



Prime Minister's Office

7th Baltic Sea States Summit

Riga, Latvia

4 June 2008

Chairman's Conclusions

1. At the invitation of the Prime Minister of Latvia, the Heads of Government and representatives of Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia and Sweden, and of the European Commission, met in Riga on 4 June 2008 for the 7th Baltic Sea States Summit. The Heads of Government welcomed the participation at the Summit of the President of the Standing Committee of the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference (BSPC).

The Future of Baltic Sea Regional Cooperation

2. The Heads of Government endorsed the Declaration on the reform of the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS), as presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Latvia and adopted at the CBSS Ministers' Deputies Meeting in Riga on 3 June 2008.
3. The Heads of Government noted with satisfaction the successful development and the considerable potential of the Northern Dimension (ND) and its partnerships and drew attention to the important role of the CBSS as a participant in the ND. They also welcomed the increased attention paid by the EU to the opportunities and challenges of the Baltic Sea Region which is inter alia manifested by the Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region under preparation by the European Union.
4. The Heads of Government noted with appreciation the close and regular dialogue with the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference (BSPC) and acknowledged that cooperation between the CBSS and the BSPC has deepened. They reiterated the importance of its continuation.

Environment

5. The Heads of Government reiterated their profound concern about the state of the land and marine environment in the Baltic Sea Region and its adjacent areas and congratulated the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (HELCOM) on the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, as recently adopted in Krakow, Poland, to restore the good environmental status of the Baltic Sea by 2021.
6. The Heads of Government underlined that the implementation of this overarching programme of actions to combat the serious deterioration of the Baltic marine environment is an initiative of the highest political importance for the region. They gave their full support and commitment to ensure the implementation of the Baltic Sea Action Plan. In this respect they stressed the importance of the national programmes of actions to be developed and considered by the HELCOM Ministerial meeting in 2010.

7. The Heads of Government expressed their common concern on maritime safety. They underlined the importance of continued coordinated efforts in this sphere, including further development of the ship reporting systems existing in the Baltic Sea Region.
8. The Heads of Government expressed their commitment to action across all sectors, thereby addressing in a coherent manner all human activities affecting the marine environment of the Baltic Sea and sustainable management of the land and sea areas of the region.
9. The Heads of Government took note of Baltic 21's report to the Summit entitled *Reaching a Landmark - Ten Years of Cooperation on Sustainable Development in the Baltic Sea Region* and recognised the valuable efforts of Baltic 21 in turning the three pillar principles of sustainable development into practice, in supporting capacity building and in the development, promotion, assessment and fostering of strategic projects in the field of sustainable development in the Baltic Sea Region. Furthermore, they took note of the outcomes of the 1st High-Level Meeting of Representatives of the CBSS Ministries of Agriculture and Environment, held in April 2007 in Saltsjöbaden, Sweden.
10. The Heads of Government looked forward to the future contribution of the EU Marine Strategy Directive to the environmental protection of the Baltic Sea. In this connection, they noted with satisfaction the successful activities of the Northern Dimension Environmental Partnership (NDEP) in the region. The NDEP continues to implement successful work using public grant funding to mobilise significant lending from international financial institutions.
11. The Heads of Governments encouraged the CBSS and its strategic partners to pay special attention to climate change in the region and mitigate, to the extent possible, adverse effects thereof.

Economic development

12. The Heads of Government consider the issue of economic development and competitiveness tied to efforts to sharpen the region's innovative and competitive edge. Bearing in mind that innovation and competitiveness are central parts of the EU Lisbon Strategy, and also constitute an important component of the Socio-economic Development Concept of the Russian Federation, the CBSS should remain focused on these issues.
13. In this context, the Heads of Government noted that the Baltic Sea Region is a rapidly growing and developing economic area. However, significant additional efforts are needed in order for the economies of the Baltic Sea States to be able to improve their competitiveness and respond to the challenges of globalisation. Research, development and innovation have to be raised to a priority for the region. Knowledge and competence are the central means to strengthen competitiveness and sustainable growth. There is a need to continue to raise the technological quality of products and services in the Baltic Sea Region. Networks of enterprises and research institutions should be further strengthened to fully utilize the common potential of the region.
14. The Heads of Government emphasised that special attention should be given to the needs of small and medium-sized enterprises in the Baltic Sea Region.
15. The Heads of Government underlined that attention should be given to the sector of maritime economy with its high growth and employment potential for the region and to the further development of the region's transport and logistics infrastructure. In this context, they also welcomed the ongoing examination of the possibility to establish a Northern Dimension Partnership on Transport and Logistics.

