



## **Annual Report from the Committee of Senior Officials** The 12<sup>th</sup> Year of the Council's Activity 2003-2004

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## **Committee of Senior Officials (CSO), 12<sup>th</sup> Year of the Council's Activity**

### Annual Report of the Committee of Senior Officials 2003-2004

During the period of the Estonian Presidency of the CBSS, (from 12 June 2003 – 21 June 2004), the Committee of Senior Officials has conducted its work according to the Council's directions, as outlined in the Copenhagen and Svetlogorsk Declarations, the Communiqué from the 11<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Session, and in line with the political guidance from the Heads of Government of the CBSS member-states, as reflected *i.a.* in the Chairman's Conclusions of the 4<sup>th</sup> Baltic Sea States Summit Meeting.

The CSO held nine meetings in the following cities: Laulasmaa, Pärnu, Tallinn and Tartu in Estonia; Brussels, Klaipeda, Pskov, Reykjavik and Stockholm. The CSO Troika (Finland, Estonia and Poland) held one meeting, in Pärnu. Ambassador-at-large Mr. Tiit NABER of the Estonian Foreign Ministry chaired the meetings.<sup>1</sup> In addition, the CSO Chairman officially represented the CBSS at a series of meetings and conferences of relevance to Baltic Sea regional co-operation.<sup>2</sup>

The following priority areas and issues were deliberated by the CSO during its Estonian Chairmanship:

1. In the context of the historic enlargement of the EU in May 2004 to embrace a further four member-states of the CBSS, the **Northern Dimension** and other related policies of the European Union continued to be an important theme for the CSO. The role of the CBSS in coordinating regional input to the elaboration and implementation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> ND AP for the period of 2004-06 was highlighted at several meetings of the CSO. The CSO approved the first CBSS contribution to the Northern Dimension Information System and looked forward to the calling of a first Senior Officials Meeting by the EU Presidency during the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of 2004 to discuss implementation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> ND AP. The European Commission regularly updated the CSO on progress achieved toward the elaboration of the new European Neighbourhood Policy and on the ongoing discussions on creating a new European Neighbourhood Instrument proposed to take effect from 2007. The CSO has closely monitored the launch of the new ND Partnership in Public Health and Social Wellbeing, *i.a.* by engaging in a dialogue with representatives of the Task Force on Communicable Disease Control on defining its role in facilitating a successful launch. The CSO has supported the CBSS Senior Officials for Information Society in seeking endorsement by the Heads of Government at the 5<sup>th</sup> Baltic Sea States Summit for a prolongation of the Northern eDimension Action Plan for the period of 2005-06.
2. The role of the CBSS as a focal point for **regional coordination** of intergovernmental cooperation in the Baltic Sea region was developed and further elaborated. The CSO Chair hosted the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual meeting in Stockholm in December 2003 of the chairpersons of the senior officials groups representing the

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<sup>1</sup> A list of the CSO meetings with summaries of the main topics is annexed below as attachment no.1.

<sup>2</sup> A list of the relevant meetings and conferences attended is annexed below as attachment no.2.

four main intergovernmental cooperation organisations active in the Northern Dimension area, the Arctic Council, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, the CBSS and the Nordic Council of Ministers. “4+1” Meetings of the four regional Chairs with representatives of the European Commission were held, in conjunction with the CSO meetings in Brussels and Reykjavik, to discuss implementation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> ND AP as well as cooperation in other areas of mutual interest. Possibilities to intensify bilateral cooperation between the CBSS and the NCM were explored in several key fields, *i.a.*: cross-border cooperation; culture; ICT (NeDAP 2005-06); transport.

3. Fostering **economic co-operation** within the region, as a priority of the Estonian Presidency, also remained high on the CSO’s agenda. The WGEC Chairman participated in several CSO meetings and the CSO was informed in detail on the preparations and the outcomes of the 5<sup>th</sup> CBSS Ministerial Meeting on Trade and Economy.<sup>3</sup> At its December 2003 meeting in Stockholm, the CSO engaged in a lively dialogue with the Chairman of the Business Advisory Council (BAC), the Secretary-General of the Baltic Sea Chambers of Commerce Association (BCCA) and the Secretary-General of the Baltic Development Forum (BDF). The CSO continued to devote considerable attention to monitoring sectoral cooperation on transport infrastructure (the ad-hoc Working Group on Transport) and considered the consequences and possible follow-up to the self-dissolution of the Baltic Sea Customs Conference.
4. The promotion of practical co-operation with other **regional and subregional actors** continued to be a priority goal for the CSO. The CSO held its meeting in Klaipeda on 15-16 October in conjunction with the 7<sup>th</sup> General Conference of the Union of Baltic Cities (UBC). This was followed by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Coordination meeting of the heads of Baltic Sea regional organizations,<sup>4</sup> presided over by the CSO Chairman. One concrete result of that meeting was the agreement to cooperate in the creation and joint operation of a powerful new virtual networking tool, [www.balticsea.net](http://www.balticsea.net). The new Baltic Sea Region Internet Portal, spearheaded and coordinated by the CBSS, was officially launched at the 4<sup>th</sup> Baltic Sea Region NGO Forum in April 2004. At its meeting Tartu and Pskov on 4-5 March, the CSO focused on cross-border cooperation, highlighting the experiences of regional and local officials and NGOs in the Lake Peipsi region as well as the Euroregion Pskov-Livonia. The prospects for intensified cross-border cooperation at the new and existing borders of the EU and EEA countries with the Russian Federation was examined, *i.a.* in connection with the presentation of a relevant study by Nordregio commissioned by the Swedish Government. The CSO endorsed the proposal for the elaboration of a CBSS-NCM joint initiative on cross-border cooperation. The CSO was provided an overview of the current situation in the region with regard to the EU Interreg III B program and was also informed in detail about the preparations for the launch, in connection with EU/EEA enlargement, of two new, (EEA and Norwegian), financial mechanisms for cross-border cooperation.
5. Co-operation on **soft security** matters continued to be a major focus of attention for the CSO. At its 4-5 March meeting in Tartu/Pskov, the CSO met representatives of the Task Force on Organised Crime and the Task Force on Communicable Disease

<sup>3</sup> The annual report of the WGEC is attached below as annex no. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Organizations participating in the meeting: Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference, IV Baltic Sea Region NGO Forum, Baltic Sea States Subregional Cooperation, Baltic 21, HELCOM, the Union of the Baltic Cities and VASAB.

Control who presented information regarding their present and planned activities. At the same meeting, a representative of the Working Group on Nuclear and Radiation Safety (WGNRS) reported to the CSO on i.a. implementation of the Agreement on the Exchange of Radiation Monitoring Data.<sup>5</sup> At its first meeting, in Tallinn in September 2003, the CSO was informed extensively on the follow-up to the high-level CBSS meeting on unaccompanied and trafficked children in the Baltic Sea region. The CSO continued to monitor closely the work of the EUROBALTIC co-operation on civil protection. Poland, as lead-country for civil security co-operation, presented a report on its activities in this field to the CSO. The CSO was also informed about a Swedish Government inquiry of potential future cooperation on civil security issues in the CBSS framework and the Secretariat organised a well-attended seminar on the subject with the participation of the authors of the study and other members of the security policy community.

6. Co-operation in the field of **higher education** was also highlighted by the CSO on several occasions. At its meeting in Klaipeda in October, the Head of the International Expert Group for the EuroFaculty Kaliningrad project and the vice-rector of Kaliningrad State University provided an overview of the situation with regards to the fulfilment of certain conditions for a CSO decision to be taken on a prolongation of the project. A final decision in favour of prolongation was taken by the CSO at its December meeting in Stockholm. At its March meeting in Tartu, the CSO met with the Director of the EuroFaculty who delivered a detailed report on the finalisation of the EuroFaculty project and presented an elaborate proposal for the transformation of the EuroFaculty, located at universities in Tartu, Riga and Vilnius, into Centres of Excellence for post-graduate training and research. On 5 March, the CSO met in Pskov with local authorities and representatives of institutes for higher education and was informed about the potential for Pskov to act as the host of a new EuroFaculty project. A CBSS expert fact-finding mission was mandated to further investigate the possibilities for a EuroFaculty in Pskov and report back to the CSO in due course.
7. **Civil society and democratic development** in the region continued to be an important focus for the CSO, especially in the context of the closure of the office of the CBSS Commissioner on Democratic Development in December 2003. The Commissioner presented her final report to the CSO at its meeting in Stockholm in December. The CSO and its Working Group on Democratic Institutions<sup>6</sup> decided to engage in a selective follow-up of the work of the Commissioner in relevant fields. The CSO endorsed the WGDI report and recommendations on selective follow-up of the Commissioner's final report at its meeting in Reykjavik in May. The CSO held its meeting in April in conjunction with the 4<sup>th</sup> Baltic Sea NGO Forum in Pärnu. The Chairman of the International PrepCom of the Forum participated in the meeting of the CSO and the CSO Chairman – along with several members of the CSO – participated in the Forum. The Pärnu CSO meeting also featured a discussion on stepping up cooperation with the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference, resulting in the joint elaboration of a Memorandum of Understanding planned to be signed in June by the Chairman of the BSPC and the CSO Chairman.

