



## **Annex to the Warsaw Declaration**

Endorsed at the meeting of the Deputy Foreign Ministers of the Council of the Baltic Sea States

8 June, 2016

In order for the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) to further develop the vision of the organisation and concrete policy responses to global challenges impacting the Baltic Sea Region; hereby the high-level representatives of the meeting are presented with a description of strategic actions and achievements during the Polish Presidency year.

### **Coherence, Cooperation and Continuity**

The Polish CBSS Presidency 2015-2016 set its three Presidency priorities as *Sustainability, Creativity & Safety* and launched practical measures aimed to enhance synergy among different institutions and formats in the region. The organisation as a whole is increasingly carrying out its work in a cross-cutting way and this should be continued. This can be noted by the numerous actions taking place between priority areas and jointly between Expert Groups, especially in civil security cooperation.

Poland convened a Conference of Ministers of Culture which was held within the framework of the Baltic Sea Cultural Gathering in Gdansk under the theme of *Culture as a driving force for social and economic development of the region*.

Under the Polish Presidency a new field of endeavour for the CBSS crystalized which was marked by Poland hosting the 1<sup>st</sup> Session of the Baltic Sea Region Science Ministers.

Furthermore, joint meetings between the CSO, the National Coordinators of the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) and other relevant stakeholders were organised focusing on synergies in the areas of culture, adaptation policy in the area of climate change and horizontal issues.

The Polish Presidency organised, on 9 March in Warsaw, an informal seminar “Common Space of Baltic Sea Cooperation”, involving the CSO members and experts knowledgeable in the Baltic Sea Region. It is very important to continue this process of strategic internal reflection on the future of the CBSS.

Coordination and cooperation between stakeholders in the Baltic Sea Region have improved through the involvement of the CBSS working structures in the implementation and review of the Action Plan of the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) in its policy areas compatible with the CBSS long-term priorities and where mutual benefits with the CBSS were identified – including the Policy Areas (PAs) and the Horizontal Actions (HAs), such as Policy Area Secure, Horizontal Action Climate and Horizontal Action Neighbours.

In the context of HA Neighbours the CBSS Secretariat has participated in a number of events in St. Petersburg related to possible synergies between the EUSBSR and the Strategy for the Social and Economic Development of the North-West Federal District of the Russian Federation.

With a view to implementing the long-term CBSS priorities, the CSO considered ways of improving cooperation with the other councils in the North - the Arctic Council, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministers - through joint meetings.

The CSO also supported activities of the CBSS Secretariat to maintain contacts with other macro-regional organisations e.g. Adriatic Ionian Initiative (AII), Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), Central European Initiative (CEI), South East European Cooperation Process (SEEC) through the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) and the Visegrad Group (V4) through the International Visegrad Fund (IVF) in order to exchange best practices.

### **Regional Financial Support**

The CBSS Project Support Facility (PSF), launched in 2013, provided funding, in particular seed money, to 20 projects. A total of more than 950 000 euro out of 1 million euro was awarded to around 120 Baltic Sea Region actors. Based on the voluntary contribution of the CBSS Member States an additional PSF call was opened in 2016 and three further projects were awarded financing after CSO approval. Thus, the PSF has contributed to the implementation of the CBSS long-term priorities across the board of priorities.

### **Way forward**

In times of change the CBSS intends to continue further developing its long-standing and close partnership with its networks. It is important to strengthen relations with its network of engaged stakeholders and to facilitate cooperation to implement the CBSS long-term priorities in the Baltic Sea Region.

The CBSS will continue to pursue the implementation of strategic activities which were approved in 2014 with the *Decision by the Council of the Baltic Sea States on a review of the CBSS long-term priorities*. The organisation will also continue to disseminate information on these strategic activities in each long-term priority to Observer States and partner organisations of the Council. *The Vilnius Declaration - A Vision for the Baltic Sea Region by 2020* remains a significant guiding document in this respect and all stakeholders in the Baltic Sea Region are invited to participate.

The CBSS will continue the successful practice of roundtables with Baltic Sea Region stakeholders and partners including international organisations and foundations of CBSS Member States, as well as private public partnerships with a view to optimize implementation of the CBSS long-term priorities.

The CBSS Expert Groups and Intergovernmental Networks will continue to participate in those priority areas of the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, where the CBSS can provide expertise and where it would benefit CBSS Member States. They shall also seek synergies with relevant strategies of CBSS Member States such as the Strategy for the Social and Economic Development of the North-West Federal District of the Russian Federation when appropriate for regional cooperation and where the implementation of the CBSS long-term priorities can be furthered.

