



Annual Report from the Committee of Senior Officials

The 6th Year of the Council's Activity 1997-1998

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Table of contents

Annual Report from the CBSS Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) _____ 3

Annual Report of the Working Group on Democratic Institutions _____ 15

Annual Report of the Working Group on Economic Co-operation _____ 19

Annual report of the Working Group for Nuclear and Radiation Safety _____ 29

Annual Report from the CBSS Committee of Senior Officials (CSO)

4 annexes

(1997-1998)

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF SENIOR OFFICIALS, THE SIXTH YEAR OF COUNCIL ACTIVITY

1. Introduction

During the period of Denmark's Presidency of the Council of Baltic Sea States, CBSS, 3 July 1997 - 23 June 1998, the Committee of Senior Officials, CSO, conducted its work according to the directives outlined in the Copenhagen Declaration, the Communiqué of the Riga 6th Ministerial Session, the Kalmar Action Programmes and other guidelines set by Heads of Government and Ministers. At the Ministerial Meeting in Riga in July 1997 the incoming Chairman, Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Niels Helveg Petersen, announced that the activities of the Danish Presidency will focus on six priority areas:

- Democratic participation and human rights;
- Economic development and social and labour related issues;
- Civic security; - Education;
- Environment and nuclear safety, and
- Institutional strengthening of the CBSS.

2. Outlook

Inspired by an increased awareness of the regional identity and based on the common history and cultural heritage the co-operation between the CBSS states is making progress contributing to a stable, democratic and prosperous Europe in which democratic values, respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms prevail.

One of the main events of the region was the meeting of the Heads of Government of the Baltic Sea States in Riga in January 1998, which gave important impetus to cooperation and took new initiatives, i.a. in the fields of civic security, small and medium size enterprises and energy.

The launching of the EU enlargement process on 30 March 1998 marked a moment of historic significance for Europe in general and for the Baltic Sea Region in particular. The perspective of EU membership for Baltic littoral states is complemented by the Partnership and Co-operation Agreement between the Russian Federation and the European Union. The Agreement has added a new quality to EU relations with Russia, including i.a. the perspective of a future free trade agreement between the EU and Russia. The challenge and opportunity for the CBSS is to strengthen the inclusive and comprehensive co-operation in the Baltic Sea region.

In parallel Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the Russian Federation are striving for further international integration by seeking membership of OECD and WTO.

Following Finland's initiative for a Northern Dimension, the European Council in Luxembourg in December 1997 requested the European Commission to report on this matter later this year. Finland proposes that the Northern Dimension should address sectors such as environment, energy, trade cooperation and transport, which are also priority sectors for cooperation within CBSS. The role of CBSS of bringing the countries in the region, including Russia, 4 EU member states and 4 EU applicant countries, closer could thus be enhanced. This could imply that CBSS would evolve, thereby broadening its scope also to political issues within the aim and objectives of the CBSS.

3. Progress within priority areas

3.1. Democratic participation and human rights

The Riga Ministerial Session in July 1997 confirmed the importance of the work of the CBSS Commissioner on Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, including the Rights of Persons belonging to Minorities, and agreed that the Commissioner's work should continue. An amended mandate has been adopted, a higher annual budget has been supported, and Professor Ole Espersen was re-appointed for the position for a period of three years. The Co-operation between the Commissioner and the Working Group on Assistance to Democratic Institutions, WGDI, has proven valuable, and it has been strengthened.

A Round Table on Current Issues of Democracy and Human Rights in the Baltic Region, with participation of parliamentarians from the CBSS countries, was held in Copenhagen on 13 February 1998 at the initiative of the CBSS Commissioner and in co-operation with CBSS bodies. The Round Table set up an informal agenda for future CBSS Co-operation and for the work of the CBSS Commissioner covering topics within two areas: democratic institutions (national ombudsmen, complaints against the police, local democracy, non-governmental organisations, parliamentary co-operation, open democracy, and awareness and international protection of human rights) and human rights (protection of persons belonging to minorities, criminal justice, military spokesmen, and abolition of capital punishment). The Round table also dealt with conditions for obtaining citizenship and voting rights for non-citizens.

The Riga Summit in January 1998 decided that co-operation on the rights of the child, based on the report of the Commissioner concerning "The implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in the CBSS Member states with regard to specific articles (sexual abuse, violence in media, children of asylum seekers)", should continue in accordance with the report of the expert group. The report on "Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children" was considered by the CSO. The report pointed to the importance of exchange of information and knowledge about the phenomenon and the necessity to raise awareness of the issue among the relevant decision makers (police and public prosecutors, social and health services, schools, media etc.). Seminars were recommended as a means to serve these goals. Denmark, Germany and Latvia have offered to convene a seminar at the local level in

Riga in October 1998, and a conference at the national and regional level will be arranged by Norway and Sweden and hosted by ! Estonia in Tallinn on 3-4 September.

The report of the Commissioner on "Some Aspects of the Rules and Regulations related to the Right of the Personnel of the Armed Services" is being considered with a view to a possible follow up. The conditions in the armed forces with regard to rights and obligations, health and welfare differ markedly.

The Riga Summit in January 1998 stressed the importance of the presence of independent and pluralistic media. The CBSS Commissioner will co-ordinate his efforts in this field with the activity of the OSCE Representative on the Freedom of the Media and the EU Commission.

The issue of democratic participation is related to the conditions of non-citizens and I citizens with a foreign citizenship. Participation in public life is considered as a key element in a true democracy, and the presence of a large segment of society with no or foreign citizenship thus creates certain problems and raises important questions. The CBSS Commissioner on Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Including the Rights of Persons Belonging to Minorities, devoted attention to this matter as a priority question, The CBSS Commissioner and the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities have made recommendations to the CBSS countries concerned.

3.2. Economic co-operation including social and labour related issues

In general, the economic development in the Baltic Sea region is showing a positive trend. Inter-regional trade is growing, joint ventures are to an increasing extent becoming part of business life and investments, including projects of regional significance, are increasing. In Russia far-reaching economic reforms are carried out. Simultaneously Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland have continued their comprehensive reforms and adjustments with a view to preparing for EU membership. As steps towards EU-membership are implemented, the countries concerned gradually move towards integration into the European Union. The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between Russia and the EU provides impetus to a continued expansion of the co-operation with Russia, thereby contributing to a strengthening of the security and stability of the region.

