



## **Conference Resolution**

Adopted by the 18<sup>th</sup> Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference (BSPC)

The participants, elected representatives from the Baltic Sea States, assembling in Nyborg, Denmark, 31 August – 1 September 2009,

discussing Co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region, Maritime Safety and Security, Civil Security, Climate Change and Energy Efficiency, and Labour Market and Social Affairs,

- A. emphasizing the significance of a parliamentary dimension and parliamentary involvement in the strategies and efforts to develop the Baltic Sea Region, thereby contributing to a broad debate, transparency, legitimacy and support of the work;
- B. reaffirming the mutually beneficial contacts and exchange between BSPC and CBSS, and recognizing the important role of the CBSS in initiating and coordinating actions against the challenges of the Baltic Sea Region;
- C. reiterating their support to the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP) as a central tool for restoring a good environmental status of the Baltic Sea by 2021, and underlining that governments must fulfill their pledges to implement the plan according to its agreed timetable;
- D. supporting the design and development of strategies and programs for the Baltic Sea Region as important instruments for setting priorities, while also maintaining the necessity to coordinate the strategies with the Northern Dimension policy;
- E. stressing that the present economic downturn must not be taken as an excuse for lowering environmental goals, cutting environmental resources or delaying timetables for environmental plans and projects;

call on the governments in the Baltic Sea Region, the CBSS and the EU,

### **Regarding Co-operation in the Region, to**

1. define and pursue a common political agenda for the Baltic Sea Region, e.g. by devising a joint understanding of governance, leadership and division of labour among the leading regional and sub-regional actors in the Region, and by enhancing coordination between them;
2. proceed with strong and sustained measures to fulfill the overall environmental goals and objectives of the HELCOM BSAP, and to assure that the obligations to produce national action plans to the HELCOM Ministerial meeting in Moscow in May 2010, as well as to implement them prudently, are honored;
3. ensure a close linkage between the forthcoming strategies and programs for the Baltic Sea Region and the HELCOM BSAP;

4. take concrete steps to ensure that strategies and programs for the Baltic Sea Region, such as the emerging so-called EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, are closely attuned to and coordinated with the Northern Dimension, in order to secure a mutual cooperation on an equal basis between Russia, Iceland, Norway and EU, and to incorporate the interests of the non-EU Baltic Sea Regions states in the strategies;
5. Support the abilities to develop bankable projects for the implementation of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, involving the financial support to the project development fund managed by Nordic Investment Bank (NiB) and Nordic Environment Finance Corporation (NEFCO);
6. ensure that citizens are kept informed and involved in the planning and implementation of strategies and projects that influence the development of the Baltic Sea Region; NGO´s play an invaluable role both as opinion-makers and independent experts, and their views, warnings and advice should be taken seriously;
7. take concerted and solidaric measures to deal with the causes and consequences of the current economic recession; a mutually supportive and successful regional approach would also contribute to the positive branding of the Baltic Sea Region and to the credibility and usefulness of regional cooperation;

#### **Regarding Maritime Safety and Security in the Region, to**

8. encourage active cooperation within the International Maritime Organization(IMO) on the development of relevant measures to reduce the environmental impacts of shipping in the Baltic Sea, recognizing that IMO rules and regulations are the basis for maritime development of any region, and that the regulations should be developed according to current challenges;
9. promote continuous initiatives, support and concrete measures within the field of Maritime Safety, such as increasing the use of pilots in narrow and difficult international shipping lanes, and enhancing the joint preparedness to tackle spills of oil and hazardous substances;
10. promote and support concrete projects to implement maritime spatial planning in the Baltic Sea Region, encouraging cross-sectoral and transnational coordination of resources, and thereby holding up the Baltic Sea Region as a model region;
11. support the BSSSC Five Point Action Plan "Clean Baltic Shipping", aimed at, i.a., reducing nitrogen and sulphur oxides emissions in ports by using shore-to-ship power supply, minimizing sewage discharge from ships, reducing the environmental load from cruise shipping, encouraging sustainable port management, and stimulating research and development of green and clean maritime technologies;
12. support the designation of the Black Sea, the Mediterranean Sea, the North-East Atlantic and the Irish Sea as Sulphur Emission Control Areas (SECA), as is already the case with the Channel, the North Sea and the Baltic Sea, provided the criteria for such a designation are fulfilled;
13. consolidate and further develop the progress made within the fields of maritime safety and ship traffic monitoring, on the one hand with a view to improving monitoring and separation of the growing maritime traffic, especially in connection with hazardous cargo and severe winter conditions, and on the other hand with a view to monitoring the Baltic Sea for the purpose of environmental protection, fishing and combating crime;

14. join and support the Surveillance Cooperation Baltic Sea (SUCBAS) with the purpose of improving maritime situational awareness across the entire Baltic Sea and approaches in support of maritime safety, maritime security, protection of the environment and countering illegal activities in the maritime environment)

15. contribute to the efforts of the Baltic Sea Region Harmonisation Working Group on Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) and Ship Reporting Systems (SRS) established to harmonise and integrate VTS and SRS operation to ensure that all systems assist safe navigation of ships in an optimised and uniform manner;

16. join and support the initiatives under the Single Hull Tanker and Banned Vessel monitoring project, developed jointly by HELCOM and the European Maritime Safety Agency, for the purpose of further improving maritime safety and supporting the Port State Control authorities with the aim to eliminate the operation of sub-standard ships in the Baltic, and ensure that the maritime transport operates in a safe, secure and environmentally friendly way;

