THE RUSSIAN PRESIDENCY
OF THE COUNCIL
OF THE BALTIC SEA STATES
(July 2012 – June 2013)

Moscow, Saint Petersburg, Kaliningrad, Novgorod, Pskov
One of the key characteristics of the Russian Presidency will be the principle of continuity. We intend to continue to some extent the work on the topics which have been the CBSS priorities during the past year: sustainable development, energy, maritime policy.

Another direction of our Presidency will be modernization as a new and important stage of reforming the Council oriented to project activities and innovative development of the region.

First Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation
IGOR SHUVALOV

Russia starts the Presidency of the Council of the Baltic Sea States with a firm resolve to give a new impetus to multilateral cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region, and consolidate the role of the CBSS as a coordinator of regional cooperation with a view that all the important issues of the region are solved with regard to the national interests of the Council’s member-states. We plan to focus on continuity and modernization as a new and important stage of reforming the CBSS oriented to project activities and further search for breakthrough innovative areas to join regional efforts aimed at promoting the Baltic Sea Region to the forefront of the innovative development.

We intend to strengthen the active role of the CBSS in providing stability, partnership and good-neighborhood in the Baltic Sea Region, fighting against extremism and radicalism, stimulating the traditions of tolerance, promoting direct contacts between people, including facilitation of the existing visa regime.

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation
SERGEY LAVROV
We value the Council of the Baltic Sea States for the fact that this format allows to create a unifying agenda on a regional platform both for EU member states and for Non-EU member countries. Over the years, the Council has formed a package of its methods and ways of working. But to move forward, it is essential to search for new forms, leave the well-worn methods. The CBSS should remain a testing ground for new forms and areas of cooperation. This approach should be equally applied to the competence of the Council, to the list of issues and questions that are put on its agenda.

Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation
VLADIMIR TITOV

It is extremely important to further promote cooperation in the field of modernization and innovation, focusing on clusters of growth and moving in the long term towards forming the regional partnership in this area, settling a network of public-private partnership in order to modulate «the Baltic Sea Dimension» of the partnership as a stable platform of growth with the establishment of regional private equity fund and the active involvement of the education sector. Combating eutrophication and environmental degradation will help preserve the ecosystem of the region. Enhanced cooperation in the area of «green» economy, energy efficiency, nuclear safety and infrastructure is important for maintaining the competitiveness of the Baltic Sea Region in Europe, and more over on a global scale.

Chair of XXI Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference
VALENTINA PIVNENKO
Priorities of the Russian Presidency of the Council of the Baltic Sea States (2012-2013)

The main goal of the Russian Presidency is to give new impetus to multilateral cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region, to consolidate the role of the CBSS as coordinator of regional cooperation. Russia puts the emphasis on continuity and modernization as an important new stage of reforming the Council. Russia supports its orientation to project activities and a further search for breakthrough innovative areas to integrate regional efforts.

The main priorities of the Russian Presidency are the following:

1. Development of cooperation in the field of modernization and innovation with the focus on clusters of growth, with the prospect to form regional partnership in the field;

2. Establishment of a network of public-private partnership (PPP) in view to shape «the Baltic Sea area of PPP» as a platform for sustainable growth and setting up a regional private equity fund;

3. Promotion of the traditions of tolerance as a means of combating tendencies of radicalism and extremism;

4. Promotion of people-to-people contacts, facilitating the visa regime.

Russia will under its Presidency promote the long-term CBSS priorities (Riga Declaration, June 2008):

1. Economic development

   Development of maritime infrastructure in the Baltic Sea Region, including the topic of transition to alternative, environmentally safe forms of marine fuel;
   Promoting the implementation of transport and infrastructure projects of regional significance;
   Improving the competitiveness of cities and regions of the Baltic Sea with special emphasis on the tourism sector;
   Stimulating the exchange of experience in the field of marine spatial planning of the Baltic Sea water areas under the programs of comprehensive development of coastal areas;
   Creating conditions for better exercise of public-private partnership in order to boost the modernization processes in the region and enhance innovation.
Events:
- Conference on Russia-Norway-EU Cross-border Cooperation (Pskov, September 2012);
- IV Baltic Transport Forum (Kaliningrad, September 2012);
- IV International Forum of Regions-Partners of Kaliningrad Oblast (Kaliningrad, September 2012);
- Conference of Transport ministers (Moscow, December 2012);
- Meetings and seminars of Expert Group on Maritime Policy
  Moscow, September 2012
  Saint Petersburg, November 2012
  Kaliningrad, first quarter 2013;
- Conference on Modernization of the South Eastern Baltic Sea Area (SEBA)
  (Kaliningrad, first half 2013);
- Conference on Public-Private Partnership in the region (Saint Petersburg, second quarter 2013).