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<sup>5</sup> The annual report of the WGNRS is attached below as Annex no.3

<sup>6</sup> The annual report of the WGDI is attached below as annex no.2

8. The Estonian Presidency took steps to further intensify cooperation with CBSS **Observer States**. The 2<sup>nd</sup> annual meeting of the CSO with Observer States took place in Stockholm on 12 December and resulted in a lively exchange of views between the CSO and the representatives of France, Italy, Netherlands, Slovakia, Ukraine, United Kingdom and United States of America. The Presidency, in cooperation with the Secretariat, also organised a series of thematic briefings for Observer States' representatives in Stockholm during the first semester of 2004.
9. The 5-Year Review of the **Secretariat** was conducted by an independent consultant under the close supervision of the CSO. The CSO was informed about and discussed with the consultant the progress of the review at its December meeting in Stockholm and at its subsequent meeting in February in Brussels. The CSO accepted the final report of the consultant at its meeting in Pärnu and discussed possible follow-up to the review, *i.a.* drafting revised terms of reference for the Secretariat and investigating the need for a possible revision or updating of the CBSS Information Strategy.
10. A stated priority of the Estonian Presidency program was to continue the discussion on the **new role of the CBSS** after EU enlargement and to consider possible reform and development of the CBSS structure and activities in accordance with changes in the international environment. To this end, the CSO engaged in an open-ended informal exchange of views in conjunction with its regular meeting in Brussels in February, including a review of the implementation of relevant decisions taken at the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Ministerial sessions regarding the structure and working methods of the CBSS. At its meeting in Pärnu and in subsequent exchanges, both written and oral, the CSO has engaged in a discussion on a substantive revision of the CBSS terms of reference.

## Attachment N<sup>o</sup> 1 to the Annual Report of the CSO

### CSO meetings during the Estonian Presidency, 2003-2004

The Council of Senior Officials (CSO) held a total of nine meetings during the Estonian Presidency 2003-2004 with the following main topics:

**11-12 September 2003, in Tallinn:** Commission Revised Proposal for a Northern Dimension Action Plan for 2004-06, Commission Proposals for a Wider Europe/New Neighbours policy, Presentation of the Estonian Presidency Program, Review and follow-up of the 12<sup>th</sup> ministerial session at Pori on 10-11 June 2003, CBSS Initiative on Combating Trafficking in Children, Baltic Sea Region Energy Cooperation (BASREC) funding proposal, Confirmation of the date for the 5<sup>th</sup> Baltic Sea States Summit.

**15-16 October 2003, in Klaipeda:** NDAP 2004-06 tasks for the CBSS, EU Wider Europe/New Neighbours Initiative, Cross-Border Co-Operation, Kaliningrad, EuroFaculty Kaliningrad, Closing the Office of Commissioner for Democratic Development, Cooperation with HELCOM, Cooperation with CBSS Special Participants, CBSS structures and working bodies dealing with economic issues, 5-Year Review of the Secretariat, Activities of the CBSS Secretariat and Director's report.

**11-12 December 2003, in Stockholm:** Implementation of the EU Northern Dimension Action Plan for 2004-06, Further Development of the EU Wider Europe / New Neighbours Initiative, Cooperation with Observers, Cooperation with Business Networks, Cooperation on Cultural affairs, Follow-up of the Final Report of the CBSS Commissioner, Final Decision of the Prolongation of the EuroFaculty-Kaliningrad Project, Presentation of supplementary Nordregio study on cross-border cooperation, Report by SOIS on NeDAP Implementation, Confirmation of date for the 5<sup>th</sup> Baltic Sea States Summit meeting.

**5-6 February 2004, in Brussels:** Implementation of the EU Northern Dimension Action Plan and elaboration of the EU European Neighbourhood Policy. Format and Agenda of the 5<sup>th</sup> Baltic Sea States Summit, Preparation of the meeting of CBSS Ministers for Trade and Economy, 1<sup>st</sup> Interim Report on the 5-Year Review of the Secretariat.

**4-5 March 2004, in Tartu/Pskov:** Co-operation in Soft Security issues (Statements/Information by Task Force on Organized Crime, Task Force on Communicable Disease Control, Working Group on Nuclear and Radiation Safety, Civil Security Lead Country, Swedish Study of Civil Security issues in the CBSS), Cross-Border Cooperation, Co-Operation in Border Crossing Issues, Preparation of Format and Agenda of the 5<sup>th</sup> Baltic Sea States Summit, Norwegian EEA financing mechanisms.

**14-15 April 2004, in Pärnu:** Revision of Terms of Reference of the CBSS, Final Report and Recommendations of the 5-Year Review of the CBSS Secretariat, Secretariat 2005 Budget, Secretariat staff recruitment, 5<sup>th</sup> Baltic Sea State Summit Program and other Practical Issues, Draft Agenda and Format of the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the CBSS Minister's Deputies, Baltic 21 SOG, Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference, Working Group on Youth Affairs, IV Baltic Sea NGO Forum, Baltic Sea Region Internet Portal.

**27-28 May 2004, in Reykjavik:** Coordination with Arctic Council, Barents Euro-Arctic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministers, Preparation of main documents for the 5<sup>th</sup> Baltic Sea States Summit, WGDI Report on Follow-up of the CBSS Commissioner Final Report.

**8-9 June 2004, in Stockholm<sup>7</sup>:** Preparation of main documents for the 5<sup>th</sup> Baltic Sea States Summit and the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of CBSS Minister's Deputies.

**20 June 2004, in Laulasmaa:** Cooperation with the Nordic Council of Ministers. Last-minute preparation of the Meeting of CBSS Minister's Deputies and the 5<sup>th</sup> BSS Summit. 2<sup>nd</sup> Status Report on follow-up of the Pori Communiqué, CSO Annual Report, CBSS Secretariat 5-Year Review follow-up, Secretariat 2005 Budget, Secretariat staff recruitment.

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<sup>7</sup> This meeting was a continuation of the agenda from the preceding meeting at Reykjavik.

## Attachment N<sup>o</sup> 2 to the Annual Report of the CSO

### Participation by the CSO Chairman in meetings and conferences related to Baltic Sea Regional cooperation during the Estonian Presidency, 2003-2004:

- *12<sup>th</sup> Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference*, 8-9 September in Oulu, Finland.
- *High level meeting with officials from the German Foreign Ministry*, 24-25 September in Berlin, Germany.
- *High level meeting with officials from the Polish Foreign Ministry, Ministry of Economy, Labour and Social Policy and the Polish Chancellery of the Prime Minister*, 26 September in Warsaw, Poland.
- *9<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Session of the Barents Euro-Artic Council (BEAC)*, 2-3 October in Umeå, Sweden.
- *Baltic Development Forum (BDF) 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Summit meeting*, 5-7 October in Riga, Latvia.
- *Meeting of Chairmen of CBSS economic cooperation bodies*, 9 October in Tallinn, Estonia.
- *3<sup>rd</sup> Coordination meeting of Heads of Baltic Sea Regional organisations*, 17 October in Klaipeda, Lithuania.
- *7<sup>th</sup> General Conference of the Union of the Baltic Cities*, 17-19 October in Klaipeda, Lithuania.
- *11<sup>th</sup> Baltic Sea States' Subregional Cooperation (BSSSC) conference*, 23-25 October in St. Petersburg, Russia.
- *Meeting of CBSS & NCM / Meeting of AC, BEAC, CBSS & NCM*, 3 December in Stockholm, Sweden.
- *Baltic Sea Seven Islands Cooperation Network Annual Conference*, 4 December in Hiiumaa, Estonia.
- *Committee of Senior Representatives of the Northern Dimension Partnership on Public Health and Social Well-being meeting*, 9-10 December in Stockholm, Sweden.
- *(4+1) Meeting of the CSO Chairs of the AC, BEAC, CBSS and NCM with representatives of the European Commission on implementation of the ND AP 2004-06*, 4 February in Brussels, Belgium.
- *Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE) European Conference on the Role of Baltic local authorities in Responding to Major Oil Spills* 9-10 February in Helsinki, Finland.
- *Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC) 39<sup>th</sup> Executive Board meeting*, 6 March in Vaasa, Finland.
- *International conference to mark the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Helsinki Convention*, 22-24 March in Riga, Latvia.

