



Danish Presidency 2008–2009



THE 17TH YEAR OF THE COUNCIL'S ACTIVITY 2008–2009

Annual Report

from the Committee of Senior Officials

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The Committee of Senior Officials (CSO)

Danish Presidency

Chairman – Ambassador Karsten Petersen, Denmark
Danish Delegate – Ms Louise Holmsgaard

The Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) consists of officials appointed by each Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Member States and a representative of the European Commission. The Director General of the CBSS Secretariat and the Secretary to the Committee are also both present at the meetings. Countries may appoint additional delegates as appropriate to attend a specific meeting which happens on a frequent basis.

During the Danish Presidency, the CSO consisted of: Mr. Karsten Petersen, Chairman, Ms. Louise Holmsgaard, MFA of Denmark, Ms. Pille Kesler, MFA of Estonia, Mr. Kalle Kankaanpää, MFA Finland, Mr. Mikko Hirvi, MFA Finland, Mr. Jan-Axel Voss, MFA of Germany, Mr. Kornelius Sigmundsson, MFA of Iceland, Ms. Anda Orchard, MFA of Latvia, Mr. Dainis Garancs, MFA of Latvia, Ms. Kornelija Jurgaitiene, MFA of Lithuania, Mr. Neris Germanas, MFA of Lithuania, Mr. Dag Briseid, MFA of Norway, Mr. Jaroslaw Kurek, MFA of Poland, Mr. Alexander Sverchkov, MFA of the Russian Federation, Mr. Alexander Shapel, MFA of the Russian Federation, Mr. Timofey Kunitskiy, MFA of the Russian Federation, Mr. Sten Luthman, MFA of Sweden, Mr. Petteri Vuorimaki & Mr. Lars Grønberg, European Commission, Dr. Gabriele Kötschau, Director General, and Mr. Bjarke W. Bøtcher, Senior Adviser at the CBSS Secretariat and Secretary to the CSO.

The CSO convened for 9 meetings during the reporting period. The meetings took place on the following dates: Copenhagen, 11–12 September 2008; Stockholm, 20–21 October 2008; Copenhagen, 6–7 December 2008; Brussels 27–28 January 2009, Copenhagen, 9–10 March 2009; Copenhagen 29–30 April 2009, Copenhagen 18–19 May 2009; Copenhagen, 2 June 2009 and Copenhagen, 29 June 2009.

Activities of the Committee of Senior Officials

1. INTRODUCTION

The Annual Report covers activities conducted during the Danish Presidency of the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS), 1 July 2008–30 June 2009. In its capacity as the managing body of the CBSS in-between the Ministerial Sessions, the CSO ensures the implementation of decisions emanating from the Baltic Sea States Summits and the CBSS Ministerial Sessions. Furthermore, the CSO monitors the functioning of the four CBSS expert bodies (the Working Group on Democratic Institutions; the Working Group on Economic Cooperation, the Expert Group on Nuclear and Radiation Safety and the Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings with a focus on adults), the work of other CBSS structures and bodies, as well as Baltic Sea cooperation in general.

The CSO is assisted by the Permanent International Secretariat in Stockholm. After the decision of the Heads of Government at the 3rd Baltic Sea States Summit in Kolding Denmark, 2000, as also reflected in the CBSS' Terms of Reference, the CBSS encompasses all multilateral intergovernmental regional cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region.

Ambassador Karsten Petersen of the Danish Ministry for Foreign Affairs chaired all meetings of the CSO during the Danish Presidency, in the cities of Copenhagen, Stockholm and Brussels. The CSO was instrumental also in the preparation of and follow up to the CBSS Political Directors meeting on 9 March 2009 in Copenhagen, as well as for the negotiation of the Declaration and other documents for the 15th CBSS Ministerial Session on 3–4 June 2009 held in the Danish town of Elsinore.

The CSO focused its monitoring and decision making on the five long-term priorities of the CBSS, and within these, on four priority fields of the Danish Presidency, namely energy and climate, safeguarding the environment, empowering youth and enhancing civil security, with a view to achieve common objectives, greater visibility and concrete results.

2. IMPLEMENTING CBSS REFORM

An overarching task of the Danish CBSS Presidency was to implement the reform of the CBSS, as initiated by the CBSS Foreign Ministers at the 14th Ministerial Session held in Malmö, Sweden in June 2007 and laid down by the Reform Declaration endorsed by the 7th Baltic Sea States Summit held in Riga, Latvia in June 2008. As a result of the reform, five long-term priorities for the CBSS were agreed, cf. below.

The reform process implied a need to revise the existing Terms of Reference of the CBSS, the Terms of Reference of the CBSS Secretariat and the Principles and Guidelines for Third Party Participation in CBSS Meetings and Activities. After negotiations on these three documents at the CSO meetings in Copenhagen on 11–12 September 2008 and in Stockholm on 21 October 2008, they were agreed at political level via a written procedure taking effect as of 29th April 2009.

The CSO also discussed and, on 11–12 September 2008, adopted revised Financial Rules of the CBSS Secretariat.

3. REFORMING CBSS WORKING GROUPS

The CSO approved the transformation of the CBSS Working Group on Nuclear and Radiation Safety into a time limited Expert Group, in line with the Riga Declaration on the reform of the CBSS. The CSO had received a proposal to this effect at its meeting on 27 January 2009 from the Chair of the Group. During the Spring of 2009, the CSO discussed an amended mandate for the group, and on 26 March the Committee adopted the Terms of Reference of the now CBSS Expert Group on Nuclear and Radiation Safety (EGNRS).

The CSO were briefed twice on the discussions to either dissolve or transform the Working Group on Economic Cooperation into one or more Expert Group(s), in line with the Riga Reform Declaration. At the first CSO meeting under the Danish Presidency in Copenhagen on 11–12 September 2008, the Chair of the Working Group on Economic Cooperation (WGEC) Mr Bent Lindhardt Andersen informed the CSO that Member States should submit proposals in the shape of a draft mandate for work to be undertaken in the field of economic development. The first draft mandate to be discussed was put forward by Germany and focused on Maritime Economy. Other CBSS member states followed with proposals to set up expert groups on, respectively, Labour Markets and Integration (Finland), Economic Development (Russia), Development of Technology Transfer (Lithuania) and Small & Medium-sized family business (Poland).

At the fourth meeting of the CSO the WGEC Chairman briefed the Committee on the current status of the discussions of the WGEC. The Chairman noted that the Working Group had agreed to look for a concept which would include clearly defined topics and a time limitation, while avoiding overlapping.

Germany put forward a draft proposal for an Expert Group on Maritime Policy which was discussed at CSO level due to its more cross-sectoral policy aspects. At their sixth meeting the CSO decided to launch this Expert Group on Maritime Policy. The Terms of Reference for this group were adopted by the CSO on 2 June 2009.

A proposal to transform the Working Group on Democratic Institutions into an expert group was discussed at length at several CSO meetings, but no consensus was achieved. The Working Group was therefore formally dissolved, while consideration of people to people contacts and the promotion of tolerance will remain on the CSO agenda.

The CBSS Working Group on Cooperation for Children at Risk in the Baltic Sea Region briefed the CSO on its work at the CSO meeting in Copenhagen on 9–10 March, and outlined their decision to transform into an Expert Group, to refocus their mandate and to streamline their fields of priority from five to three to reinforce the focus of the work. The CSO took note of this.

In April 2008, the managing body of the Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea Region, the Senior Officials Group, proposed to the CSO to consider an integration of Baltic 21 and its Lighthouse Projects into the CBSS. Baltic 21 would then function as an Expert Group on Sustainability as of 1 January 2010. The CSO decided to in essence accept this request at their meeting on 2 June. The modalities of the integration and the financial implications thereof have yet to be finalised.

4. STRENGTHENING CBSS PROJECT-ORIENTATION

In the Riga Reform Declaration of 2008, the CBSS decided to become more project oriented and that the CSO should strive to implement this in practice. To this end, the CSO prepared a policy-paper entitled *Guidelines for CBSS Participation in Projects* which was adopted on 22 January 2009 by a silent procedure. These Guidelines are intended to assist the CSO in their decisions on whether the CBSS should participate in a given project, as well as to guide the CBSS Secretariat in the process of project identification, funding and management. The guidelines are intended to be applied flexibly, depending on the concrete proposals, projects and related conditions. They are subject to review and further development by the CSO on the basis of accumulated experience in implementing projects.

At its fifth meeting, the CSO agreed to a proposal from the Chairman to the effect that a two-stage procedure be applied in relation to projects in all the fields of cooperation: Firstly, an expression of interest or a decision of principle should be given to join a particular project so as to mandate the Secretariat to participate in the preparations for the project in question with the view to draft an application. Secondly, a final decision on CBSS participation in a project under preparation should be taken once most or all documents are available.

In this new orientation, the CSO during the Danish Presidency has monitored a variety of projects under the CBSS “umbrella”. Projects can either be totally financed and managed in a CBSS framework or co-financed with other stakeholders with varying financial commitment. Outlined below are key projects in three of the priority areas. Other CBSS projects can be found under the respective reports of specific expert groups or other structures in later chapters of this Annual Report.

In the field of education the CSO had agreed at its meeting on 7 December 2007 to approve a further EuroFaculty project, this time in Pskov, Russia. The EuroFaculty projects are directly financed by the CBSS Member States along with other partners and could be presented as an example of a model CBSS project.

The project has a budget of approximately 1.128 000 EUR of pledged contributions in cash or in kind by each of the CBSS Member States as well as the Nordic Council of Ministers, the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg and the United Kingdom. The duration of the project is from 1 January 2009 till 31 December 2011.

The official launch of the project took place at its Opening Conference held on 30 January 2009 in Pskov. The aim of the EuroFaculty Pskov project is to upgrade university education in Business Economics / Business Administration at the two institutions of higher education: the Pskov State Polytechnic Institute and the (non-state) Pskov Volny Institute.

Additional funds were committed at the first meeting of the CSO by Germany, Norway, Poland and Sweden which agreed that their share of the surplus from the preceding EuroFaculty Project in Kaliningrad could be transferred to the Lead Country account of the forthcoming project in Pskov, while Denmark was ready to consider favourably additional funds for the project.

At the CSO meeting in October 2009, Ambassador Kerstin Asp-Johnsson, Lead Country Representative and Chair of the International Expert Group for the CBSS EuroFaculty in Pskov briefed on the progress of the project. A short briefing was also given at the March meeting. Russia extended an invitation for the CSO to pay a visit to Pskov at an appropriate point of time.

In the field of economic development the CBSS currently participates in the *Baltic Sea Labour Network (BSLN)* project. The BSLN intends to provide a European model for the improvement of interregional labour policy; its Lead Partner is the German Confederation of Trade Unions and it operates in cooperation with three CBSS Strategic Partners, i.e. the Baltic Sea Trade Union Network, the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference and the Baltic Sea Chambers of Commerce Association, as well as with trade unions from the CBSS Member States and other partners representing employers’ organisations, public authorities and research institutions.

Another project currently at the application stage, entitled Creative Across Borders (CAB), is an offshoot of the former Baltic Euroregional Network (BEN) project, which the CSO has followed closely. Surplus funds from the BEN project (130.000 SEK) were requested by the Secretariat and granted by concerned member states to be used for the development and preparation of a project proposal based on the BEN network. The proposal is prepared for the 2nd Call of the EU Baltic Sea Programme in 2009.

The CSO formally decided for the CBSS to join the CAB project proposal at its fifth meeting in Copenhagen on 9–10th March 2009. At the suggestion of the Secretariat, the Secretariat will allot a Senior Adviser part-time as an in-kind contribution to the project. The Chairman noted that individual CSO Members were encouraged to support the project vis-à-vis their respective national member of the BSR Programme Monitoring Committee. The Chairman also concluded that the CSO mandated the CBSS Secretariat to use the remaining funds, provided that the Secretariat informed in advance the five specific donor countries of the intended use of the funds and sought approval.

The main objective of the project is to increase the capacity of cross-border regions in the development of creative industries for socio-economic growth of their territories, especially focusing on possibilities to stimulate the tourist industry. The intended target group would include the business community. Expected results from the project would be an increase in the economic potential of creative industries in the border regions of the Baltic Sea Region and an increase of visibility of creative industries as an economic activity on local, regional, national and the Baltic Sea Region level.

In the field of Civil Protection and Civil Security, the CSO agreed to support the revised application for funding for the Eurobaltic Risk Reduction in City Areas (ERRICA) project. The CSO was briefed on the ERRICA project proposal at its meeting in Brussels on 27 January 2009.

5. REALISING CBSS LONG-TERM PRIORITIES

In the following, some of the activities undertaken during the reporting period, under each of the five agreed long term priorities, will be briefly presented.

- **Environment**, which may include climate change,

This long-term priority has the objective of contributing to an organisational streamlining of the work on environmental protection within relevant CBSS bodies, taking into account efforts by other international organisations in the region.

The Presidency priority field of Energy and Climate had the objective of continuing and strengthening the long-lasting energy cooperation in the region, particularly in order to ensure the integration of energy markets and infrastructure as well as competitive, stable and secure energy supplies, while at the same time combating climate change.

The CSO Chairman attended the 17th Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference held in Visby on 1–2 September 2008 which had the overall theme of Energy and Climate Change.

- **Economic development**, which may include innovation, competitiveness and a favourable business environment, fostering entrepreneurship, cluster development, maritime economy, transport & logistics, research and development, customs cooperation and well-functioning labour markets,

The Committee of Senior Officials monitored proposals for new expert groups in the field of economic cooperation as outlined above and will continue to consider them in consultation with pertinent line ministries.

- **Energy**, which may include energy security, energy efficiency and saving, renewable energy and the impact of energy on the environment,

On 17–18 February 2009 the Baltic Sea Region Energy Cooperation (BASREC) Conference of Ministers was held in Copenhagen. The Chair of the BASREC Group of Senior Energy Officials, Mr Hans Jørgen Koch, Deputy State Secretary in the Danish Energy Agency under the Ministry of Climate and Energy, briefed the CSO on the results of the Ministerial Conference at the CSO meeting on 9–10 March 2009.

The CBSS Secretariat currently offers the managing body of the BASREC free secretarial assistance. At the Copenhagen CSO meeting 11–12 September 2008 it was decided to continue this assistance until the end of the Danish Presidency.

- **Education & culture**, which may include the EuroFaculty concept, student and academic mobility, upgrade of science and research network capacity, cultural heritage, contemporary culture and the promotion of regional identity,

The CSO monitors the progress of the CBSS-financed EuroFaculty Project in Pskov, while the daily management is undertaken by Sweden as the project's Lead Country. The status of the EuroFaculty Pskov project was discussed at the CSO meetings in Stockholm on 21 October 2008 and again in Copenhagen on 9–10 March 2009.

- **Civil security & the human dimension**, which may include the fight against trafficking in human beings, the protection of children's rights, nuclear and radiation safety, civil protection, as well as consumer protection, youth affairs, people-to-people contacts and the promotion of tolerance,

One focus of the Danish Presidency during the reporting period in the field of civil security was put on activities which intend to counteract trafficking in human beings in the Baltic Sea Region. The emphasis was placed upon coordination, the exchange of knowledge and the conduct of preventive and protective activities in cooperation with other important regional and international actors that tackle trafficking.

The Committee of Senior Officials on 11-12 September 2008 met with the Chair of the Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings with a Focus on Adults, Ms Anne Katrine Tholstrup Bertelsen, and were briefed about the five newly adopted strategic activities of the group for the period 2008-10, including the continuation and development of the group's Training Sessions for Diplomatic and Consular Personnel. Three training seminars of consular staff in CBSS Member States took place during the Danish Presidency. The seminars were held in Denmark in November 2008, Estonia in April 2009 and in Iceland May 2009, and the latter as part of the launch of the first Icelandic National Action against Trafficking in Human Beings.

