



Swedish Presidency 2006–2007

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

**of the 14th Session
of the Council of the Baltic Sea States,
in Malmö, Sweden on 12-13 June 2007**

The Council of the Baltic Sea States, consisting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, the Russian Federation, Sweden and a representative of the European Commission met upon the invitation of the Foreign Minister of Sweden in Malmö on 12-13 June 2007 for its 14th Session. The Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference, and sub-regional organisations from the Baltic Sea States also attended.

The Council

- recalling the Chairman's Conclusions of the 3rd Baltic Sea States Summit in Kolding, Denmark on 12-13 April 2000,
- also recalling the Chairman's conclusions of the 6th Baltic Sea States Summit in Reykjavik on 8 June 2006,
- reiterating its commitment to, and shared responsibility for, strengthening of the Baltic Sea States region as an area of prosperity, economic growth, sustainable development, public health and social well-being of its population,
- recalling the importance of the new Northern Dimension policy agreed at the Northern Dimension Summit on 24 November 2006 in Helsinki,
- also recalling the importance of the European Union policies in the Baltic Sea co-operation, including the integrated Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007-2013, implemented in partnerships between the EU Member States in the Baltic Sea Region, Norway, Russia and Belarus,
- reaffirming the need of further strengthening and enhancing co-ordination with the Arctic Council, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, the Nordic Council of Ministers, at all levels and in all areas of benefit to the region,
- notes with appreciation the closer practical co-operation between the Council of the Baltic Sea States under the Swedish Presidency and the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference,
- welcomes the enhanced practical and concrete co-operation with the Observer States of the CBSS, in particular with Ukraine, and the efforts to develop enhanced expert level contacts with Belarus, in areas of mutual benefit,
- acknowledges the efforts undertaken during the Swedish Presidency, in the following priority areas,

Energy and Environment

to improve the protection and preservation of the environment in the Baltic Sea Region, addressed through concrete activities;

- acknowledges the importance to reach a common approach towards a sustainable, competitive and secure energy future, by focussing on activities promoting security of supply, energy efficiency, increased use of new and renewable energy sources, and reductions of carbon dioxide (CO²) emissions, as well as contributing to strengthening of the European Union's energy dialogues with the Russian Federation and Norway,
- welcomes the efforts to reach an efficient use of Combined Heat and Power (CHP), the promotion of bio-energy and wind-power in general, and bio-fuels in the transport sector, and furthermore the decision to establish an ad hoc working group on bio-energy,
- also welcomes the efforts to reach a holistic approach to energy and environment issues, further concrete measures to mitigate energy related climate change, the possible linkage of these efforts to the work of the European Union, and takes note of the joint efforts towards financing of projects with a sustainable energy and environmental profile,
- further welcomes the promotion of best practices for interaction between central, regional and local authorities, businesses and civil society on environmental safety, mitigation and adaptation to climate change,
- reiterates its continued concern about the state of the environment in the Baltic Sea States Region, in particular regarding the marine environment, and calls for further concerted measures, especially these contributing to fulfilling the objectives of the Baltic Sea Action Plan of the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (HELCOM),
- also underlines the importance of the High Level meeting on Environment and Agriculture in Saltsjöbaden, Sweden in April 2007 as a new starting point for joint efforts by these sectors to reduce discharges of nutrients into the Baltic Sea,
- expresses appreciation of the Gotland Initiative to promote activities to combat eutrophication of the Baltic Sea, and encourages the continuation of efforts of the Baltic Sea islands towards becoming testing grounds for sustainable development projects,
- underlines that capacity building has to be further increased in all sectors of society in order to assess how sustainable consumption and production patterns can contribute to the restoration of the Baltic Sea,
- supports the continued development of cross-sector projects on sustainable development with a particular focus on rural development,
- notes with satisfaction the initiation of a dialogue on Integrated Coastal Zone Management with the objective to promote best practices,
- welcomes the development of a long term perspective on territorial development of the Baltic Sea Region, focusing initially on urban networks, accessibility and sea use planning, with the objective to achieve a territorially integrated region.
- also welcomes the efforts to extend the system of exchange of radiation monitoring data to cover also airborne radioactivity in the Member States with the intention to have the routine data exchange in place between all CBSS Member States as soon as possible,

- takes notes of the interest to develop a common vision with the intent to transforming the Baltic Sea Region into a maritime best practise region, taking into account relevant principles and policies of the International Maritime Organisation,

Civil Security

to promote democracy, human rights and social security, stability, security and prosperity in the Baltic Sea States region, addressed through concrete activities;

- underlines the importance of continued forceful efforts to prevent and combat all forms of trafficking in human beings in the Baltic Sea Region, and notes with satisfaction the efforts to conduct joint activities between the CBSS structures to this end,

- welcomes the initiative to develop a training programme for diplomatic and consular personnel focusing on adult victims of trafficking,