The meeting of the Ministers of Culture and the meeting of the Ministers of Science were developed in close cooperation with the Policy Area Coordinators for Culture and Innovation of the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and these two events can be cited as good examples demonstrating the core role of the CBSS as a forum for all multilateral intergovernmental cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region, as well as illustrations of possible future synergy efforts. Pursuing political dialogue through Baltic Sea States Summits, CBSS Foreign Ministers' Sessions and other high-level meetings can increase the efficiency of Baltic Sea Region cooperation.

The Polish CBSS Presidency also stressed the importance of close cooperation between regional formats, frameworks and institutions and welcomed the openness in extension of invitation to meetings, where broader participation is deemed warranted (incl. the Northern Dimension, the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region gatherings and the regional councils of the North). Further coordination between the CBSS bodies and sector ministries incl. HELCOM<sup>1</sup> and the VASAB<sup>2</sup>, was prioritised in a number of joint meetings which further supported the strengthening of multi-level governance in the region by focusing collaboration efforts with the Baltic Sea States Sub-regional Cooperation (BSSSC), the Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC) and the Baltic Sea Commission of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Region (CPMR) in areas of mutual importance as well as to reiterate the strong existing cooperation.

Energy issues in the Baltic Sea Region were tackled by BASREC<sup>3</sup>. As the Polish CBSS Presidency reports, projects related to i.a. energy efficiency improvements, electric cars and the establishment of a Carbon Capture and Storage Experts Network were carried out. A decision was made on the revision of the BASREC format based on mutual interest in regional energy issues by all Baltic Sea Region countries.

The following steps within each priority area have been taken in regards to implementation:

### **Regional Identity**

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<sup>1</sup> HELCOM - The Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea is an intergovernmental organization and a Strategic Partner of the CBSS

<sup>2</sup> VASAB - Vision and Strategies around the Baltic Sea is an inter-governmental body of the CBSS and specialises in spatial planning.

<sup>3</sup> BASREC - Baltic Sea Region Energy Cooperation is an inter-governmental body of the CBSS

The development of the innovation and leadership programme Balticlab has continued, jointly with the Swedish Institute, which will take the ideation programme to Kiev, Ukraine, Minsk, Belarus and Moscow, Russia during the summer of 2016. It has been thought to broaden the participation within the fields of entrepreneurship and creative industries by moving forward with the Creative Ports initiative in cooperation with the Goethe Institute. To enhance creativity and entrepreneurship; young, creative minds in the Baltic region can be given opportunity to drive innovation and integration. This should lead the way towards a strategic basis for enacting a Baltic Sea Region Strategy for Innovation that attempts to concentrate the habitat for the innovation community and represents a bottom-up approach when it comes to designing innovation-friendly policy across regional borders. The Ideation Programme brings together cultural operators and entrepreneurs from Norway, Sweden, Finland, Russia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine, Poland and most recently with Balticlab 4.0 due to the collaboration with Goethe Institute – Germany. They come together in diverse international groups to prototype ideas that reflect their own field of work, as well as benefit innovation & integration which hold the key to our collaborative future.

The process of defining the steps forward for the EuroFaculty concept and the development of governance curricula in higher education, as exemplified by the CBSS Summer Universities, continue to be shaped. In 2016, three will take place in Kristiansand, Norway, Stockholm, Sweden and St. Petersburg, Russia. Supporting the development of higher education in the Baltic Sea region has historically been an important priority of CBSS. The EuroFaculty concept has modernized faculties with respect to the teaching of economics, business administration, political science and law at universities in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, followed by higher education institutions in Russia according to the Bologna process. The most recent EuroFaculty endeavour in Pskov was completed in 2015. A CSO informal working group will submit recommendations regarding the future development of the EuroFaculty. The importance of cultural heritage has increased – one of the upcoming actions by the Monitoring Group on Cultural Heritage (MGCH) is the forthcoming forum 'From Postwar to Postmodern – 20th Century Built Cultural Heritage' to be held in September 2016 Kiel, Germany. Alongside this, at the moment, the Monitoring Group has appointed three Working Groups: Coastal Heritage, Underwater Heritage and 20th Century Built Heritage.