The CSO received, at their meeting on 9 March 2009, information about the recent and upcoming activities of the Baltic Sea Task Force on Organised Crime, as well as on the results of its recent structural reform, from the Chair of the Operative Committee of the Task Force on Organised Crime, Mr Lenno Reimand, Director of Intelligence in the Central Criminal Police of Estonia.

The CSO Chairman addressed the Fifth Meeting of National Contact Points and Experts on Unaccompanied and Trafficked Children in the Baltic Sea Region in Copenhagen on 12 May 2009.

The Baltic Sea NGO Forum, initiated by the CBSS in 2001 and held now for the 8th time, took place in the Danish town of Elsinore on 26 February–1 March 2009 with around 160 participants. The Danish Presidency gave financial support to the event. The Forum was addressed by the CSO Chairman on behalf of the Danish Foreign Minister.

The CSO were briefed on 2–3 December 2008 on the preparations of the Forum by its Coordinator, Mr Jens William Grav, and on 18–19 May 2009 on its results. The CSO proposed to Ministers for the CSO to follow up on the NGO Forum's Declaration during the Lithuanian CBSS Presidency.

The Danish Presidency priority of empowering youth had the objective of providing a forum for all countries of the Baltic Sea region to develop ideas and strategies for youth policy generally and to connect the strategies for youth policy of these countries and to establish current projects.

The CSO Chairman mandated the CBSS Secretariat to give an intervention on his behalf on the occasion of the youth conference entitled Active Citizenship & Environmental Challenges held under Danish Presidency in Copenhagen on 15–16 May 2009, focussing on the importance of raising young people's awareness of the environmental challenges facing the region, and strengthening their ability to address such challenges through exercising their rights and responsibility as active citizens.

6. CONTINUING COOPERATION WITH THIRD PARTIES

The Guidelines and Principles for Third Party Participation in CBSS Activities and Meetings, mentioned were in need of an update in light of the Riga Reform Declaration. Therefore the document was revised by the CSO and subsequently adopted at political level by a written procedure during the Danish Presidency. The document regulates the participation in and inclusion of Strategic Partners and Observer States in CBSS activities. The revised document reflects the decision to merge the categories of Special Participants and Strategic Partner into a single entity of Strategic Partner, and more clearly describes the procedures and responsibilities pertaining to the status of Observer State and Strategic Partner.

During the Danish Presidency, activities were continued, aiming at increasing the levels of collaboration and coordination with other actors in the Baltic Sea Region, and in particular with the Strategic Partners of the CBSS, as well as with other regional councils and initiatives in Europe.

The CBSS Strategic Partners were invited to observe the 15th CBSS Session held in Elsinore on 4 June 2009.

Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference (BSPC)

During the reporting period, the relationship between the CBSS and the BSPC was further strengthened. The CSO Chairman participated at the 17th BSPC Conference in Visby, 1–2 September 2008 and also held an intervention on behalf of the Presidency at the said conference. Following the already established tradition, the Chair of the BSPC Standing Committee was invited to participate at the 15th CBSS Ministerial Session. Further on, the CSO Chairman addressed the Expanded Standing Committee in Brussels on 25 February 2009. The intervention was appreciated by the Committee and it was noted that the cooperation between the two organisations has become even closer and more coordinated. The CBSS Secretariat participated at the Expanded Standing Committee meeting on 29 May 2009 in Warsaw, the Standing Committee meetings on 31 August 2008 in Visby and 21 November 2008 in Copenhagen and the BSPC Secretary level meetings on 20 January 2009 in Lübeck and 25 March 2009 in Warsaw. To enhance the information exchange between both organisations, the CBSS Annual report 2007–2008 was sent to the BSPC.

Regional Councils in the North

On 25 March 2009 the CSO Chairman represented the CBSS at a meeting between the Presidencies and Secretariats of the four regional councils in the North of Europe, the Arctic Council, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, the CBSS and the Nordic Council of Ministers, which took place in Copenhagen.

Baltic Sea States Sub-Regional Cooperation (BSSSC)

On 17–19 September 2008, the Danish CSO Chairman participated in the 16th Baltic Sea States Sub-Regional Cooperation Annual Conference and board meeting held in Kaunas.

Baltic Development Forum (BDF)

The CSO meeting on 2 December 2008 in Copenhagen took place back-to-back with the Baltic Development Forum's Summit. At this meeting, the Strategic Partner ScanBalt gave a presentation of its work. The following day, on 3 December 2008, the Committee convened in the premises of the Öresund Committee, and the Director of the Secretariat of the Öresund Committee gave a briefing on the work of the Committee.

Baltic Sea Trade Union Network (BASTUN)

The CSO discussed, at their meeting in Stockholm on 21 October 2008 and on other occasions, a proposal from the Baltic Sea Trade Union Network (BASTUN) regarding the establishment of an Advisory Committee of Trade Union Representatives as a parallel organisation to the Business Advisory Council (BAC). The proposal argued that the establishment of such a body would give more balanced representation of trade union interests in the CBSS cooperation. However, the CSO considered, firstly, that BASTUN as a Strategic Partner already had the opportunity to voice these interests, and, secondly, that a comparison between BASTUN and the BAC was misleading. A formal letter to this effect to the Chairman of BAC was sent on the 9 June 2009.

The Northern Dimension Partnership on Public Health and Social Well-being (NDPHS)

The current status of the NDPHS Secretariat as a project of the CBSS continued throughout the Danish Presidency and will expire on 6 September 2009.

The expectation is that the temporary project will come to an end as soon as the currently ongoing process regarding the establishment of a legal capacity of the NDPHS Secretariat has been authorised by NDPHS Partners and an NDPHS International Secretariat with its own legal capacity can be established.

The Danish CBSS Presidency represented by Mr Mogens Jørgensen, Head of Division for International Affairs in the Danish Ministry of Health and Prevention addressed the 5th NDPHS Partnership Annual Conference (PAC) held in Ottawa, Canada on 19 November 2008. He reiterated the CBSS' interest in participating and in contributing to the Partnership's activities. The international conference on "Reducing Alcohol Problems in the Baltic Sea Region: Effective Approaches to Tackle Alcohol Related Problems in Local Communities," which was organised jointly by the CBSS and the NDPHS on 12–13 March 2007, in Riga, Latvia, was but one of the activities jointly carried out by CBSS and NDPHS. The CBSS input was also marked by specific activities, such as Children at risk and combating trafficking in human beings. Taking note of the NDPHS evaluation, the CBSS expressed its readiness to support the NDPHS' social well-being activities. The CBSS is already involved in several new project initiatives, such as the *Baltic Sea Labour Network (BSLN)*, a project on youth unemployment and a project idea on commuters, all of which could be of interest for the NDPHS to collaborate closer with the CBSS, and thus enriching the social well-being part of NDPHS' work.

Annual Joint Session with the European Commission

The CSO held its Annual Joint Session with the European Commission in Brussels on 28 January 2009. The Annual Joint Session has become a valuable tradition and provides useful dialogue in order to achieve synergies and to find areas of mutual interest for hands-on cooperation. This year, the session in particular discussed the emerging European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and the implications that its adoption would have in the region.

EU Baltic Sea Strategy

The emerging EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region has been a standing item on each CSO meeting throughout the Danish CBSS Presidency. The European Commission's delegate has kept the CSO updated on the development of the strategy. The CSO Chairman attended the first Stakeholder Conference in Stockholm on 30 September 2008.

The City of Helsinki, the European Commission and the CBSS Secretariat jointly organised the *EU Baltic Sea Region Strategy Roundtable on Safety and Security* held in Helsinki on 8-9 December 2008.

The Secretariat, on behalf of the CSO Chairman, attended several of the other thematic roundtable meetings, which were held in connection with public consultations on the strategy.

The Secretariat also represented the CBSS at the second Stakeholder seminar held in Rostock on 5–6 February 2009.

As the strategy was presented only after the 15th CBSS Ministerial Session, the CSO did not discuss the possible role of the CBSS in the implementation of the strategy in substance.

Other Regional Organisations

To improve coordination between the CBSS and other regional organisations a meeting between the Secretariats of the Central European Initiative (CEI), the Adriatic Ionian Initiative (AII) and the CBSS Secretariat was held on 15 December 2008 in the Italian city of Trieste. The Director General of the CBSS Secretariat briefed the CSO on the results hereof at its meeting in Brussels in January 2009.

On 11–12 June 2009 a representative of the CBSS Secretariat attended a coordination meeting in Trieste with representatives of the CEI, the AII, the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, the Regional Cooperation Council, the South-East European Cooperation Process as well as the European Commission. The CSO received a written briefing on the results hereof.

CBSS Observer States

At the CSO's Annual Consultation with the 7 current CBSS Observer States in Stockholm on 20 October 2008, the CSO and representatives of the Observer States discussed ways of ensuring increased participation of the Observer States in relevant fields of common interest including trafficking in human beings, environment, energy, public health and education. The Observer States were also briefed on the reform process of the CBSS. The representatives from France, Italy, Slovakia, the Netherlands, the Ukraine, the United Kingdom and the United States presented their current contributions to the cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region.

In regard to cooperation with Belarus the CSO discussed a series of proposals, as presented by the Ambassador of Belarus to Sweden, at its meeting in Stockholm held on the 21 October 2008. The CSO noted that Belarus was already taking part in several aspects of the cooperation in the region and was generally knocking on an open door. If Belarus could present additional concrete fields of particular interest to the country, it was encouraged to inform the CSO hereof.

Throughout the Danish Presidency, the CSO discussed applications for Observer Status from the Republic of Belarus, the Republic of Romania and the Kingdom of Spain. The respective applications were reviewed according to the revised Principles and Guidelines for Third Party Participation in CBSS Activities and Meetings. All applications were found eligible according to these principles. At its meeting in Copenhagen on 29–30 April 2009 the CSO decided to recommend to the appropriate level that Belarus, Romania and Spain be welcomed as observers to the Council as of 1 July 2009.

These three countries were, along with the existing Observer States, invited to attend the 15th Ministerial Session in Elsinore, Denmark on 3–4 June 2009, where the formal decision was taken to accord them Observer Status, effective as of 1 July 2009.

7. RESHAPING THE ADMINISTRATION FOR CBSS REFORM

According to the revised *Terms of Reference of the CBSS Secretariat*, as adopted at political level during the Spring of 2009, the position of the Head of the Secretariat in the future will be titled Director General and the contracts for the International Staff will be offered for a period of four years with the possibility of prolongations of up to two years.

Since the Director General, the Deputy Director General and two Senior Advisers were due to leave the Secretariat in the summer of 2009, transitory measures were undertaken by the CSO to prolong exceptionally the contract of the Director General and one of the Senior Advisers for one year, while the positions of Deputy Director General and the other Senior Adviser were advertised for recruitment.

At its meeting in Copenhagen on 11–12 September 2008, the CSO adopted revised Financial Rules of the Secretariat, which defined the rules for replenishments to the Working Capital Fund and set a ceiling for this fund.

The Secretariat's budget for 2010, as adopted by the CSO at its meeting in Copenhagen on 29 June 2009 took into consideration the changed tasks and responsibilities of the Secretariat as a result of the aforementioned CBSS reform, in particular the increased focus on development and implementation of projects. In this regard the CSO decided to create a CBSS budget line for Project Facilitation within the general budget which would initially amount to 25,000 Euros.

The 15th Ministerial Session decided to accept the request by Baltic 21 to integrate into the CBSS. However, the budget line for the Baltic 21 Secretarial Unit is left blank in the above-mentioned budget, as the financial implications of integrating this unit as of 1 January 2010 will only be dealt with after the summer break.

At the ninth and final CSO meeting held in Copenhagen on 29 June 2009, which concluded the 2nd Danish Presidency in the Council of the Baltic Sea States, the CSO Chairman extended his gratitude to the CBSS Secretariat for support throughout the Presidency, and handed over the CBSS flag to Lithuania, which will hold the Council's Presidency in the period 1 July 2009–30 June 2010.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Petersen', written in a cursive style.

Ambassador Karsten Petersen

*Chairman of the CBSS Committee of Senior Officials (CSO)
And the Danish delegate to the CSO Ms Louise Holmsgaard*



Environment

... the long term priority of Environment for the future of Baltic Sea cooperation may include climate change

Sustainable Development: Baltic 21 – Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea Region

Chair of the Baltic 21 Senior Officials Group (SOG):

Mr. Carl Bjørn Rasmussen, Danish Environmental Protection Agency

Members of the Baltic 21 Senior Officials Group Bureau:

Ms. Vilija Augutaviciene, Ministry of Environment, Lithuania

Mr. Trygve Bjørnæs, Ministry of Finance, Norway

Mr. Vladimir Maximov, Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation (until 16 February 2009)

Mr. Sven Sjögren, Ministry of Enterprise, Energy and Communication, Sweden

Under the reporting period 2008–2009 Baltic 21

- Continued to contribute to the overall objective of sustainable development in the region
- Carried out an assessment and decided on a new mandate
- Secured funding for four new Baltic 21 Lighthouse projects
- Mobilised some 80 partners in the region for project implementation
- Provided a joint input to the EU BSR Strategy

Baltic 21 members are representatives from the 11 Baltic Sea States, the European Commission, inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations, academic and financial institutions, as well as local, city and business networks.

The steering group for Baltic 21 responsible for decision-making within the network is the Senior Officials Group (SOG). During the inter-sessional period between SOG Meetings, SOG Bureau meetings are organised to assist and give guidance to the SOG Chair and the Baltic 21 Unit at CBSS Secretariat. The SOG Bureau membership and the period each particular country holds the chair function rotates with a two year cycle.

During the reported period Senior Officials Group has had had two meetings, one in Copenhagen, Denmark on November 18, 2008 and one in Tallinn, Estonia on April 23–24 2009.

During the year, 3 meetings of SOG Bureau were organised in Stockholm, Sweden on the 8 October 2008, 18 February 2009 and 31 March 2009.

One Lead Party and Responsible Actor Meeting was held on 29-30 October 2008 in Berlin, Germany. This meeting was held back to back with a meeting of the ad hoc Working Group on Balanced Urban and Rural Development on 28-29 October 2008. An additional meeting of the ad hoc Working Group was also held on 26–27 January 2009.

Reports from all the above mentioned meetings are published on the Baltic 21 website. www.baltic21.org

BALTIC 21 ASSESSMENT

More than ten years have passed since Baltic 21 was set up in 1998. The landscape of cooperation has changed over the last 10 years, with a shift from west-east cooperation towards the EU. Today, eight out of eleven countries in the Baltic Sea Region are members of the European Union. Naturally, a lot of our work on sustainable development has found its home in the EU sphere, including fisheries and maritime safety. Furthermore, the Council of Baltic Sea States has, through a reform process, identified long term priorities that are closely related to sustainable development for the future and has steered the organisation towards

a more project-oriented approach. Hence, all of these developments led Baltic 21 in 2008 to embark on an assessment of its work, in order to identify future priorities and streamline its institutional set-up to better reflect the current cooperation climate in the Baltic Sea Region.

The Baltic 21 assessment consisted of an internal phase (questionnaire sent out to relevant actors) and an external phase (carried out by an independent consultant). The assessment revealed both strengths and weaknesses of the current Baltic 21 set up, the preferred modes of cooperation and the strategic areas for the future work. While the multi-stakeholder and project-oriented approach has been appreciated and supported by the participants of the assessment, the implementation of the project-policy cycle was considered weak. The assessment also brought forward questions regarding possible future structural solutions for the Baltic 21 network. The possible solutions were also discussed in depth at the subsequent SOG and SOG Bureau meetings which allowed the network to formulate a joint position. Full or partial integration of Baltic 21 into the CBSS was seen as a preferred option by the majority of countries. The new Baltic 21 mandate has been adopted including principle functions, strategic areas of cooperation, and organisational matters. Baltic 21 shall work on the basis of a multi-year programme of work aiming to enhance the project-oriented approach, strengthen the policy-project-policy loop, support the CBSS in its long-term priorities, and foster synergies between stakeholders in the BSR. The strategic areas of future cooperation include climate change; sustainable urban and rural development; sustainable consumption and production, and innovation and education for sustainable development. The organisational structure of Baltic 21 has been reviewed. The Steering Committee (currently the Senior Officials Group) will continue to meet twice a year while the SOG Bureau meetings will be discontinued. Instead, meetings of the Heads of Country Delegations may be held back-to-back with the Steering Committee Meetings, The Steering Committee may recommend, as appropriate, the convening of ad-hoc working groups of limited duration for further policy and project development. Other Baltic 21 structures, such as the Sectors and Joint Actions, will also be discontinued (and consequently the Lead Party and Responsible Actor functions) although the informal active networks will continue to be supported as appropriate. The period each country will chair the network will rotate on a one-year cycle following the presidency of the CBSS.

