Luxembourg Parliament

Mr Maarten B. Engwirda, Member of the European Court of Auditors from the Netherlands

Mr Anders Forsberg, General Secretary of the Swedish *Riksdag* and Chairman of the Working Group on IPEX

Meeting of COSAC Chairpersons (February 2005)

Mr Nicolas Schmit, Minister Delegate of Foreign Affairs and Immigration,
Luxembourg

Mrs Margot Wallström, Vice-President of the European Commission and
Commissioner for Institutional Relations and Communication

XXXII COSAC the Hague (November 2004):

Mrs Timmerman-Buck, President of the Senate, the Netherlands

Mr Weisglas, President of the House of Representatives, the Netherlands

Mr Nicolaï, State Secretary for European Affairs, the Netherlands

Mr Brinkhorst Minister of Economic Affairs, the Netherlands

Mr Deetman, the mayor of The Hague

Mr Anders Forsberg, General Secretary of the Swedish *Riksdag* and Chairman of
the Working Group on IPEX

XXXI COSAC Dublin (May 2004):

Mrs Mary McAleese, President of Ireland

Dr Rory O Hanlon TD, *Ceann Comhairle* of *Dáil Éireann*

Mr Brian Cowen TD, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Ireland

Ms Neven Mimica and Mrs Lucija Cikes, Members of the Parliament of Croatia,

Ms Karolina Ristova, Mr Tome Trombev and Mr Slobodan Casule, Members of
the Parliament of FYR Macedonia,

Mr Borys Tarasyuk, Member of the Parliament of Ukraine

Mr Gijs de Vries, Coordinator for counter terrorism-related matters in the
Council of the EU

Meeting of COSAC Chairpersons (February 2004)

Mr Dick Roche TD, Minister of State for European Affairs, Ireland

XXX COSAC Rome (October 2003):

Mr Marcello Pera, Speaker of the Senate of the Italian Republic

Mr Pierferdinando Casini, Speaker of the Italian Chamber of Deputies

Mr Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, President of the Italian Republic

Mr Franco Frattini, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Italy

Mr Javier Solana, Secretary General of the Council of the European Union, High
Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy

Mr Borys Tarasyuk, Member of the Parliament of Ukraine,

Mr Riccardo Nencini, President of CALRE, President of the Regional Assembly
of Tuscany

Mme Françoise Schepmans, President of the Parliament of the French
Community of Belgium and Member of CALRE

Mr Fernando Manuel Machado Menezies, President of the Parliament of Azzorre
Islands, Portugal and Member of CALRE

Meeting of COSAC Chairpersons (November 2003)

Mr Franco Frattini, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Italy

XXIX COSAC Athens (May 2003):

Mr Constantine Simitis, Prime Minister of Greece
Mr Apostolos Kaklamanis, Speaker of the Hellenic Parliament
Mr George Papandreou, Greek Minister for Foreign Affairs and Member of the Praesidium of the Convention on the Future of Europe
Mr Michalis Chryssochoidis, Greek Minister for Public Order
Mr Jan Dirk Blaauw, President of the Assembly of Western European Union

XXVIII COSAC Brussels (January 2003)

Mr David Martin, Vice President of the European Parliament

XXVII COSAC Copenhagen (October 2002):

Mr Ivar Hansen, Speaker of the *Folketing*
Mr Per Stig Møller, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Denmark
Ms Gisela Stuart, UK MP, Member of the Praesidium of the Convention on the Future of Europe, and Chairperson of the Working Group in the Convention on National Parliaments

XXVI COSAC Madrid (May 2002):

Mr Alberto Ruiz-Gallardón, President of the Regional Government of Madrid
Ms Luisa Fernanda Rudi Úbeda, Speaker of the *Congreso de los Diputados*
Mrs Esperanza Aguirre Gil de Biedma, Speaker of the *Senado*
Mr Ramón de Miguel, Secretary of State for European Affairs
Mr Mariano Rajoy, Vice-President of the Spanish Government and Minister for the Interior
Mr Rodrigo de Rato, Vice-President of the Spanish Government and Minister for Economy

XXV COSAC Brussels (October 2001)

Mr Guy Verhofstadt, Prime Minister of Belgium
Mrs Laurette Onkelinx, Vice Prime Minister and Minister for Employment, Belgium
Mrs Magda Aelvoet, Minister for Consumer Protection, Public Health and Environment
Mr Olivier Deleuze, State Secretary for Energy and Sustainable Development
Mr Antoine Duquesne, Minister for Home Affairs

XXIV COSAC Stockholm (May 2001):

Mr Göran Persson, Prime Minister of Sweden
Mrs Anna Lindh, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sweden
Mrs Birgitta Dahl, Speaker of the Swedish *Riksdag*
Mr Kjell Larsson, Minister for the Environment, Sweden