The coastal and underwater heritage working groups were involved in the Monitoring Group's strategic CBSS Project Support Facility project Pro BSR. The project started by elaborating the Monitoring Group's Strategy for 2015-2020, and a Baltic Sea Region Maritime Heritage Action Plan 2015-2020 based on the Strategy. This led to an EUSBSR Flagship initiative to integrate BSR Maritime Cultural Heritage into topical regional policy development and the implementation of the Maritime Spatial Plan (MSP). This work is led by the joint HELCOM-VASAB MSP Working Group. The former projects of the Underwater Heritage Working Group have revealed that the underwater heritage assets of the Baltic Sea are unique even on the global scale if we perceive the Baltic Sea as one entity. The Working Group approved a Code of Good Practice for the Protection of the Underwater Heritage of the Baltic Sea, in order to enhance the protection of the fragile treasure which is under increased pressure from sea use. The flagship initiative develops further tools for the cross-

sector engagement of protection and sustainable management of common heritage assets. The activities of the Coastal Heritage Working Group verify how the coastal traditions and heritage link the people around the Baltic Sea. The Working Group values and revitalizes maritime heritage in all of its diversity by exhibitions and joint projects. The 20th Century Built Cultural Heritage Working Group has prepared the above mentioned Forum titled "From Post-War to Postmodern – 20th Century Built Heritage." The 6th Baltic Sea Cultural Heritage Forum calls for the attention of safeguarding the post-war and late 20th century built environments as valuable manifestations of the region's history and development. The forum will foster understanding of the importance of these environments as an integral part of sustainable development strategies of urban and rural landscapes.

Young people have been brought together for active learning and leadership at the two Baltic Sea Youth Dialogues jointly with the Körber Foundation. There are tentative plans to further the discussion for young people by convening a Youth Roundtable, as well as a Baltic Sea Youth Dialogue in 2016. Gathering together young people through learning in the Baltic Sea region can develop opportunities for dialogue and understanding. Since 2014 the project Baltic Sea Youth Dialogue has provided one platform for exchange and understanding between participants from all CBSS Member States. The main objective of the Baltic Sea Youth Dialogue on a general level is to share knowledge and understanding of the historical backgrounds of the countries of the Baltic Sea Region. A particular emphasis is placed on experiencing some of the specifics of border regions. In September 2015, the Polish city of Olsztyn welcomed fifty young Europeans from 19 countries for the Second Baltic Sea Youth Dialogue. *Homeland reconsidered – new loyalties and redefined identities in Europe* was the topic of the youth dialogue, in which the Körber Foundation and the CBSS continued the cooperation started with the first Baltic Sea Youth Dialogue, which took place in Estonia and Russia in 2014. Looking at developing different formats to bring together young people in the region could be one avenue in the future.

### **Sustainable and Prosperous Region**

Various Climate Round Tables have taken place, alongside the Joint Meeting on Sustainable Development with the focus on climate change adaptation, organised by the Polish CBSS Presidency. In addition, the recent CBSS-Benelux joint seminar "Macro-regional cooperation on Climate Change Adaptation" on 9 May, 2016 brought together the Carpathian Convention, the Union for the Mediterranean and the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region to define the role and the added value of macro-regional cooperation on Climate Change Adaptation in Europe and explore the possibilities to optimize them. The CBSS will also continue to coordinate the climate actions in the Baltic Sea Region by coordinating the Horizontal Action Climate of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. Establishment of the BSR Climate Change Stakeholder Platform is a strategic action initiated by the CBSS. The Platform is a Flagship of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and provides the BSR key stakeholders a framework for supporting the development and implementation of the national climate policies and advancing joint climate actions in the Baltic Sea Region. Together with all BSR countries, the research community and pan-Baltic organisations (BSSSC, BSC/CPMR, Nordregio, UBC and VASAB), the European Commission and the European Environment Agency are involved in this activity.

The potential of benefit from innovation, research and scientific endeavour for the region is immense and in line with this the possible establishment of a Baltic Sea Region Science Network can be viewed as a positive step. Alongside the importance of tapping innovation in the region, especially of large scale research infrastructure for industrial use, a new impetus has been given to science cooperation within the CBSS by the involvement in the transnational research access programme – Baltic TRAM and the formation of a Baltic Science Network. The Network has the aim to provide Science and Research Ministries of the Baltic Sea Region states with an overall coordination framework to develop and implement science policy in a macro-regional dimension and to ensure a better representation of macro-regional interests on the EU level which will be extremely important moving forward. The aim to develop and implement transnational strategies, incentives and programmes to support higher education, research and innovation and to develop research and innovation excellence will need to move hand in hand with a focus on investments in research infrastructures and on strengthening cooperation between research institutions and business. Cooperation to enhance dialogue between industrial users and researchers in order to streamline research and development intensive investments in innovation and link them to concrete industrial needs will become increasingly necessary. The initiatives that CBSS embarks on now and over the next period in the field of science jointly with partners is closely interlinked with the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and the Policy Areas of Education and Innovation.