- also welcomes the implementation of a training programme for professionals in the Baltic Sea Region on care for and assistance to trafficked children,

- acknowledges the positive international and national effects of the efforts to strengthen the rights of children in institutions and the combating of sexual abuse and other forms of exploitation of children, and looks forward to continued concerted focus on young offenders,

- welcomes further efforts to address challenges to public health and social well-being in the Baltic Sea Region, i.a. measures addressing alcohol-related problems in local communities,

- also welcomes the identification and the development of best practices to receive international emergency assistance in the Baltic Sea Region, enabling adequate and rapid measures,

- expresses appreciation of the efforts to protect the common cultural heritage in the Baltic Sea States Region, and to encourage further measures to counteract illegal trade in archaeological artefacts,

- notes with satisfaction the ongoing active cooperation at various levels in the cultural field reflecting common cultural values in the Baltic Sea States Region,

- takes note of the newly launched interactive cultural portal, in developing a renewed approach of the role of culture in the process of strengthening the Baltic Sea co-operation, focused on the culture as a mechanism for civil society development,

- also notes with satisfaction that the project on children's culture "Think future, do now" has inspired further exchange and development of child culture of high quality in the Baltic Sea States Region,

- notes with appreciation the exchange of best practice models on the promotion of youth voluntary work and the counteracting of youth unemployment, as well as the results achieved through the project "Different History-Common Future", highlighting the potential of young people in the Baltic Sea States Region,

- notes with appreciation the efforts of the 5th Baltic Sea NGO Forum in Saltsjöbaden, Sweden in October 2006 to develop concrete and practical co-operation between the NGOs, i.a. against

discrimination and social exclusion, human trafficking, drugs and criminality, and in favour of the environment and sustainability,

- welcomes the invitation of Latvia to the next Baltic Sea NGO Forum in Riga in May 2008, bringing the issues discussed in Saltsjöbaden further and adding new themes to the agenda, enabling the NGOs to become an increasingly valuable partner to the governments, for the benefit of the populations in the Baltic Sea Region,

- takes note of the recommendations on the role of civic education in the fight against corruption from the Conference on Relations between Corruption, Democracy and Human Rights in Warsaw in May 2007 and welcomes further efforts to fight corruption through transparency, civic education, public participation and public access to information,

- recognises the successful EuroFaculty programme, in the faculties of law and economics, at the Immanuel Kant State University of Russia in Kaliningrad, containing development of curricula, modern teaching methodology, improved library and ICT facilities and language training of teachers and students. The programme has resulted in an increased international rank and reputation of the university, at the same time contributing positively to the general development of higher education in Russia.

- welcomes the readiness of interested CBSS Member States to co-finance and launch the EuroFaculty programme for two institutions of higher education in Pskov,

- recognises steps taken to promote education for sustainable development in the Baltic Sea Region, and welcomes further initiatives in the region's education sector, in order to enhance the competitiveness its educational institutions at the European and global level,

Trade and Investment

to promote trade and investment in the Baltic Sea region by removing barriers to trade and investment and by working actively towards greater contact between businesses in the region, addressed through concrete activities;

- notes with appreciation of the 6th Ministerial Conference on Trade and Economy, held in Stockholm in May 2007, and its conclusions,

- recognises that accelerating trends towards growing competition in the global economy impose new challenges on the Baltic Sea States Region. Further efforts should therefore be undertaken to stimulate foreign direct investment and to improve the conditions for domestic investment in the region,

- underlines the value of the CBSS "Road Map on Actions Aimed at Achieving Competitive, Stable, Transparent and Predictable Investment Conditions in the CBSS Member States" as a tool for benchmarking investment conditions and business climate, and notes that realization of the potential of further economic growth in the Baltic Sea Region requires continued improvement of the business climate,

- acknowledges the constructive support by the Business Advisory Council in contributing to CBSS efforts to achieve the stated aim of removing the remaining barriers to trade and investment in the region,

- calls for measures to better acquaint the business community with the SOLVIT centres, mandated to connect companies and individuals affected by differing regulatory systems, and encourages

competent national authorities to ensure that the resources available to their SOLVIT centres are adequate to meet the demand for their services.

- notes the offer by some members of the CBSS to make their SOLVIT enquiry points for barriers to trade ready to address complaints submitted also by non-EU/EEA members of the CBSS,

- welcomes the efforts to raise awareness, in particular in the business community, to the detrimental impact of corruption on the business climate,

- underlines the need to further develop coordinated efforts promoting entrepreneurship, innovation and the growth of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), e.g. by making SMEs more interested in expanding their business beyond their national borders,

- looks forward to Russia's accession to the World Trade Organisation,

Final provision

- expresses its appreciation to the CBSS Permanent International Secretariat in Stockholm for its excellent support and collaboration,

The 15th Ministerial Session of the CBSS will be held in Denmark in June 2009.