16. The Heads of Government considered that science parks and industrial cluster development are issues which could benefit from being addressed by the CBSS.
17. The Heads of Government underlined the importance of a favourable business environment and a well-functioning labour market in the region.

Energy

18. The Heads of Government recognised that stable and secure energy supplies are important for the economic growth and welfare in the region. A joint and innovative regional effort is needed to meet the objective of an increased use of renewable energy resources, and to enhance energy efficiency. Further exchange of knowledge and best practices on the use of these sources is an asset for potential cooperation between the countries of the region.
19. The Heads of Government took note of the fruitful results of the work of the Baltic Sea Region Energy Cooperation (BASREC). They look forward to the forthcoming BASREC Ministerial meeting in September 2008 in Copenhagen which is expected to set appropriate benchmarks for the continued and enhanced energy cooperation in the next three-year period 2009 to 2011. Sustaining integration of the energy markets and infrastructure as well as ensuring the competitive, stable and secure energy supply in the region are of a particular importance.
20. The Heads of Government supported a more focused approach by BASREC in achieving the required results and objectives, including in the area of climate change and the implementation of concrete projects.

Education & culture

21. The Heads of Government recognise that education is a cross-cutting field of cooperation, which can constitute a means of boosting the competitiveness of the region's human resources. In this context, special attention will be paid to the promotion of cooperation between universities in education and research, the improvement of curricula, student and academic mobility; the upgrading of network capacity for research; as well as adult education and life-long learning.
22. The Heads of Government welcomed the results of the 3rd CBSS High-Level Meeting of Ministries of Education and Science entitled *Higher Education and Science for Sustainable Development and Competitiveness of the Baltic Sea Region* held in Riga in September 2007, and acknowledged the need of education, research, development and innovation to be on the CBSS agenda.
23. The Heads of Government welcomed the establishment of a CBSS EuroFaculty project in the Russian city of Pskov, aiming at an upgrade of the curricula in economics at both a state and a non-state university. They appreciated the service of Sweden in its capacity as lead country of the project. The Heads of Government expressed their satisfaction with the development of the new and inclusive funding structure pertaining to EuroFaculty Pskov involving all CBSS Member States as well as the Nordic Council of Ministers and the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg.
24. The Heads of Government noted with appreciation the successful completion of the CBSS EuroFaculty project at the Immanuel Kant State University of Russia in Kaliningrad in the autumn of 2007, and extended its gratitude to Denmark as the lead country for this project in 2000-2007. The EuroFaculty Kaliningrad project provided sustainable results in the fields of law and economics, at the same time increasing the international rank and reputation of the university and positively contributing to the general development of higher education in Russia.

