

## **The 2<sup>nd</sup> BSSSC annual conference - Lübeck-Travemünde (Germany), 17-19 October 1994**

### **Resolution**

Representatives from the subregions of the Baltic Sea states Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia and Sweden,

Welcoming guests from the region Pays de la Loire, as representatives of Arc Atlantique, the Baltic Sea Chambers of Commerce Association, the Union of the Baltic Cities, the Committee of Senior Officials and the Working Group on Economics of the Council of the Baltic Sea States, the Nordic Council and the European Commission,

Taking into account the growing awareness of a common historical and cultural heritage and the wish to promote regional development in the Baltic Sea Region by making their potential available at the subregional and municipal level,

Appreciating the remarkable revival of Baltic Sea co-operation carried out by a great number of nongovernmental and governmental organizations in recent years,

Determined to contribute to an even better understanding among the people of the Baltic Sea Region and Europe and to stability in Europe as a whole,

Resolved to ensure the harmonious economic and social progress of the subregions in the Baltic Sea Region as well as to support democracy by common action,

Taking into account the substantial work of the Helsinki-Commission (HELCOM),

Recognizing And Welcoming the contribution to the expansion of subregional multilateral networks provided by spatial planning considerations as shown in the studies “Europe 2000+” of the European Commission and “Vision and Strategies around the Baltic Sea 2010” by Ministers of Spatial Planning and development,

Affirming as essential objectives of their efforts the constant improvement of the living conditions and a sustainable economic development in the Baltic Sea Region,

Resolved, therefore, to develop lasting multilateral co-operation networks between all the subregions of the Baltic Sea Region,

Referring to the principals in the declaration of the First Conference on Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-operation at Stavanger, 7-8 October 1993,

Noting the encouragement given by the Council of the Baltic Sea States - CBSS - to the development of subregional co-operation and recognizing the importance of the CBSS,

Appreciating the excellent work of the fora Economics, Ecology and Youth and relevant subgroups done at Travemünde,

**I. Agree on the following projects of multilateral co-operation at the subregional level:**

**Economy**

Small and medium sized enterprises and vocational training/higher education

- The information flow between the subregions has to be improved. A connection of all subregions to the European Business and Innovation Centre Network (EBN) is recommended.
- The coordinating links, if available, should be the regional Chambers of Commerce (and Industry).
- In order to cope with the demands resulting from the world-wide competition of regions, the presentation of the Baltic Sea business region to potential investors is essential.
- The Conference recommends the establishment of an annual Balt-Partenariat as a regular exhibition and market place for contacts between entrepreneurs from the entire Baltic Sea Region. The next Balt-Partenariat should take place at Gdynia.
- The implementation of governmental programs should be assisted by already functioning efficient non-governmental organizations. Institutional support of these networks would help to stabilize existing partnerships and would accelerate the economic development process in the Baltic Sea Region.

### **Infrastructure and tourism**

Economic progress and social stability rely on infrastructure improvement. This applies, for example, to the transport sector, communication lines and tourism.

- Short-term efforts should be concentrated on opening bottlenecks at the borders. This means training programs for border/customs officers, basic technical help, abolishment of the visa regime amongst all Baltic neighbors, beginning with short-stay visitors, e.g. tourists and businessmen.
- Medium-term activities must be geared to a Baltic Motorway Ring including the Via Baltica, Via Hanseatica, A 20 and the Motorway A 18 from St. Petersburg to Oslo as well as support for further ongoing projects. Private, national and international funds must be mobilized.
- Establishment of public administrative training courses including training in languages meeting the needs of the countries in transition, financed by international assistance agencies.
- Standard harmonization of harbor (container) and railway traffic should be aimed at with European standards. The Baltic Ports Organization should be involved. In the same direction investment should be promoted and funding provided by national governments, EU and International Financing Institutions.
- Definition of regionally agreed local transborder programs, following the example of "Pomerania", e.g. in the field of tourism infrastructure, respecting environmental concerns.
- Data networks ("information highways") for research, business and administration around the Baltic Sea and training of staff and physical improvements for border crossing points, financed by the EU.

### **Energy**

- There are sufficient energy resources available around the Baltic Sea. Therefore most efficient use of local resources has to be given priority and should be demonstrated in innovative pilot projects particularly in the field of renewable energy.
- As these sources are unevenly distributed the improvement of transportation and transmission systems is of strategic importance (i.e. Baltic Ring for the transmission of electric supply) linking the Nordic, continental and former Soviet networks.
- The high quality of science and research in the field of energy should be used in such a way that an information network is established to provide a permanent exchange and update of results.