LIGHTHOUSE PROJECTS (LHP)

The term, Lighthouse Project has been coined to denote projects **designed to demonstrate sustainable development in action**. The Baltic 21 Lighthouse Project is a quality label issued by the Baltic 21 Senior Officials Group. The LHP criteria demand the projects to be innovative and demonstrate sustainable development in practice on a Baltic Sea Regional level, be cross-sectoral, involve a multi-stakeholder partner network, include a learning aspect and promote equal opportunities. These projects are lead by different members of Baltic 21.

An adopted Lighthouse Project proposal becomes a fully-fledged Lighthouse Project as soon as it secures funding for its implementation.

8 LHPs were implemented during 2002–2007, 1 ongoing since 2005, 4 launched during spring 2009 and, for the other 4 projects funding is pending.

Lead Partners of the LHPs regularly report to SOG. The Baltic 21 Secretariat participated at various project events, provides secretarial service as appropriate, and works to enhance visibility of the projects. While the 1st generation of LHPs received the label retrospectively (after the project proposal had been formulated) the second generation of LHPs (the 4 projects launched this spring) were created by the special ad-hoc working groups especially set up by Baltic 21 for this purpose and serviced by the Baltic 21 Secretariat.

EHSA – Ecosystem Health and Sustainable Agriculture

EHSA is an educational course package for the Baltic University Programme in cooperation with Envirowet Baltic. The goal is to transfer knowledge through a series of seminars and training courses and develop a new educational package on sustainable agriculture, land use, rural development, ecosystem health and manage-

ment for teachers, students and people working in government offices, ministries, and municipalities and as agricultural advisors and agricultural managers. The project has a large multiplying effect since when the educational materials are ready they will be used by hundreds of students in all the countries across the BSR including Ukraine and Belarus. The agri-advisory service of EHSA will also be adapted to the local conditions in different countries.

Duration of the project: 12 September 2005 – ongoing with pending completion date

Lead partner: Baltic University Programme

Number of partners: 230 universities from 9 countries

Budget: 6 500 000 SEK - 600 000 EUR, Financed by SIDA/Urban and the Baltic Sea Unit of SIDA, the Swedish Institute, and the Swedish Environmental Protection Institute

Other: EHSA has been successful in becoming a UN Partnership for Sustainable Development, which means that the project is invited to report on its activities yearly during the UN Commission on Sustainable Development Meetings at a Partnership Fair, which happened for the first time last year on 5–16 May 2008.

Four Projects were awarded funding on the 24th October 2008

Following the decision of Baltic 21 governing body, the Senior Officials Group (SOG), to concentrate on the topics of bio-energy, education, innovation and urban and rural development, in spring 2006 four working groups (WG) were set up to further develop these themes into Baltic 21 Lighthouse projects. The WGs had a limited mandate of 3 meetings each, in the case of the Working Group on Balanced Urban and Rural Development the mandate was extended for a further 4 meetings. Participation in the meetings was self-financed by the participants. A consultant was employed to assist the WGs with the preparation of the project proposals to be submitted to the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007–2013. The proposals from all four WGs were handed in for the first call for funding on the 31st of May 2008.

Out of 110 applications, the Monitoring Committee of the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007–2013 approved 24 transnational cooperation projects in October 2008. Three out of the four project proposals prepared by the Baltic 21 Working Groups were accepted for co-financing. In addition, the Baltic 21 Eco-Region Project, developed in cooperation with Baltic 21 members and led by the German Federal Ministry of Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety was also accepted. During February–May 2009 the four new LHPs held their kick-off meetings.

The Baltic Sea Bioenergy Promotion Project

The project is acknowledged as a strategic project by the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007–2013 Monitoring Committee. The proposal has been designed in co-operation with BASREC.

The project is a platform for cross-sectoral and transnational networking to facilitate information and knowledge exchange, a coordinated policy development and application of bio-energy promotion instruments. The project aims at strengthening the development towards a sustainable, competitive and territorially integrated Baltic Sea Region in the field of sustainable use of bio-energy. One of the main objectives is to assess and optimize the existing policies for sustainable supply and use of biomass originating from different sources and produced for heating and cooling, electricity generation, and as a transport fuel. The project will also address the issue of competition for resources between the use for food, fibre and fuel. Provision of information and knowledge transfer will ensure transparent business possibilities between the BSR countries.

Duration of the project: 2009-2011

Lead partner: The Swedish Energy Agency

Number of partners: 34 partners from 10 countries

Budget: 5 000 000 EUR (from the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007–2013)

SPIN – Sustainable Production through Innovation in Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)

SPIN aims at identifying and testing appropriate incentives for SMEs to apply eco-innovations and increase the exploitation of the innovation potential. Company performances can be made substantially more sustainable in terms of environmental, economical and social performance through technical and organisational innovations. This will lead to the creation of public benefits and private profits whilst reducing economic and environmental costs. The project will identify eco-innovational highlights and support their dissemination and deployment. SPIN will reach out to more than 2000 SMEs in the region and assemble a database of best practices. The project will elaborate and test a transnational action plan enhancing the application of eco-innovations throughout the BSR

Duration of the project: 2009–2011

Lead partner: Federal Environment Agency, Germany

Number of partners: 10 partners from 8 countries

Budget: 3 035 000 EUR (from the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007–2013)

NEW BRIDGES – Strengthening of Quality of Life through Improved Management of Urban Rural Interaction

Regions and municipalities are the key actors in managing urban-rural interactions and their impacts on quality of life. The New Bridges project aims to improve the management of quality of life through urban-rural planning. The project focuses on individual preferences and future potentials with regard to residential preferences, provision of services, mobility and accessibility. The project will analyse the preferences of different population groups and stakeholders, and develop new working methods and pilot models. By applying the multi-stakeholder involvement principle the project will provide recommendations for the coherent and integrated urban-rural planning.

Duration of the project: 2009–2011

Lead partner: Union of the Baltic Cities

Number of partners: 15 partners from 9 countries

Budget: 3 200 000 EUR (from the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007–2013)

EcoRegion

The objective is to contribute to develop the Baltic Sea region into the world's first Eco-Region, where economic growth goes hand in hand with environmental integrity and social justice. A number of selected model regions will implement selected sustainable development measures identified with the help of the cyclical sustainable development management scheme, which is still a new approach within Baltic 21. Baltic 21 sectoral networks will be strengthened and action programmes updated. The Baltic 21 sectors' and regions' experience, as well as the Eco Region concept, will be disseminated within and outside of the BSR – with particular emphasis on NW Russia.

Work package *6 Policy Development* will be administered by the Baltic 21 Unit and the administration of the CBSS Secretariat.

Duration of the project: 2009–2011

Lead partner: German Federal Ministry for Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety

Number of partners: 25 partners from 10 countries

Budget: 3 421 000 EUR (from the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007–2013)

LIGHTHOUSE PROJECTS WITH FUNDING PENDING

Baltic Landscapes

The project is a follow-up of the Baltic Forest project. The project's focus is on sustainable use and management of natural resources, emphasizing empowerment of societies to meet sustainable development issues on the local level. To achieve progress along this line there is an evident need for neutral platforms to develop cooperation and common understanding between different local land use stakeholders and actors with different interests and visions. This also includes aspects of gender, minorities (i.e. Sámi people) and disabled groups (i.e. accessibility in the landscape). Furthermore, there is a need to develop landscape-scale areas where sustainability problems are identified and solutions explored in close cooperation between the research community, local knowledge and experiences, land users and other land base stakeholders, decision makers and policy development.

Duration of the project: 3 years.

Lead partner: Swedish Forest Agency

Number of partners: 12 partners from 4 countries

Budget: The project proposal will be submitted under the 3rd call of the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007–2013

ILTRAS – Innovative Learning Transfer for Sustainability

The project aims at producing innovative solutions for the local societies, while at the same time scaling up the experiences to the policy level, with focus on the environmental and social pillars of sustainability. The effort to investigate local sustainability issues within new environments is to be considered an integral part of a lifelong learning process, which involves all members of society, disregarding age, position in life and social sector belonging – thus including, but also going beyond the formal education system.

The project will give a strong contribution to the branding of BSR as the model region for sustainable development and education for sustainable development. At the same time the project activities aim at promoting entrepreneurship and increasing the quality of life for citizens.

The project will provide information for policy and decision makers at national level and input to the BSR strategies for a sustainable regional development (Baltic 21, Agenda 21 for Education in the Baltic Sea Region, EU BSR Strategy), the UNECE Decade for ESD, national and regional authorities and organisations.

The project was previously known as BalticArenas and the application was originally submitted under the first call of the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007–2013, but was unfortunately not successful. After the consultation with the BSR Programme offices in Rostock on 5th February 2009 the project was reviewed, revised and consequently renamed.

Baltic 21 Unit is envisaged to have a role in one of the Work Packages dealing with demonstration projects on climate change.

Duration of the project: 2010–2012

Lead partner: Åbo Akademi University

Number of partners: 18 partners from 10 countries

Budget: 3 200 000 EUR (funding pending)

AGORA 2.0 Heritage Tourism for Increased BSR Identity

The project is a follow-up to AGORA – AGORA 2.0 aims at close cooperation between tourism stakeholders of the Baltic Sea Region. Partners are public authorities on national and regional level, as well as international NGO and business and heritage organizations, which are all dealing with tourism development and influence national tourism policies. The project aim is to increase BSR identity by heritage tourism (where heritage includes natural heritage), based on principles of sustainability.

Duration of the project: Jan 2010–Dec 2012

Lead partner: Baltic 21 Tourism Sector Lead Party Germany, University of Greifswald

Number of partners: 25 partners from 9 countries

Budget: 2 800 000 EUR (funding pending)

Baltic Marine Litter

The aim of the Baltic Marine Litter Project is to raise awareness of marine litter in the Baltic Sea among policy makers and other relevant stakeholders, to facilitate the harmonization of policies on the issue and to develop potential solutions and best practices. All activities aim at highlighting and visualizing the issue of marine litter among decision makers in the Baltic Sea region. The Fishing for Litter work package aims to contribute to the overall aims of the project by firstly reducing the impact of marine litter on biodiversity, coastal communities and users of the sea by removing it from the marine environment. A transnational network of 15 harbours around the Baltic will be set up. The aim would be to sign up 60 vessels to the scheme and to involve 300 fishermen. Over the period of the project it is expected that 300 tonnes of marine litter would be removed from the marine environment. The marine litter would also be monitored when it is brought ashore to assess the composition, as well as the amount, of litter on the Baltic seabed. This information would be reported to HELCOM.

Secondly the project would raise awareness of the issues with policy makers and within the fishing industry. The project will engage with fishermen and fishermen's organisations that are involved in the project to improve their waste management practices.

Duration of the project: 2009–2013

Lead partner: Keep Sweden Tidy

Number of partners: 8 partners from 5 countries (Through KIMO Baltic Sea the project will have partners in all BSR countries except Germany)

Budget: 3 500 000 EUR (funding pending)

EU STRATEGY FOR THE BALTIC SEA REGION

For the first time in its history the European Council in June 2007 asked the European Commission to prepare a specific regional strategy by June 2009. The aim of the Strategy will be to coordinate the efforts of various actors in the Region (Member States, regions, financing institutions, the EU, the pan-Baltic organisations, non-governmental bodies and so forth.) so that by working together they would promote a more balanced development of the Region. The BSR covered by the strategy refers to the territory of the eight EU member states around the Baltic Sea. As such, it would include entire Member States (e.g. Estonia) and parts of Member States (e.g. Germany). The Strategy will build upon four action-oriented objectives:

- to improve the environmental state of the Baltic Sea Region and especially of the Sea;
- to make the Baltic Sea Region a more prosperous place by supporting balanced economic development across the Region;
- to make the Baltic Sea Region a more accessible and attractive place for both its inhabitants, for competent labour force and for tourists;
- to make the Baltic Sea Region a safer and more secure place.

The Strategy will be based on the commitments undertaken by Member States and regions under the EU legislation, and also in the contexts of the Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas, the National Strategic Reference Frameworks and the Operational Programmes under the European Regional Development Fund and European Social Fund, as well as the strategies and programmes under European Agriculture Fund for Rural Development, and will also further build on these commitments. The external input is being sought by a series of round-table stakeholder events in the Baltic Sea Region in which Baltic 21 played a key role.

The EU Commission has already acknowledged Baltic 21 as an actor in the region in terms of development and implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. The Baltic 21 Unit has attended several of these roundtable events and monitors closely the development of the Strategy. Furthermore, Baltic 21 has taken these roundtable events as an opportunity to promote some of its policy recommendations, such as those on sustainable rural development, with a view of having them recognized in the Strategy's Action Plan.

Baltic 21 mobilized its network and provided a joint input to the EU BSR Strategy focusing on urban-rural planning and renewable energy:

Sustainability is what will ensure that the region will be an environmentally friendly, prosperous, accessible and attractive, as well as safer and more secure place. Hence, sustainable development aspects need to be brought into the overall objectives of the strategy,

Baltic 21 is a unique network with both governments and stakeholders participating in a multi-stakeholder set up. The main focus of Baltic 21 is currently on sustainable rural and urban development and promoting the sustainable use of bio-energy. However, our main proposed key actions to be included in the Action Plan are:

- Sustainable development aims to develop socially integrated urban and rural communities which are stable over time within sustainable ecological and economical spheres. **Sustainable rural and urban development** in the Baltic Sea Region must be strengthened through concrete actions to establish cross-sectoral sustainable development including connecting urban and rural areas, scale up sustainable agricultural practices, enhance the sustainable tourism potential, create a model forest network and foster good governance and service provision in rural areas.
- Promote the **sustainable use of renewable energy** in the region, through concrete actions to strengthen the development towards a sustainable, competitive and territorially integrated Baltic Sea Region in the field of sustainable use of renewable energy.

In addition, Baltic 21 provided a list of concrete actions currently being implemented in the BSR for which Baltic 21 could identify concrete responsible actors.

PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED BY THE BALTIC 21 UNIT

During the period chaired by Sweden (2006–2008) Baltic 21 put a particular focus on cooperation with neighbouring countries and other regions. Specific funding (in form of project grants) was provided for this purpose by the Swedish Ministry of Environment. These projects are specifically administered by the Baltic 21 Unit and the CBSS Secretariat administration.

Cooperation with the Lake Victoria Basin Region

Cooperation between the BSR and Lake Victoria Basin has shown that despite many differences, the two regions easily find a common ground when it comes to the alarming state of environment and the necessity to build up institutional and human capacities. Members of Baltic 21 and partners in the Lake Victoria Basin jointly organised a side event at the 16th Session of the UN CSD focusing on actions towards sustainable development.

Financing: SEK 150 000 grant from the Swedish Ministry of the Environment

Duration of the project: 2008

Outcomes:

- Participation in the 16th UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD, 5–16 May 2008, New York).
- Baltic 21 Unit organised a meeting with partners from Lake Victoria Basin in conjunction with World Water Week in August 2008, Stockholm, Sweden.
- Possible future areas of cooperation identified, including the Baltic University Programme will work together with the universities from East Africa to build up a university cooperation and competence for education for sustainable development.