- *Meeting of the Committee of Senior Representatives (CSR) of the ND Partnership in Public Health and Social Wellbeing, 29 March in Madrid, Spain.*
- *Baltic 21 Senior Officials Group meeting, 1 April in Vilnius, Lithuania.*
- *Central Europe in the Enlarged European Union, Central European Journalist Forum, 2-3 April in Warsaw, Poland*
- *IV Baltic Sea NGO Forum, 16-17 April in Pärnu, Estonia.*
- *5<sup>th</sup> CBSS Ministerial Conference on Trade and Economy, 19-20 April in Tallinn, Estonia.*
- *Meeting with the European Investment Bank, 28 April Luxemburg, Grand Duchy of Luxemburg.*
- *Baltic Sea Forum Conference on Baltic Sea Maritime Safety, 3-4 May in Kiel, Germany*
- *Meeting with officials from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 17 May in London, United Kingdom.*
- *(4+1) Meeting of the CSO Chairs of the AC, BEAC, CBSS and NCM with representatives of the European Commission on implementation of the ND AP 2004-06, 26 May in Reykjavik, Iceland.*
- *CPMR-Baltic Sea Commission General Assembly, 3-4 June in Schwerin, Germany.*

## Attachment N° 3 to the Annual Report of the CSO

### 1) Participation by representatives of CBSS structures and working bodies at CSO meetings during the Estonian Presidency 2003-2004:

- Baltic 21
- Baltic Sea Monitoring Group on Heritage Cooperation
- Baltic Sea Region Border Control Cooperation, (BSRBCC)
- Business Advisory Council (BAC)
- Civil Security Lead Country
- Commissioner on Democratic Development
- EuroFaculty Directorate
- Expert Group on EuroFaculty Kaliningrad (EF-K)
- Senior Officials Group on Information Society (SOIS)
- Task Force on Communicable Disease Control (TF-CDC)
- Task Force on Organized Crime (TF-OC)
- Working Group on Child Co-operation (WGCC)
- Working Group on Democratic Institutions (WGDI)
- Working Group on Economic Co-operation (WGEC)
- Working Group on Nuclear and Radiation Safety (WGNRS)
- Working Group on Youth Affairs (WGYA)

### 2) Participation by observers, special participants and invited guests at CSO meetings during the Estonian Presidency 2003-2004:

#### a. Observers:

- France
- Italy
- Netherlands
- Slovakia
- Ukraine
- United Kingdom
- United States of America

#### b. Special Participants:

- Baltic Development Forum (BDF)
- Baltic Sea Chambers of Commerce Association (BCCA)
- Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference (BSPC)
- Baltic Sea States Subregional Cooperation (BSSSC)
- Baltic Seven Islands Cooperation (B-7 Islands)
- Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions – Baltic Sea Commission (CPMR-BSC)
- Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC)

#### c. Invited Guests:

- Arctic Council (AC)
- Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC)
- Helsinki Commission (HELCOM)
- Nordic Council of Ministers (NCM)

## ***Annex 1: Working Group on Economic Cooperation (WGEC)***

### Annual Report of the Working Group on Economic Cooperation 2003-2004

#### ➤ **Meetings of WGEC:**

- Rakvere, 18.-19.09.2003, main topics addressed: future of [www.balticmarket.org](http://www.balticmarket.org); fight against corruption, future of the working group.
- Narva, 20.-21.11.2003, main topics addressed: Joint Investment Area; border crossing.
- Pedase, 15.-16.01.2004, main topics addressed: border crossing, preparations for meeting of Ministers of Trade and Economy.
- Tallinn, 18.-19.03.2004, main topic addressed: preparations for the meeting of Ministers of Trade and Economy.
- Copenhagen, 01.04.2004 (additional meeting), main topic addressed: preparations for the meeting of Ministers of Trade and Economy.
- Pärnu, 17.-18.05.2004, main topics addressed: report to the meeting of Heads of Government, border crossing, business development (indicators), North-West Russia.

#### ➤ **Preparation of report for the Baltic Sea Summit (Laulasmaa, 21 June 2004)**

WGEC prepared a report informing the Heads of Government of developments in the following topics as set in Chairman's Conclusions at previous Summit:

- Fight against corruption
- Joint Investment Area
- Border crossing

#### ➤ **Meeting of the CBSS Ministers of Economy and Trade (Tallinn, 19-20 April 2004)**

The WGEC prepared for the Ministerial meeting a document titled the 'Tallinn Declaration' that noted the changing environment and the need to adjust economic co-operation in the CBSS to be able to respond to new challenges. The Declaration was adopted by the Ministers.

Preparations for the Ministerial included also an information briefing for the observers with the view to keeping them updated and engaged.

The WGEC prepared implementation paper that includes overview of WGEC work and sets objectives and deadlines for WGEC activities to be presented for information to the ministers at earliest opportunity.

➤ **Continued addressing of objectives set in the MAP**

**Border-crossing**

- In co-operation with the Baltic Sea Customs Conference (BSCC) Procedures Working Group the “Laufzettel” measurements on borders in the Baltic Sea region were finalised in autumn 2003. The report demonstrates that the 2 hours goals has not yet been achieved on all borders.
- The WGEC discussed the possibility of establishing an ad-hoc open-ended expert group on border-crossing issues. The Ministers of Economy took note of the initiative to create the working group during their meeting in Tallinn. Following the discussions in the CSO Sweden elaborated the draft Terms of Reference for the expert group.

**Investment co-operation**

- Study paper “Barriers to Investments in the Baltic Sea region and Recommendation for the Creation of a Joint Investment Area” was produced by BAC in autumn 2003. The Study points out the existence of numerous barriers, which hinder trade and investment.
- Expert meeting to develop recommendations for the creation of a JIA was held in Stockholm on March 02, 2004. According to Chairman’s Conclusions a Road Map outlining future activities should be compiled.

**Fight against corruption**

- Compiling the survey “Administrative Regulations on Corruption in the CBSS Member States” on the basis of replies to the Questionnaire is still in process. The survey will outline the regulatory framework for fight against corruption in all member states.

**Standardisation and conformity assessment**

- The Chair of the Task Force on Standardisation and Conformity Assessment submitted its final report for approval. The WGEC decided against the background of the report to dissolve the Task Force on Standardisation and Conformity Assessment. The WGEC will look forward to continuing exchange of information on the EU-Russia co-operation in the field of standardisation.

**Indicators**

- In consultations with experts the WGEC worked to establish indicators which would enable effectively monitor the fulfilment of the Moscow Action Plan. Denmark offered to provide the WGEC with a concrete set of indicators that would measure economic developments and support decision-making.

**Support development of SME-s**

- In co-operation with Germany reorganisation of the SME information gateway [www.balticmarket.org](http://www.balticmarket.org) into a more efficient and easier-to-find format.

➤ **Co-operation with other organisations**

- Meeting of CBSS and BEAC WGEC Chairs in Oslo on 03. March 2004 for exchange of information concerning the activities of the working groups. The CBSS WGEC Chairmanship participated in the annual Customs Liaison Committee meeting in Luleå on 30. September 2003.
- Meeting of CSO Chairman with Chairmen of CBSS Working Bodies dealing with economic questions was held in Tallinn in 09. October 2003 to strengthen co-ordination in CBSS.
- Brainstorming meeting of WGEC Chairman with private sector organisations in December 2003 to discuss preparations for the Meeting of Ministers of Economy.

➤ **Reorganisation of work of the WGEC**

- The number of items addressed at a meeting was reduced to allow more time for discussions.
- The principle of value added constituted an important element in rationalising the WGEC agenda (dropping the item of tourism, decision to request final report from the Task Force of Standardisation and Conformity Assessment, introduction of questions relating to North-West Russia).
- Deadlines for WGEC activities were set (see implementation document as prepared for the meeting of Ministers of Trade and Economy).

➤ **Conclusions**

- During the Estonian Chairmanship the WGEC addressed a number of activities and made progress in improving trade and investment conditions in the region (border-crossing, SME information gateway, investment co-operation). The WGEC's efforts culminated with the Meeting of Ministers of Trade and Economy that *inter alia* produced the guidelines to continue rationalising the work of WGEC.
- Though WGEC meetings provided good quality discussions, expertise and preparedness for the meetings can be further improved. This is especially important regarding the shift in the WGEC work towards more result-oriented work plans and activities.
- The WGEC participates in regional economic co-operation and is responsible for contributing to common objectives. The Chair should provide necessary leadership to ensure clearer support of these endeavours.
- Co-operation with specialists and other regional networks is essential to avoid duplication and achieve tangible results.

## ***Annex 2: Working Group on Democratic Institutions (WGDI)***

### Annual Report of the Working Group on Democratic Institutions 2003-2004

Development of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights in the Baltic Sea Region

#### **I. Introduction**

Member States of the Council of the Baltic Sea States recognise that a well-functioning democracy depends on continuous promotion of democratic values and principles, as well as on development and strengthening of democratic institutions. One of the main objectives of the CBSS is to provide a framework for common efforts aimed at promoting democratic development in the region. For this purpose the Council established its Working Group on Democratic Institutions (WGDI).

The WGDI, working in close coordination with the CBSS Committee of Senior Officials (CSO), ensures the continuous political and organisational support in the preparation of conferences, workshops and seminars for exchange of experience and best practices in the field of democracy and human rights.

The WGDI has enjoyed a very close and fruitful cooperation with the Office of the Council of the Baltic Sea States Commissioner for Democratic Development. The CBSS Commissioner's office was closed down at the end of 2003, according to a decision made by the CBSS Members States at the Ministerial Meeting in Pori in June 2003. The closure of the Commissioner's office has affected the work of WGDI during the activity period 2003-2004.

In order to avoid duplication of activities and to ensure synergy of efforts, the Working Group cooperates closely with other working structures within the Baltic Sea region. An important component of the WGDI work is expert activities such as conferences, seminars, and workshops.