- Technical assistance in order to improve safety standards of nuclear plants in Lithuania and the St. Petersburg area is vital and should be intensified.

### **Ecology**

The following aspects are regarded as general problems affecting the Baltic Sea Region:

- Eutrophication of the Baltic Sea and inland waters
- Sewage construction and sewage water purification
- Ecologically incompatible waste disposal, in particular of toxic waste
- Contaminated military sites
- Oil pollution.

A broadly based extensive programme of training to develop ecological awareness is called for. This would represent a major contribution to the solution of environmental problems. The following proposals for projects were made:

- Establishment of an ecological training network between the Baltic subregions relying on the experience gained by the UNCED-pilot project in the region of Mikkelin. An initial seminar will be held in autumn 1995.
- Training of technicians and specially skilled staff to operate modern environmental equipment
- Increased use of existing economic structures, being indispensable for solving environmental problems:
- More use of local consultation facilities besides foreign experts
- Support for local enterprises in developing and manufacturing modern environmental technology
- Establishing joint ventures with specialized companies
- Awarding licenses for the production of sophisticated environmental equipment

### **Support sales and marketing, also on foreign markets**

Support should be given to the establishment of a database for marketing and use of second-hand environmental equipment.

An example of this is the co-operation between Schleswig-Holstein and Estonia in upgrading waste water treatment plants on the island of Hiiumaa and the provision of training facilities for technicians at the Technical University of Tallinn.

A further proposal is the co-operation between islands and coastal regions of the Baltic Sea archipelago in sustainable development and in environmentally compatible tourism. The Conference welcomes the proposals of Finland, Denmark, Sweden and Estonia that a transborder coordination centre (Eurohouse) should be set up. It is planned that a first seminar should be held early 1995 in Saaremaa followed by seminars around the islands.

The Conference supports the suggestion of the Union of the Baltic Cities that there should be increased co-operation to solve the environmental problems (especially waste water treatment). Environmental problems in border regions should in future be tackled on direct contacts at the subregional and municipal level.

### **Youth policy**

The Conference examined social problems, unemployment and educational deficits among young people in the Baltic Sea Region, youth exchange projects and opportunities for young people to develop their talents in arts, music and handicrafts.

The Conference welcomes the offer of regions and cities in the Baltic Sea Region to implement the following projects:

- The Union of the Baltic Cities extends an invitation to a second workshop of the Commission of Social Affairs on the topic: "Employment, developing projects for women and young people" in Rostock in spring 1995.
- Mecklenburg-Pomerania is providing a cross-border secondary school: Deutsch-Polnisches Gymnasium Löcknitz.
- At the suggestion of Rogaland Fylke the Conference invites vocational schools in each subregion to participate in a network of vocational schools, financed by the EU-programs SOCRATES and LEONARDO.

### **The Conference welcomes:**

the invitation of young musicians from the Baltic Sea Region to participate in a summer school 1996, organized by the County Administration of Kristianstad;

the invitation of the Freie und Hansestadt Hamburg to young apprentices to attend an arts and crafts competition and exhibition in 1996;

the invitation by the provinces of Uusimaa, Vaasa and Turku-Pori to youth workers to a "Congress of

Youth Workers" in autumn 1995;

the offer of Schleswig-Holstein to make the Youth Information Office available for the Baltic Sea Region and to distribute information on this service;

the readiness of the municipality of Klaipeda, the Union of the Baltic Cities and the Land of Schleswig-Holstein to prepare a summer working camp 1996 in Klaipeda. The participants should build either a youth hostel or a camp site for young people.

the co-operation in the interests of the young people should be continued and intensified. Effective partnerships for assistance should be encouraged. The participants of the Conference will promote these aims in their organizations and will report on the results to the next Conference.

## **II. Welcome**

The "Orientations for a Union Approach towards the Baltic Sea Region" elaborated by the European Commission.

The Conference urges the Council of the EU to decide upon a EU-Baltic Sea programme, which facilitates transborder and interregional co-operation between all the subregions in the fields of economics, environment, science, research, education, vocational training, culture and co-operation between administrations. Programs like, OUVERTURE, ECOS, LIFE and INTERPRISE should be strengthened and a special amount should be reserved for the Baltic Sea subregions. The budget for the application of Art. 10 ERDF and the two other structural funds for innovative projects should be enlarged. Programs like INTERREG, PHARE and TACIS should provide support for identical types of projects as far as interregional co-operation is concerned. TACIS, like PHARE, should provide a special line for multilateral co-operation and be opened up for projects of infrastructure investment in addition to technical assistance. The combined special PHARE/INTERREG budget - 150 mil ECU in 1995 - should finance transborder and interregional co-operation and should not be limited to land border projects.