Within the sphere of private business the Baltic Sea Business Advisory Council, BAC, and the Second Baltic Sea Business Summit submitted messages to the Riga Summit in January 1998 outlining how governments could contribute to and facilitate the efforts of the private sector in order to promote trade, investments, innovations and contacts in the Baltic Sea littoral countries/regions. The reports contained a number of requests for actions by governments that were considered to be conducive for promoting inter-regional trade and strengthening the economic growth of the region. The requested actions concerned more flexible and transparent customs clearing and certification procedures, joint and co-ordinated combating of crime, removal of discrimination of foreign companies in terms of operating conditions,

improvements of the transport infrastructure, especially certain specified major corridors, and scientific support. The two messages served as an important reference point for the activities of the Working Group on Economic Co-operation, WGEC.

The harmonisation process is already being implemented as EU applicant countries align themselves with economic rules and legislation applying in the EU. Furthermore, the proposals reflected the perspectives embodied in the Co-operation and Partnership Agreement between EU and Russia. Being implemented such measures will contribute to bringing about immediate and perceptible benefits to consumers and producers in the region.

In September 1997 the CSO requested the Danish Fund for Investments in East and Central Europe to organise a conference of investment banks and funds operating in the Baltic region. The conference took place in Copenhagen on 13 January 1998 and it was the first of such character. The conference identified the following areas to be of mutual interest

- To further facilitate and strengthen exchange of information and experience and encourage co-ordination of activities between participants and other relevant financial institutions in the region;
- To intensify joint investment activities with the aim of exploiting the complementarity of the instruments of the institutions, and
- To actively promote other joint initiatives that may contribute to enhance cross-border investments and trade in the region.

The Baltic Sea States Summit in Riga on 22-23 January 1998 welcomed a message with these conclusions and, based on the commitment to create a more favourable investment climate in the respective countries, called on the relevant financial institutions and banks to pay special attention to investments in both the private and public sector with a view to upgrading environmental, energy and transport facilities and industry. Also, the Summit underlined the importance of providing credits for projects of relevance to regional co-operation.

On 18-19 February representatives of the natural gas transmission companies in the Baltic Sea Region attended the first Baltic Gas Summit in Denmark. The gas executives welcomed the political initiatives for further co-operation in the energy sector in the Baltic Sea Region, and took note of the Presidency Declaration from the meeting of the Heads of Government in Riga. In the context of the objectives of more efficient use of energy and further integration of energy markets, the Baltic Gas Summit called upon the respective authorities for support for the development of the gas sector in the Region in close dialogue with the gas industry. Optimal use of the existing infrastructure and removal of bottlenecks were also among the topics discussed.

Likewise, the electricity companies of the region met in order to promote their co-operation. Furthermore 2 April 1998 a workshop on the development of the Baltic Sea electricity system was organised by electricity companies of the region. There was agreement about the necessity of a close co-operation between power and gas companies.

18 power companies and utilities have completed "The Baltic Ring Study" concerning the possibilities of establishing a common energy market around the Baltic Sea. The study emphasises that among the main benefits of such a market are a reduction of costs, enhanced security of supply and reductions of emissions if common environmental standards are applied. The Riga Summit welcomed this study and encouraged the parties to take the necessary steps for its implementation. The Summit further recognised that an integrated electricity grid around the Baltic Sea was a precondition for a common and regional electricity market, that would have beneficial effects for the consumers and producers and make a substantial contribution to reducing environmental impact.

Companies and organisations within the electricity sector have established a consultation and advisory body, BALTREL (Baltic Ring Electricity Co-operation Committee), with a view to realisation of the views in the Baltic ring study.

Norway, at the Riga Summit, offered to host a ministerial conference to discuss integration of energy markets and networking in the Baltic Sea Region. The meeting will take place during the Lithuanian Presidency.

At the Riga Summit Sweden, supported by Lithuania in its capacity of future presidency of the CBSS, proposed a meeting between the ministers of trade of the CBSS countries with special attention to small and medium sized enterprises, SMEs. The meeting will be held in Vilnius on 9-10 July 1998. Sweden will co-chair the meeting. The following issues will be addressed by ministers:

- Barriers to trade and investments with regard to SMEs
- Adaptation of SMEs to international competition
- Financing of the SME's

Upon proposal from Poland and Denmark a special meeting on labour policies was held in Sobieszewo in Poland on 15-16 January 1998. The meeting i.a. showed the increasing interdependence of sector policies concerning macro-economy, labour market and ecological issues.

The Danish Minister of Labour convened a ministerial conference on labour market policies on 18 May in Copenhagen. The conference was preceded by a joint meeting between Trade Unions and Employers organisations. A message on tripartite co-operation was delivered to Ministers. Ministers exchanged experiences from bilateral co-operation and PHARE/TACIS assistance, discussed the challenges and requirements related to the development of modern legislation and institutions and was briefed by the European Commission on labour market policies in the context of Agenda 2000 and the challenges related to the EU enlargement process.

3-5 June 1998 the 7th Baltic Sea conference on Social Security was held in Copenhagen. The conference was arranged in co-operation between the CBSS-chairmanship and the Danish Ministry of Social Affairs. The conference focused in part on EU-related questions within the area of social security as well as questions concerning co-ordination of public and private pension schemes, labour market

policies for the elderly, the role of the private sector in social development and social sector development in the new democracies.

3.3 Civic security

The Summit meetings in Visby in May 1996 and in Riga 1998 agreed to reinforce the co-operation within the civic security area, i.a. concerning maritime safety, environmental damage industrial disasters, air and sea traffic surveillance border control and rescue services.

In response to the call the Danish Presidency convened a conference in Århus on 8-9 June 1998 to set the agenda for future co-operation in the field of civic security. The key questions addressed during the conference were rescue at sea, surveillance of sea environment and fighting pollution, monitoring of dangerous (non radioactive) goods at sea, monitoring of persons, goods, identification support in major accidents, production of , dangerous goods and means of transportation in relation to illegal trade, nuclear safety, and emergency management. During the conference participants were invited to a practical demonstration at the Danish Admiral Fleet. Sweden, Norway and Lithuania intend -' to convene a conference on 8-9 September 1998 as a further follow up to the Riga Summit decisions.

The Visby Summit established a Task Force on Organised Crime in the Baltic Region. The task force delivered its report to the Riga Summit in January 1998. The Riga Summit found that the Task force had achieved operative and concrete results in the four main areas of its work: improved and increased exchange of information, joint operative measures, judicial co-operation and special surveys and training. The Summit decided to prolong the mandate of the Task Force through 1998. In addition it was decided that an Operative Committee, OPC, should be established in order to assist the Task Force in preparing and implementing its decisions and serve as a multidisciplinary expert committee on operative issues. The work has continued intensively since the Summit and the OPC is now well established.

The civic security aspects of the Russian initiatives concerning strengthened confidence and security in the Baltic Sea Area have been addressed by the CSO.

