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Thank you very much for your letter of 5 July enclosing a proposal from the Dutch Senate and its European Affairs Committee that a debate be held on the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) during the October COSAC in London.

In accordance with COSAC's rules, the contents of the agenda for the October meeting were discussed by the Troika at the Chairpersons meeting in London last week. Your proposal was considered by the Troika as part of that discussion.

The Troika thought that COSAC was perhaps not the best forum for such a debate to take place. COSAC, in particular following the recent change to Article 7 of the rules, focuses as you know on exchanging best practice on scrutiny of European business rather than in-depth discussions of particular policy areas. In this case, the troika considered this was not an area where debate in COSAC would add value, and issues between the institutions would need to be resolved by the institutions themselves.

May I, however, add a personal note? The agenda for October does include provision for a debate, also under Article 7 of the rules of procedure, on future possible topics for COSAC debate. The UK Presidency intends to propose, as one of the items on that list, how national parliaments scrutinise the human rights implications of the European legislation which they are asked to consider.

I hope this explanation makes clear why the Troika did not feel able to agree to your proposal and I thank you once again for having presented it in such a comprehensive and clear way.

I am copying this letter to Jimmy Hood, Chairman of the European Scrutiny Committee, House of Commons; Edward McMillan-Scott and Jo Leinen at the European Parliament; Werner Fasslabend at the Austrian Nationalrat and Albrecht Konecny at the Bundesrat; Ben Fayot from Luxembourg and to the Clerk of the House of Commons, European Scrutiny Committee, and to the COSAC Secretariat for onward distribution to Troika colleagues in Brussels.

GRENFELL

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