#### **II. WGDI agenda and activities during the Lithuanian Chairmanship 2003-2004**

The Chairmanship of the WGDI rotates on an annual basis. In 2003-2004 the Working Group was chaired by Lithuania. During this Chairmanship the WGDI held four meetings: 10 September 2003 in Tallinn, 2 December 2003 in Vilnius, 29 March 2004 in Vilnius, and 14 May 2004 in Vilnius. Two seminars were arranged: one on free media, their responsibilities and influence for the development of civil society, held on 3 December 2003, and another on trafficking in human beings, especially in women and children, held on 30 March 2004. During the Lithuanian Chairmanship the WGDI also focused on issues including:

- Future work of the WGDI after the closure of the office of the CBSS Commissioner
- Civil society, NGO participation

- Ombudsmen activities
- Cross-border-cooperation

*WGDI future work in view of the closing of the Office of the CBSS Commissioner for Democratic Development*

The WGDI continues to work for the promotion of democratic values in the Baltic Sea region, and will in particular follow up on core areas of competence as suggested in the Commissioner's Final Report of 6 December 2003. The WGDI decided to focus on the issues under the CBSS Commissioner's mandate that were already integrated in its activity plan for 2003/2004. The Commissioner's survey on trafficking in human beings gave important input to the WGDI seminar on trafficking; the expert group on pre-trial detention was brought under the auspices of the WGDI; the issues regarding interaction between central and local authorities to foster democratic institutions is in the focus of the Working Group. The Working Group decided to follow more closely the activities of the ombudsmen in the Baltic Sea area, and suggested that the chairperson of the WGDI participates in their annual meetings. Other issues that have been addressed by the CBSS Commissioner and which are of relevance for the WGDI and other CBSS bodies include: good lawmaking, good governance, the fight against corruption and human rights aspects, e.g. trafficking in human beings. The WGDI made a recommendation on the Secretariat's handling of possible individual communications, as they are no longer dealt with by any CBSS body following the closure of the Commissioner's office.

In its future activities, the Working Group will follow up on the mentioned issues and will scrutinise the possibility of taking up other relevant issues as mentioned in the Commissioner's Final Report.

**Free Media**

Around 50 participants from almost all CBSS countries and Belarus took part in the seminar "Free Media: Responsibility and Influence for the Development of Civil Society", organised on 2 December 2003 in Vilnius. It focused on examining problems that hinder free media exercise and debated national and international mechanisms that can redress the damage inflicted upon individuals or society as a whole through the misuse of the might of the media. The CBSS Commissioner on Democratic Development, Ms. Helle Degn, gave her last presentation in her capacity as Commissioner. Ms Degn stressed that media have to comply with the same requirements of transparency, accountability and participation as those set up for other institutions of power.

The seminar discussed Council of Europe's standards and the practice of the European Court on Human Rights in the field of the media as well as national mechanisms protecting the rights of individuals against misuse of the might of the media. Country profiles of media regulations were provided, and particular attention was given to the current situation in Belarus. Participants discussed the role of public service broadcasters in the development of civil society. The rights of journalists as well as the influence of commercial interests on the independence of the media were also discussed. Discussions addressed some issues that affect media independence: political advertising, transparency of the ownership, and media concentration. The seminar report can be found on the CBSS website [www.cbss.st](http://www.cbss.st)

### ***Trafficking in Human Beings***

A seminar on legislation concerning trafficking in human beings, especially in women and children, was organised on 30 March 2004 in Vilnius. Representatives from practically all CBSS member states as well as Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine and USA took active part. The seminar touched upon international norms, both existing ones and norms in preparation. It was recognised that international law can only work when national law is in place. International norms are an umbrella and also a push factor for national legislation, providing national governments with the idea of the composition as well as the priority order of the substantive issues. It is important to have the national tools to combat trafficking in human beings, but implementation of these tools is necessary. Law enforcement activities, gender equality and a human rights perspective must be kept at the forefront of all activities, and one must include a child perspective as well. National efforts should be linked to a regional perspective and with a cross-border approach. Protection of victims requires a multidimensional approach: Victims must receive social, material, legal, medical and psychological assistance. Victims must be rehabilitated and reintegrated into the labour market, so that they may enjoy a full and active life and do not fall prey to traffickers again. Special protection measures must be developed for children. Coordination of action and cooperation across sectors and across borders and with NGOs must be developed. The seminar report will be posted on the CBSS website: [www.cbss.st](http://www.cbss.st).

### ***Civil society, NGO activities***

On a number of occasions the WGDI discussed the issue of closer involvement of the NGO community in the work of the CBSS. The Head of the Children's Unit at the CBSS Secretariat shared the Working Group for Cooperation on Children at Risk's (WGCC) experience in cooperating with NGOs. A number of the members of the WGDI took part in the IV NGO Forum, held on 16-17 April in Pärnu, Estonia. The Working Group will study the relevance of the outcome of the forum for its future work and will follow up on the report of the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference on legislation related to NGOs.

### ***Ombudsmen institutions/gender issues***

An exchange of views on the work of the ombudsmen in the CBSS region took place at the WGDI meeting in December 2003. The Lithuanian Ombudsman on gender equality participated in the meeting and outlined her work and future activities in view of the recent adoption of a law on equal opportunities. Taking into account information about the 3rd CBSS ombudsmen seminar, held in Tallinn on 29 August 2003, and the 8<sup>th</sup> Round Table of European Ombudsmen, held in Oslo on 3-5 November 2003, the WG stressed the importance of close cooperation and annual meetings of the ombudsmen within the CBSS region. The WG proposed that the chairperson of the WG participates in the meetings of the CBSS ombudsmen.

### ***Study visit***

The Lithuanian Chairmanship arranged a study visit in conjunction with the WGDI Meeting in Vilnius on 29 March. The study visit was made to the Seimas, the Lithuanian Parliament, where WGDI members met Lithuanian Parliamentarians of the Human Rights Committee. The Lithuanian National Plan on Human Rights was presented to the WGDI members.

### ***Cross-border-cooperation***

Euro-regions and other cross-border cooperation activities after the EU enlargement were discussed at the WGDI Meeting in Vilnius on 29 March. Two concepts of cross-border cooperation were presented: 1) The concrete border as obstacle and possibility, and 2) Cooperation on the local/regional level. Stable financing is a problem, since the institutions participating in cross-border cooperation depend on support from the EU, from where funding first and foremost is sought, e.g. Tacis in Russia and Belarus and Interreg in the EU Member States. The Working Group noted the importance of cross-border-cooperation, for instance in preventing the creation of new dividing lines. The involvement of local communities is crucial in this endeavour.

## **III. Future Activities**

The promotion of democracy, the rule of law, human rights and the fostering of civil society will remain a focus of the Council of the Baltic Sea States. The Working Group on Democratic Institutions will continue its work aimed at achieving these goals. Cooperation with other regional and international institutions will be crucial in carrying out this task and in avoiding duplication of efforts.

### ***Scope of future activities***

Within its Terms of Reference, the Working Group on Democratic Institutions will focus on a selected number of issues, for instance:

- arranging and evaluating seminars aimed at exchanging views and best practices in fields such as civil society, the rule of law, efficiency of administration, local democracy and equal opportunities, including gender issues;
- ensuring organisational support in the preparation of events related to the strengthening of democratic institutions, good law-making, good governance, local self-government, etc.

Good governance and good lawmaking are important factors to promote transparency of law making and human rights awareness. The WGDI will cooperate closely with the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference (BSPC) in providing training in human rights, exchange of best practice in legislation and governance.

### ***Structure and working methods***

The WGDI arranges its activities according to a work plan, which is discussed by the CSO and WGDI chairpersons at the beginning of each presidency and then endorsed by the first CSO meeting. The work plan envisages the expected outcome of the WGDI's activities. The work of the WGDI is assisted by expert meetings, the conclusions and recommendations from which are transmitted to the WGDI. The CBSS Secretariat provides support to the WGDI, follows up on its decisions and keeps the Working Group informed about the progress.

The WGDI will continue the discussion on its future role, scope of activities and working methods.

## ***Annex 3: Working Group on Nuclear and Radiation Safety (WGNRS)***

### Annual Report of the Working Group on Nuclear and Radiation Safety 2003-2004

#### **I. Introduction**

The Working Group on Nuclear and Radiation Safety (WGNRS) within the CBSS is a forum for exchange of information and coordination of efforts to enhance nuclear and radiation safety in the region. The working group identifies actions to be initiated with the aim to strengthen cooperation in these fields. The national nominated participants in the WGNRS have their expertise knowledge mainly in the field of radiation protection, nuclear safety and radiological emergency planning.

In order to strengthen the radiation safety in the Baltic Sea area, the WGNRS put special emphasis on cooperation in a variety of different fields. The group addressed problems in emergency preparedness, potential terrorist events involving radioactive material and illicit trafficking. Concrete common projects include the exchange of monitoring data and information, a regional agreement on assistance and exercises in the field of nuclear and radiological preparedness. National reports on major nuclear and radiation safety issues in the CBSS member states are presented and discussed in each meeting.

#### ***Meetings***

During the 2003-2004 activity period two meetings were held: On 23-24 October 2003 in Tallinn and on 25-26 March 2004 in Copenhagen. A workshop was organised on "Stabilisation of data exchange" on 8 December 2003 in Copenhagen and an Expert Meeting on External Dose Rate Measurements was held on 18-19 March 2004 in Helsinki. Additionally an exercise on information exchange took place in November 2003.