3.4 Education

The reason behind the establishment of the EuroFaculty was a general recognition of the need to strengthen the education of university candidates in law, economics and political science/public administration with a view to further the reform process.

The aim of strengthening these disciplines remains the primary objective. In parallel with the efforts to introduce curriculum reforms within these disciplines another problem evolved: to retain a qualified teaching staff when the younger teachers are tempted to leave to more lucrative activities and the older generation retire. The EuroFaculty

Academic programme for 1998-2005 reflects this dual track objective: continued curriculum transformation and staff development.

The Riga Summit in January 1998 recognised that shortage of university graduates within the relevant areas constitutes a major constraint to the reinforcement of institutional and administrative capacity in the countries concerned. Furthermore, the Summit stressed the need for better co-ordination between higher education institutions of the region, i.a. concerning mutual recognition of studies, certificates, diplomas and degrees of institutions in other countries and the establishment of networks as a means of promoting student I exchanges. There was agreement that the EuroFaculty could play a central role in this co-ordination and in providing graduates necessary in the continued transformation process.

An outstanding issue is the establishment of a stable financial basis and a transparent accounting system for the EuroFaculty and a broadening of the donor base. This will be a challenge for the new Director of EuroFaculty, who will take up his functions as from 1 September 1998.

3.5. Environment and nuclear safety

The Baltic 21 process remained the focal point of the environmental activities of the CBSS during the Danish Presidency. The terms of reference of the process were provided by the declaration of the Ministers of Environment in Saltsjöbaden in October 1996, "Towards an Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea Region". Baltic 21 is a democratic, open and transparent process, governed by a steering group, the Senior Officials Group, SOG, consisting of representatives of the CBSS Governments, the EU, NGO's, intergovernmental organisations (e.g. IBSFC, HELCOM, VASAB) and the international development banks ii (IBRD; EBRD; EIB; NIB; Nefco). Seven sectors, agriculture, energy, fishery, forest, industry, tourism and transport, have made their reports on sustainable development in the sector and made sector specific action programmes.

The Summit in Riga in January 1998 tasked the June 1998 Ministerial meeting to take action within the field of Baltic 21. Responding to this request the SOG has prepared a final report.

The report describes both the background and the context of Baltic 21 (i.a. a follow up to the Rio Declaration and the Global Agenda 21 adopted in 1992 by the UNCED, the Visby Summit in May 1996, the Saltsjöbaden Declaration of October 1996 and also the Amsterdam Treaty, identifying sustainable development as a central objective) and the basic principles applied. Goals and definitions are set up. The various gaps and obstacles for a sustainable development are identified. Even though encouraging steps have been taken, the Baltic Sea region is not yet on the way to sustainable development. However, the region enjoys a unique combination of favourable natural and human resources together with a rich common heritage and history, and given its great potential for economic and social development, the region is better equipped than most other regions to proceed towards sustainable development. Finally, the report presents a vision for the region year 2030. Policy implications are identified. An action programme is set up, falling in two parts: a set of joint actions, including cross-sectorial activities, and a set of priority actions for each sector. Financing, including international IFI's and other sources, and a system for follow-up on progress in implementation are covered.

Implementation of the Baltic 21 should be examined when ministers of environment meet in relation to other Baltic Sea regional activities directly connected to the scope of baltic 21, such as the HELCOM Review, IBSFC, VASAB and the EU dimension.

Baltic 21 is a valuable contribution to the stability and security in the region. Ministers are I called on to adopt the report and to endorse the following basic principles for implementation

- *An overall follow-up of the Baltic 21 progress is needed;*
- *The sectors should be responsible for the implementation and the self-evaluation of their action programmes;*
- *In the coordination and steering of the implementation of Baltic 21 a continued role should be played by SOG, also serving as a focal point of information, while no new institutions should be established;*
- *Environment ministers should have a strong role regarding the environmental aspects of sustainable development and*
- *There should be a regular reporting back to the highest political level.*

The report and the Communiqué to be adopted at the 7th CBSS Ministerial Session relating to Baltic 21 will be transmitted to the Ministerial "Environment for Europe" 23-25 June 1998 in Århus.

Nuclear safety and nuclear emergency preparedness is a mutual interest of all CBSS countries. In order to improve the possibilities for obtaining fast and reliable information about the radiological situation in neighbouring countries, a Baltic Sea States Agreement on Exchange of Radiation and Monitoring Data and other information of Radiological Significance is under preparation with the aim of extending an already existing co- operation on data exchange between the Nordic countries to all CBSS members.

3.6 Institutional strengthening of the CBSS

At the CBSS Ministerial session in Riga, Minister's instructed the CSO to prepare and consider a final proposal for setting up a permanent CBSS secretariat. The CSO prepared a draft decision which was circulated to ministers on 24 February. As proposed by the CSO, the secretariat shall provide technical and administrative support for the Council and be a focal point of information. Ministers decided on the proposal in written procedure and decided to set up the secretariat in Stockholm. The CSO adopted a budget for the secretariat at its meeting on 27 March in St. Petersburg.

After consultations between Ministers Mr. X was nominated as head of the secretariat. The CSO looks forward to a constructive coopeartion with Mr. X and his staff.

The CSO has also agreed on an information strategy for the CBSS, which the secretariat will also have to carry out. The main objective is to make the CBSS better known to the public. The information policy is based on the objectives of the CBSS as stated in the 'founding' documents. The instruments of the information policy will be

the newsletter BALTINFO and the homepage developed by the Swedish Support Group.

4. Co-operation with the BSSSC

The Danish Presidency convened a conference on decentralisation-reforms on 24-25 November 1997 in Copenhagen. Participants in the conference represented as well the state as the regional and sub-regional level. A joint meeting between the CSO, the BSSSC and other sub-regional organisations was held on 24-25 February 1998. Efforts have been initiated in order to strengthen the cross-border cooperation on the sub-regional and local level, in particular between Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Russia. The BSSSC will put emphasis on the demands on the sub-regional and local administrations as a consequence of EU membership and will promote the integration of remote areas in the regional co-operation.

5. The CBSS relations to third countries

Third countries have expressed interest in the work of the CBSS. Already at the 6th Ministerial Session in Riga, representatives of France, Ukraine and USA attended.

In considering approaches which could be relevant for building a relationship with interested *third* countries the CSO agreed that arrangements developed should permit differentiation without discrimination in the treatment of third countries.

In view of the interest in CBSS activities, expressed by Ukraine and the US, CSO members have met with senior officials from these countries.

France, Ukraine and USA were invited to the 7th Ministerial Session at ministerial level.