25. The Heads of Government also stressed that cultural exchange, the preservation and sustainability of cultural heritage, in their own way contribute to the strengthening of regional identity.
26. The Heads of Government took note of the results of the meeting of the CBSS Deputy Ministers of Culture and their representatives held in Veliky Novgorod, Russia, in November 2007. They look forward to the outcome of the forthcoming 8th CBSS Conference of Ministers of Culture to be held in Riga in October 2008.
27. The Heads of Government noted with appreciation the highly successful 3rd Baltic Sea Region Cultural Heritage Forum entitled *Cultural Heritage and Tourism: Potential, Impact, Partnership and Governance* in Vilnius, Lithuania in September 2007 and welcomed the Forum's Report which will provide a useful tool for municipalities in managing sustainable cultural tourism. They also recognised the positive developments on cultural heritage education for children and the Code of Good Practice on Underwater Cultural Heritage Protection. The Heads of Government recognised the importance of the continued fight against the illegal export of cultural artifacts and "black archaeology", and encouraged further cross-sectoral approaches in preserving and managing the region's cultural heritage by involving municipalities, the business sector and academia.
28. The Heads of Government welcomed the ongoing cooperation and initiatives in the field of contemporary culture. They agreed that cultural initiatives taken have resulted in closer contacts between the countries of the region, between cultural institutions, organisations, artists and cultural operators, and mentioned the 4th ARS BALTICA Photo Triennial as an excellent example in this respect. They appreciated the planned Ars Baltica focus on intensifying the cultural cooperation with Russia, especially in the Kaliningrad Oblast.
29. The Heads of Government noted the ongoing work within the Northern Dimension Framework with regard to cultural cooperation, initiated by the Nordic Council of Ministers and building on the already existing efforts in the region.
30. The Heads of Government noted with appreciation the successful development of the Baltic Sea Festival, which has developed from a Finnish, Russian and Swedish initiative into an event of regional importance. The Festival continues to provide a welcome addition to the cultural calendar and manages to combine outstanding musical performance with an equally valid political and environmental position by collaborating with its partners to highlight the importance of the Baltic Sea as a life artery; both culturally and ecologically.
31. The Heads of Government valued the Latvian CBSS Presidency's project *Balticness* that has been carried out in eleven Baltic Sea Region's metropolises with the view to promote a multi-layered approach of cooperation. This cooperation has aimed to enhance regional identity and an awareness of the Baltic Sea Region through regional thinking in informal thematic networks. The project encompassed a multi-disciplinary program of eleven thematic seminars complemented by a photographic exhibition and a series of jazz concerts. The project brought together youth, academia, the private and public sector as well as civil society in a cross-sectoral approach addressing the issues vital to the Baltic Sea Region. The Heads of Government also underlined the importance of this approach as an inspiration for future work.

Civil security & the human dimension

32. The Heads of Government encouraged the CBSS and other competent structures to follow-up on the implementation of a number of regional projects aimed at enhancing civil security around

the Baltic Sea, such as: the fight against organised crime and trafficking in human beings, the protection of children's rights, the promotion of tolerance as well as cooperation on nuclear and radiation safety and between authorities responsible for law enforcement, civil protection and border control in the Baltic Sea Region.

33. The Heads of Government underlined the importance of continued joint efforts in combating organised crime, international terrorism and illegal migration. They took note of the valuable results as regards the operative cooperation achieved by the Task Force on Organised Crime in the Baltic Sea Region, and confirmed the Regional Strategy of the Task Force together with recommendations concerning its future structures and work. The Heads of Government decided to prolong the mandate of the Task Force to 31 December 2010.
34. The Heads of Government welcomed the successful integration and consolidation of the Nordic Baltic Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings into the CBSS framework to include Germany, Poland and Russia, with the objective of fostering projects and enhancing cooperation to combat trafficking in the Baltic Sea Region and its neighbourhood. They also took note of the prolongation of the mandate for the CBSS Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings with focus on adults to 30 June 2011. They acknowledged the successful implementation of the training of Diplomatic and Consular Personnel on the issues pertaining to the crime of human trafficking from the human rights perspective. Furthermore they welcomed the collaboration between this Task Force and NGOs focussing on the rehabilitation of trafficked persons.
35. The Heads of Government acknowledged the importance of good public health and social well-being as indispensable for any society to thrive. Regional efforts in these fields should, therefore, be continued and strengthened. They reiterated their commitment to the Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social Well-being (NDPHS), whose Secretariat is co-located with the CBSS Secretariat in Stockholm. The Heads of Government noted with satisfaction that the NDPHS has established mechanisms to facilitate donor contributions and project application. Furthermore, they took note of the recommendations provided by the four NDPHS Expert Groups, respectively on Prison Health, notably women in prison, HIV/AIDS; Social Inclusion, Healthy Lifestyles and Workability, as well as developments in the Primary Health Care Expert Group. While appreciating contributions made so far, the Heads of Government underlined the importance of continued efforts to deliver concrete results based on the principle of co-financing from the ND Partners.
36. The Heads of Government welcomed the efforts by the CBSS Working Group on Nuclear and Radiation Safety to implement the 2006 Joint Declaration on the Exchange of Air Radiation Monitoring Data on the basis of the Agreement on the Exchange of Radiation Monitoring Data of 7 June 2001 and looked forward to a fully operational exchange in the near future. They also welcomed the Working Group's new practice to organise annual Topical Days for a wide range of civil security and nuclear experts, the first of which was organised in April 2008 in Copenhagen on radiological terrorism.
37. The Heads of Government underlined the importance of upholding and promoting good governance in the Baltic Sea Region. In this context they recognised the continued work in the fight against corruption and took note of the comparative study on good governance and corruption prevention in the public administration of the CBSS Member States, focusing on internal mechanisms of corruption prevention and the promotion of integrity.
38. The Heads of Government commended the valuable work of the CBSS Working Group for Cooperation on Children at Risk. They recognised the successful completion of the two year training for professionals in the region working to rehabilitate child victims of trafficking, recognising that the region through this endeavour possesses a unique expertise in this field and