The Working Group is very concerned about the fact that Russian representatives have not participated in the WG meetings during the past years. Involvement of the Russian Federation is of vital importance since Russia is the biggest member in the CBSS also regarding the number of nuclear facilities in the region. The WG strongly recommends all member states to participate in the WG's work because only close co-operation between all the members can provide added value in the region in terms of nuclear and radiation safety of the citizens around the Baltic Sea.

#### **II. WGNRS Agenda and Activities during Swedish/German Chairmanship in 2003-2004**

##### ***Illicit trafficking***

At the meeting in Tallinn a Swedish expert gave an overview of potential terrorist events involving radioactive material and illicit trafficking. The routes for illicit trafficking of radioactive material have changed from the direction East – West to the direction East –

South. However, good, reliable and precise information is extremely rare. The WGNRS recognised that the illicit trafficking itself and the discovery of stolen sources is a business for secret services and the police. Still the WG will continue to observe the situation. Contact with the IAEA is useful, since the agency has established a database on illicit trafficking events.

### ***Protection of radioactive sources***

The WG emphasises the need to protect radioactive sources from misuse. Radioactive sources are of special interest when they are characterised by high activities and used outside protected areas. The WGNRS realised that it will not be possible to document all corresponding sources. Therefore the objectives were revised: It is intended to review the different kind of sources with activities greater than 1 TBq in the different countries and how these sources are protected against misuse or theft.

### ***Military and civil authorities***

It has been recognised that military and civil authorities do not cooperate in the field of radiation and nuclear safety in most CBSS countries. The information exchange is rare and could be improved significantly. With respect to nuclear and radiation safety, the Working Group would like to initiate national reviews on cooperation between civil and military authorities in the fields of licensing, control of sources, emergency preparedness, waste disposal etc.

### ***Monitoring radionuclides in air***

The external dose rate and the radionuclide concentration in air are the most important measurements in the early phase of an accident to evaluate the radiological situation. The measurement of radionuclides in air is a very sensitive method to detect even small releases. To strengthen the emergency preparedness, the WG intends to come to an agreement on the exchange of monitoring air data in addition to the agreement on the exchange on the results of the external dose rate measurements.

### ***Regional agreement on assistance***

An agreement on assistance in the case of a nuclear accident would be a milestone for strengthening the regional emergency preparedness. But the discussion continues on how to proceed in order to come to an arrangement on mutual assistance. A background report will be prepared by Norway and Lithuania to analyse the prevailing situation in the region.

### ***Data and information exchange***

A workshop on "stabilisation of data exchange" was organised in Copenhagen on 8 December 2003. The objective of the meeting was to review the agreement on the exchange of environmental monitoring data and to consider further improvements. The expert group came to the following decisions: The new European Data Format EURDEP 2.0 will be used in the future to make the data compatible on a European level. A central server for the data exchange will be installed in Freiburg, Germany, in addition to the already established national ones. Thanks to this installation all relevant information will be

available at one server that offers network redundancy and rapid information exchange, which is especially useful in an emergency situation.

### ***External Dose Rate Measurements***

An Expert Meeting on External Dose Rate Measurements took place on 18-19 March 2004 in Helsinki. Some CBSS countries are presently considering to renew their automatic external dose rate networks. For harmonisation, the major lines will be defined for future automatic external dose rate network. These considerations covers the measurement technique, the quality control, the data transfer technique, the data format and the presentation of the results.

### ***Information exercise***

An exercise on information exchange was organised in November 2003 by STUK. The response from CBSS member states was not very encouraging because only six countries and the EC participated. The results for the participating states were however mostly satisfying.

## **Annex 4: Secretariat of the Council of the Baltic Sea States**

### Annual Report of the Secretariat of the Council of the Baltic Sea States 2003 - 2004

#### **A. Overall activities of the Secretariat**

During the period 2003-2004 the work of the Secretariat has continued under the guidance of the CSO and other governing bodies. Major events regarding the period were the 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Secretariat, which was celebrated in October 2003 in the context of a seminar with the CBSS Chair Ms. Kristiina Ojula as the key-note speaker; the 5-year review of the Secretariat conducted by consultant ADLittle during November 2003 – April 2004; and preparations of the 5<sup>th</sup> BSS Summit in the aftermath of the EU enlargement on May 1, 2004.

While keeping the budgetary ceiling on the level of the previous period the deficit of the budget year 2002 was turned to surplus in the budget year 2003, due to continued attention to cost-efficiency and budgetary discipline.

There were no changes in the personnel under the period. The de facto consolidation of the work of the core Secretariat and the specialized units has continued. Regarding the growing workload the focus has been on efficient servicing of the Presidency, the CSO and other CSO working groups and related structures. Improvement in the application of IT- and information activities has been accomplished.

#### **B. CBSS Structures and Working Bodies Serviced by the Secretariat**

##### **Committee of Senior Officials (CSO)**

The Secretariat has continued to provide technical and administrative support to the CSO Chairman and the CSO Troika in the performance of their duties. Nine meetings of the CSO and one meeting of the CSO Troika were serviced by the Secretariat. The Secretariat also provided support for the CSO Chairman in the preparation and execution of several other meetings, including i.a. the 3<sup>rd</sup> Coordination meeting of heads of Baltic Sea regional organisations and the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the chairs of senior officials groups of the Arctic Council, Barents Euro-Arctic Council, The Nordic Council of Ministers and the CBSS. The Secretariat continued to perform a liaison function for the CBSS Presidency in contacts with a wide range of actors, including CBSS member-states and the European Commission. In line with the agreement establishing the Secretariat and in accord with other relevant CBSS documents, the Secretariat also served as a focal point for the full range of CBSS structures and working bodies, CBSS partner organisations and special participants as well as with the CBSS observer states and relevant international organisations such as the UN, the OSCE and the Council of Europe. In concordance with the Presidency, the Secretariat has continued to develop and improve the implementation of the CBSS Information Strategy, primarily via the CBSS website and the CBSS official newsletter *Baltinfo* and via participation in various seminars and conferences as well as via contacts with relevant media and academic communities. During the last year, major technical and substantive innovations included the launch of the CSO and

WGEC/WGDI/WGNRS extranets, the launch of a new Baltic Sea Region Internet Portal and the complete redesign of the CBSS Brochure.

### **Group of Senior Energy Officials (BASREC-GSEO)**

By securing the continuity of the operation of the BASREC Secretariat in the CBSS Secretariat the project maintained the co-operation momentum achieved in the BASREC organisation through the GSEO. This period saw the agreement on and putting into place of the work plan for the period 2003-2005. Four of BASREC's five working groups, gas, electricity, bioenergy and climate change worked actively to put into place their new work plans, and to focus these appropriately. The secretariat drove this process on proactively. Discussions on future work were held in Copenhagen, August 2003. Contacts with other organisations, Energy Charter, EBRD and EIB were upheld. Close contact was held with foreign ministries of the region and the European Commission, to ensure that Northern Dimension policy and discussions on the future of the CBSS suitably reflected BASREC positions.

The concrete actions during the contract period concerned included the support for the GSEO meetings in Tallinn, (June), Goteborg (September) and Riga (December) as well as support for the Testing Ground Agreement signature in Goteborg (September).

Furthermore, a Project Team was initiated, to look into and actively seek funding for BASREC projects from a number of sources, including NCM and EU funds. Visits were made to Brussels in this context.

The Secretariat continued disseminating publications and other information resulting from the BASREC2002 project, developing the web-site, undertaking the financial and substantial reporting of the work done, and enhancing the budgetary and substantial framework plans for BASREC's activity period of 2003-2005. Coordination was undertaken with NCM on several issues, including financing and IPR.

### **Baltic 21 Senior Officials Group (SOG-BALTIC 21)**

Following the provisions for reporting to the Political level in the Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea region adopted by the CBSS in 1998 the Baltic 21 Unit has developed and disseminated on the Baltic 21 web site an interactive indicator and assessment report displaying the Regions progress towards sustainable development.

The Baltic 21 Unit has organized meetings of, and provided secretarial services to an ad hoc Baltic 21 Working Group on Policies and Strategies II (WGPS II) that was established by the Baltic 21 SOG. As requested by the Baltic 21 main document adopted by the CBSS, the report "Five Years of Regional Progress toward Sustainable Development" as well as a draft new mandate for the coming five-year period has been submitted to the 5<sup>th</sup> Baltic Sea States Summit.

The Baltic 21 Unit completed the implementation of the Baltic 21 priority project "Project development and fundraising", which was started in 2002 and was financed by a voluntary contribution from Germany.

The unit continued the implementation of the Baltic 21 priority project "Public awareness and monitoring of the Baltic 21 process" by means of a consultant. The consultant has primarily been occupied with the production of the Baltic 21 information material, in particular the Baltic 21 Newsletter of which one was issued during the fall 2003 and one during the first half of 2004. Other products are: an information flyer about the report "Towards sustainable development in the Baltic Sea Region", a folder with info sheets

presenting all Baltic 21 Sectors, Spatial Planning and Joint Actions, and a CD-ROM including all information material produced so far.