The Expert Group on Sustainable Development – Baltic 2030, working on the basis of the Declaration *Baltic 2030 Renewing the Commitment to Sustainable Development in the Baltic Sea Region*, will identify the thematic areas and collaborative actions where complementary or supplemental dialogues are needed. The adoption of the Global Agenda 2030 and the Paris Climate Agreement marked the beginning of a new era in global collaboration for sustainable development. Implementation of these global political agendas in the Baltic Sea Region requires extensive and well-coordinated cross-sectoral cooperation between the BSR governments, pan-Baltic organisations and engagement of all relevant stakeholders in the region. The CBSS – Baltic 2030 study *Assessing the status of sustainable development in the Baltic Sea Region: a macro-regional perspective* highlights 3 common macro-regional goals (climate change, saving the Baltic Sea, quality of life) and recommends that the regional level should function as place for monitoring the implementation of these shared goals in order to increase the coherency of sustainable development activities. The CBSS has a strong potential to continue as a platform for a multi-stakeholder dialogue to support these processes. For two decades, the CBSS countries have been guided in their collaboration on sustainable development by Agenda 21, mandated by agreement of the region's Heads of Government and the European Commission in 1996. The main objective of the new Mandate of the CBSS Expert Group on Sustainable Development - Baltic 2030 is to develop a new sustainable development action plan for the Baltic Sea Region and follow up its implementation. This process is to foster coordinated sustainable development related activities of stakeholders in the Baltic Sea Region. The CBSS and the EGSD – Baltic 2030 should also support mutual learning, exchange and dissemination of best practices, e.g. through the instrument of voluntary peer reviews and the continuation of fostering

synergies among relevant CBSS Expert -Groups, as well as specialist inter-governmental platforms such as BASREC, VASAB, HELCOM, in their work on the 2030 Agenda.

The work of the Expert Group on Maritime Policy (EGMP) has continued most recently at the European Maritime Day – *Investing in Competitive Blue Growth – smart and sustainable solutions*, in Turku where the CBSS jointly with HELCOM organised a thematic session under the Polish Presidency on *Partnerships for Green Shipping*. The purpose of the workshop was to highlight and promote blue growth in shipping through partnerships, both public-private and business to business. Public-private partnership will be addressed by the CBSS promoting Green Shipping through the Baltic Sea Maritime Dialogue and by HELCOM MARITIME subgroup for green technology and alternative fuels in public-private partnership. Inputs given to develop synergies with other regional actors working in the Maritime field as well as the inputs given to the EU Maritime Days promote cooperation and further the Baltic Sea Maritime Dialogue. A follow-up on the analysis of needs of Small and Medium-Sized Ports (SMPs), as well as maritime and coastal tourism to the benefit of the Baltic Sea Region network is also considered. An important role has been played by public-private practical interaction that acted as a tool for cross-border cooperation, economically viable actions and projects for the benefit of the Baltic Sea Region environment, as has been consistently shown by the continuing progress made by the Saint Petersburg Initiative.

### **Safe and Secure region**

The necessity of the work by the CBSS Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings (TF-THB) and in particular the recent work led by the Latvian Ministry of Interior on the fight against trafficking and the potential of capacity building measures at the municipal level will be strengthened further by the STROM II project. In the future this will become especially important in light of the current migration situation and the need for integration on the municipal level. The Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings continued to counteract all forms of trafficking through practical, holistic and multidisciplinary approaches and will focus more on building capacity of front line staff at the municipal level to reduce the opportunities for traffickers to exploit people, to identify the groups at risk, to map the extent of the trafficking problem at the local level and to assist victims of human trafficking. The TF-THB has also focused on addressing new and emerging trends in human trafficking through the TRACE project, including trafficking for forced criminality and forced begging which are impacting the development and implementation of European and national anti-trafficking policies and laws, as well as introducing new instruments and providing diversified and tailor-made trainings to various target groups. As trafficking for labour exploitation is likely to continue to be one of the most prevalent forms of exploitation in the Baltic Sea Region, the TF-THB will continue focusing on building capacity and establishing dialogue among relevant actors to prevent abusive recruitment, irregular employment and exploitation of migrant workers, and to ensure that labour and migration, policies are tuned, consistent and avoid the risk of compromising the protection of human rights. Human trafficking also continues to require a gender-sensitive approach and must recognize the

increased vulnerability of women in particular to trafficking for sexual exploitation, as well as for domestic servitude.