Promotion of Baltic 21 towards actors in Belarus and Ukraine

Baltic 21 has been actively working to promote Baltic 21 principles on sustainable development towards actors in Ukraine and Belarus. Being part of the Baltic Sea catchment area these countries were seen as natural partners for Baltic 21 to cooperate with on improving the ecological status of the sea and furthering sustainability. Enabled by a special project grant, Baltic 21 Unit organized a fact-finding visit to both countries. Stakeholders from Ukraine and Belarus both from the relevant Ministries and NGOs took part in several Baltic 21 events.

Financing: SEK 500 000 grant from the Swedish Ministry of the Environment

Duration of the project: 2007–2008

Outcomes:

- Employment of the Baltic 21 Unit Project Officer (80%)
- Participation of Belarusian and Ukrainian stakeholders in the Baltic 21 networks activities, including working groups and Lighthouse projects;
- New partner institutions and actors were identified in Belarus and Ukraine;
- New areas of cooperation were identified, including education, agriculture, tourism and sustainable rural development;
- A database was established for people seeking possible partners in Belarus and Ukraine;
- A National Focal Point for Baltic 21 in Belarus has been established to support national and regional efforts after the project has been completed.

BSR Region – Mediterranean Region exchange of experiences in sustainable development

Duration of the project: since 2003

Outcomes during the reporting period:

- On 19–20th of May 2009 a European Maritime Day Stakeholders Conference took place in Rome, Italy. Baltic 21 Unit took part in the event by organising a workshop and showing the exhibition together with the film presenting its work and the Lighthouse projects. The workshop entitled *10 years of maritime sustainable development in action: “Aspects of Sustainable Maritime Development – learning from experience”* focused on the three Lighthouse Projects BaltCoast, New Hansa and Baltic SeaBreeze on sustainable maritime development.
- In October 2008 a seminar entitled “Challenges for the 21st century: Environmental protection as a prerequisite for sustainable development – Sharing experience between the countries of the Black Sea and the Baltic Sea regions” was held in Stockholm. The main organizers of the event were the Council of the Baltic Sea States, Baltic 21, the Embassy of Romania to Sweden, and the Swedish Institute for International Affairs. A whole set of common challenges requiring urgent actions was easily identifiable: eutrophication, introduction of alien species, oil spills, overfishing, unsustainable production and consumer patterns, and low public awareness.
- Further meetings are planned – follow-up meeting in Romania, and meeting on education on environmental protection and sustainable development in Stockholm in the fall of 2009.

Promotion of Participation of the Russian Stakeholders

At the end of 2008 Baltic 21 Unit received a grant from Sweden to promote cooperation with North-West Russia in 2009 in the context of the new Baltic 21 Lighthouse projects. The Baltic 21 Unit will support Russian participation in Lighthouse Projects and will try to strengthen national network of the Russian Baltic 21 partners. During the spring 2009 the Russian Baltic 21 partners were consulted and a series of support actions to be implemented in the fall 2009 proposed.

Financing: SEK 200 000 grant from the Swedish Ministry of the Environment

Duration of the project: 2009

Baltic 21 promotional materials

In 2008 Baltic 21 celebrated its 10th anniversary.

An **exhibition** about the work of Baltic 21 was realised. The exhibition consists of 8 roll-ups with information about the projects leading by Baltic 21, main goals and activities of the organisation and a model of a lighthouse, which symbolise the Lighthouse Projects idea.

During the reporting period the exhibition has travelled to 7 countries in the Baltic Sea Region (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Finland, Poland, Russia, and Sweden). For the first time it was shown at the 10th Baltic 21 anniversary in Latvian Ministry of Environment in June 2008. In the same month exhibition has travelled also to Sweden, Finland and Estonia (Baltic Sea Summer Tour organised by Brig *Tre Kronor*). In August 2008 the Baltic 21 exhibition has been presented during 2 events – Association of Environmental Educators of Latvia and BSPC annual conference in Visby, Sweden. Later this year exhibition has visited Latvia (September 2008), Lithuania (September, October, November, December 2008), Sweden (October 2008), Russia (October 2008) and Poland (November 2008). In March 2009 the exhibition was presented in Tallin, Estonia by Estonian Green Movement, and in April has been moved to the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communication of Estonia.

As a compliment to the exhibition, and as a stand-alone introduction to the work of Baltic 21, a **12 minute long film** was produced: *Baltic 21: A decade of Action for Sustainable Development*. The film can be viewed on the Baltic 21 website www.baltic21.org

The anniversary exhibition and film was made possible through in kind financial support from the Swedish Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Enterprise, Energy and Communication of Sweden.

In the reporting year the Baltic 21 Unit published 2 issues of the **Baltic 21 Newsletter**. One issue focused on the outcomes of Baltic 21 Lighthouse Projects implemented so far, the 10 years anniversary and sustainable rural development practices in the region. The other issue highlighted the new Baltic 21 Lighthouse Projects and Baltic 21 partners in Russia as well as the input from Baltic 21 to EU BSR Strategy.

A **report** marking the 10th Anniversary of Baltic 21 was published in June 2008 entitled Baltic 21 Report to the Heads of Government: *Reaching a Landmark – Ten Years of Cooperation on Sustainable Development in the Baltic Sea Region*.

Leaflets for the following sectors were produced:

Agriculture, Education, Forest, Industry and Spatial Planning

Leaflets for the following Joint Actions were produced:

Joint Action 4: City Cooperation for Sustainable Development and Joint Action 7: Local Capacity Building for Sustainable Development

A brochure *Creating Partnerships for a Sustainable Baltic Sea Region* and a postcard were produced in 2007.

The **Triennial Report**, covering the period of 2006 to 2008 and highlighting policy issues and actions taken up and implemented by Baltic 21 during the last three years, will be submitted to the 15th CBSS Ministerial Session on 3–4 June 2009.

Baltic 21 Unit

The secretariat function of Baltic 21 is carried out by the Baltic 21 Unit. The unit is staffed by:
July–November 2008: Head of Unit 100 %, Senior Adviser 75 % (from September), Senior Adviser 70 %;
December 2008–June 2009: Acting Head of Unit 80 %, Senior Adviser 70 %.

The salaries of the Baltic 21 Unit are funded by the regular budget, except for 20% of the current Senior Advisers salary which was funded throughout the period by project funds.

A Project Officer (working 80%) is financed through special funding from the Swedish Ministry of Environment. Baltic 21 Unit has also benefitted from intern assistance; one for a period of four months (Sept–December) and one for a period of six months (Jan–June) during the reporting period.

Baltic 21 Unit currently operates on a separate budget from the CBSS Secretariat built on Baltic 21 Member States' voluntary contributions. All Member States except one contributed to Baltic 21 in 2008.



Economic Development

...the long term priority of Economic Development for the future of the Baltic Sea cooperation may include, innovation and competitiveness and a favourable business environment, fostering entrepreneurship, cluster development, maritime economy, transport and logistics, research and development, customs cooperation and well-functioning labour markets

CBSS Working Group on Economic Cooperation (WGEC)

Chair – Mr. Bent Lindhardt Andersen, Danish Ministry of Economic and Business Affairs, National Enterprise and Construction Authority

PRIORITY DURING THE PERIOD CHAIRED BY DENMARK

During the period chaired by Denmark the WGEC focused its work on the reform of the Working Group. According to the Riga Declaration, the WGEC as a permanent CBSS working structure should be either discontinued or transformed into one or several expert groups with a clear and time-framed mandate.

NUMBER OF MEETINGS

During the reporting period three meetings were held in Copenhagen - in December 2008, March 2009 and May 2009, where the Member States discussed and evaluated possibilities for setting up new expert groups.

SECRETARIAL FUNCTION

The WGEC is being provided with a Secretary Function from the CBSS Secretariat.

COMPOSITION OF THE WORKING GROUP

The WGEC is currently composed of 22 representatives from the 11 CBSS Member States and the European Commission as well as representatives from the Business Advisory Council, the Baltic Sea Chambers of Commerce Association and the Baltic Sea Trade Union Network. Out of 22 representatives 18 are men and 4 are women.

MAIN ACTIVITIES OF THE WGEC

In accordance with the Riga Declaration on reform the representatives of the WGEC decided to discontinue the working group. Based on this decision and in order to ensure continuity the members of the Working Group have examined several possibilities in order to strengthen the long term priority of field of economic development by potentially establishing a series of Expert Groups which will be set up on a case by case basis. However, the expert groups should have a clear time-limited mandate, scope and tasks. The members have submitted five proposals for the creation of the following CBSS Expert Groups (EGs) dealing with economic development for the consideration of the CBSS Committee of Senior Officials.

The following are currently on the table for discussion

- EG on Labour Markets and Integration – proposal by Finland
- EG on Maritime Industries – proposal by Germany
- EG on Development of Technology Transfer facilitation – proposal by Lithuania
- EG on Small & Medium-Sized Family Business – proposal by Poland
- EG on Economic Development – proposal by Russia

The WGEC proposes that the country submitting a proposal for an expert group normally takes the Chair function of the group.

It is envisaged that the concrete work of the new expert groups would be launched during the forthcoming Lithuanian CBSS presidency 2009–10.

OTHER BUSINESS

Portal for Small & Medium Sized Enterprises www.balticmarket.org

The SME Portal has been in place since 2001. The WGEC has overseen the portal. With the discontinuation of the WGEC this role and function should be transferred to another working body. However, before a decision would be taken it would be useful to re-assess the value of the portal and verify whether the costs for maintain it reflect actual needs of the business community, especially in the current economic climate.

The Chair of the Working Group and representatives from the CBSS Secretariat participated in the 10th Annual Summit of the Baltic Development Forum in Copenhagen on 30 November–02 December 2008. The Secretariats' Report from the Summit, as well as the State-of-the-Region Report 2008 was made available to the WGEC. The State of the Region Report, among others, contained important recommendation for policy-makers on issues of competitiveness.

Baltic Sea Labour Network – (BSLN)

The CBSS joined the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007–2013 Project entitled *Baltic Sea Labour Network – (BSLN)*.

The BSLN is a new 2.7 million Euro project over a three year period, involving 27 partners from 10 CBSS Member States. It is financed through the INTERREG IVB Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007–13, and it strives to make the region an attractive place in which to invest, live, and work.

The lead parties of the project are the Confederation of the German Trade Unions Region North with a very active participation of the Baltic Sea Labour Network – BASTUN.

The Director General of the Secretariat was nominated as a member of the BSLN Steering Committee, the first meeting of which will take place in October 2009.

The CBSS joined the Baltic Sea Labour Network Project as a partner upon a respective decision by the CBSS CSO. The project was officially approved on 25 October 2009, and was launched within the Tripartite Forum on Mobility of Labour on 25 November 2008 in Copenhagen (organised by the BASTUN). A CBSS delegation attended the Forum, headed by the Committee of Senior Officials Chairman, Ambassador, Karsten Petersen. As an outcome of the Forum, the general structure and objectives of the project were set out. The project was initiated by the German Trade Unions in cooperation with the Scandinavian Trade Unions altogether encompassing 27 partners from 10 CBSS Members States, The lead partner in a Consulting Company by the name of *Kooperationsstelle* based in Hamburg.

Representatives from the CBSS Secretariat attended the 3 first meetings of the Facilitators Team – an operational body, which has the responsibility to deal with the general preparatory, organisational and technical aspects of the Project. The meetings were held in Stockholm, 19-20 January 2009, and in Hamburg on 4 March 2009. The Secretariat also participated in the BSLN Partners Conference in Hasenwikel (Germany) on 23-24 April 2009, which was devoted to adjusting and adopting the national plans of the partners, as well as to training in project management.

The required first audit of the CBSS' part will be completed during the summer.

Cooperation with Partners – the Baltic Sea Trade Union Network (BASTUN), the Baltic Sea Chambers of Commerce Association (BCCA) and the Business Advisory Council (BAC)

Cooperation with the Baltic Sea Trade Union Network, the Baltic Sea Chambers of Commerce Association and the Business Advisory Council, continued through their participation in the WGEC. Cooperation with BASTUN was also increasingly developed by participation in the BSNL project. All the organisations had and used the opportunity to present their views and visions of the future economic cooperation and the reform of the WGEC.

The CBSS attended the annual 6th BCCA Economic Forum in Turku on 10 November 2008, which was devoted to *Russia's role in the Baltic Sea Economic Cooperation: Russian business and investment environment*. The CBSS delegation was represented by the Danish delegate to the WGEC, Mr. Ib Kjøller, and Deputy Director of the CBSS Secretariat, Mr. Phil Saprykin. The delegation made a brief intervention that dealt with the economic aspects of the ongoing reform of the CBSS and the plans for the group during the period it continued as a group in its current form under the period chaired by Denmark.

Baltic Development Forum (BDF)

The CBSS took part in the 10th Anniversary Summit of the Baltic Development Forum in Copenhagen on 30 November–2 December 2008. The Summit had a certain link to the Danish CBSS Presidency, and was focused on four general themes: Energy & Climate, EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, freedom of knowledge and movements, as well as the role of Russia in the Baltic Sea Region (BSR). In addition the following topics within the aforementioned areas were developed: implications of the global financial and economic turmoil – state-of-play in the BSR's financial sector, environmental challenges of the BSR, promotion of innovation, Baltic Sea youth, fostering entrepreneurship, the so-called, *fifth freedom* – free movement of knowledge. The CBSS delegation was headed by the Committee of Senior Officials Chairman, Ambassador, Karsten Petersen, and included the Chair of the WGEC, Mr. Bent Lindhardt Andersen, and the management team of the CBSS Secretariat.



Energy

...the long term priority of Energy for the future of Baltic Sea cooperation may include, energy security, energy efficiency and saving, renewable energy and the impact of energy on the environment

Baltic Sea Region Energy Cooperation (BASREC)

Denmark chose Energy and Climate as a first priority for its presidency of the CBSS. During this time the CBSS Secretariat continued liaison with BASREC. A representative from Danish Energy Authority, which is part of the Ministry for Climate and Energy, chaired the Group of Senior Energy Officials.

The Fifth BASREC Ministerial Meeting was held on 17–18 February 2009 in Copenhagen with the CBSS delegation headed by the Committee of Senior Officials Chairman, Ambassador Karsten Petersen. BASREC has defined the following energy topics in order to meet global energy policy and climate policy challenges:

- Security of energy supply
- Development and integration of energy infrastructure in the region
- Energy efficiency and savings
- Increased use of renewable sources with specific focus on the forms of energy potentially dominant in the region
- Increasing renewable sources in the heat market
- Rehabilitation and development of district heating systems and CHP in order to facilitate the use of biomass
- Development of Clean Coal Technology
- Demonstration of Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS)
- Energy policy issues for the post-Kyoto period

The Secretariat also participated in the BASREC GSEO meetings on 2–3 September 2008 in Copenhagen, and on 6–7 May 2009 in Kolding, organised back-to-back with joint BASREC – Baltic Gas Seminar hosted by Energynet.dk.



Education and Culture

...the long term priority of Education and Culture for the future of Baltic Sea cooperation may include, the EuroFaculty concept, student and academic mobility, upgrade of science and research capacity, cultural heritage, contemporary culture and the promotion of regional identity

Education

CBSS EUROFACULTY CONCEPT

Completion of the EuroFaculty Kaliningrad project (LC EF-K)

The CBSS Secretariat continued to take responsibility for the administrative handling of the research project on identifying the factors that were important for the successful restructuring of the Law and Business Economics studies at the Immanuel Kant State University of Russia (IKSUR) in Kaliningrad in the years 2000–2007.

The research project, which was initiated by the CSO in the Autumn of 2007, was carried out by the Norwegian researcher Mr. Kjell Askeland, and his report entitled *Researching the EuroFaculty Project at IKSUR Kaliningrad, – a contribution to the Educational Development in Russia* was presented to the CSO at its meeting in Copenhagen on 18–19 May 2009. A seminar on this report was held on 20 May 2009 in Copenhagen, convening former participants from the current and former CBSS EuroFaculty projects and other interested participants.