The question of participation of Belarus in new selected CBSS activities remains on the agenda with a view to identifying possible areas of mutual interest for co-operation in accordance with the basic CBSS objectives.

6. The CBSS relations to other regional bodies and organisations.

As annex I is enclosed a list of the contacts during the Danish Presidency.

7. CSO meetings

As annex II is enclosed a list of the CSO meetings during the Danish Presidency.

8. Activities of the CBSS Working Groups.

As annex III is enclosed the Annual Report of the Working Group on Economic Cooperation, WGEK. The group was chaired by Germany in 1997/98. Lithuania will be chairing in 1998/99.

As annex IV is enclosed the Annual Report of the Working group on Assistance to Democratic Institutions, WGDI. Latvia chaired the group in 1997/98 and Finland will be chairman in 1998/99.

Annex I

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF SENIOR OFFICIALS, THE SIXTH YEAR OF ACTIVITY

Contacts with regional bodies and organisations

In line with the co-ordinating role of the CBSS representatives of the following bodies and organisations were invited to report on their activities during the Danish Presidency:

- The Parliamentary Conference on Co-operation in the Baltic Sea Area
- The Nordic Council of Ministers
- The Helsinki Commission on Environmental Protection, HELCOM
- VASAB 2010
- Baltic Chambers of Commerce Association, BCCA
- Union of Baltic Cities, UBC
- Baltic Tourism Co-operation, BTC
- Baltic Ports Organisation, BPO
- Baltic Sea States Sub-Regional Conference, BSSSC
- The Task Force on Organized Crime
- The Black Sea Economic Cooperation

Annex II

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF SENIOR OFFICIALS, THE SIXTH YEAR OF THE COUNCIL ACTIVITY

CSO Meetings

During the Danish chairmanship the CSO held 12 (13) meetings:

* 2-3 September (Copenhagen):

Main topics: Presentation of the Work Programme of the Danish chairmanship and of the three working groups. Decision on implementation by the WGDI of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Consensus on the need to establish a permanent secretariat for the CBSS.

* 30 Sept. - 1 Oct. (Copenhagen)

Main topics: Presentation of Polish/Danish initiative on co-operation in the field of Labour Market and Social Policies. The CSO-chairman presented the outline for a Heads of Government meeting to be held on 22-23 January 1998. The financial situation of the EuroFaculty. Adoption of the budget for the CBSS Commissioner. Co-operation between Border Control authorities. Presentation of a draft Agreement on Regular Exchange of Radiation Monitoring Data.

* 27-28 October (Gdansk. back to back with the 5th. BSSSC conference)

Main topics: Future of the EuroFaculty. The modalities concerning the permanent secretariat. The scenario for the Heads of Government meeting and the chairman's draft of elements for the conclusions. Opportunity to participate in parts of the BSSSC Conference.

* 18-19 November (Copenhagen)

Main topics: Fact - founding mission of the EU Commission to the EuroFaculty. Financing of EuroFaculty's expansion to Kaliningrad. The CBSS Commissioner presented the plans for a Round Table on current human rights and democracy issues. Continued discussion on the draft summit conclusions.

* 2-3 December (Copenhagen)

Main topics: Continued discussion on the draft summit conclusions. Presentation on the WGEC's meeting on Social and Labour Market issues. Agreement to decide on a budget key for the secretariat in written procedure. Presentation of the proposal for a "Northern Initiative" in the EU.

* 17 December (Copenhagen)

Main topics: Continued discussion about the scenario and draft conclusions of the summit. Estonia informed that Tallinn was no longer a candidate for hosting the CBSS secretariat.

* 13-14 January (Riga)

Main topics: Finalizing of the conclusions (Presidency Declaration) from the summit. Follow-up on the WGDI's interim report on Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children.

* 24-25 February (Copenhagen)

Main topics: Follow-up on the Presidency Declaration from the Summit in Riga. Information on the plans for three ministerial meetings: on Information Technology, on Energy Co-operation and on Small and Medium Size Enterprises. Information on the plans for a conference on Civic Security. The preparations of the Second Conference of the Ministers in charge of Industry and Economic Affairs in the Baltic Sea region 19-20 March 1998. Report by the WGEC on the meeting on Labour Policy. Future presidencies of the CBSS and its working groups. Relations of the CBSS to third countries. The medium term financing of the EuroFaculty. Status of written procedure concerning the secretariat and discussion of a draft budget. The CSO met jointly with representatives of the BSSSC, UBC, BSC and the Parliamentary Conference. Conclusions of the Round Table on Human Rights and Democracy.

* 26-27 March (St. Petersburg)

Main topics: Preparations of the ministerial meeting on Small and Medium Size Enterprises (SMEs). The chairmanship informed about preparations on the Conference on Civic Security and the Ministerial conference on Labour Market Policy. The 1st Vice Governor of St. Petersburg and representatives of other regional authorities gave an overview of the position of St. Petersburg and neighbouring areas to regional co-operation, and the Russian CSO delegation gave a presentation on Russian visions for increased co-operation in the region. Finland presented its proposal for a Northern Dimension in the EU. The question of observers to the CBSS. The budget for a permanent secretariat was agreed. The future information policy of the CBSS. The CSO took note of the final report on Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in the Baltic Sea Region.

* 21-22 April (Gilleleje)

Main topics: Visions for Baltic Sea Co-operation. Briefing on the preparation of the final report on Baltic Agenda 21. The CSO-chairman informed that all ministers had replied affirmatively conc. the written procedure on the establishment of a permanent secretariat. The US participated and was invited to the 7th Ministerial Session of the CBSS.

* 12-13 May (Copenhagen)

Main topics: The scenario and the communiqué of the 7th Ministerial Session. Chairman informed about the status for the process of appointing a head of the permanent secretariat. The Task Force on Organised Crime and the Commissioners office briefed about their activities. Information on the Conference on Civic Security 8-9 June. The Director of DUPI (Danish Foreign Policy Institute) informed on the activities of the institute and on a conference on perspectives for Baltic Sea Co-operation to be held in parallel with the 7th Ministerial Session. Ukraine participated and was invited to the 7th Ministerial Session of the CBSS.

* 10-11 June (Copenhagen)

Main topics: Continued preparations of the 7th Ministerial Session. Report from the CBSS Commissioner. Discussion of Baltic 21 and Information Technology. Written procedure conc. appointment of the head of the secretariat and candidates for the deputy.