The CBSS Expert Group on Children at Risk promotes the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other relevant international standards to identify crimes against children and their protection needs. A set of interrelated priorities and projects are developed to increase regional cooperation and attention to children at risk through a comprehensive and sustainable child protection platform. Through this platform the Expert Group is documenting, advocating and training key stakeholders in the prevention of exploitation and trafficking of children in migration, on the issues of child sexual abuse and exploitation and on ways to adhere to the national laws banning corporal punishment of children. The project PROTECT Children on the Move devoted to the rights of children in the migration process was completed in 2015. Also in the same year the Tallinn Recommendations on Alternative Care and Family Support were adopted in May. As a follow-up the Warsaw Roundtable on Deinstitutionalization and Foster Care in April 2016 adopted recommendations regarding the improvement of childcare in alternative family settings. The PROMISE project promotes the Children's House model to all countries in the region containing a comprehensive and collaborative approach to ensuring justice and care to children victims/witnesses to violence, while the AudTrain project trains stakeholders in monitoring and auditing of child care facilities. The new Sustainable Development Goals highlight child protection issues and the Expert Group will collaborate with the ministries to implement the goals and indicators in the future.

*Safe and Secure Region* requires comprehensive cooperation between civil protection organisations and law enforcement agencies in order to address jointly and efficiently major challenges posed by natural and man-made disasters as well as by organised crime. The Civil Protection Network (CPN) will focus on building capacities for effective response to threats of a cross-border nature and on spreading best practices in prevention and preparedness to common emergencies. The priority in this area is to ensure that citizens and communities in the region are well protected against different emergencies through regional coordination. The Civil Protection Network (CPN) should focus on building capacities for effective response to threats of cross-border nature and on spreading best practices in prevention and preparedness to common emergencies. The key obligation is to increase Baltic Sea Region resilience by creating a common security culture. To this end, a multilevel governance approach should be mainstreamed.

Increasing climate change challenges have to be addressed by strengthening cooperation between civil protection and sustainable development stakeholders by identifying gaps in the existing frameworks of adaptation to climate change and developing ways to overcome shortages of capacities in these areas. The UN Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction offers a platform to tackle these problems.

Threats posed by organised crime require a well-coordinated and targeted response. To this end, the mandate of the Baltic Sea Task Force against Organized Crime (BSTF) should be reviewed and renewed. This cooperation forum should provide the region with an improved mechanism for combating severe crimes, including illicit drug trafficking, trafficking in

human beings, smuggling goods and money laundering. Cybercrime is a new growing challenge that needs an adequate response.

The increased number of persons crossing borders, both external as well as within the region, requires close cooperation of border guards and other agencies responsible for border control in order to combat effectively trans-border crimes and reduce threats to border security. The Baltic Sea Region Border Control Cooperation (BSRBCC) has made remarkable achievements in this area and should further develop most efficient types of joint operations, exercises and exchange of information.

The risk assessment capacities and exchange of information between law enforcement agencies in the region must be enhanced, in order to improve security standards. To this end, the CBSS should encourage this cooperation by providing support for the joint meetings and operational activities of BSRBCC and BSTF members, and build linkages between these cooperation frameworks and CBSS Expert Groups and Networks – Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings, The Expert Group for Children at Risk, the Civil Protection Network and Expert Group on Nuclear and Radiation Safety. Synergies with the EUSBSR Policy Area Secure need to be developed and used in more extensive ways. The CBSS should become a platform for dialogue on cooperation in the area of security between all relevant regional stakeholders.

The migration challenges facing the Baltic Sea Region are new and multi-faceted, requiring efficient utilisation of existing networks, expertise and structures. Migration challenges have developed as a new important policy area for the region. The focus of CBSS activities should i.a. be in the fields of integration, the challenges of unaccompanied migrant children, the increased danger of trafficking in human beings, as well as coordination in the field of border management and the fight against people smuggling. In the context of the current migration situation, the role of municipalities in the work against human trafficking must be strengthened to ensure proper victim identification and assistance measures. For this purpose, the CBSS should use existing structures according to their mandates, such as the Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings, Expert Group for Children at Risk and encourage the corresponding work of the BSTF and the BSRBCC as well as close cooperation with the relevant CBSS Strategic Partners such as IOM, BSSSC, CPMR and the Union of Baltic Cities.