The unit has developed with launched a comprehensive, informative and technically upgraded Baltic 21 web site, at [www.baltic21.org](http://www.baltic21.org).

The production and distribution of all information material was financially supported by Sweden (funding for a period of two years was provided in 2002) and the European Commission, except for the newsletter (funded through member countries' contributions and the EC grant) and the Baltic 21 folder with info sheets (funded by the four International Financial Institutions that are members of Baltic 21).

The Baltic 21 unit participated in the Baltic Sea NGO forum and gave a presentation.

The Unit continued to provide technical and administrative support the Baltic 21 SOG and the SOG Bureau. The unit participated in and contributed to a number of meetings and developed ca. 50 documents for them.

The Baltic 21 Unit also supported the Baltic 21 Sectors and Joint Actions and participated in a number of meetings organized by them.

### **Working Group on Democratic Institutions (WGDI)**

In 2003-2004 the Working Group was chaired by Lithuania. During this chairmanship the WGDI held four meetings: 10 September 2003 in Tallinn, 2 December 2003 in Vilnius, 29 March 2004 in Vilnius, and 14 May 2004 in Vilnius (Secretary: Senior Adviser Ms. Gry Tina Tinde). Two seminars were arranged: one on free media, its responsibilities and influence for the development of civil society, held on 3 December 2003, and another on trafficking in human beings, especially in women and children, held on 30 March 2004. In connection with the seminar on trafficking, the Secretariat prepared a survey on legislation on trafficking in all CBSS member states (Senior Advisor Ms. Gry Tina Tinde participated).

During the Lithuanian chairmanship the WGDI also focused on issues such as:

- The future work of the WGDI after the closure of the office of the CBSS Commissioner on Democratic Development
- Civil society, NGO participation
- Ombudsmen activities
- Cross-border-cooperation

The European Commission and Iceland have not participated in WGDI meetings during the reporting period.

### **Working Group on Economic Co-operation (WGEC)**

The Secretariat has been providing full technical assistance to five regular meetings of the WGEC (Rakvere, 18-19 September 2003; Narva, 20-21 November 2003; Pedase, 15-16 January 2004, Tallinn, 18-19 March 2004 and Pärnu, 17-19 May 2004) and to one additional WGEC session (Copenhagen 1 April 2004) (Secretary: Senior Advisor Mr. Philipp Saprykin).

Secretariat was substantially involved in the preparations to the Ministerial meeting on Trade and Economy held 19-20 April in Tallinn, including arranging a brief on the Ministerial for representatives of the CBSS observer-states, which was held on 7 April in Stockholm. Upon request by the WGEC Chair, Secretariat was assisting in the preparations to and follow-up of the Brainstorming meeting with business sector organizations on 1 December 2003 in Stockholm, as well as to the Expert meeting on

“Joint Investment Area” held 2 March 2004 in Stockholm. Following the request by the CSO Chairman, Secretariat was involved in the preparations and a technical assistance for the meeting of the CSO Chairman with the Chairmen of the CBSS working bodies and structures dealing with economy, held on 9 October 2003 in Tallinn.

Apart from the normal service, upon request of the WGEN Chair, the Secretariat was involved in preparations of the following documents for both the Chair and Working Group:

- History Table of WGEN work since its establishment;
- WGEN draft comments to the draft NDAP 2004-06;
- Table on Economic profile of the WGs for the meeting of the Chairmen of WGs dealing with Economy on 9 October 2003, Tallinn;
- Guidelines, Future formula for CBSS after EU enlargement – outcome of the meeting of the Chairmen of WGs dealing with Economy on 9 October 2003, Tallinn;
- Memo, SME Portal [www.balticmarket.org](http://www.balticmarket.org) for the WGEN meeting in Narva (20-21 November 2003);
- Chairman’s Conclusions: Brainstorming with private sector (BAC, BCCA, BASTUN) 1 December 2003 in Stockholm;
- Memo on Ministerial meetings and activities in Pskov and Novgorod regions for the WGEN trips to Russian North-West regions, 9 December 2003;
- Sketch of the draft Progress Report on MAP with recommendations for WGEN, 17 December 2003;
- Memo, meeting with Swedish Customs DG Mr. K. Jansson, 13 February 2004, Strömsborg;
- Memo for WGEN Chair on relations CBSS – BEAC, 26 February 2004;
- Draft Chairman’s Conclusions from the Expert meeting on JIA, 2 March 2004, Stockholm;
- Draft Special Report on achievements for the V BS Summit;
- Report from the Ministerial meeting on Trade and Economy, 19-20 April 2004, Tallinn;

Secretariat continued to be a contact point with the VINN Company until the expiration of the contract on the maintenance of the SME Gateway [www.balticmarket.org](http://www.balticmarket.org) (end March 2004). At present the management of the Portal was taken over by Germany.

Secretariat continued the work on upgrading the content of the Survey on Administrative Regulations on Corruption in CBSS member-states.

Secretariat continued to liaise with the Baltic Sea Customs Conference, Procedural Working Group, especially in connection with the information on the Laufzettel Project on border-crossing measurements, as well as with other business related organizations such as BAC, BCCA, BASTUN, CBSS/BEAC Customs-Liaison Committee, as well as with the Task Force on Standards and Conformity Assessment (including assistance in the preparations of the Final Report of the TF).

### **Working Group on Nuclear Radiation Safety (WGNRS)**

In October 2003 Germany took over the chairmanship for three years. During the 2003-2004 activity period two meetings were held: On 23-24 October in Tallinn and on 25-26 March 2004 in Copenhagen. (Secretary: Senior Adviser Ms. Gry Tina Tinde). A workshop was organised on “Stabilisation of Data Exchange” on 8 December 2003 in Copenhagen, and an Expert Meeting on External Dose Rate Measurements was held on 18-19 March 2004 in Helsinki. An exercise on information exchange took place in November 2003.

The European Commission and Russia have not participated in WGNRS meetings during the working period.

## **Working Group for Co-operation on Children at Risk (WGCC) & the Children's Unit**

### **Meetings organised by the WGCC and the Children's Unit:**

The activities during the year have been in line with the agreed priorities and with the activity plan adopted at the meeting of the Working Group in Sigulda, Latvia in May 2003.

The Working Group for Cooperation on Children at Risk has met twice during the year: Copenhagen in October 2003 and Vilnius in April 2004 (Secretary: Head of Children's Unit Mr. Lars Lööf).

The WGCC and the Children's Unit have organised one meeting of the National Coordinators and Competence Centres in Helsinki in June 2004.

The WGCC and the Children's Unit have in co-operation with and support from the Estonian Ministry of Social Affairs and in co-operation with Tartu Child Support Centre organised a meeting with researchers involved in the research on young persons' experiences of and attitudes toward child sexual abuse in Tartu, Estonia in December 2003.

The WGCC and the Children's Unit have, with support from the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, organised the first meeting of the National Contact Points on unaccompanied and trafficked children in Stockholm in December 2003.

In co-operation with and through support from the Norwegian Ministry for Child and Family Affairs the second meeting of the National Contact Points was held in Oslo in May 2004.

The WGCC and the Children's Unit were co-organisers of the WGDI – WGCC seminar on trafficking in human beings with special emphasis on legal issues, held in Vilnius in March 2004.

### **Meetings organised in co-operation with partners:**

The WGCC and the Children's Unit supported the organisers of the "NGO-conference on separated and trafficked children, best practices and co-operation" held in Vilnius in September 2003 through financial support from the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

The WGCC and the Children's Unit co-organised and chaired the VIP (Victim Identification Project) dissemination meeting held in Stockholm in October 2003. The meeting was financed through the EU Daphne programme.

The WGCC and the Children's Unit co-organised together with the Council of Europe one of the workshops at the conference "Internet with a Human Face – A Common Responsibility" held in Warsaw in March 2004.

### **Plenary presentations:**

The WGCC and the Children's Unit participated with plenary presentations at a number of international and regional conferences:

- Transnational Conference on Domestic Violence, Kiel, Germany.
- Trafficking of Children, Seminar Malmö, Sweden.
- Conference: "Internet with a Human Face – A Common Responsibility". Warsaw.
- Children at Risk. Seminar, Vilnius.
- International meeting on the rights of the child organised by the Swedish Barnombudsman, Stockholm.
- COPINE Conference: Psychological and Legal Issues of Internet Abuse Images. Cork, Ireland.
- Presentations of the regional co-operation were also made at a numerous other occasions.

## **B.II. CBSS Working Bodies served on an ad-hoc basis by the Secretariat**

### **Senior Officials on Information Society (SOIS)**

The Secretariat has been providing technical assistance to two regular SOIS meetings (Vilnius, 20 October 2003 and Riga, 24 April 2004) (Secretary: Senior Advisor Mr. Philipp Saprykin). Secretariat was involved in the process of preparations of the papers for the V Baltic Sea Summit, including draft NeDAP 2005-06, a draft Statement by the Heads of Government and insertion for the Draft Chairman's Conclusions. Upon request by the Chair, Secretariat has also prepared the following papers and reports for SOIS:

SOIS comments to the draft NDAP 2004-06, mid August 2003;

Interim Report on Implementation of NeDAP for 2003, December 2003;

Report on NeDAP Action Lines activities, December 2003;

Memo on the meeting with NCM Secretary General, Mr. Per Unkel, on NCM-SOIS relationship, 10 March 2004;

Comments to the draft NeDAP 2005-06, for the SOIS meeting in Riga, 23 April 2004;

Secretariat was instrumental in conducting consultations with the NCM officials on possible participation of the NCM in the new NeDAP as a full member.