2. Environmental protection and sustainable development

Securing environmental safety of coastal areas and coastal waters, including the elimination of the accumulated damage to the environment and formation of an effective network to monitor the status and pollution of the environment;

Development of a macro-regional climate change adaptation strategy with the view to the developing a set of measures to assess climate risks, climate change mitigation and adaptation to climate change as highlighted in the Strategy on Socio-Economic Development of the North-West Federal District of the Russian Federation until 2020;

Improving environmental situation through promoting the implementation of projects of construction and reconstruction of municipal sewage treatment plants, sewers, enterprises for sorting and recycling of waste;

Reducing biogenic load on water bodies and improving the quality of natural waters;

Working out the idea to create a network of recreational clusters based on sustainable tourism development.

Events:
- Baltic 21 Expert Group Meetings;
3. Education and culture

Increasing mobility of young people and encouraging them to volunteer;
Support to regional networks of scientific and educational initiatives in view to develop «EuroFaculty» concept as a form of increasing academic mobility of young people;
Preserving monuments of cultural heritage and maintaining them in a proper condition, including elaborating of regional agreement on the protection of underwater cultural heritage of the Baltic Sea; support for historic cities – sites of regional identity.

Events:
- VI Baltic International Forum «Universities as Resources for Regional Development» (Expert seminar on the «Baltic Law Institute» project, Kaliningrad, October 2012);
- Launch of the second phase of implementing Pskov «Eurofaculty» concept (Pskov, October 2012);
- International conference «Problems and Prospects of Applying of European Educational Standards in Cross-Border Regions» (Pskov, October 2012);
- International debut film festival «Baltic Debuts» (Svetlogorsk, July 2012);
- Film festival «Window to Europe» (Vyborg, August 2012);
- Open cultural festival «Territory of Peace» (Kaliningrad, August 2012);
- Presentation of results of the first phase of implementing Pskov «Eurofaculty» concept (Pskov, April 2013);
- International Baltic Artek preparation workshop (Kaliningrad, April 2013);
- Festival of arts «Amber Necklace» (Kaliningrad, April-June 2013).

4. Energy

Preservation and development of power supply network in the region as a positive example of regional interdependence;
Special emphasis on issues of energy efficiency and usage of renewable and alternative energy sources, as well as market mechanisms to encourage activities aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Events:
- Conference of the Baltic Sea Energy Cooperation Forum – BASREC (Moscow, first half of 2013);
- Thematic workshop on energy and resource efficiency within the EFFECT project (Petrozavodsk, June of 2013).
5. Civil security and human dimension

Monitoring of radiation situation in the Baltic Sea Region;
Moving ahead with macro-regional risk assessment for the Baltic Sea Region;
Exchange of experience in the sphere of voluntary fire protection in the Baltic Sea Region;
Counteracting trends of extremism and radicalism in the CBSS countries by promoting tolerance among young people;
Combating human trafficking with particular attention to children, exploited sexually or in other ways. Children can become vulnerable also through information and telecommunication networks;
Ensuring information security of children, protecting them from information harmful to health and socialization;
Respecting and protecting the rights of children whose parents have different citizenship and/or live apart.

Events:
• Conference of the Expert Group on Children at Risk (Moscow, December 2012);
• Meetings of the Task-Force against Trafficking in Human Beings
  Moscow, November 2012
  Moscow, March/April 2013
  Moscow, June 2013;
• Conference with participation of the CBSS TF-THB line ministers on fighting against human-trafficking (Saint Petersburg, second half 2013);
• Baltic Sea NGO Forum – «Tolerance and Cultural Diversity» (Saint Petersburg, April 2013);
• Joint Russian-Finnish seminar on forest fires prevention and supervisory activities (Leningrad region, October 2012);
• Seminar on exploring general cross-border risks and creating base for elimination of flood consequences (Kaliningrad region, April 2013);
• Annual Meeting of Directors Generals of Rescue services (Kaliningrad, April 2013);
• Training for specialists from Kaliningrad region, Poland and Lithuania on rescue on water bodies (Kaliningrad region, second quarter 2013).

The Russian Chairmanship will be concluded by the 18th Ministerial session (June 2013), after which Finland will take over the CBSS Presidency.
Contacts

The Secretariat of the Russian Presidency of the CBSS
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
119200 Moscow, Russia
Smolenskaya-Sennaya 32/34
www.cbss-russia.ru

Chair of the Committee of Senior Officials:
Sergey Petrovich – Deputy Director of the Second European Department,
+7 499 244 26 97
spetrovich@mid.ru

Russian representative in the Committee of Senior Officials:
Alexander Zelenov – Head of Section for Regional Cooperation,
Second European Department,
+7 499 244 15 72
avzelenov@mid.ru

Logo design by S.Lipatov,
stepanlipatov@gmail.com