A joint effort by the Baltic Sea states and the EU to bring about financial support is called for and could be provided by reserving a corridor in existing energy programs as part of a Baltic Sea programme.

In line with this adaptation of EU instruments, regional development should be promoted by an extension of the planning of Transeuropean Networks in the fields of transport, energy and telecommunication to the future EU member states in the North and to the Central and Eastern European countries, including North West Russia (e.g. Via Baltica, Via Hanseatica, Fehmarn Belt crossing between Schleswig-Holstein and Denmark in addition to the already planned Öresund crossing between Sweden and Denmark).

### **III. Agree on the following institutional arrangements:**

The continuation of work under the umbrella of the CBSS. The CBSS is asked to nominate a person responsible for subregional issues and projects, to invite the chairman of the Conference and the Speaker of the subregions to ministerial sessions as well as to the meetings of the Committee of Senior Officials and the Working Group on Economics. The Conference on Baltic Sea States Subregional Cooperation will meet annually in different countries under changing chair.

The Working Group will consist of two representatives of each state and shall meet annually under an alternating chair of the incoming host in order to prepare the Conference.

The nomination of a Speaker of the subregions of the Baltic Sea Region for a period of two years who shall represent the subregions in international institutions, in particular within the CBSS and its bodies as well as the EU and express the position of the subregions. The Speaker should have the possibility to consult the members of the Working Group when appropriate.

The establishment of permanent links with HELCOM as observer-organization.

### **IV. Agree that:**

The Third Conference on Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-operation shall take place in Västmanland, 1995.

The Working Group shall take place in Västerås and prepare the Third Conference.

The Conference of 1996 is foreseen to be held in Finland.

The Speaker for the period 1995-1997 will be Minister Gerd Walter.

## **Annex**

Conclusions of Forum I Economics

Subgroup on small- and medium-sized enterprises and vocational training/higher education

Central future co-operation projects

1. The information flow between the subregions has to be improved. A connection of all subregions to the European Business and Innovation Centre Network (EBN) is recommended. The coordinating links, if available, should be the regional Chambers of Commerce (and Industry), alternatively the regional development authorities.
2. The establishment of vocational and management training courses is of considerable importance. In this context it is the task of the responsible authorities in the Baltic Sea Region to establish common standards and to ensure an international-orientated qualification of the trainees/students. Good examples are provided by the initiatives for implementing the Baltic Academies for Economics and Business Administration in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, the Business Academy in Gdansk and the extension of the Eurofaculty to the regions of St. Petersburg and Kaliningrad.
3. In order to cope with the demands resulting from the world-wide competition of regions, the presentation of the Baltic Sea business region to potential investors is essential. Organizations should inform each other of relevant events and try to organize common information stands.

### **Demands on an integrated Baltic Sea programme**

4. An adjusted development of the whole Baltic Sea Region needs to follow a certain path. For this reason the various organizations promoting and supporting the Baltic Sea area should establish an Advisory Board on Baltic Sea Developments.
5. The Working Group recommends the establishment of an annual Balt-Partenariat as a regular exhibition and market place for contacts between entrepreneurs from the entire Baltic Sea Region.
6. Since 1990 the three Chambers of Commerce & Industry of Schleswig-Holstein have organized an annual Baltic Sea University with and for students of the entire Baltic Sea Region. A similar facility for the professors of the Baltic Sea Region should be established. This could be under the auspices of the ERASMUS-programme and/or within the framework of the Eurofaculty.
7. Support for the reform states regarding the carrying out of administration jobs (land register, trade register etc.) is urgently needed. This should also permit a better handling of the



privatization process in the countries in transition.

8. In order to resolve investment problems experienced by small- and medium-sized companies the European Community is required to facilitate access to the respective funds offered by public institutions, e.g. the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development or the European Investment Bank.
9. The Working Group recommends the opening of existing regional development programs such as INTERREG and INTERPRISE to the entire Baltic Sea Region.

### **Institutional claims**

10. The Council of the Baltic Sea States should be accepted as the coordination forum for the mutual exchange of ideas and the adjustment of programs in order to provide for a coherent development in the Baltic Sea Region.
11. Realization of governmental programs should be assisted by already functioning efficient nongovernmental organizations. An institutional support of these networks would help to stabilize these existing partnerships and would accelerate the economic development process in the Baltic Sea Region.
12. Fine-tuning of the expected EU-Baltic Sea programme should be provided by a task force consisting of the affected general directions, national governments, the European Parliament. The Council of the Baltic Sea States and non-governmental organizations acting in and for the benefit of the Baltic Sea area.