### **Ad-Hoc Working Group on Transport**

Secretariat continued liaising with the WGT Chairman, and, upon requests of the CSO Chairman, was circulating relevant information for the WGT members. Secretariat together with the WGEN Chairman attended the Northern Dimension Logistic Forum 2-3 October 2003 in Kotka/Hamina/Koulova, preparing talking points for the Chair and a Report on the meeting (Senior Advisor Mr. Philipp Saprykin).

## **C. Other organisations, conferences and meetings to which the Secretariat has made substantive contributions**

### **NCM**

Secretariat assisted the Estonian Presidency in attending the NCM Conference on Euroregions (based on the NCM project on Adjacent Areas) held 16-18 June 2003 in Tartu (Estonia) by preparing a draft speech and a report from the meeting (Senior Advisor Mr. Philipp Saprykin). Secretariat held several working meetings with the NCM Secretariat on developing a pilot project on Cross-Border co-operation in the region (2 February and 11 May 2004 in Copenhagen).

### **CPMR- Baltic Sea Commission**

Secretariat assisted the CSO Chairman in attending the 9<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the Baltic Sea Commission on 3-5 June in Schwerin (Germany), including preparation of the Talking points and Report from the meeting (Senior Advisor Mr. Philipp Saprykin). During 2003-04 Secretariat had several working meeting with the BSC President Mr. Andres Gustâv and his Deputy Mr. Tommy Kalsson (26 November 2003 in Stockholm, 14 April 2004 in Solna, and 28 April in Stockholm). The Memos from the meetings were circulated to parties concerned in due course.

### **Baltic Sea NGO Forum**

The theme of the IV Baltic Sea NGO Forum, held on 16-17 April in Pärnu, Estonia, was "Challenges for Baltic Sea Civil Society in a Changing Europe". Since the NGOs in the region cover areas that are at the centre of CBSS priorities and projects, the Secretariat and the specialised units have been involved in the NGO Forum preparations in various ways. These include participation in the Preparatory Committee (it changed its name to the Consultative Committee in 2004) (Senior Advisor Ms. Gry Tina Tinde participated), liaison with NGOs in member states and working directly with NGOs on subject matters. Three Secretariat staff members participated in the forum at Pärnu (Director Mr. Hannu Halinen, Senior Advisor Ms. Gry Tina Tinde and Head of the B21 Unit Mr. Marek Maciejowski). The Advisor to the BSPC Rapporteur on Legislation Related to NGOs also participated in the forum (Advisor Ms. Sophie Levasseur). The May *Baltinfo* issue included a report from the forum and an interview with Arnold Rüütel, President of Estonia, on civil society issues.

### **CBSS Commissioner on Democratic Development**

The Commissioner participated in the December 2003 CSO meeting and outlined her final report. As per the decision made at the Pori Ministerial meeting in June 2003 the Commissioner's office was closed on 31 December 2003 and the website with all its contents was transferred to the CBSS website. The Final Report of the Commissioner is available on the website. A farewell interview with the Commissioner was published in the January issue of *Baltinfo*. The Expert Group on Pre-trial Detention that the Commissioner initiated has been taken under the auspices of the WGDI. The WGDI has recommended that the BSPC follow up on the Commissioner's good governance seminars. The WGDI has recommended that the CBSS annual meetings of ombudsmen continue and that each Presidency is responsible for holding the meeting.

### **The EUROBALTIC Programme**

This civil protection programme has received Interreg-funding from the EU for 2003-2005 and from CBSS countries. The project will lead to improved abilities in protecting human life and the environment as well as cultural heritage, and promote sustainable development of safe communities in the Baltic Sea region. Five work packages include the role of non-governmental actors, transnational, cross-sectoral and multi-level co-operation; IT technologies, and training systems. Activities consist of inter alia research, surveys, pilot projects, workshops/seminars, training and exercises, and action plans and handbooks. In April 2004 the programme launched a website: <http://eurobaltic.srv.se/>.

### **BSSSC**

Secretariat assisted the CSO Chairman in attending the XI BSSSC Conference (23-25 October, St.-Petersburg) by preparing talking points and a report from the event.

#### **UBC**

Secretariat assisted the CSO Chairman in attending the VII UBC General Conference (16-19 October, Klaipeda) by preparing talking points and reporting on the outcome of the event. Secretariat also supported the CSO Chairman in preparing and carrying out a brief on the Cross-Border Co-operation initiative in CBSS, for the UBC 39 Executive Board meeting on 5-7 March 2004, Vaasa (Finland).

### **CLRAE**

The Secretariat continued liaising with the Council of Europe Congress of Local and Region Authorities of Europe. Upon the invitation by CLRAE, Secretariat supported the CSO Chairman, who has attended the Conference on the Role of Baltic Local Authorities in Responding to Major Oil Spills held in Helsinki, 9-10 February 2004, preparing draft speech and reporting on the outcome of the Conference.

## **B7 Network**

The Secretariat continued liaising with the Baltic Sea Seven Islands Co-operation network. Secretariat has prepared a speech for the CSO Chairman to address the B7 Annual Conference held, 4 December 2003 in Hiiumaa (Estonia).

## **EuroFaculty-Kaliningrad**

The Secretariat has continued its participation in the work of the CBSS Expert group for EF-Kaliningrad, which monitors the implementation of the project, participating in the meetings and preparing reports, maintaining contacts with parties involved in or related to the project, including arranging the CBSS Observer-States briefing, held on 10 March 2004 in Stockholm. The May Baltinfo issue included an interview with Ms. Vera Zabolotkina, Vice-rector of Kaliningrad State University on achievements of EF-Kaliningrad project during the first Phase and its role for higher education reform in Russia. The Secretariat contributed to the preparation of a special mission which task would be to study the possibilities of establishing a new EuroFaculty project in Pskov.

## **Baltic Sea Secretariat for Youth Affairs**

The Secretariat has continued its contacts with the Baltic Sea Secretariat for Youth Affairs and has monitored developments of the co-operation among the youth organisations in the Baltic Sea region.

## **Other Business**

The Secretariat has continued its cooperation with **Baltic Sea Monitoring Group on Heritage Co-operation** and **Ars Baltica Organising Committee**. The Secretariat participated in the 6<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Baltic Sea States Ministers of Culture in Saint-Petersburg, 1- 3 December 2003 (Senior Advisor Ms. Rasa Kairiene). The report from the conference was published in February Baltinfo issue. The Secretariat has been collecting and networking information about the co-operation in the field of culture in other regions around the Baltic Sea. The Second meeting on Cultural Co-operation in the Northern Dimension was held on May 11 2004 in Stockholm. The meeting was called jointly by the NCM and CBSS. The report from the meeting was presented for the CSO. The Secretariat was active in promoting the Baltic Sea Festival as an instrument for cultural co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region.

The Secretariat has continuing its liaison with **Task Force on Communicable Disease Control** and a new established **Partnership in Public Health and Social Well-being**, collecting and facilitating the exchange of information in this field. The Secretariat participated in the First Meeting of the Committee of Senior Representatives (CSR) of the Partnership and provided information for the CSR related with the establishment of its Secretariat.

Following the request by the CSO Chairman, the Secretariat compiled a Comparative Table on activities of Regional Organisations in the Baltic Sea Area, (December 2003).

Secretariat drafted for the CSO Chairman talking points for the International Conference to mark HELCOM's 30 Anniversary held 22-24 March 2004 in Riga.

## **D. Information Strategy, Baltinfo and Web pages**

To mark the occasion of the 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the CBSS Secretariat in October 2003, the information tools of the Secretariat have been thoroughly reviewed and updated:

### ***D. I. The CBSS information Brochure***

The Secretariat produced in October 2003 a 28 pages information brochure “*Council of the Baltic Sea States – Innovative Cooperation for a Dynamic Region*” describing the history and the organization of the Council

### ***D. II. The CBSS newsletter BALTINFO***

The Secretariat produced 9 issues (including July 2003 and June 2004) of the monthly CBSS Newsletter BALTINFO, of an average size of 10 pages and circulated them to approximately 1.000 subscribers with another 500-800 issues distributed each month at various conferences, seminars and other events.

The Baltinfo has undergone a thorough redesign in order to be harmonized with the CBSS brochure and Website and since the February 2004 edition; the newsletter was published for the first time in colour and was also distributed in electronic format to about 800 registered users.

The Newsletter is posted on the CBSS website [www.cbss.st](http://www.cbss.st) and on the Baltic Sea Region Portal [www.balticsea.net](http://www.balticsea.net).

### ***D. III. The CBSS Websites***

The structure of the CBSS website has been redesigned to be mirroring the structure of the information brochure. Hundreds of final statements, reports of sectoral ministerial meetings and annual reports of CBSS Working Bodies have been scanned and published on the website between October 2003 and June 2004 to complete the document section of the site.