Inauguration of the EuroFaculty Project in Pskov (LC EF-P)

During 2008–2009, the CBSS Secretariat assisted with the preparatory work for the new EuroFaculty project in Pskov in north-western Russia. On 12 June 2008 the winning consortium was selected at a meeting of the project's International Expert Group in Stockholm. This consortium is headed by the Turku School of Economics (Finland) while the partner universities of the consortium are Roskilde University (Denmark), University of Turku (Finland), Trondheim Business School (Norway), Saint Petersburg State University (Russia) and the Stockholm School of Economics' department in Saint Petersburg, Russia (Sweden). On 1 October 2008 the contract between Sweden as the project's Lead Country and the Turku School of Economics as Lead University of the university consortium was signed in Turku. The subcontracts between the Turku School of Economics and the two receiving institutions in Pskov, the Pskov State Polytechnic Institute and the Pskov Volny Institute, were signed in Pskov on 15 October.

On 30 January 2009 the opening ceremony of the CBSS EuroFaculty Project was held in Pskov. The opening took place in the Hall of the Pskov Regional Administration in the presence of the Governor of the Pskov Region, the Representative of the Russian President in the Pskov Region, the Chairman of the Legislative Assembly and a large number of officials, teachers and students from Pskov as well as members of the International Expert Group and an assortment of foreign guests. The Expert Group held a meeting back-to-back with the opening event.

A detailed Budget and Activity Plan together with the Inception Report were presented by the Consortium to the Lead Country in the spring of 2009. The Budget and Activity Plan and the Inception Report were discussed by the International Expert Group at its meeting in Turku in on 11–12 June 2009.

On 5 May 2009 the Lead Country Representative, accompanied by the Secretariat, paid a visit to the Russian Ministry of Education and Science in Moscow to discuss the progress of the project and the prospects for a Russian financial contribution to the project.

To raise additional financial contributions, the Secretariat had a close dialogue with the donors to the completed EuroFaculty Kaliningrad project (2000–2007); regarding a transfer of the surplus from this project to the EuroFaculty project in Pskov. In the Autumn of 2008, Germany, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Sweden and the United Kingdom decided to transfer their respective shares of the financial surplus from this project to the new EuroFaculty project in Pskov, and in the Spring of 2009 Denmark decided to pledge an additional contribution to the project in Pskov, corresponding to the Danish share of the surplus from the completed project in Kaliningrad.

The Secretariat is a member of the International Expert Group which is the project's steering body and attends the meetings of the group. In addition the Secretariat has provided secretarial assistance to Sweden as the project's Lead Country and undertook the preparation of minutes from the Expert Group meetings. Further the Secretariat attended various other meetings with the Lead Country, relating to the implementation of the project.

Culture

THE 8TH CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF CULTURE

On 16–17 October 2008, the 8th CBSS Conference of Ministers of Culture took place in Riga. The goal of this conference was to discuss ways to improve the structures and substance related to cultural cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region in the light of new political frameworks, such as the Northern Dimension Policy Document and the CBSS Declaration on Reform. Stronger cooperation in the field of creative industries was also on the agenda. The Ministers decided to appoint Senior Officials who will meet at least once per year, beginning in the 2nd half of 2009, and who will work according to the mandate approved by the Member States. In the future, the Ministers will only meet when it is necessary to give political guidance and to take decisions on strategic policy issues. The CBSS Secretariat assisted in the preparation of the conference.

COOPERATION WITH ARS BALTICA

The CBSS Secretariat participated at the 37th ARS BALTICA Organising Committee meeting in Riga on 18 October 2008. Additionally, the Secretariat kept a close and regular working contact with the ARS BALTICA Secretariat in Gdansk. The CBSS Secretariat together with ARS BALTICA Secretariat assisted in the preparation of the Baltic Sea Focus Day on 18 May 2009 during the International Children's Theatre Festival in Copenhagen, which was the main cultural activity under the Danish CBSS Presidency.

BALTIC SEA MONITORING GROUP ON HERITAGE COOPERATION

The CBSS Secretariat maintained a close working contact with the Baltic Sea Monitoring Group on Heritage Cooperation, especially with the Chair and Coordinator of the Monitoring Group. The CBSS Secretariat facilitated the participation of the Head of the Working Group for Underwater Heritage in the Monitoring Group at the UNESCO Underwater Heritage meeting on 26–27 March 2009 in Paris.



Civil Security and the Human Dimension

...the long term priority of Civil Security and the Human Dimension for the future of Baltic Sea cooperation may focus on civil society, civil protection and civil security; these topics may include the fight against trafficking in human beings, the protection of children's rights, youth affairs, the promotion of people to people contacts and consumer protection

Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings with focus on adults (TF-THB)

Chair – Denmark; Representative from the Danish Ministry for Social Welfare, Department for Gender Equality

From the period from July 2008 to December 1st 2008 the TF-THB was chaired by the former TF-THB delegate Ms. Anne Katrine Tholstrup Bertelsen. During this period the TF-THB was granted funds for its work and the group decided upon the strategic activities for the years 2008 to 2010. As Ms. Bertelsen then subsequently moved over to the Social Ministry her position in the Department for Gender Equality became vacant and she was replaced by a caretaker Chair, Ms. Kira Appel, to host the meeting in Copenhagen in March 2009 and to facilitate and support the current work of the TF-THB.

Composition of the group

The Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings (TF-THB) is currently composed of 27 members from the Ministries of Family Affairs, Foreign Affairs, Gender, Interior, Justice, Social Affairs and Welfare from the CBSS Member States. The TF-THB also consists of two experts from the Directorate General for Justice, Freedom and Security at the European Commission. The group consists of 18 women and 9 men. The Chair of the TF-THB is rotated among the TF-THB Member States and follows the CBSS presidency.

Secretarial Function

The TF-THB is being provided with a Secretary Function, a Senior Adviser who is part of the core team at the CBSS Secretariat. The position is currently funded by Sweden with the view to multi-lateralise the position in the budget FY 2011.

Number of Meetings

The TF-THB has had three meetings during the period chaired by Denmark. The meetings took place on the 15-16 September 2008, 25 November 2008 and the 17-18 March 2009 in Copenhagen, Denmark at the invitation of the Danish Ministry for Social Welfare, Department for Gender Equality.

At the first meeting on the 15–16 September 2008 the TF-THB decided upon its five strategic activities for the years 2008-2010:

- Training Seminars on Human Trafficking for Diplomatic and Consular Personnel in the CBSS Region in cooperation with the IOM
- Joint project with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on Fostering NGO and Law Enforcement Cooperation in Preventing and Combating Human Trafficking in, from and to the Baltic Sea Region
- Regional Information Campaign against Trafficking in Human Beings
- Improved Data Collection and Support to Research on Human Trafficking in the Region
- Comparative Regional Legal Analysis on Human Trafficking

The development and implementation of these activities was mainly discussed throughout the three meetings.

First strategic activity:

Training Seminars on Human Trafficking for Diplomatic and Consular Personnel in the CBSS Region

Under this first activity, the TF-THB is conducting training seminars on human trafficking for diplomatic and consular personnel in all of the CBSS Member States. The aim is to provide consular staff with the potential to react, if they have reasons to believe that a person that walks through their door or they encounter in other ways may possibly be facing a situation of human trafficking.

Every Member State as well as the Observer States to the organisation sends participants from relevant government ministries and/ or embassies in the region to each of the training sessions. Furthermore, depending on the situation in each country, representatives from other relevant embassies such as countries of origin and destination are also invited. Consultants from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) are conducting the Seminars together with appointed governmental and nongovernmental national trainers as well as TF-THB delegates and the Senior Advisor assigned to the group. The aim of the Seminars is to increase the knowledge about human trafficking of the staff responsible for consular matters and to provide them with methodological tools to be able to react and how, if there are any suspicions of such cases or discoveries. The outcome will be a methodological handbook which will be developed in cooperation with the IOM and distributed amongst the CBSS embassies. The handbook will provide the embassies with tools to assist victims and potential victims through collaboration with the police, immigration authorities, customs, labour inspectorates, social services and so on.

The first Training Seminar took place on the 24th of November 2008 in Copenhagen, Denmark in the Danish Parliament. This training was attended by TF-THB delegates, representatives from the embassies of the CBSS Member States and the Observer States. Those delegates participated along with a number of other invited guests who were specifically invited because they represented countries that are relevant in one way or another to the Danish case. They are considered relevant either by being source countries or transit countries from where or through trafficking victims come to Denmark. The training totaled 45 participants.

The Copenhagen training has been followed by Training Seminars in Tallinn, Estonia on the 28th of April 2009 and in Iceland on the 25th–26th of May. In March 2009 Iceland introduced its first National Action Plan against Trafficking in Human Beings. In order to present this Action Plan and identify the role of the Icelandic stakeholders in the fight against trafficking the Icelandic Government and the CBSS Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings invited a number of relevant Icelandic authorities, along with diplomatic and consular personnel, for a one and a half days training seminar on how to combat and organise the work against human trafficking. The Training Seminar which was held in the Nordic House was opened by the Minister for Social Affairs and closed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

In conjunction with the Training Seminar the TF-THB opened the photographic exhibition *hidden* also at the Nordic House. The body of work *hidden* consists of a larger series of images taken over a number of evenings in a Baltic Sea State capital. Trafficking in Human Beings is by action a hidden crime – the normality of the surroundings where trafficking and exploitation take place enable the traffickers to partake in their clandestine activity largely undetected and in collusion with others. The crime leaves few tracks as the traces and the stains are removed when no one is looking. The intention with the exhibition is that it can assist us in opening our eyes and increase our understanding of an issue that may not be obvious to us on first look. It is a fact that human trafficking in all its forms is a severe exploitation and abuse which is taking place in our everyday surroundings although we normally fail or choose not to see it.

This was the first time that this series of photographs were publicly exhibited. The exhibition is currently thought to be exhibited in four of the destinations for the Training Seminars.

In early September a Training Seminar will be held in Lithuania as a first activity under the period chaired by Lithuania. The training will be held back to back with the next TF-THB meeting. As the last session of the year a Training Seminar will be held in December in Helsinki, Finland.

These Training Seminars will be followed by six additional trainings in Warsaw, Berlin, Oslo, Stockholm, Riga and Moscow over the course of 2010.

Moreover, as the TF-THB is currently funded by a contribution from the Swedish Government and funds from its National Action Plan (see below) it has been decided jointly by the TF-THB and the Swedish Ministry of Justice that a Training Seminar will be held in Brussels during the Autumn/Winter to coincide with the Swedish EU Presidency.

Financing: The Swedish National Action Plan against Trafficking in Human Beings for Sexual Exploitation

Outcome:

- Increased knowledge of human trafficking of the consular staff attending the trainings - measured by the evaluation of the participants at each session
- Written report and evaluation from every Training Seminar
- A methodological handbook to be distributed to the CBSS Embassies in the region

Second strategic activity:

Joint project with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on Fostering NGO and Law Enforcement Cooperation in Preventing and Combating Human Trafficking in, from and to the Baltic Sea Region

During this reporting period the TF-THB and the UNODC have developed a joint project on fostering NGO and Law Enforcement cooperation in preventing and combating human trafficking in, from and to the Baltic Sea Region.

The project aims at strengthening cooperation between different governmental institutions and non-governmental actors within and between the target countries, fostering the creation of an environment that adequately assists and protects victims of human trafficking and ultimately reduces the number of victims of this crime.

By collecting and analysing data and conducting study visits a consultant will deliver country assessments of each Member State of the CBSS on the existing cooperation mechanisms between state actors, in particular the Law Enforcement and NGOs.

With support by the UNODC Head Office in Vienna and the TF-THB Secretariat, a consultant started working on the project in April and country assessments will be undertaken in all CBSS Member States during the summer 2009, starting in Finland.

The project will be concluded with a regional conference in Stockholm in 2009 bringing together relevant actors from civil society, state actors especially from the criminal justice response institutions but also the social welfare institutions and international organisations operating in the region. The conclusion of the country assessments and recommendations on how to improve the cooperation models will be presented at this conference.

Total Budget: 190.000 USD

Financing: The Swedish National Action Plan 2008 and 2009

Outcome:

- Assessment of the national cooperation mechanism in each CBSS country conducted
- Project report on the national cooperation mechanism
- Regional conference in Stockholm in late 2009 presenting the report and the findings of the country assessments

Third strategic activity:

Regional Information Campaign against Trafficking in Human Beings

To activate this activity and to ensure its sustainability the TF-THB is currently looking into the possibility of implementing a joint pilot campaign targeting human trafficking into Sweden from the Baltic Sea Region. The information campaign will be connected to a hotline against gender based violence in Sweden – *Kvinnofridslinjen*. *Kvinnofridslinjen* is a national telephone support line for women who have been subjected

to threats and violence. Today this hotline does not receive calls from victims of trafficking but the aim is to broaden their mandate and knowledge to enable them to also assist this group. The project is planned to be implemented jointly with the Swedish National Coordinator against Prostitution and Trafficking, based at Stockholm County and the National Centre against Gender Based Violence (*Nationellt Centrum för Kvinnofrid*). The campaign will be called *safe trip* and will target travel spots in Sweden with a number to a hotline that foreign women in Sweden, who might be potential victims of trafficking or are at the risk of becoming victims of trafficking, can call for assistance. Stickers, leaflets and contact cards will be available at well selected spots at airports, ferries, bus stops and so on around Sweden to target trafficking within, from and to the Baltic Sea Region with a transit in Sweden or with Sweden as a destination.

If this pilot is successful the TF-THB will look into the possibility to run this campaign throughout the whole CBSS Region under the project period 2009–2010.

Financing: Joint financing of the implementing partners – the budget will be set in the late autumn of 2009.

Outcome:

- To provide potential victims and victims of human trafficking travelling to, through or within Sweden with a hotline number to contact for questions and assistance
- Increased support to potential victims and victims of human trafficking in Sweden

Fourth strategic activity:

Improved Data Collection and Support to Research on Human Trafficking in the Region

In February 2009 *Guidelines for the Collection of Data on Trafficking in Human Beings, including comparable indicators* were presented in Vienna, Austria at a Ministerial Conference arranged by the project partners; the Federal Ministry of the Interior of Austria and the IOM in Vienna. The project was financially supported by the European Commission, Directorate-General Justice, Freedom and Security.

As no standardised guidelines for data collection on human trafficking exist, but the need for reliable data on trafficking in human beings has been pointed out in several documents on the EU level, the project intended to support the EU to define common EU guidelines and to provide Member States of the EU with a minimum set of data and comparable indicators to measure human trafficking.

A multidisciplinary Expert Team consisting of representatives from EU Member States, law enforcement agencies, research institutes, civil society and international organisations were asked to contribute to the elaboration of these guidelines. The Guidelines are to be seen as a set of recommendations that lead Member States through the necessary steps for implementing a *coordinated data collection and monitoring system* at the national level. They provide concrete strategies to help Member States identify counter-trafficking stakeholders, encourage and regulate their cooperation and exchange information through formalised channels. Most importantly they encourage states to create a national focal point which would accumulate and analyse information on human trafficking and provide this data to a European Coordination Mechanism.

As a first step towards potential closer harmonisation in this field the TF-THB has agreed to hire a consultant to conduct a desk study to assess the current data collection and indicators used in trafficking cases in the CBSS Region. This assessment will be used as a base line study for potential future activities in this field if a need for improvements will be found.

This activity will be developed in detail during the Lithuanian Presidency and a detailed project description will follow in October 2009.

Financing: The Swedish National Action Plan

Outcome: An assessment of the current data collection on human trafficking and the indicators used in the CBSS Region

In addition to improved data collection the TF-THB has also decided to support research in the region as a main priority. To slowly initiate this activity a first questionnaire has been sent out to Swedish researchers in this field. The questionnaire will provide a first picture of the research situation on human trafficking in Sweden and the Swedish researchers view on the need of a regional network of researchers. The TF-THB will then further discuss the needs in this field and how to develop sustainable activities and structures, such as the possibility of creating an interactive research portal or arranging regular regional or national seminars to support researchers in this field.