Mrs Margot Wallström, Member of the European Commission with responsibility for Environment

XXIII COSAC Versailles (October 2000):

Mr Lionel Jospin, Prime Minister of France

Mr Pierre Moscovici, Minister for European Affairs

Mr Christian Poncelet, Speaker of the Senate

Mr Raymond Forni, Speaker of the National Assembly

Mrs Elisabeth Guigou, *Garde des Sceaux*, Minister of justice

Mr Hubert Védrine, Minister for Foreign affairs

XXII COSAC Lisbon (May 2000):

Mr António Guterres, Prime Minister of Portugal

Mr António Vitorino, Member of the European Commission with responsibility for Justice and Home Affairs

3 Extracts from the Rules of Procedure of other parliamentary bodies

PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Part XIV: SPECIAL GUESTS, OBSERVERS^[1] AND OTHER GUESTS - *Rule 59 - Special Guests*

59.1. The Bureau may grant Special Guest status to national parliaments of European nonmember states which have signed the Helsinki Final Act of 1 August 1975 and the Charter of Paris for a New Europe of 21 November 1990; accepted the other instruments adopted at the OSCE conferences; and signed and ratified the two United Nations Covenants of 16 December 1966 on Civil and Political Rights and on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

59.2. Any formal request for Special Guest status shall be addressed to the President of the Parliamentary Assembly by the President of the parliament concerned.

59.3. If the Bureau, having consulted the Political Affairs Committee, approves such a request, the President of the Parliamentary Assembly shall invite the parliament concerned to assume Special Guest status.

59.7. Members of Special Guest delegations may sit in the Assembly but without the right to vote. They shall have the right to speak with the authorisation of the President of the Assembly.

59.8. Members of Special Guest delegations may attend committee meetings as provided in Rule 47.5.

59.9. The Political Affairs Committee, or at least twenty members, may request of the President that Special Guest status be suspended or withdrawn. The President shall immediately inform the Bureau of any such request. If the request

was not made by the Political Affairs Committee, the President shall forthwith seek that committee's opinion which shall forward it to the Bureau.

59.11. Where Special Guest status has been withdrawn, the parliament concerned shall make a further formal request if it wishes to assume this status again.

Suspension of Special Guest status may be lifted by the Bureau deciding by a two-thirds majority if it considers that the conditions having led to the suspension no longer exist.

Rule 60 - Observers

60.1. The Assembly may, on the proposal of the Bureau, grant Observer status to national parliaments of non-member states of the Council of Europe which meet the conditions set out in paragraph 1 of Statutory Resolution (93) 26 of the Committee of Ministers on Observer status.

60.2. The Assembly shall specify the number of members of Observer delegations. The parliaments concerned are not required to submit credentials to the President of the Assembly but, in appointing their delegations, they should reflect the various currents of opinion within their parliaments.

60.3. Members of such delegations may sit in the Assembly but without the right to vote. They shall have the right to speak with the authorisation of the President of the Assembly.

60.4. They may attend committee meetings as provided in Rule 47.5.

60.5. The Bureau may, by a two-thirds majority, invite representatives of parliaments of other non-member states to attend a debate in the Assembly.

Rule 61 - Representatives of national or international organisations

61. The Assembly may, on the proposal of the Bureau, invite national or international organisations to present reports or communications.

THE ASSEMBLY OF WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION

The WEU Assembly currently comprises some 400 parliamentarians from the national parliaments of 37 European countries. These include all the EU member states (including the ten signatory states of the modified Brussels Treaty) and the European members of NATO as well as Russia, Ukraine and the Balkan states.

Member countries:

France, Germany, Italy, United Kingdom,
Spain, Belgium, Greece, Netherlands, Portugal Luxembourg

Affiliate member countries:

Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovak Republic, Slovak Republic, Estonia,
Latvia, Slovenia

Associate member countries:

Turkey, Norway, Iceland

Affiliate associate member countries:

Romania, Bulgaria

Observer countries:

Austria, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Ireland

Affiliate observer countries:

Cyprus, Malta

Affiliate associate partner country:

Croatia

Permanent Guests:

Russian Federation, Ukraine

Special Guests:

Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, FYROM (Macedonia), Serbia and Montenegro

RULE 17:

Observers

1. On the proposal of the Presidential Committee, the Assembly may admit representatives of parliaments of non-member states of WEU as observers. Its decision may be of a permanent nature, in which case observers from the states concerned shall assume the title of permanent observers. Observers shall sit in the chamber but not be entitled to vote. They may speak with the authorisation of the President of the Assembly.
2. Representatives of parliaments of WEU observer and associate partner countries to the Assembly shall have permanent observer status.
3. Permanent observers of associate partner countries shall sit in committees without voting rights. The Presidential Committee shall fix the number of their representatives in sessions and in committees and the way they shall participate in the activities of the Assembly."