took note of the published report, while encouraging the continued work to eradicate this repulsive form of exploitation.

39. The Heads of Government recognised the importance of ensuring young people who have been placed in care the best possible start in their independent life and welcomed the initiative to disseminate best practices in the region. They welcomed the initiative to improve the situation for children in residential care by empowering professionals through training in their monitoring of the situation for children in care in the Baltic Sea States and beyond, so that the children's rights are respected.
40. The Heads of Government expressed their appreciation for the high-level coordination and information exchange within the civil security and law enforcement networks of the Baltic Sea Region, including the annual meetings of the Directors General for Civil Protection, the Prosecutors General, and the Directors General of Tax Administration. They noted with satisfaction the continued added value created by the Baltic Sea Region Border Control Cooperation.
41. The Heads of Government welcomed the continuation of transnational activities in the field of civil protection under the umbrella of the CBSS, especially the well-established EuroBaltic Civil Protection Network and noted the successful finalisation of the EuroBaltic II project by the end of 2007. They positively noted the decision of the CBSS to become a partner of the EuroBaltic project regarding Risk Reduction in City Areas.
42. The Heads of Government recognised the value of a well-functioning civil society as a basis of democracy and looked forward to further strengthened cooperation between governmental and non-governmental organisations and welcomed the 7th Baltic Sea NGO Forum held in Riga in May 2008.
43. The Heads of Government underlined the importance of cooperation in the field of youth policy. They welcomed the main focus on people-to-people contacts, voluntary work, youth entrepreneurship and employment, youth research, intercultural learning and cooperation with other regional structures through the exchange of information and experiences, as well as joint projects.

External Cooperation

44. The Heads of Government welcomed the increased cooperation and coordination between the CBSS and the Nordic Council of Ministers (NCM) and noted with satisfaction the collaboration in the successfully completed "Baltic Euroregional Network" (BEN) project co-financed by the BSR Interreg III B Neighbourhood Programme and its final conference held in Jelgava, Latvia in October 2007. The network aimed at improving the administrative capacity of various cross-border structures through cooperation, as well as giving input for regional and national governments on cross border cooperation. They appreciated the NCM financial support to the continuation of the project and would welcome CBSS Members to consider supporting further activities of the BEN network and cross-border cooperation in general.
45. The Heads of Government noted the effort made during the Latvian CBSS Presidency to upgrade contacts with other regional councils and initiatives. They welcomed the continuation of regular coordination meetings between the CBSS and the Arctic Council, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministers. They also recognised the interest shown in the experiences of the CBSS as an example of cooperation for other regional initiatives, such as the Central European Initiative and Adriatic-Ionian Initiative as well as the Black Sea Economic Cooperation.

46. The Heads of Government underlined the importance of continued cooperation with the Observer States of the CBSS.

47. The Heads of Government acknowledged the efforts to intensify expert level contacts with Belarus, in areas of mutual benefit.

Final provisions

48. The Heads of Government expressed their gratitude to Latvia for its Presidency of the CBSS during 2007-2008, and welcomed Denmark as the incoming Presidency for the period 2008-2009.

49. The Heads of Government welcomed the invitation from Lithuania to host the 8th Baltic Sea States Summit in June 2010.