### **Regarding Civil Security in the Region, to**

17. enhance cooperation and coordination on civil security issues in general, in order to foster a joint and comprehensive understanding of the risks and threats facing the Baltic Sea Region, as well as strategies and measures to counter them;

18. step up strategic and operational cooperation between law enforcement authorities and other relevant actors in order to strengthen the joint capacity to identify, monitor and take forceful action against organized cross-border crime, such as trafficking in human beings, drug trafficking, illicit trade, corruption, money laundering, illegal migration, illegal labour, hate crimes, and others;

19. intensify cooperation against trafficking in human beings, placing emphasis on, i.a., preventive measures, protection and support – by means of e.g. safehouses – for victims and people at risk, as well as strategies and measures against the root causes of trafficking;

20. improve and coordinate data collection concerning the scale of the problems of trafficking in human beings in order to provide a realistic basis for the development of adequate measures to fight the problem;

21. carry out the adoption, implementation and coordination of proper legislation – in accordance with relevant UN and Council of Europe protocols and conventions of which they are parties – against trafficking in human beings, which targets all forms of exploitation and includes measures to assist victims);

22. strengthen cooperation on crisis management and civil protection against natural, technological and man-made risks and emergencies, e.g. by coordinating planning, prevention and resources, and by streamlining existing arrangements within a comprehensive region-wide framework;

23. take concerted action to reinforce IT security by analyzing, detecting and managing cyber crimes, and by launching defensive and protective measures against the disruption of critical infrastructure systems;

### **Regarding Climate Change and Energy Issues in the Region, to**

24. actively work for a new international climate agreement, addressing all relevant climate change risk factors in accordance with their impact;

25. develop a coherent energy strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, in order to enhance security of energy supply, increase the use of renewable energy, and strengthen interconnection between countries, for instance by interconnected transmission lines that will gradually develop into a smart grid between the countries and the off-shore windmill parks;
26. launch action plans for the propagation of Combined Heat and Power (CHP) and for building renovation and housing innovation, for the purpose of improving energy efficiency and energy-saving;
27. use the present economic crisis as an opportunity to promote qualitative growth in the Baltic Sea Region, for instance by directing financial packages, investment plans and subsidies, as well as international financial resources, towards renewable energy production, energy efficiency investments, CHP, efficient district heating systems and interconnecting the electricity grid;
28. establish a common regional training programme to strengthen the joint capacities in energy planning, for instance by developing the exchange of experiences and promoting best practices among officials at local and national level;

#### **Regarding Labour Market and Social Affairs, to**

29. make systematic and coordinated efforts to identify barriers to the development of cross-border labour markets and mobility, in accordance with the political recommendations in the final report of the BSPC Working Group on Labour Market and Social Welfare, and to carry out practical measures to dismantle and prevent such barriers;
30. make labour market and social welfare issues a priority task on the agenda of the CBSS, taking into account the work and results of the Baltic Sea Labour Network (BSLN);
31. strengthen the existing information centres in the Baltic Sea Region and to establish new centres in locations where the number of cross-border commuting is growing but where centres do not exist; the information centres should have the capacity and mandate to provide comprehensive and official information on social security, employment legislation and tax legislation in all the languages spoken on both sides of the border, including, where applicable, minority languages;
32. foster regular dialogue between associations representing cross-border workers, trade unions, employers and political decision-makers, and strengthen cooperation regarding cross-border labour markets via the establishment of councils for border regions and the development of networks; likewise, an exchange of experience should be organised regarding the work of the information centres throughout the Baltic Sea Region;
33. enhance transport and logistic capacities in border regions, especially as regards public transport, in order to facilitate cross-border commuting and to promote economic growth; efforts undertaken should be compatible with the overall objectives of the Northern Dimension Partnership on Transport and Logistics;
34. take concerted action to exchange and implement best practices regarding training and employment of young people in the Baltic Sea Region, including cooperative activities between schools, social partners, public authorities and civil society, and paying special attention to disadvantaged groups;

35. begin giving pupils an introduction to the world of work two years before they leave secondary school, propose agreements between governments and the social partners to ensure sufficient training places are created, and ensure that, in the case of youth unemployment, the employment agencies offer integration plans and, after three months of unemployment at the latest, further training, the opportunity to gain additional qualifications, training places or jobs;

#### **Furthermore the Conference**

36. confirms its support to the CBSS in its transformation towards a more focussed and target-oriented organization, and in realizing the political and operational priorities of the CBSS, hence looks forward to ongoing cooperation with CBSS;

37. agrees – concerning the year 2009-2010 – that the Enlarged Standing Committee should convene twice a year and the Standing Committee convene twice a year with the Standing Committee open for observers from national and regional parliaments that are not represented in the Standing Committee

38. asks the Standing Committee to establish a Working Group on Integrated Maritime Policy, especially infrastructure and logistics, and a Working Group on Civil Security, especially trafficking in human beings, to submit reports to the 20<sup>th</sup> BSPC;

41. adopts the amended Rules of Procedure, to take effect after the closure of 18<sup>th</sup> BSPC;

42. welcomes with gratitude the kind offer of the Åland Islands to host the 19<sup>th</sup> Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference in Mariehamn on 29 – 31 August 2010.

*/list of participating parliaments/*