OSCE

The parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE is the parliamentary dimension of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, whose 55 participating States span the geographical area from Vancouver to Vladivostok.

RULE 42 *Observers:*

1. Provided notification has been given to the Secretariat, representatives of the following organizations may be admitted as observers: the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe; the Assembly of WEU; the NATO Parliamentary Assembly; the Inter-Parliamentary Union; the European Parliament and the Interparliamentary Assembly of the CIS;
2. Parliaments of the States which are Partners for Co-operation of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe may also be admitted as observers.
3. The names of observers under paragraph 1 of this Rule shall be notified to the Secretariat by the parliamentary bodies to which they belong.
4. Other persons may be admitted as observers subject to the discretion of the President or the Standing Committee.
5. Observers may sit in the Assembly without the right to speak unless invited to do so by the President.

INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION

The Inter-Parliamentary Union is the international organisation of the Parliaments of sovereign States. The IPU Assembly (formerly known as the Inter-Parliamentary Conference) is the principal statutory body that expresses the views of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Rule 1

1. The Assembly shall be composed of sitting members of Parliament designated by the Members of the Union as delegates in conformity with Article 10 of the Statutes.

2. Associate Members shall participate in the Assembly and its Standing Committees with the same rights as ordinary members, with the exception of the right to vote and to present candidates for elective offices.

Rule 2

1. Representatives of international organisations may be invited by the Governing Council to follow the work of the Assembly in the capacity of observers.

Representatives of other bodies to which observer status has been accorded by the General Assembly of the United Nations may also be invited by the Governing Council as observers (cf. Statutes, Art. 21 (g)).

2. Observers may only speak on the invitation of the President

THE NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

III. Parliamentary Observer and Ad Hoc Parliamentary Delegations (Parliamentary Guests) Article 3

1. Delegations from other parliaments and inter-parliamentary assemblies may, with the consent of the Standing Committee and subject to the approval of the Assembly, be invited by the President to attend sessions of the Assembly as parliamentary observers. Subject to the discretion of the President, parliamentary observers shall leave the chamber during closed sittings. Subject to the discretion of the President, parliamentary observers may participate in plenary debates of the Assembly. They may speak but shall not be entitled to vote or move amendments.

2. Subject to the discretion of Chairmen of Committees, parliamentary observers may participate in meetings of the Assembly's Committees. They may speak but shall not be entitled to vote or move amendments.

3. The Standing Committee may also invite parliamentary delegations to participate in specific sessions on an ad hoc basis. If a request for the participation of a parliamentary delegation is received and no Standing Committee meeting is scheduled before the session in question, the President shall decide whether to permit ad hoc participation following consultation with the host delegation and the members of the Bureau.

4. The names of observers under this article shall be notified to the International Secretariat by the parliamentary body to which they belong.

EURO-MED PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

Observers and guests

"On a proposal from the Bureau, and pursuant to Rule 9(3) of these Rules of Procedure, the Assembly may grant permanent observer status at its meetings to:

- the representatives of the national parliaments of the countries of the Mediterranean region which are not members of the EU and that have not subscribed to the Barcelona process;
- the representatives of the national parliaments which are not Mediterranean, but which are candidate countries, provided that the European Union has officially commenced discussion and negotiations with the country concerned in view of its accession to the European Union;
- the institutionalised consultative bodies and financial bodies of the process of Barcelona;
- the regional parliamentary and intergovernmental organisations which request such status.

Other organisations may also be invited by the Bureau to attend a meeting of the Assembly."

COSAP (The Conference of the Parliamentary Committees For European Integration / Affairs of the Countries participating in the Stabilization and Association Process of South East Europe [Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, FYR Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro])

Rule 4. composition "In the Conference each national Parliament of the member countries of the Conference shall be represented by a delegation composed at most by six members of its Committee for European Integration / Affairs, depending on the arrangements of each national parliament.

Persons who are not Committee members may participate in the work of the Conference as observers, namely as experts or special guests (for instance representatives of the COSAC, the European Parliament, the European Commission, representatives of Embassies of the Member States of the Conference and of the European Union, etc)."

NORDIC COUNCIL

The Nordic Council consists of members of the national parliaments representing the Nordic countries and autonomous territories.

Article 22: Invited guests

"The Presidium may invite representatives of elected bodies, who may be given observer status, and other guests to attend a session.

The Presidium may resolve to permit invited guests to take the floor in the course of a session."

BALTIC SEA PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE

All national and regional parliaments in the Baltic Sea region send delegates to the yearly Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference as do some international organizations.

Rule 1 of the Rules of Procedure states:

"Conferences shall be held annually. All the national and regional Parliaments in the Baltic Sea Region are invited to participate in the conference. Organisations granted Permanent Participant status or Observer status according to the annexed lists are to be invited."