Fifth strategic activity:

Comparative Regional Legal Analysis on Human Trafficking

During the year the TF-THB has not implemented activities under this priority. Nevertheless, under this activity a legal analysis will be carried out by a consultant in 2010. The analysis will specifically assess the existing legislation for protection of victims of human trafficking and the possibility for harmonisation in this field will be explored.

Financing: The Swedish National Action Plan 2010

Outcome: A detailed overview of the trafficking legislation in the CBSS Region, especially laws protecting the rights of victims of human trafficking.

OUTREACH AND DISSEMINATION WORK OF THE TF-THB

Since the mandate of the TF-THB was prolonged and the funds secured for 2008–2010 the TF-THB Secretariat has put a strong focus on presenting the work of the TF-THB by arranging meetings and liaising with relevant actors in this region and representing the TF-THB at international conferences.

In addition to the joint activities with the IOM and the UNODC the TF-THB has participated and given presentations at UN.GIFT meetings in Vienna, IOM and OSCE Conferences as well as at EU events in Brussels.

A close cooperation has furthermore been developed with the upcoming Swedish EU Presidency where combating human trafficking will be one of the major focus areas.

Since the Spring the TF-THB is represented by the Senior Adviser to the TF-THB in the OSCE Expert Alliance Coordination Group against Trafficking (AECT). The AECT is chaired by the OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings Ms. Eva Biaudet.

INFORMATION MATERIAL ABOUT THE WORK OF THE TF-THB

The TF-THB has designed and produced information materials about the work of the Task Force. A brief leaflet explaining the rationale and the activities of the TF-THB has been printed in English and Russian. In addition to the leaflet the TF-THB has developed a set of factsheets outlining the strategic activities in detail and furthermore explaining trafficking in human beings as well as the history and the terms of reference of the Task Force. The factsheets have been laid out both in English and Russian and they are being distributed to relevant stakeholders in the region.

Expert Group for Cooperation on Children at Risk (EGCC) formerly known as the Working Group for Cooperation on Children at Risk (WGCC) & the Children's Unit

Chair – Sweden; Representative from the Swedish Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Deputy Director Ms Agneta Björklund

Vice Chair – Denmark; Representative from the Danish Board of Social Services, Director Mr Bertil Mahs

COMPOSITION OF THE GROUP

The Expert Group for Cooperation on Children at Risk, EGCC, consists of ten members; all member countries to the CBSS except Latvia have appointed senior officials to the group. The EGCC consists of representatives from the line ministries dealing with children's issues, mainly ministries of social affairs, ministries of education and designated child ministries. The group consists of six women and four men. The European Commission has not assigned a member to the EGCC. The period the EGCC is chaired by each country is rotated among the members to the group and does not follow the CBSS presidency. The group is from May 1st 2009 called the Expert Group for Cooperation on Children at Risk, EGCC.

MEETINGS OF THE EGCC

The EGCC, has had two meetings, one in Oslo on September 30th and October 1st 2008 at the invitation of the Norwegian Ministry of Health and one in Tallinn on March 12th to 13th 2009 at the invitation of the Estonian Ministry of Social Affairs. Reports from the meetings of the EGCC are published on the Childcentre website.

During the year, the sub group of the EGCC consisting of the representatives from Sweden, Denmark, Estonia and Lithuania has worked together with the secretariat to detail the actions taken regarding the rights of children in institutions.

During the year the Working Group for Cooperation on Children at Risk has agreed on a new priority document guiding the work for the next two years. For the years 2009 – 2011 the focus will be on

- **The protection of children from all forms of sexual exploitation** including –
 - Unaccompanied and trafficked children
 - Children abused by being offered money or other forms of remuneration in exchange for sex
 - Children and online sexual exploitation
- **The protection of children from all forms of sexual abuse and sexual violence**
- **The rights of children in institutions and in other forms of out of home care.**

The Working Group for Cooperation on Children at Risk (WGCC) also decided to rename itself the Expert Group for Cooperation on Children at Risk, the EGCC, following the reform of the CBSS. The group officially renamed itself and adopted the new priority document on **May 1st 2009**. The members of the group will continue to be appointed by the ministries responsible for children's issues in the member states and the European Commission is invited to appoint a member to the group.

During the year the following major activities have been arranged by the EGCC. Many of the activities have been made possible through the close cooperation with governmental agencies, NGOs and IOs. The EGCC sometimes takes on the role of facilitator or coordinator, allowing organisations to join with other experts and organisations in the region. The EGCC aims at supporting professionals in the region with new tools and the most recent knowledge available.

PRIORITY A: PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM ALL FORMS OF SEXUAL ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION

Sexual Exploitation of Children

Expert input: The secretariat co-authored the background paper “Child Pornography and online Sexual Exploitation of Children” prepared for the 3rd World Congress against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents. The EGCC was invited to the world wide consultation on the paper held in Bangkok.

Financing: ECPAT international, 100%

Outcomes:

- Background document on Internet related exploitation of children published in English and in Russian.

Preparatory meetings: The EGCC and the secretariat were part of the preparatory process leading up to the 3rd World Congress, including the planning meeting in Florence, major presentations at the regional European preparatory meeting in Geneva and the thematic preparatory meeting in Florence.

Financing: Geneva meeting: ECPAT international. Florence meetings: EGCC budget and national budgets.

Outcomes:

- Input to the 3rd World Congress preparations leading to the EGCC presenting at 4 different workshops during the congress.

Participation and contribution at the 3rd World Congress: Members of the EGCC and the Secretariat presented the work of the group at four different workshops during the World Congress:

- EGCC programme on Unaccompanied and Trafficked Children in the Region of the Baltic Sea States
- Child abuse on the Internet with a focus on victim assistance. EGCC work in the area of protection of children on the Internet.
- Child Friendly Forensic Investigations.
- The BSR regional study on Adolescent Sexuality.

Outcome: The EGCC and the CBSS demonstrating what regional cooperation can achieve to the world countries.

Financing: National budgets and ECPAT international (Secretariat attendance).

Conference: Children and online Sexual Violence.

Financing: The World Childhood Foundation and Telia Sonera, through the Online project at Linköping University, 50 % and the Swedish Children’s Welfare Foundation, 50 %. Through a grant from SIDA Baltic Sea Unit, Linköping University could invite experts from several CBSS countries that would not otherwise have been able to participate.

Outcome: 170 participants at the conference, some 20 workshop presentations. CD ROM including presentations and papers. www.childcentre.info carries the presentations, some of which are video presentations.

PRIORITY B: STREET CHILDREN AND CHILDREN WITHOUT A FAMILY

During the year the EGCC has not implemented activities under this priority.

PRIORITY C:

THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN IN INSTITUTIONS AND IN OTHER FORMS OF PROTECTION

Following the recommendations from the Conference on the topic held in Stockholm in 2006, the WGCC has set up a sub group working on the practical implementation of the suggested activities. The subgroup consists of the Swedish chair to the WGCC, the Danish vice chair and the Estonian member to the WGCC. The secretariat is also participating in the subgroup meetings and the Lithuanian member to the WGCC is part of the preparatory group for the planned conference in the fall of 2009.

Training for professionals monitoring children's institutions: Two Norwegian experts from the County Governor of Hordaland developed and conducted a four day pilot training of staff supervising and auditing children's institutions. This was the first time that the training was conducted with experts from different countries. The training was evaluated and scored exceptionally high on usefulness in the daily work of the expert participants. The EGCC will consider if this kind of training is one that should be continued.

Financing: The Norwegian Ministry of Children and Equality, 100 %

Outcome: 17 experts from Estonia, Lithuania, Denmark and Latvia trained in systemic auditing methods.

Conferences and networking: The Secretariat gave input to the Council of Europe Expert Committee on Children and Family policy and to the Eurochild's 5th annual conference.

Financing: The EGCC budget and SOS Children's Villages

Outcome: Council of Europe and SOS Children's Villages in discussions with the EGCC in co-organising conference on children leaving care planned to be organised in Vilnius during the Lithuanian presidency to the CBSS.

Publication of the mapping study *Keeping the door open*: The study commissioned by the EGCC mapping available support measures in place in the member countries for young people leaving institutional care was printed and published. The report: *Keeping the door open* is now available in English and in Russian.

Financing: SIDA Baltic Sea Unit, 100%

Outcome: The report is published in English and in Russian both in hard copy and on the web site.

PRIORITY D:

YOUNG OFFENDERS AND SELF DESTRUCTIVE BEHAVIOUR OF CHILDREN

During the year the EGCC has not implemented activities under this priority.

PRIORITY E:

UNACCOMPANIED AND TRAFFICKED CHILDREN

National Contact Points on Unaccompanied and Trafficked Children are appointed in all CBSS member states except Germany and Russia. Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova take part in the implementation of the programme and have also appointed National Contact Points, NCP.

5th Meeting of National Contact Points and National Coordinators

Financing: The Danish National Board of Social Services

Outcome: The National Contact Points, the National Coordinators, EGCC members and representatives of the experts trained in the BSR CACVT training met to discuss information sharing and hands-on assistance to unaccompanied and trafficked children. Report published on the www.childcentre.info

Expert input: The secretariat gives expert input to three actions in the Swedish government's plan against prostitution and human trafficking, Save the Children Denmark's NCM financed project preventing trafficking by media productions and to Save the Children Norway's knowledge seminar.

Financing: Swedish government, Nordic Council of Ministers, Save the Children Norway

Outcome: EGCC and CBSS input.

CHILDREN'S UNIT

The Secretariat function of the EGCC is carried by the Children's Unit staffed by the Head of Unit 100% and a Project Officer 20%.

The Children's Unit operates on a separate budget built on member states' voluntary contributions. All Member States except Latvia and Russia contributed to the Children's Unit in 2008. The Project Officer is a part of the follow up process to the Oslo ministerial meeting which is financed partly by the Norwegian Ministry of Children and Equality.

THE CHILDCENTRE WEB SITE

The website www.childcentre.info has been updated during the year including mirror sites in all 11 regional languages and English. The Secretariat and the National Coordinators in the different countries are responsible for the updating of information on the site. The hosting of the childcentre website has been moved to a shared hosting site meaning that the cost of hosting has been reduced considerably.

Funding: The update of the childcentre website was accommodated within the EGCC budget.

ASSOCIATED EXPERT GROUP TO THE NDPHS

The EGCC is associated expert group to the Northern Dimension Partnership on Health and Social Well-being. The EGCC meeting in Oslo on September 30th and October 1st was both a joint meeting of Expert Groups and Associated Expert Groups to the NDPHS and a meeting of the EGCC. All EGCC activities and plans are presented to the NDPHS at meetings of the CSR of the NDPHS and at the NDPHS web site.

Civil Protection: Expert Group on Nuclear and Radiation Safety (EGNRS)

Chair – Mr. Finn Ugletveit, Norway

The CBSS Expert Group on Nuclear and Radiation Safety (EGNRS), formerly known as Working Group on Nuclear and Radiation Safety (WGNRS) is a forum, established in 1992 by the CBSS Committee of Senior Officials (CSO), for exchange of information and coordination of efforts to enhance and strengthen nuclear and radiation safety in the region. Within the reporting period, the EGNRS continued its activities with regard to already covered issues as well as included some new topics into its work.

Chair Function

During 2007–2009 the EGNRS has been chaired by the Norwegian representative in the EGNRS Mr. Finn Ugletveit, Senior Adviser at the Norwegian Radiation Protection Authority. The current EGNRS Terms of Reference (ToR) states that *“The Chair of the Expert Group will be elected by its members for a period of three years”* (Para 6). As Mr. Ugletveit’s Chairmanship period is coming to an end, the EGNRS meeting in St. Petersburg on 15-16 April 2009 decided that a new Chair should be nominated at the next regular meeting of the Group, which will take place on 4-5 November 2009 in Warsaw. It was noted that since 1992, the Chair function has so far been held by Finland, Sweden, Germany and Norway. Therefore, preferably, the next Chair should come from some of the other CBSS Member States. The St. Petersburg meeting mandated the Chair and the CBSS Secretariat to start the process of inquiries and prepare a basis for the nomination of the next Chair by the end of 2009.

Number of Meetings

The EGNRS meets formally twice a year, but has developed a network that functions even in between the meetings as a channel of practical information and cooperation. The extra ad hoc sub-working groups are mentioned below. Furthermore, each of the regular meetings are normally preceded by a preparatory planning meeting within a smaller group, consisting of the Chairman, the respective regular meeting’s host country representative, other interested or invited participants, and the Secretary of the Group. These preparatory meetings are usually hosted by the CBSS Secretariat. In the current reporting period, the above mentioned arrangement was applied.

The regular meetings for the whole Group in the reporting period took place in Riga on 12–13 November 2008, hosted by the Radiation Safety Centre of Latvia and in St. Petersburg 15–16 April 2009, hosted by the V.G. Khlopin Radium Institute. In Riga, the programme included an excursion to the facilities of the Radiation Safety Centre, allowing the Group to familiarise with the Centre’s administration and resources. In St. Petersburg, the object of the excursion was the Emergency Response Center of Rosatom (EMC), focusing especially on the organisation and technical monitoring and emergency response equipment of the EMC.

Beside most of the CBSS member states representatives, in the Riga meeting also representatives from the CBSS observer country Ukraine as well as from Belarus, the latter as an invited guest, were participating. In the St. Petersburg meeting, the observer country France took part.

Composition of the Expert Group

The current EGNRS ToR states that *“Each Member State and the European Commission have the right to nominate experts to the Expert Group. The CBSS Observer States are invited to participate in the Expert Group’s meetings. Other entities may be invited as guests on an ad hoc basis”* (Para 5).

The EGNRS is currently composed of representatives from the eleven CBSS Member States and the European Commission, the representatives of the CBSS Observer States as well as the representative of the CBSS Secretariat who functions as Secretary and assists the Chair. The members of the EGNRS are senior representatives of their respective competent authorities (in the case of the EC, the Directorate-General for Energy and Transport – DG TREN, Directorate H, Nuclear Energy) and in the main are experts in the field of radiation protection, nuclear safety and nuclear and radiological emergency preparedness and response.

The EGNRS recognises and emphasises the importance of cooperation between all CBSS Member States, and the success of the EGNRS depends to a great extent on the active participation of, and contribution of information by, all CBSS Member States as well as the Observer States. In general, the activity level among the Member States has been committed, and some Observer States have in practice participated in the work very actively on an equal footing.

Ad hoc sub-working groups, with appropriate membership constellations, which may include members not belonging to the regular EGNRS membership, can be, and have been, regularly established to focus on particular time-limited objectives or prepare a proper knowledge basis for the Group's decision-making.

Secretarial Function

The EGNRS is being provided with a Secretary Function, a Senior Adviser from the CBSS Secretariat.

Working Group Fund provision

According to the current Terms of Reference, *“The host country will bear all costs in connection with holding meetings of the group. Participants will bear the expenses relating to their travel and stay”* (Para 7). In addition, the EGNRS has an annual budget of EUR 5000 from the CBSS Secretariat's general budget. The 2008 budget was used to co-finance the Topical Day in Copenhagen in April 2008. As to the budget 2009, no decisions have been yet made, but several alternatives were discussed by the EGNRS meeting in St. Petersburg on 15–16 April 2009, to be further decided upon.