The calendar of events of the Website, updated daily, remained very comprehensive and nuanced, reinforcing the Secretariat’s role as a focal point for Baltic Sea regional cooperation and providing a useful tool for professionals working in the field.

The Childcentre web site has continuously during the year been updated and used. The monthly increase of visitors to the site is approximately 10%, with a repeat visitor rate of about 35%. The closed part of the site now has around 200 professional users and the discussion forums have been used to obtain information on a national and on a regional basis. The Childcentre web site is updated by the National Coordinators in each of the 11 countries in the co-operation and by the Head of Unit. The latter is also in charge of technical changes to the site.

#### ***D. IV. The CBSS Extranet***

In September 2003 the Extranet function of the website was launched in Tallinn. The Extranet function has become a very important tool for the CBSS officials and all important documents for the work of the Council are now available on the secure restricted section of the CBSS website.

#### ***D. V. Lectures, Conferences and Seminars***

In the framework of implementation of the Information Strategy in accordance with the mandate, Secretariat staff members delivered lectures at a number of meetings and conferences. A template PowerPoint presentation which design has been aligned with the CBSS website and newsletter has been produced by the Secretariat in order to present a clearer and harmonized picture of the Council and to facilitate the work of the Senior Advisors when presenting the organization.

During the past year, the Secretariat hosted various meetings, conferences and seminars for foreign visitors and organisations. The highlight of the season was the Secretariat seminar "*Civil Security Challenges in the Baltic Sea Region*" featuring Mr. Alyson BAILES, Director of SIPRI, Christer PURSIANEN, Senior Research Fellow at NORDREGIO and officials from the Swedish Defence Ministry in Stockholm on 1 March 2004.

#### ***D. VI. Public Queries and Year Books***

The Secretariat continued to provide factual information about the CBSS and its activities upon request of academics, officials from member state ministries or agencies etc. The Secretariat also updated and provided information to European, American and international yearbooks and encyclopaedias.

#### ***D. VII. The Baltic Sea Regional Portal***

The Secretariat has launched on 16 April 2004 the new Baltic Sea Region Portal [www.balticsea.net](http://www.balticsea.net). This new portal is a platform providing a single point-of-entry with easy access to all major Baltic Sea regional organizations. It contains up-to-date, accurate information on events, news and contact details for the people making it happen in the Baltic Sea Region.

## E. Administrative Issues

### Staff

The following 12 staff members are employed at the CBSS Secretariat (in chronological employment order):

Secretary: **Claire Nyström** (from 1 September 1998)  
Deputy Director: **Alar Olljum** (from 1 September 2001)  
Senior Advisor: **Rasa Kairiene** (from 15 September 2001)  
Director of the Secretariat: **Hannu Halinen** (from 15 September 2002)  
Senior Advisor: **Philipp Saprykin** (from 16 September 2002)  
Senior Advisor: **Gry Tina Tinde** (from 15 January 2003)  
Senior Advisor of the Baltic 21 Unit: **Lars Westermark** (from 12 November 2001)  
Head of the Baltic 21 Unit: **Marek Maciejowski** (from 1 July 2002)  
Senior Advisor/Head of the Children's Unit: **Lars Lööf** (from 12 June 2002)  
Senior Advisor of the Children's Unit: **Eva Ekmebag** (on a 2-year secondment from the Swedish Foreign Ministry from 22 April 2003)  
Head of Energy Unit: **Janis Folkmanis** (from 22 April 2003)  
Secretary/receptionist: **Ligia Broström** (from 7 July 2003)

The following persons were hired locally on a temporary basis at the Secretariat during the past year:

Legal Advisor **Jutta Karlsson** (from 1 September 2003 until 28 November 2003, from 9 January 2004 until 8 March 2004 and 22 March 2004 until 21 May 2004)  
Information Strategy Officer **Didrik de Schaetzen** (from 1 May 2003 until 31 December 2003 and from 1 January 2004 until 30 June 2004)

### Accounting and Budget

The budget of the Secretariat for the financial year 2004 was adopted by the CSO by silent procedure on 20 June 2003, in accordance with the relevant decisions taken at its meeting in Pori on 9-10 June 2003, with a total spending of € 850.000. Additional budget was adopted by the CSO at its meeting in Klaipeda on 15-16 October 2003 for the 5-Year Review of the CBSS Secretariat with a total amount of EUR 100.000. The financial accounts for the year 2003 were finalised in February 2004 and audited by the Swedish National Audit Office in March 2004. The Audit Report was submitted to the Secretariat on 30 March 2004. The CSO took note of the report at its meeting in Pärnu on 14-15 April 2004.

The budget for the energy unit as the secretariat of BASREC was approved and contract signed by the Nordic Council of Ministers on 23 June 2003 for the year 2003.

The SOG, at its 18<sup>th</sup> meeting April 24-25 2003 Turku, Finland approved the budget for the Baltic 21 Unit for the year 2004 with a total spending of €408.665. On top of this, Sweden agreed to provide a host country contribution.

The Budget for the Children's Unit for the year 2004 was approved at the WGCC meeting in Sigulda, Latvia on 27 May 2003. The scale for contributions has been calculated according to the regular contribution scale used within the CBSS.

### ***Financial Contributions***

At the time of closing the financial accounts for the year 2003, all CBSS member states had paid their contributions to the CBSS Secretariat in full.

In 2003, the Nordic Council of Ministers provided funding for BASREC activities, including the energy unit of the Secretariat.

As regards the main budget of the Baltic 21 Unit, during 2003 all countries except Russia paid their contributions to its FY 2003 budget. Additionally, Sweden made a host country contribution of SEK 715,000.

As regards voluntary contributions, Sweden and the European Commission financially supported the Baltic 21 priority project "Public awareness and monitoring of the Baltic 21 process" – Sweden contributed SEK 798,247 for 2002 and 2003, the EC € 100,000 for the period May 2002 through December 2003 (final instalment of € 40,000 has been received in 2004). Germany contributed SEK 85,321 as the final instalment for the Baltic 21 priority project "Project development and fundraising". Furthermore, Germany contributed SEK 89,950 and Finland SEK 91,015 to support the work of the ad hoc Baltic 21 Working Group on Policy and Strategy. International Financial Institutions that are members of Baltic 21 contributed funds for the production and distribution of the Baltic 21 folder with info sheets: EBRD - 15,039, EIB - 14,979, NEFCO - 15,039, and NIB - 15,039 (all figures in SEK). Finally, Sweden transferred at the end of 2003 the first instalment amounting to SEK 200,000 as her a voluntary contribution to support the continued implementation of the Baltic 21 priority project "Public awareness and monitoring of the Baltic 21 process" during 2004.

In accordance with the decision taken by the CSO at the inclusion of the Children's Unit in the secretariat of the CBSS, contributions to the budget of the Children's Unit are voluntary. During 2003 all countries except Latvia, Poland and Russia contributed to the budget. During 2004 all countries except Latvia and Russia has up until May 30th contributed to the budget. The Swedish Ministry for Social Affairs has during the period contributed with the rent for the premises and with the overhead costs shared by all units and the secretariat.

## **Internships**

During the past year, the CBSS Secretariat hosted six interns:

Mr. **Henry Varga** worked from 11 August until 31 October 2003. During this time, he was specifically tasked to look into public information activities at the Secretariat. He supported to prepare a PowerPoint presentation on history, organization and challenges of CBSS and a new CBSS brochure, to improve the CBSS website and to prepare a programme on the occasion of the 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the official Inauguration of the Secretariat.

Ms. **Sophie Levasseur** worked from 25 August until 3 October 2003. During this time, she studied a status of NGOs and their influence on policy-making in the Baltic Sea Region and in this context prepared a survey of NGO legislation in the CBSS Member States.

Ms. **Gesche Clausen** worked from 1 October 2003 until 31 March 2004. During her stay at the secretariat she assisted Baltic 21 and Children's Unit. In particular she supported Baltic 21 by preparing two final reports: to the EC on the project "Towards sustainable development in the Baltic Sea Region – Support to Baltic 21" and to the German Federal Ministry of Environment on the project "Assistance to Project Development and Fund-raising". For the Children's Unit she was involved in preparing, assisting at and following-up "The National Contact Point meeting on Unaccompanied and Trafficked children in the Baltic Sea Region" and also prepared an overview on national legislation combating trafficking in human beings, with special emphasis on children.

Ms. **Hilde Engelen** worked from 3 November until 19 December 2003. During this time, she looked into issues such as the role and place of the CBSS within the Baltic Sea Region. In this context she prepared a report related to her PhD thesis "The Council of the Baltic Sea States: Its Place and Its Role within the Baltic Sea Area".

Ms. **Christiane Kasack** worked from 7 January until 27 February 2004. Based on her familiarity with parliamentary work due to earlier internships, she conducted a scientific study on improving the interaction between the Council of the Baltic Sea States and the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference. She presented the study in an in-house seminar and also prepared an article for the CBSS Baltinfo on the study.

Ms. **Maria Kekki** started from 1 March and will stay until 30 July 2004. During this time, she supported Baltic 21 unit in the preparation of the new website and in the senior officials group meeting in Vilnius. Further Ms. Kekki has assisted with Baltinfo newsletter as well as prepared various memos from the meetings and seminars in and outside of the Secretariat.