The following are invited parliaments and parliamentary organisations (i.e. those bodies that have permanent participant status):

Baltic Assembly

European Parliament

Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation

Nordic Council

Parliament of Åland

Parliament of Denmark

Parliament of Estonia

Parliament of Faeroe Islands

Parliament of Finland

Parliament of the Federal Republic of Germany

Parliament of Free and Hanse City of Bremen

Parliament of Free and Hanse City of Hamburg

Parliament of Greenland

Parliament of Iceland

Parliament of Kaliningrad Region

Parliament of the Karelian Republic

Parliament of Latvia

Parliament of the Leningrad Region

Parliament of Lithuania

Parliament of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern

Parliament of Norway

Parliament of Poland

Parliament of the City of St Petersburg

Parliament of Schleswig-Holstein

Parliament of Sweden

Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

The following are invited to attend as observers:

1. Adrian-Ionian Initiative (AII)

2. Standing Committee of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region

3. Baltic 21

4. Baltic Chamber of Commerce Association

5. Baltic Council of Ministers
6. Baltic Development Forum
7. Baltic Sea Commission/CPMR
8. Baltic Sea Forum
9. Baltic Sea Region University Network
10. Baltic Sea States Sub-Regional Co-operation BSSSC
11. Baltic Sea Youth Forum
12. CIFE (The International Centre for European Studies)
13. CIS-IPA Commonwealth of Independent States – Inter-Parliamentary Assembly
14. Council of Baltic Sea States CBSS
15. COSAC
16. European Commission
17. FUEN (Federal Union of European nationalities)
18. Helsinki Commission - HELCOM
19. IPU
20. NEKON (Northern European Knowledge Network of Excellence)
21. NGO-Forum
22. Nordic Council of Ministers
23. North-West Parliamentary Association of Russia
24. PABSEC (Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Co-operation)
25. State Legislative Leaders' Foundation
26. Trade Union Co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region (BASTUN)
27. Union of the Baltic Cities UBC
28. WoMen and Democracy – the Baltic Sea Region's Women's Conference

PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION (PABSEC)

The Parliamentary Assembly is composed of 70 parliamentarians representing the BSEC member countries (Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Serbia and Montenegro, Turkey, Ukraine).

The People's Assembly of Egypt and the Knesset of the State of Israel have observer status.

Article 32– Observers

1. The parliaments of the states having observer status in the BSEC may be granted observer status in the Assembly with the approval of the Standing Committee endorsed by the General Assembly.
2. The observer status of a national parliament shall be terminated or suspended in accordance with its status with the BSEC or upon the request of the national parliament.
3. Provided notification has been given to the Secretariat, members from the following organisations may be admitted as observers: the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of Commonwealth of Independent States (IPA CIS), the European Parliament (EP),

Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of the Eurasian Economic Community (IPA EURASEC), the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the NATO Parliamentary Assembly (NATO PA), the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation on Security and Cooperation in Europe (PA OSCE), the Inter-Parliamentary European Security and Defense Assembly (Assembly of WEU).

4. Observers shall have the right to address PABSEC meetings and to participate in debates but not to vote.

5. With the consent of the Standing Committee endorsed by the General Assembly interparliamentary organisations requesting observer status in the PABSEC may be granted the observer status upon their application.

6. Applications shall be examined on a case-by-case basis in view of readiness of the applicants to make a practical and valuable contribution to the work of the Assembly.

7. The observer status of an inter-parliamentary organisation or assembly may be terminated or suspended at its request.

Article 33 – Guests

1. Representatives of parliaments, governments, non-governmental organisations and business circles may be invited to the committee meetings and the General Assembly by the Chairmen of the Committees and the President of the Assembly. They may take the floor with the consent of the chair of the sitting.

CALRE

CALRE is the Conference of speakers of the regional assemblies with legislative power of the regions of the European Union. In total there are 74 regions from 8 countries. More specifically, CALRE consists of the parliaments of the Spanish autonomous communities; the Italian regional councils; the assemblies of the Belgian regions and communities; the parliaments of both the Austrian and the German Länder; the autonomous parliament of Åland (Finland); the regional assemblies of the Azores and Madeira (Portugal); and the ones of Scotland, Wales and Northern-Ireland (the United Kingdom).

The speakers of the regional parliaments of the member states of the European Union that have legislative power can attend CALRE meetings as participating members.

ARTICLE 12 Of The Rules Of Procedure - COMPOSITION AND ASSISTANTS

"The speakers of the parliaments of the legislative regions of the European Union are full members at the Plenary Assembly.

"With the approval of the Standing Committee, observers that have the right to speak, but not the right to vote, can be invited.

"The chairman of the conference disposes of the freedom to decide about other possible invitees."