PRIORITIES DURING THE SECOND PERIOD CHAIRED BY NORWAY

Revision of the Terms of Reference (TOR)

Declaration on the Reform of the Council of the Baltic Sea States from 3 June 2008 states that the CBSS *“priorities can be implemented by expert groups, including governmental and non-governmental experts, as appropriate, with clear and time-limited mandates and tasks. The existing three permanent CBSS Working Groups shall be discontinued or transformed into expert groups by the 15th Ministerial Session at the latest. Decisions on establishing expert groups shall be taken by the Committee of Senior Officials. Overlapping mandates with bodies outside the CBSS are to be avoided.”*

Following this statement, it became necessary to change the Group's name and also revise the Terms of Reference (ToR). The Group's meeting in Riga on 12–13 November 2008 thoroughly discussed the issue and recommended that the new ToR should be based on minimal changes, that is, changing the name of the Group into an Expert Group on Nuclear and Radiation Safety (EGNRS) combined with minimal revision and updating of the ToR concerning the mandate. This was done in line with the recommendations from the CSO Chair. The ToR draft of the Group's Chair was approved by the Group itself by silent procedure by 31 December 2008, and after that it was presented to the CBSS CSO as an official CSO Transmission. It was also presented and motivated orally in the CSO meeting on 27 January 2009 in Brussels by the Group's Chair. After some discussion in the CSO and minor changes of mainly editorial nature, the new Terms of Reference were approved by decision of the CBSS CSO as reflected in Transmission DK-125 of 26 March 2009.

The approved ToR preserves the general inclusive spirit and wide scope of the Group's mandate, only updating some issues, e.g. removing references to older documents, including some issues that have become in

practice included in the work of the Group due to the changed conditions, and defining in more definite terms some organisational issues.

The wide definition of “nuclear and radiation safety” is reflected in the new ToR as “[...] *safety and security of installations, radiation protection and radioactive waste management, both civil and military [...]*” (Para 1). The reform declaration’s demand on “*clear and time-limited mandates and tasks*” is taken into account in the new ToR as follows: “*The tasks and working methods of the Expert Group will be, unless otherwise decided, thoroughly reviewed every five years, and presented to the Committee of Senior Officials of the Council of the Baltic Sea States for a renewed decision regarding continuation of the work of the Expert Group*” (Para 8).

Exchange of monitoring data

The core of the achievements and activities of the EGNRS is the Agreement of the Exchange of Radiation Monitoring Data (7 June 2001), obliging the Parties, i.e. currently all the CBSS member states, to “*establish the necessary legal and administrative basis for improved exchange of radiological data between the Parties in normal situations and in case of nuclear or radiological accidents or incidents, and thereby provide an improved basis for situation assessments, decisions and public information*” (Article 1). In practice this has been interpreted and implemented as the almost real-time exchange of gamma radiation data. The Government of Norway is designated as the Depositary of the agreement.

The scope of this agreement was extended to airborne measurements by the Joint Declaration on the Exchange of Air Radiation Monitoring Data, which was favourably recognised by the Heads of Government at the 6th Baltic Sea States Summit in June 2006 in Reykjavik. The server, which handles the data of the above mentioned data exchanges, is administrated by Germany and it is password-secured, i.e. not public.

As to the data exchange in general, while working well, it still needs some refinements in order to provide up-to-date data exchange, which takes into account the related technological developments. Therefore, for instance, a sub-working group on the issue of data validation concerning data exchange, coordinated by Germany, was established as a result of the EGNRS Riga meeting on 12–13 November 2008, and this sub-working group presented its preliminary results in St. Petersburg meeting on 15–16 April 2009. It was concluded that the EGNRS will discuss and decide upon the final proposals from the sub-working group after it will present its final results, i.e. before the next EGNRS meeting in Warsaw in November 2009. Another issue which remains to be solved is the proper visualisation of the data.

As to the recent extension of the data exchange to the air monitoring data, the EGNRS has finalised the technical guidelines and the CBSS member states have made the data exchange operational since the Summer of 2008. Yet some practical and technical challenges remain. The EGNRS meeting in St. Petersburg made decisions concerning how to resolve the remaining problems.

Regional agreement on assistance in the case of an emergency

The EGNRS has continued to discuss the necessity of a regional agreement or arrangement on assistance in the case of a nuclear or radiological emergency. At the same time, to avoid duplication of work, the EGNRS has monitored the international development on this issue, most particularly the ongoing processes within the EU and in the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The EGNRS meeting in Riga on 12-13 November 2008 tasked Norway and Germany to make a concrete proposal on the substance, form and level of this kind of a regional agreement or arrangement. A draft proposal was presented at the EGNRS meeting in St. Petersburg on 15–16 April 2009. The necessity of further work into this direction was acknowledged. The meeting decided upon the process, which would lead to a more formal proposal from the Group to appropriate levels of decision-making within the CBSS member states.

Emergency exercises and training

The need and feasibility for common actions have been considered to strengthen the emergency preparedness cooperation in case of radiological and nuclear accidents. As the CBSS/EGNRS member states are participating in international exercises in the field in question, the EGNRS has discussed the possibility to establish additional regional objectives to international exercises. The CBSS member states also invite each other as observers to national exercises of common interest for an exchange of experience.

The EGNRS itself organizes CBSS Communication Exercises, in order to test the functioning of proper emergency communication without prior notification. The rule is to organise no less than 1 and no more than 2 exercises per year. The most recent one was organized during the previous reporting period in the spring 2008. In the Copenhagen EGNRS meeting on 4 April 2008, given that also other organisations organise this type of exercises, it was decided that it was nevertheless useful to continue these regional exercises. In the St. Petersburg EGNRS meeting on 15-16 April 2009, Sweden, who is currently taking care of organizing these exercises, announced that it will organise at least 1 non-prior-notification communication exercise before the next meeting of the EGNRS in November 2009 in Warsaw.

National reports

The members of EGNRS have prepared national reports for each EGNRS meeting, focusing on national activities in radiation protection, nuclear safety and emergency preparedness and response. The reports act as a chain for exchange of general information between the CBSS member states and their competent authorities in the field of nuclear and radiation safety. The reports also describe the overall situation regarding the pollution from radioactive substances in the Baltic Sea Region.

Topical days

In 2007, the EGNRS decided to start organising annual "Topical Days", where specific issues are presented and discussed among different representatives from CBSS member states and observer countries in more depth. The first Topical Day issue was focusing on malevolent acts involving radioactive material, and it was held in Copenhagen on 2-3 April 2008 (the two-day seminar was organized by the Danish Emergency Management Agency within the framework of the EGNRS). The results of this exercise were further discussed in the EGNRS meeting in Riga on 12-13 November 2008 and in St. Petersburg 15-16 April 2009. Discussion on whether some follow-up activities in this field should be organised is in progress.

The EGNRS meetings have continued to discuss the issue of organizing a second Topical Day on the theme of monitoring environmental terrestrial and marine radiation. Consultations with other organisations working in the same field, such as HELCOM MORS group, have been held. The EGNRS meeting in St. Petersburg on 15-16 April 2009 decided that a survey of the different environmental monitoring activities of the member states and the related multilateral arrangements will be carried out. The next EGNRS meeting in November 2009 in Warsaw will decide upon the possible organisation of a Topical Day on this issue, based on the forthcoming survey.

New topics

In the St. Petersburg EGNRS meeting on 15-16 April 2009, the Group was invited to discuss the introduction of new items, activities, proposal etc. onto the EGNRS agenda.

One new activity area, i.e. facilitating the establishment of cooperative arrangements for gamma spectrometry among laboratories in the member states, was introduced in the St. Petersburg EGNRS meeting on 15-16 April 2009, and a more formal plan is to be concretized by the summer 2009.

Another item, which was originating from the EGNRS members, is the theme of organizing cross-sectoral education and training in combating illicit trafficking in nuclear and radiological materials for criminal and terrorist purposes. The International Atomic Energy Agency has taken up the theme and is now, together with the EGNRS member Finnish Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority STUK, organizing a regional

conference on the theme in Helsinki on 8–12 June 2009. The EGNRS representatives participated actively in the conference, representing the multilateral regional level of nuclear and radiation safety cooperation. Moreover, the CBSS-related multilateral regional networks of the police, border control and customs cooperation are involved. The goal is to enhance both international, regional and cross-sectoral cooperation and practices in the field, making the Baltic Sea region as a showcase, whose experiences could be used for the benefit of other European regions, too. The preparation of this conference has been – and its outcome will be – carefully discussed and analysed by the EGNRS.

Other possible new fields of cooperation that have been discussed, but not yet agreed upon include e.g. harmonising of the visualisation of monitoring data, as well as training cross-border assistance from a customs formalities' point of view.

Civil Society and the Human Dimension: Working Group on Democratic Institutions

Chair: – Ambassador Karsten Petersen, Denmark

Priority during the reporting period

The main focus during the reporting period has been the reform of the CBSS. According to the Declaration on the Reform of the CBSS, the Working Group on Democratic Institutions shall be either discontinued or transformed into expert group by the 15th Ministerial Session at the latest.

Thus, the main priority during the Danish Presidency was to see if transformation of the WGDI into an Expert Group was viable.

Number of Meetings

During the reporting period one meeting has been held in Copenhagen.

Composition of the Working Group

The WGDI is composed of 11 civil servants. Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland and Russia are represented by the Ministries of Foreign Affairs; Finland by the Ministry of Justice and Sweden by the Ministry of Integration and Gender Equality. Out of 11 WGDI members four are women and seven are men.

Secretarial Function

The WGDI is being provided with a Secretary Function, a Senior Adviser from the CBSS Secretariat.

Working Group Fund provision

The Working Group has been allotted 5000 EUR from the CBSS Secretariat's budget. Since the Expert Group has not yet been established, the Fund was not used during the reporting period.

Main activities of the WGDI

In the light of the Riga Reform Declaration, during the autumn of 2008 and winter of 2009, the WGDI conducted a thorough discussion on the Russian proposal to create an Expert Group on Tolerance. Two successive versions of the draft mandate for an Expert Group on Tolerance were prepared by the sponsor of the proposal and discussed by the Group in a written procedure. Since the Chairman detected no prospect for consensus on the matter on the basis of comments received on the draft mandates, he referred the issue to the CSO for ultimate decision.

In addition, the WGDI participated and presented its *Comparative analysis of the practice of corruption prevention in public administration in the Baltic Sea Region* (the main achievement of the WGDI work in the previous reporting period 2007-2008) at the Safety and Security roundtable in Helsinki on 9 December 2008. The event was the last of four thematic Roundtables in the framework of the preparation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. The WGDI was represented there by its Chairman and Secretary of the Group.

Following tradition from the previous years and well established cooperation with the Baltic Sea NGO Forum, the WGDI Chairman gave a speech at the opening of the VIII Baltic Sea NGO Forum in Elsinore (Denmark) on 27 February 2009. The WGDI Secretary was present throughout the Forum and participated at the thematic workshops and discussions.

Coordination with Expert Bodies and other Structures in the field of Civil Security and the Human Dimension

CBSS CIVIL PROTECTION NETWORK

The CBSS Civil Protection network consists of the representatives of the competent civil protection/rescue services authorities of the CBSS members. This cooperation was favourably developed during the reporting period 2008–2009, introducing a rotating Chair function, new initiatives and projects.

The meeting of the Directors General of Civil Protection of the Baltic Sea States was for the first time organised in 2001 in Tallinn, and it became, after a while, a somewhat more integrated part of the ‘CBSS family’ under the so-called CBSS Lead Country function in Civil Security (Poland). The 6th meeting in Karlstad, Sweden, in the autumn 2007 decided that this organisation and the respective Directors General meetings were to be replaced by a rotating Chair function synchronised with the CBSS Presidency, starting with the Danish Presidency 2008-2009. Therefore, the Danish Emergency Management Agency (DEMA) organised the 7th CBSS Civil protection Expert meeting in Copenhagen on 29 January 2009, where the CBSS Secretariat was represented. This was followed by the 7th meeting of the Baltic Sea States Directors General of Civil Protection in Copenhagen on 26–27 April 2009, also organised by DEMA. The CBSS Presidency was represented by the CSO Chairman and the CBSS Secretariat by the Director and a Senior Adviser. In the meeting, the CBSS Secretariat’s new, more project-oriented mandate was discussed and welcomed, and it was decided that the CBSS Secretariat will, later in 2009, invite the representatives of the CBSS Civil Protection authorities to Stockholm to develop joint project ideas and discuss funding opportunities.

While there is no CBSS expert group or task force in the field of Civil Protection, under the umbrella of the Directors General meetings there has however existed a large-scale and rather operationally oriented project cooperation going on under the so-called Eurobaltic Programme, which was co-funded by the EU Interreg III B programme between 2003 and 2007. This operational cooperation is potentially to be continued by the project Eurobaltic Risk Reduction in the City Area, ERRICA, which participates in the 2nd Call of the EU Baltic Sea Region Programme; the application was consequently delivered by the end of March 2009. The project initiative was presented by the Lead Partner Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) to the CBSS CSO on 10 March 2009. The CSO decided to renew its full support to the project initiative and mandated the CBSS Secretariat to participate in the project as a full-fledged partner. This is a three-year strategic project in the field of civil protection and critical infrastructure protection. If approved by the Baltic Sea Region Programme, the ERRICA project will achieve a series of strategic plans for national and transnational investments, improved legislation and emergency response in the region, a common education platform, and a common basis for resource pooling to support the EU Community Mechanism.

The next expert meeting and subsequent Directors-General meeting is expected to take place in Lithuania in January and March/April 2010 respectively.

BALTIC SEA REGION BORDER CONTROL COOPERATION (BSRBCC)

The Baltic Sea Region Border Control Cooperation (BSRBCC) has been active and developing in the reporting period 2008–2009, and the relationship between the BSRBCC has been activated. The Baltic Sea Region Border Control Cooperation (BSRBCC) was originally established at the 5th Ministerial Session of the CBSS in 1996 at the level of the heads of the relevant national authorities in the fields of Border/Coast Guards. It includes all the CBSS Member States except Iceland, who has an observer status. The BSRBCC cooperates closely with Baltic Sea Task Force on Organised Crime, the EU border control agency FRONTEX, EUROPOL, INTERPOL and other relevant networks and organizations.

The heads of national border control authorities meet in the annual BSRBCC Summit. At expert level, the Baltic Border Committee (BBC) meets additionally at least twice a year. During the reporting period, the BSRBCC Summit was held on 24–26 November 2008, Marstrand, Sweden, hosted by Swedish Coastguard. The CBSS Secretariat was represented by the Director. The CBSS Secretariat Senior Adviser participated in the BBC meetings on 9 October 2008 in Stockholm, hosted by the Swedish Coastguard, and on 4–5 March 2009 in Lübeck, hosted by the German Federal Police HQ North.

Already in 2006 the BSRBCC decided to intensify its activities and started a reform process moving towards more consolidated form of an organisation. The results of this process include, among others, a system of National Contact Centres working on 24/7 basis, an encrypted communication network COASTNET, joint monthly reporting system, expert exchange system, joint concrete operations, aviation expert cooperation, a permanent Secretariat with three country representation (currently Presidency country Germany, former and next Presidencies Sweden and Russia), and website www.bsrbcc.org (to be available later in 2009). To continue this development, the BBC established in 2009 a working group to develop a long-term vision and a more concrete mission for the BSRBCC.

The next BSRBCC Summit is expected to take place in November 2009 in Germany.

BALTIC SEA TASK FORCE ON ORGANISED CRIME (BSTF-OC)

During the reporting period 2008–2009, the CBSS continued to cooperate and change information with the Baltic Sea Task Force on Organised Crime (BSTF-OC). The BSTF-OC was created back in 1996, whereas its Operative Committee (OPC) to plan and coordinate operative activities was set up in 1998. While being part of the “CBSS family”, the BSTF reports directly to the Heads of Government, and informs the CBSS. All participating countries are being represented from competent authorities fighting against organised crime and prosecuting relevant perpetrators. Besides meetings of the BSTF-OC and OPC, the BSTF-OC conducts joint operations, and joint investigation or –analysis teams have been set up.

The Meeting of the BSTF-OC was held in Tallinn, Estonia, on 8-9 December 2008. Its results were presented to the CBSS CSO in its meeting on 10 March 2009 in Copenhagen by the OPC Chair.