Annual Report of the Working Group on Democratic Institutions

Annex IV

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF SENIOR OFFICIALS, THE SIXTH YEAR OF ACTIVITY

REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON ASSISTANCE TO DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

Overview over the activities in the Working Group on Assistance to Democratic Institutions

Follow-up on proposals from Preceding Danish chairmanship (see annual report 1997)

1. Seminar on Democratic Institutions

Place: Copenhagen

Purpose: To give overview of the status on democratic institutions building in the Region and to work out an Agenda on Democracy and Human Rights in the Baltic Sea Region

- On 13-14 February 1998 in Copenhagen. the Commissioner in co-operation with the Chair of the WGDI arranged a Round Table on Current Issues of Democracy and Human Rights in the Baltic Region with participation of decision- and policy-makers in the field of democratic institutions and human rights. The Round Table agreed on an Agenda on Democracy and Human Rights in the Baltic Sea Region and set out priorities for co-operation in the field of democracy and human rights within CBSS countries in the future.

2. Further development of the concept of civic security with the aim to reach a common understanding of the concept

- Discussion on civic security concept was held during the meeting of 21-22 October. 1997
- Discussion on the civic security about concrete *forms* of bilateral and trilateral co-operation in relevant spheres of civic security was included in the meeting of 8w9 December. 1997. The Latvian chairmanship has summarised the Draft Reports *on* such co-operation prepared by the CBSS member countries

3. Follow-up on the Commissioner's report on "The implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in the CBSS member states with regard to specific articles"

- According to the proposal made by the CSO. the WGDI decided to focus on the issue of commercial sexual exploitation of children in the Baltic Sea region. An ad-hoc expert group was established to deal with the issue. This expert group elaborated and presented a comprehensive report and report with recommendations. The work on the issue is continuing within the framework of the programme on combating commercial sexual exploitation of children in the Baltic Sea Region. The Member States expressed their interest in participating in the different projects: Sweden and Norway together organise project A (the 18th conference within project A will be held in Tallinn on September 3-4, 1998) while Denmark and Germany will organise project B (Latvia has expressed its readiness to host one of the seminars organised by Denmark in Riga this year).

4. Discussion of EU Commission's Opinions regarding the possible accession of new members.

- A short discussion was held during the meeting on 8-9 December, 1997.

5. Streamlining educational activities in the Region

- Discussion on current developments of the EuroFaculty. Report on the current state of affairs made by the Director of the EuroFaculty, Mr. Toivo MILJAN
- Presentation on in-service training of civil servants by the Danish School of Public Administration
- Visit to Stockholm School of Economics in Riga

6. Continue regular contacts with the CBSS Commissioner

- The Commissioner attended two meetings of the WGDI on 21-22 October. : 1997 in Riga and on 12 February, 1998 in Copenhagen;
- Assistant to the Commissioner Mr. Jacob Gammelgaard has participated in meetings of the WGDI
- The Commissioner in co-operation with the Latvian chair of the CBSS WGDI organised the Round Table on Democracy and Human Rights in the : Baltic Sea Region;
- During the Latvian chairmanship the WGDI followed-up on the following CBSS Commissioner reports:

1) "The implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in the :,{l CBSS member states with regard specific articles"

2)"Freedom of Association"

3) "Some aspects of regulations related to the lights and duties of the Personnel of the armed services of the CBSS member states."

A follow up was also done on:

4) Commissioner's recommendation to ratify Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

5) Commissioner's report of the first mandate period.

7. Continue with thematically meetings

- During the discussion on the procedure of WGDI on 16-17 September it was agreed that the leading topic for each meeting be defined. The work of the Working Group was organised according to the following themes: rights of the child and civic security, human rights and democracy activities in the Region, rights of minorities in the Region, people-to-people activities.

Guests that have participated in Working Group meetings 1997/98:

- The CBSS Commissioner, Mr. Ole ESPERSEN
- Assistant to the Commissioner, Mr. Jacob GAMMELGAARD
- The Deputy Head of the National Human Rights Office of Latvia. Ms. Kaija GERTNERE
- Acting Chairman of the Constitutional Court of Latvia, Mr .Aivars ENDZINS
- The Director of the EuroFaculty, Mr. Toivo MILJAN
- Danish School of Public Administration, Mr .Peter WARMING
- Member of the Council of Higher Education of the Latvian Parliament, Ms. Baiba RIVZA
- Assistant to Minister of Education and Science, Ms. Mara KA TV ARE

List of experts took place in expert's group meeting on child's rights issue

- Kate JACQUEROT (Denmark), Deputy Assistant to the National Commissioner of the Danish Police
- Aija KLAVINA (Latvia), Children Rights Protection Centre
- Jukka LINDSTEDT (Finland), Ministry of Justice
- Helle Nut (Estonia), Ministry of Social Affairs
- Lars MELING (Norway), Ministry of Justice
- Kalina KOBYLINSKA (Poland), Bureau of Plenipotentiary of Government for the Rights of the Children
- Elisabeth NORRBY (Sweden), Ministry of Health and Social Affairs
- Erja-Liisa PETROVA (Sweden), Ministry of Health and Social Affairs
- Goran Hakansson (Sweden), Aliens Appeals Board

Proposals for succeeding Finnish chairmanship:

- Continue the work on Civic Security in accordance with the agenda for future co-operation agreed on in the Conference on Civic Security, 8-9 June, 1998 in Aarhus, Denmark;
 - Follow-up on Agenda on Democracy and Human Rights in the Baltic Sea Region formulated during the Round Table on Current Issues of Democracy and Human Rights in the Baltic Region, 13-14 February, 1998 in Copenhagen;
 - Continue regular contact with the CBSS Commissioner:
- to consider inner procedures within CESS member states on implementation of the Commissioner's recommendations;
- continue the practice of follow-up on the Commissioner's surveys;
- Continue the co-operation in the sphere of education;
 - Continue the work on Child Rights issue in accordance with the decisions taken during the Riga Summit in January) 1998
 - Continue with thematical meetings (each meeting should have a leading topic);
 - In a case of necessity to expand of experts meetings;
 - Discussing on more political and problematic issues (human rights, democracy issues)

Annual Report of the Working Group on Economic Co-operation

Annex III

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE OF SENIOR OFFICIALS, THE SIXTH YEAR OF ACTIVITY :

1. Introduction

The basic guidelines for the work programme. in the period July 1997 - June 1998 remained ,the Kalmar Action Programme and the annual report of the previous WGEC working period. After the. Riga Summit in January 1998 the Presidency's declaration and the messages to the Heads of Government served as additional points. of reference. Accordingly, the major issues dealt With in the framework of the WGEC can be regrouped as follows:

- a) implementation of the Kalmar Action Programme as well as first steps to the follow up of the Riga summit
- b) identification of further fields of co-operation; .
- c) involvement of international organisations an~ multilateral fora in the cause of the Baltic Sea Area, such as the EBRD, OECD,. Customs' Conference and BSSSC.