CBSS SENIOR OFFICIALS NETWORK ON TAX COOPERATION

The 12th meeting of the Directors General network on Tax Administration decided on 11 September 2008 in Helsingborg, Denmark, to terminate the network. Instead, it was decided to establish a more operational-level CBSS Senior Officials Network on Tax Cooperation. The mandate of this network states that the cooperation should be focused on operational matters within the area of tax control (fraud and avoidance), avoiding overlapping activities with other organisations. The Chair function rotates according to the CBSS Presidency. The three existing sub-working groups will continue their work and finalise their mandates, and new sub-working groups can be established. The current sub-working groups are: Sub-Working Group on Mobile Workers and Employers, Sub-Working Group on Fishing Industry, and Sub-Working Group on Debt Recovery.

Denmark as the first to hold the Chair function organised the 1st meeting of the network in Copenhagen on 10 March 2009, hosted by SKAT (the competent tax authority). The CBSS Secretariat was represented in the meeting by a Senior Adviser. After the meeting, the Danish Chair prepared an Annual Plan draft, to be adopted by the Directors-General. The 2nd meeting of the network is expected to take place in Lithuania in September 2009.

PROSECUTORS GENERAL IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION

During the reporting period 2008–2009, there were no Prosecutors General meetings held. However, the next, 13th Meeting of the Prosecutors General in the Baltic Sea Region is expected to take place on 30 September–2 October 2009 in Lübeck, hosted by the German Federal Ministry of Justice, jointly with the Ministry of Justice, Labour and European Affairs of Schleswig-Holstein and the Justice Ministry of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania. This meeting is planned to focus on issues of mutual legal assistance.

OTHER CIVIL SECURITY ACTIVITIES

During the reporting period 2008–2009, the CBSS Secretariat co-organised with the European Commission, DG Regio, and Helsinki City, the Roundtable on *Baltic Sea Region Perspectives – Safety and Security Objective in the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region* in Helsinki on 9 December 2008. The event was the last of the four issue-area focused Roundtables in the framework of the preparation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. The number of registered participants was 215. The Roundtable discussed the whole sphere of Civil Security, divided into four workshops: crime prevention; crisis management and emergency response; maritime safety; and safe and secure everyday life. The CBSS was represented in these discussions by the CSO Chairman, the CBSS Secretariat's Director General and several Senior Advisers, as well as practically all the CBSS-related Civil Security structures.

BALTIC SEA NGO FORUM

The CBSS Danish Presidency provided support to the organisation of the 8th Baltic Sea NGO Forum in Elsinore on 26 February–1 March 2009. The Forum addressed the following issues: social exclusion, civil dialogue, lifelong learning, cultural diversity, sustainable development, environment, human rights, culture, cooperation with the media and fundraising for international cooperation. The Forum also dealt with promoting civil society and the NGO network's contribution to the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. The CBSS Committee of Senior Officials Chairman officially opened the Forum on behalf of the CBSS Chairman. The Director of the CBSS Secretariat delivered a keynote speech at the first session of the Forum. The Baltic Sea NGO Network was featured in the CBSS journal Spring 2009.

BALTIC SEA SECRETARIAT FOR YOUTH AFFAIRS

The CBSS Secretariat continued the close and regular cooperation with the Baltic Sea Secretariat for Youth Affairs. The aim of the Baltic Sea cooperation in the field of youth policy is to promote intergovernmental cooperation, an active participation of young people and to encourage youth exchanges in order to promote a better understanding and knowledge of the Baltic Sea countries. The aim is furthermore to highlight the potential of young people and to recognise young people as resource. During the reporting period, the CBSS Secretariat assisted the Working Group on Youth Affairs in its transformation to an Expert Group and participated at the youth conference *Turning young people into active citizens by integrating science and sustainable development into their everyday life*, which was organised by the Expert Group on Youth Affairs.

Internal Cooperation: CBSS Permanent International Secretariat

FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE BUDGETS AND PROJECTS OF CBSS CORE SECRETARIAT AND UNITS

The 2008 budget of the CBSS Secretariat was financed by the Member States' contributions. At the time of closing the financial accounts for the year 2008, all Member States had fully paid their contributions to the Core Secretariat.

The Member States granted the Secretariat an extraordinary one-time contribution amounting to the sum of EUR 20.462 for the purchase and installation of an electronic archive (Enterprise Content Management System). The cost of purchase and annual maintenance fee is shared with the Baltic 21 Unit and the Children at Risk Unit following the principle for shared costs in the Secretariat. The total cost for the purchase and installation amounted finally to EUR 35.870.

An additional contribution for the Secretariat's 10th Anniversary celebrated in the Autumn of 2008 was received from Denmark.

The budget of the Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings with focus on adults was financed through extra contributions made by Sweden and channelled through the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The budget of the Baltic 21 Unit was financed by contributions paid by the Member States. Regarding the budget for 2008 all Member States except Russia paid their contributions. In addition to its annual Host Country contribution, Sweden also made contributions for projects to stimulate Russian participation in Baltic 21 Lighthouse Projects and for materials to mark Baltic 21's 10 year Anniversary.



The budget of the Children at Risk Unit was covered through voluntary contributions from the Member States. During 2008 all Member States except Latvia and Russia contributed to the budget. Additionally, Norway provided funds for the project for the Institution Program. The European Commission contributed to the DAPHNE Project of the CAR Unit and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) funded the Mapping Project.

In 2008–09 the CBSS Core Secretariat was also responsible for the financial management and reporting of funds assigned to the project *Research into factors important for the successful restructuring of the Law and Business Economics studies at the Immanuel Kant State University of Russia (IKSUR)* by the former CBSS Euro-Faculty Project in Kaliningrad, which was completed by the Summer of 2009.

10 YEARS ANNIVERSARY

The Secretariat celebrated its 10th Anniversary on 20 October 2008 with a half-day morning seminar at Strömsborg, Stockholm. Later the same day, approximately 100 guests from the Member States including the representatives of the Committee of Senior Officials, European Diplomatic Missions in Stockholm, international and regional organisations within the CBSS framework of cooperation as well as Host Country Representatives joined the afternoon reception hosted by the Director General and enhanced by the three special guest-speakers Mr. Uffe Elleman-Jensen, former Danish Minister for Foreign Affairs, one of the founders of the CBSS and the current Chairman of the Baltic Development Forum; Mr. Frank Belfrage, Swedish State Secretary for Foreign Affairs and Ambassador Karsten Petersen, Chairman of the Committee of Senior Officials representing the Danish Presidency 2008–2009. Musicians from Denmark, Lithuania and Sweden entertained by providing two sets of musical accompaniment of 40s swing jazz sung in Swedish and English.

CO-LOCATION WITH THE NORTHERN DIMENSION PARTNERSHIP IN PUBLIC HEALTH AND SOCIAL WELLBEING (NDPHS)

The Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social-Wellbeing (NDPHS) continued to be co-located with the Secretariat.

The co-location implies that the NDPHS would enjoy all administrative and logistic support from the CBSS Secretariat but would formally constitute a separate entity in the Secretariat. The budget of the NDPHS for 2008 was covered through contributions from Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland and Sweden. During 2008, voluntary contributions were made to the NDPHS Appropriation Account by Finland and to the NDPHS external evaluation by Germany. Additional voluntary contributions for a NDPHS Database were made by the European Commission, Finland and France.

NCM SECRETARIAT AND CBSS SECRETARIAT STAFF EXCHANGE PROGRAMME

Within the framework of the agreed scheme of staff-exchange between the CBSS and NCM Secretariats, two staff members from the CBSS Secretariat took part in a scheduled programme throughout the year at the premises of the Nordic Council of Ministers (NCM) in Copenhagen. Additionally a special bilateral meeting between the administration and personnel departments of the Secretariats took place in Copenhagen in April 2009.

HUMAN RESOURCES

The Terms of Reference of the CBSS Secretariat that were revised by the Council through written procedure in April 2009. As part of the 2009 revision the contracts for internationally recruited staff shall now, as a general rule, be offered for a period of four years, with the possibility of prolongation for up to two years. The contracts for locally recruited staff shall be offered in conformity with the labour regulations of the Host Country.

All employment contracts for the CBSS Secretariat and the Specialised Units shall observe the terms of the Host Country Agreement.

PERSONNEL EMPLOYMENT DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD

Director General: **Gabriele Kötschau** (Germany) (since 1 September 2005)
Deputy Director General: **Phil Saprykin** (Russia) (since 15 September 2005 as Deputy)
Senior Adviser: **Bjarke W. Bøtcher** (Denmark) (since 17 October 2004)
Senior Adviser: **Anitra Jankevica** (Latvia) (since 1 September 2005)
Senior Adviser: **Christer Pursiainen** (Finland) (since 1 January 2008)
Senior Adviser: **Anna Ekstedt** (Sweden) (since 14 January 2008)

Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings (TF-THB)

The Deputy Director General and two Senior Advisers will complete their contracts in the coming months.

Notice of recruitment for the positions of Deputy Director General and Senior Adviser were advertised on the 29 May with deadline 5 June. The Committee of Senior Officials at their meeting on 29 June approved the recruitment package for three new secretarial staff presented as candidates by the Director General. The new Deputy Director General and two senior advisers will begin their contracts in the autumn of 2009.

Baltic 21 Unit

Head of the Baltic 21 Unit: **Risto Veivo** (Finland) (1 September 2006–30 November 2008)
Senior Adviser Baltic 21 Unit: **Mia Crawford** (Sweden) (since 1 March 2006 – Acting Head of Baltic 21 Unit since December 2008 until December 2009)
Temporary Contracts: –
Senior Adviser Baltic 21 Unit: **Caroline Hoffmann** (Germany) (1 September 2007 to 31 August 2009)
Project Officer Baltic 21 Unit and Children at Risk Unit: **Alexandra Ronkina** (Russia) (28 January 2008 to 31 December 2009)

Children's Unit

Head of the Children's Unit: **Lars Löf** (Sweden) (since 15 June 2002)

NDPHS

Head of NDPHS Secretariat: **Marek Maciejowski** (Poland) (since 1 June 2006 in current position)
Senior Adviser NDPHS: **Bernd Treichel** (Germany) (4 December 2006 – 30 June 2009)

Notice of recruitment for the NDPHS Senior Adviser was advertised on 7 May with deadline 20 June.

Locally recruited staff members in chronological order of employment

Administrative Officer: **Ligia Broström** (since 1 Jan 2003)
Head of Administration: **Gertrude Opira** (since 15 September 2004)
Office Administrator: **Sandra Ewert** (since 1 July 2006)
Press and Communications: **Anthony Jay** (since 22 August 2006)
Temporary Contract –
Communications Assistant: **Canan Yasar** (2 February 2009 to 30 June 2009)

CBSS Secretariat Scholarship / Internship Programme

During the Danish Presidency, the Secretariat hosted 7 interns – five interns came from Member States, of which four received scholarship, with two interns coming from Observer States.

Torben Berg (Denmark)
Marta Bociek (Poland/Germany)
Agnieszka Wieczorek (Poland)
Natalia Ryzhkova (Russia)
Irina Vlassova (Russia/Israel)
Sebastien Gobert (France)
Denis Mikhailov (Canada/Ukraine)

Starting from FY 2009 the scholarship award was increased from SEK 5 000 to SEK 8 000 per month.

COMMUNICATION

Communication relates to the production of all printed and virtual matter and other activities that implement and facilitate the *CBSS Information and Communication Strategy*. This includes the production, printing and transportation of information factsheets, information leaflets, quick screens and folders for the core team, the CBSS Journal, the website and the CBSS Brochure. The ongoing reform of the CBSS since 2007 has meant that all communication tools of the organisation are in a constant need of renewal. The Secretariat has endeavoured to refresh each communication as decisions have been finalised. Under the Danish Presidency and as the 15th Ministerial Session approached this endeavour intensified.

Website

In line with point 10 of the *Declaration on the reform of the Council of the Baltic Sea States* the CBSS website, www.cbss.org which is coordinated by the Secretariat, has been re-launched to provide the basis for a one-stop-shop giving an overview of the activities and projects implemented by the CBSS and its cooperation partners, as well as increasing the visibility, understanding and appeal of the organisation.

To this end a tender for the development of a new CBSS website engine, visual interface and hosting agreement was sent out in November – with a deadline of 17 December 2008. This was extended to 12 January 2009 to enable four more companies to tender. At least two registered companies from each Member State were informed of the tender by email. The CBSS Secretariat received a total of nine tenders from Sweden, Norway, Poland, Estonia, Latvia and Germany. Companies from Russia, Iceland, Denmark, Finland and Lithuania did not tender. The Secretariat's Press and Communications Officer acted as project manager.

In this regard it was deemed necessary to recruit a Communications Assistant to facilitate the task. The deadline for applications for the recruitment of a Communications Assistant expired on 15 December 2008. The chosen applicant started in February 2009.

The position has been prolonged for the duration of the project and the contract extended until the end of June. The applicant assists with the implementation and development of the new CBSS website. Also during February the tender process for the website was completed and the Secretariat concluded its decisions based on the proposed technology, design, start-up price and subscription hosting commitments and costing. A Latvian company called *Idynamic* was selected. The contract between the Secretariat and *Idynamic* for the development of a new website was signed on 17 February 2009 in Stockholm in the presence of the Director and the Head of Administration. There was one intra-secretarial meeting to discuss the needs and to outline the project chaired by the Director and the Press and Communications Officer. This initial meeting was followed by an afternoon session where the Director of *Idynamic* outlined their plans from a technical point of view, especially the extranet. The core team were present at this meeting and gave input.

On the technical front a new account on the CBSS mail server which will be used to send out the emails from the new CBSS extranet system has been set up along with new SMTP Protocols, a new email mailing list, a new sub-domain for the extranet, copies of the current system, extract information and a new IP redirection route. The manual migration of extranet information, especially the Committee of Senior Officials extranet documents, will continue through the Summer.

A web hosting contract with *Idynamic* was signed on 18 May 2009.

The new website was launched on 1 June just before the 15th CBSS Ministerial Session.

The organisation of the website, its usability and accessibility have been prioritised throughout the project with the aim to clearly structure the organisation and to reduce the number of physical clicks that users have to complete before they reach their chosen documents.

Balticness Journal

During the Danish Presidency the Secretariat has edited four issues of the Journal. The Autumn edition was 24 pages and featured an interview with the Danish Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr. Per Stig Møller, and an open letter from the Governor of St. Petersburg, Valentina Matvienko. The Winter edition was 20 pages and featured an interview with Nyamko Sabuni, the Swedish Minister for Integration and Gender Equality. The Spring edition was 16 pages and covered among other items the launch of the CBSS EuroFaculty Pskov Project. The Summer edition prepared for the Ministerial was 12 pages and featured an interview with the Danish Minister for Climate and Energy, Connie Hedegaard.

Factsheets

A series of factsheets were produced in English and Russian for different CBSS expert bodies and cooperation networks. The factsheets were produced by the Press and Communications Officer with the input and sign off of the relevant expert bodies.

These included the following;

- Expert Group on Nuclear and Radiation Safety
- EuroFaculty Pskov
- EuroFaculty Concept
- Culture
- Civil Security and the Human Dimension
- Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings with focus on adults
- Baltic Sea Region Energy Cooperation (BASREC)

The first half of the forthcoming Lithuanian Presidency will focus efforts on updating and reviewing the *CBSS Information and Communication Strategy* after the reform process. The Factsheet series will be completed to include the long term priorities focusing on the Environment and Economic Development which will culminate in the production of a new CBSS Brochure. Other materials will also be produced to further communicate the implications of the reform and the development of new projects and Expert Groups (EGs) such as the Expert Group on Maritime Policy.

In addition, the Press and Communication Officer of the Secretariat aided the Units of Baltic 21 and Children at Risk and the Danish Presidency as well as the NDPHS with related issues and materials.



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