The work programme was adopted by the Working Group on the occasion of the Kiel meeting endorsed by the CSO after the presentation of the work programme by the WGEC's chairman at the CSO meeting in Kopenhagen (beginning of September 1991). The chair of the WGEC participated. in CSO meetings with special focus .on WGEC-related questions and ~ported about current issues of the *work* of the WGEC. This refers i.p. to the preparation period of the Riga Summit including the summit itself which was preceded by a regional business meeting.

In addition. in order to establish a fink to other important events of economic cooperation in. the Baltic Sea Region the chair was .present at the preparatory meetings of the Ministerial Conference in Gdansk (Minister? of Economy) and Vilnius (Trade ministers, focus on SME issues).

2. Schedule of Meetings

During the work period-July 1997 - June 1998 5 meetings of the WGEG took place dealing with the topics mentioned below. All WGEC meetings were chaired by Germany.

Kiel, 6-7 October 1997

adoption of the WGEC work programme, Baltic PHARE cross border cooperation, trade-interconnections and macro-economic identity, development of infrastructure in the Baltic. Sea area with special emphasis to telecommunications, Finnish initiative "Northern dimension of Europe"

Rostock,27-28.November 1997:

SME .promotion, i.p. crediting of SMEs, loan guarantee schemes~ guarantee and promotional banks, activities of EBRD in the region with special' focus on the support of. SMEs

Sobieszewo, 15-16 Januar 1998:

special meeting on labour policy (proposed by Denmark and Poland), multilateral and bilateral cooperation in this field, interdependence of employment and ecology, industrial safety and health protection.

Hamburg, 12 -13 March 1998:

Baltic Sea Customs Conference, Special Economic Zones, Baltic Sea States Subregional Cooperation (BSSSC), Summit aftermath and first steps to the follow up of the Riga Summit, ,Meeting of trade ministers on, SME issues in Vilnius - contribution of the WGEC, Follow-up of the Northern Dimension of the EU, conference on investment funds and banks

Berlin, 14 - 15 May:

situation and development of tourism in the Baltic .Sea Area, OECD BREF-Programme, upcoming ministerial meetings, debate' on and adoption of the annual report by the WGEC

3. Principal Findings and Recommendations

a) Implementation of the Kalmar Action Programme and First Steps to the Follow-up of the Riga Summit

Telecommunications:

The Kalmar action programme emphasizes the importance of the further infrastructure development in the region and especially the provision of modern information technologies. In this context, the WGEC debated, as one further field of infrastructure development, the situation of telecommunications in the Baltic Area and took note of a presentation by German Telekom, conveying also attitudes expressed in the working group of Baltic Sea telecom companies.

The WGEC took note that all in all major improvements in the field of telecommunications have already been made. Nevertheless, the necessity of a clear legal framework and major steps towards liberalisation in the field of telecommunication were called for. In addition, it was pointed out, that the countries still having a monopoly structure soon should strive to embark on deregulations. There was an understanding that telecommunications should be developed in accordance with the WTO-process and the existing EU-principles, i.e. openness and non-discrimination.

Cross Border Cooperation:

The WGEC was in general informed by the EU-Commission about priorities and current developments of Cross border Cooperation Programmes in the framework of PHARE and TACIS.

The WGEC discussed and appreciated the importance of Cross Border Cooperation in the Baltic sea area and the existence and success of trilateral CBC projects (e.g. Estonia, Latvia, Russia). The necessity of more rural CBC-projects was stressed by some delegations.

Promotion of SME: The WGEC dedicated one of its meetings to SME related issues with special regard to the financing of SME's. In doing so the WGEC took note of a range of presentations on the functioning and preconditions of guarantee banks and promotional banks and the activities of the EBRD in the field of SME promotion in the Baltic sea region (EBRD: see also below).

In this context, the main finding was that SME financing should be facilitated above all by the targeted provision of loans of medium and long term character, because long term credits are currently not or not easily available for SMEs. Beyond that, SME financing should be improved through special and additional

guarantee schemes and guarantee banks. The target of these measures should be a sound and well-balanced risk sharing.

Special Economic Zones:

The WGEC had an exchange of views on legislation and practical experiences as regards special economic zones in the CBSS countries. Several countries, all around the Baltic Sea, have established "free ports" and "ports of call" where goods transit without entering the customs territory of the country. On the other hand, Poland, Latvia, Lithuania and Russia already have or are planning special economic zones situated in ports or inland areas, where goods are produced under a favourable tax regime or with other government support. Enterprises in these zones, in fact, benefit from state aid.

It is understood that state aids may be necessary in order to allow for structural changes. However, such measures must be taken according to the provisions of the EU Treaties; the European Economic Area Treaty; the Europe Agreements or the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, as appropriate.

Reference was also made to OECD studies on this subject, pointing to the problem of competition distortion as a result of "Special Zones". The aims of such special economic zones might be better reached by measures of regional and structural policies.

Follow up to the Riga Summit:

On the basis of a paper prepared by the chair (synopsis of messages to the heads of government), the WGEC discussed the general guidelines of the follow up of the Riga Summit in the field of economic cooperation and the specific role of the WGEC in this context.

There was unanimity that the WGEC could only concentrate on specific subjects including the evaluation of those items which were mainly already dealt with in previous meetings and which continue to be unsolved and thus need further attention. The WGEC agreed that the follow up process should be further accompanied within its current work. This includes the information about the implementation process realized by other institutions both in the national and the regional, frame work as there are:

- The competent national authorities within their respective jurisdiction, i.e. in the fields of Trade and Energy, Transport and Communication, Finance and of Internal Affairs
- The conferences of Ministers in these fields, if necessary, accompanied by the WGEC.
- The National Business Association and Chambers of Commerce

- The Regional institutions of Economic Cooperation,- i.p. the BCCA and the BAC .
- The follow-up to the Riga Summit should .be realized-i.p. in close cooperation with the BAC.

Some delegations expressed the hope that the CBSS secretariat could make its contribution to an efficient follow-up. It was suggested that. the secretariat could help compile all declarations, messages, reports of the CBSS and its competent bodies to build up a solid basis for the whole follow-up-process.

b) Identification of further Fields of Co-operation;

Cooperation of' Research Institutes:

The, WGEC took note of a presentation on trade interconnections and their perspectives (illustration of different szenarios) in the Baltic Sea Area. The University of Kiel referred to similarly orientated research projects in which several research institutes of the Baltic Rim are involved.

The presentation was meant as an additional contribution to make transparent the macro-economic identity of the Baltic Sea Region (already subject of the previous WGEC working period).

There was unanimity that a closer cooperation of research institutes of the region was needed, given the fact that several research institutes in the Baltic Sea states pursue similar research projects. The group .expressed the strong interest to contribute to strengthening the network of the respective institutes.

Tourism

The WGEC took note of the presentation of the Baltic Tourism Commission. and discussed the situation and perspective of tourism in the Baltic sea area. Tourism was regarded as one. key sector in the overall economic development in the region. This refers i.p. to its possible impact on structural changes in adjacent sectors.

Labour and Social Policy

On the occasion of the special meeting on Labour Policies. held in Sobieszewo in Poland (requested by the Polish and Danish delegation) the WGEC took note of the various activities and efforts of multilateral organisations. in .the

field of employment and labour policies and took store as regards the different aspects of bilateral cooperation including inter-regional projects.

The meeting made obvious the increasing interdependence of sector policies as regards macro-economy, labour market and ecology. The awareness of the complexity of the interrelation between trade, investment and labour markets has been raised.

There was unanimity in the WGEC, in the context of economy-related items, - from time to time - to take up again issues connected with labour market and social policy. In case of a common understanding, additional gatherings "of experts could take place, within or without the framework of the Council of Baltic Sea States.

Northern Dimension of the EU.

The WGEC took note and discussed the Europe originally launched by the Prime Minister of Finland, Paavo Lipponen.. The Finnish initiative aims at developing EU's interests in Northern Europe.

The WGEC highly appreciated the initiative. The Northern Dimension of the EU should be continuously reviewed. The Finnish delegation briefed the WGEC on the stage of the implementation of the initiative and made concrete action programme available to the group;

The European Council in Luxemburg took note of the Northern Dimension and requested the European Commission to submit a report for the forthcoming European Council in Vienna 1998.

The Commission representative explained the EU's policies .towards Northern Europe formulated and implemented within the framework. of its various sectoral. policies and within the framework of its agreements .with each of the countries. in the region.

c) Stronger Involvement of International Organisations with Economic Relevance for the Cooperation within the Baltic Sea Area

EBRD:

The WGEC took note of the presentation of the EBRD on its activities in the Baltic Sea region With special regard to SME-policies (presentation 'by the

German deputy executive director). Crediting policies of the EBRO, special credit-lines and the decision making process were explained.

The group appealed to the EBRD to remain activity involved in the area and to reinforce the support for the creation of SMEs and their economic activities. A more direct crediting of SMEs by the EBRD was generally recommended.

OECD:

The WGEC took note of the activities of the DECO pursued in the framework of the Baltic Rim Economic Forum (BREF). The WGEG appreciated the programme already carried out and voiced the request towards the OECD to maintain and reinforce the programme which was characterized as an important contribution to underpin and accelerate the transition process.

Customs conference:

The presentation of the priorities of the activities of the Customs Conference (cooperation of customs administrations, practical improvements of customs procedures, assistance and staff training as well as the fight against fraud and smuggling) set the stage for a vivid discussion about the situation at the border crossings. The improvement of customs clearance procedures was emphatically *called* for.

The competent national authorities were requested to reinforce their efforts to overcome the remaining obstacles to the realization of a fast clearance .at the. border: crossings. The necessity of clear and transparent responsibilities on the national level was also underlined.

BSSSC:

The WGEC took note of a presentation of the chairman of the working group on economic cooperation of the Baltic Sea .States Subregional Cooperation. The wish to establish closer links with the WGEC expressed by the BSSSC was warmly welcomed by the WGEC. In the discussion, the BSSSC was characterized as a constituent element of the cooperation in the region.

4. Participation of the BAC

The Business Advisory Council (BAC) founded during the working period of the previous chair of the WGEC was actively involved in the work of the WGEC, participated in the WGEC meetings on a regular basis and took a stand on current issues dealt with in the WGEC.

The WGEC unanimously agreed that the BAC should prepare a document for the Summit on impediments to trade and investment which was eventually presented to the Heads of Government. Thus, the BAC . Memorandum will serve as an important point of reference for the further work of the WGEC
The BAC is supposed to, play an important role in the monitoring of the follow-up process, to the Riga Summit and previous high level declarations. on economic cooperation in the region.

5. Recommendations for the Future Work Programme of the WGEC

There was unanimity in the WGEC that the continuation of the follow up of the Riga Summit especially as regards the messages to the Heads of Government drafted by the' business community should be *put* on the agenda of the next working period. In addition, it was said that the WGEC should also attach attention to the evaluation of topics already dealt with in previous WGEC's periods, i.p. the continuous review of trade and investment barriers as well as promotion schemes.

Beyond that as regards possible topics for the future work of the WGEC, it was suggested to deal with:

- energy
- transport and port facilities
- regional and structural policies
- industrial cooperation

Special attention should be paid to possible new topics such as

- information technology
- technology transfer
- professional education

6. Overall Conclusions

The work of the WGEC has been marked by an active and constructive dialogue leading to a profound exchange of views and specified recommendations to national authorities and other international fora active in the region.

The WGEC has been an open floor for ideas, initiatives and projects put forward by WGEC member states during the meetings.

The WGEC stated improvements in the field of infrastructure and in reducing of trade barriers.

The WGEC recommends further efforts to create a network of research institutes in the Region, to improve and stabilize financing and crediting of SME, to overcome persistent obstacles to a smooth and fast customs clearance at border crossing.

The WGEC recalls that the implementation of its findings and recommendations depends above all on the concrete action taken by national Governments and competent national authorities. Therefore, the WGEC appeals to exhaust all possibilities to assure the implementation on national level. This refers both to the Governments and to the business institutions, i.e. the Chambers of commerce. In this context once more, the BAC has an important role as a link both to the national business institutions and to the CBSS cooperation structures including the WGEC.

On the Governmental level the ministerial meetings on specific matters like SME promotion, energy should also be seen as competent fora for the implementation of the different summit declarations of Heads of Government. The WGEC should continue to play an active part in the realization of such meetings.

The WGEC has successfully contributed to raise the awareness of international organisations, multilateral fora as well as international financial organisations of the cause of the Baltic Area, and it appeals to those organisations to keep to be actively involved in the regional cooperation efforts.

It was recommended that the establishment of links with other regional institutions with possible relevance for the scope of activities of the WGEC such as the BSSSC and the Barents Sea Council should continuously be followed.

Discussed and adopted by the WGEC on May 14 1998 on the occasion of the WGEC Berlin meeting.

Albrecht von der Heyden

Chairman. of the WGEC

Annual report of the Working Group for Nuclear and Radiation Safety

Short view on the past

Since establishing the WG in 1992, a remarkable development in nuclear and radiation safety in the Baltic Sea Region has taken place. The development has been significant especially in the Baltic States after the breakdown of former Soviet Union. These states have today modern legislation and independent regulatory authorities for nuclear and radiation safety. The nuclear and radiation safety authorities of the Baltic States have many-sided co-operation with the competent international bodies and all the neighboring countries. The WG has been an excellent forum for creation and maintaining of this kind of co-operation.

The WG has identified practically all the relevant subject matters calling for concerted actions to enhance nuclear and radiation safety in the region. Due to bilateral and multilateral co-operation, there have also been concrete development in safety issues. For example arrangements for informing the neighboring countries in events of nuclear or radiation incidences or accidents have been established, totally new networks for monitoring of environmental radiation have been established in the Baltic States, the Russian Federation and Poland, remarkable technical improvements at nuclear power plants in the Russian Federation and Lithuania have been carried out, all radioactive sources in the lighthouses along the coasts of the Baltic States have been removed, nuclear reactor of the training centre at Baldiski in Estonia has been decommissioned and transported to the Russian Federation, etc. However, there still remain several matters requiring further concerted efforts.

Activities during the last year

1. During the Danish rule of the CBSS, the WG has concentrated on practical arrangements for establishing the system for regular exchange of data from automatic radiation monitoring networks between the Member States of the CBSS. The WG requested the Committee of Senior Officials to acquire official attitudes of the Member States to this question. All the Member States responded positively (see Annex 1), and the WG has started the work.

It was decided to divide the task into two parts which will be carried out simultaneously; 1) formulation of text for the agreement, and 2) description and performing of the technical solution for data exchange. The parties of the agreement are identified and listed in Annex 2. The WG also identified a proper expert group for performing the technical part of the work. The Reference Group for the Baltic Sea States, concentrating on emergency monitoring integrated warning system and early warning and being sponsored by the Swedish Radiation Protection Institute, was requested to perform the technical part of the data exchange. The task was accepted in the Reference Group's meeting in Helsinki 10-11 of September 1998. If there turns up any financial problems in some Member States in implementing the data exchange system, the Committee of Senior Officials is requested to provide support to those countries.

2. The WG has encouraged international and bilateral efforts for restoration of the radioactive waste depository at Sillamäe in Estonia. In 1997 the international expert group (SIERG) was established to co-ordinate and support activities for restoration of the waste depository. The chairman of the WG is a member of the SIERG. The restoration activities have been started and two CEC funded projects for creating the technical solutions have been accepted. The Estonian Government has requested funding support also from the neighboring countries. A special fund raising meeting will be arranged at Tallinn in October 6, 1998, in connection of the Sillamäe Workshop to be held in October 5-9. The workshop is sponsored by NATO. The Committee of

Senior Officials is requested to seek financial support for the restoration activities which are estimated to cost about 250 million Estonian crowns.

3. The three Baltic States, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, have incorporated to the International Radiological Protection Association (IRPA) through the Nordic Society for Radiation Protection. The first regional IRPA congress was held in Stockholm in June 1998. The chairman of the WG was a member of the organizing committee of the congress.
4. The WG participated in the CBSS Conference of Civic Security held in Denmark in June 1998. Nuclear and radiation safety issues within the Baltic Sea States were discussed in the conference.
5. The WG made an survey on illicit trafficking of nuclear materials in the Baltic Sea States. The survey indicated that illicit trafficking in the Baltic Sea Region still occurs frequently to be given continued attention. The reason of these criminal acts is either economical, political (a part of planned terrorism) or just mistakes (unknown, hidden source in commercial goods). The means to reduce the probability and consequence of illicit trafficking are summarised to be:
 - protection of sources in a country by laws, regulations, control and physical protection,
 - prevention of offences by information and education on use of radioactive materials and risks of ionizing radiation, and by good border control as a part of overall strategy including information, co-operation, education and training,
 - an action plan if illicit trafficking occurs and is not discovered immediately at the border including information, tracing system, consequence analysis etc.Because the information on real extent of the problem in the Baltic Sea States is incomplete the WG will continue monitoring the situation.
6. The WG received brief progress reports on bilateral and multilateral agreements, development of national nuclear and radiation legislations, development of radioactive waste management including spent nuclear fuel and final disposal, and development of nuclear programmes in the Member States. Implementation of the new European directive of radiation protection into national legislations is going on in several Baltic Sea States.

View on the future

The Working Group for Nuclear and Radiation Safety within the Council of the Baltic Sea States has proven to be an important forum for exchange of information and for co-ordination of efforts to enhance nuclear and radiation safety in the Region. The WG itself is looking for means to strengthen practical co-operation in these fields by concentrating to fewer issues at a time. The WG will establish special task groups for implementation of identified and agreed common tasks, or it will use the existing expert groups for this purpose.

Absence of representatives of the Russian Federation in meetings of the WG is considered to be a serious defect. It was supposed that it is difficult to the Russian Federation to send one or two representatives to meetings with a broad agenda. By concentrating to fewer topics it is hoped that the Russian Federation could send competent representatives to the meetings.

ANNEXES Statement of the CSO on regular exchange of radiation monitoring data and the list of parties of the agreement of data exchange

ANNEX I

**Decision by the Council of the Baltic Sea States'
Committee of Senior Officials:**

*Baltic Sea States Agreement on
Regular Exchange of Radiation Monitoring Data and Other Information
of Radiological Significance.*

Nuclear safety and nuclear emergency preparedness is of mutual interest for all the States represented in the Council of the Baltic Sea States. Bilateral co-operation and multilateral co-operation in the framework of the Council of the Baltic Sea States and other international fora has prepared the way for closer contacts among the National Authorities responsible for Nuclear Safety, Radiological Protection, Emergency Preparedness, and Early Warning and Notification of Nuclear Accidents. This includes improved technical facilities for radiation monitoring and exchange of monitoring data as well as a mutual interest in strengthening the exchange of information between the authorities.

In order to improve the possibilities for getting fast and reliable information about the radiological situation in neighbouring countries the States represented in the Council of the Baltic Sea States welcome that their National Authorities responsible for Early Warning and Notification of Nuclear accidents intend to enter into an agreement on regular exchange of monitoring data from their National networks.

The agreement shall enter into force during the first half of 1998 leaving open the possibility for some countries to join the agreement at a later date.

ANNEX 2

List of organisations and contact persons representing the Baltic Sea States in establishing an agreement on regular exchange of monitoring data from the national monitoring networks.

For Denmark:
Ministry of the Interior
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