

28/08/2018/

Conference Resolution

Adopted by the 27th Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference (BSPC)

The participants, elected representatives from the Baltic Sea Region States*, assembling in Mariehamn, Åland, 26-28 August 2018,

- renew the expectation that all Baltic Sea States make every effort to ensure the Baltic Sea Region continues to be a region of peaceful and close neighbourliness and intense cooperation based on democratic values, the rule of law, human rights and equal opportunities for all. To this end, they will pursue all the opportunities of parliamentary, governmental and social exchange and democratic dialogue among neighbours. For this reason, they welcome the Stockholm Declaration of the Council of Baltic Sea States and in particular the Roadmap for Reform. They furthermore welcome the resumption of the Council of Baltic Sea States (CBSS) Foreign Ministers meetings including under the Swedish Presidency but additionally call for a resumption of the Baltic Sea States Summits. This will foster the dialogue, strengthen cooperation and manifesting peace;
- welcome the comprehensive implementation statements and reports by the governments of the Baltic Sea Region on the 26th BSPC Resolution and the progress made to implement the BSPC's calls for action;
- welcome the efforts of the Swedish CBSS Presidency 2017/2018 to improve coherence in Baltic Sea regional cooperation, acknowledge the progress of the CBSS - based on the priorities of sustainability, continuity and adaptability under the umbrella of the UN 2030 goals - and recognise the achievements in areas of Sustainable Development, Youth, the Fight Against Trafficking in Human Beings, Child Protection and Civil Protection;
- encourage the Latvian CBSS Presidency 2018/2019 to continue efforts within its three priorities: Integrity & Societal Security, Dialogue, Responsibility;
- share the vision of the CBSS Vision Group, that the Baltic Sea Region shall become a role model of ecological, economic, social and security standards and policies, with a vibrant regional civil society and will take into account the report of the Vision Group in their further discussions on future developments in the Baltic Sea Region;

- underline again the need for political exchange among young people and will proceed to establish a Baltic Sea Parliamentary Youth Forum based on the youth projects of their member parliaments and parliamentary organizations but also effect efforts to establish closer cooperation between youth organisations in the BSR and formats such as 'Regeneration 2030' involving young people in the deliberation of issues to be discussed in the BSPC;
- welcome all efforts to move towards a healthy and clean Baltic Sea;
- establish a way, as a first step within the framework of a progressive foreign and trade policy to address the issue of plastic litter on a global scale;
- strongly welcome all concrete actions and all regulations in banning or reducing the use of single-use plastic products that are found most often on beaches and in oceans, along with fishing equipment lost or left behind at sea, and intend to help raise awareness of the negative impact of plastic waste among consumers;
- discuss Cooperation, the Vision of a Healthy Baltic Sea, Sustainable Energy as well as Migration and Integration;

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

Regarding Cooperation in the Region, to

1. intensify the interaction between the Northern Dimension policy and the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea and the Russian Strategy of social and economic development of the North-West federal district;
2. extend the scope of transnational programmes covering the whole Baltic Sea area and anchor this possibility and the corresponding funding in all macro-regional strategies on a formal level to improve relations between neighbouring countries;
3. strengthen cooperation in the field of migration and integration, involving all countries bordering the Baltic Sea, to better meet similar tasks;
4. intensify programs in the scope of visits and multinational meetings of youth in view of meeting each other, fostering mutual understanding and developing relations;
5. actively support – referring to the Ministerial Declaration adopted by the CBSS Labour Ministries in June 2017 – in the field of labour and employment in the Baltic Sea Region, the work of the "CBSS/BSLF Coordination Group on Labour and Employment" (CG) – focused on the cross-cutting and topical issues pertaining to the new qualifications required for future work patterns, and their linkage to education and the needs of the labour market, life-long learning and comprehensive labour market forecasting and research, including demographic challenges; guarantee equal opportunities for men and women;

6. meet the challenges of an ageing population, social cohesion and sustainable development in the Baltic Sea region through increased cooperation on incentives and practical systems for life-long learning and adult education, adaptation of job conditions and workplaces to the needs of older persons, anti-age discrimination policies, measures to promote good health and flexible and gradual retirement schemes;

Regarding the vision of a Healthy Baltic Sea – a call for more action, to

7. – as the BSPC supports the HELCOM Ministerial Declaration of 6 March 2018 in Brussels and shares its critical view on the state of the Baltic Sea under various aspects – vigorously implement the decisions contained in the Ministerial Declaration;
8. establish effective coordination processes and policies to support the Implementation Strategy for the sustainable Blue Growth Agenda for the Baltic Sea Region;
9. enhance consultations and cooperation regarding a spatial master planning in the Baltic Sea region, considering all interests and aspects of economy (shipping, fishing, energy, tourism, etc.), environment and the neighbours;
10. considering that, depending on the country, only 25 to 60 percent of the targets of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan to be implemented by 2021 are currently met at the national level – urgently intensify efforts at the national and regional level to set appropriate policy priorities so as to achieve the objectives of the BSAP by 2021 as far as possible on schedule;
11. hold regular HELCOM Ministerial Meetings – including all responsible ministers of each member state in the meetings – and come to binding rules under international law – as was the case with the measures to increase maritime safety with the involvement of the transport ministers –, thus bringing the issue of a clean Baltic Sea more strongly into the political debate of each nation and region and to achieve a more binding enforcement of the agreements reached;
12. develop or enhance both joint and additional national and regional sustainability strategies to achieve the UN-Agenda 2030 goals and realise the vision of a clean Baltic Sea free from marine litter whilst promoting sustainable agricultural practices, more sustainable shipping and tackling eutrophication and underwater noise;
13. prepare for and help shape the “Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development” from 2021-2030 proclaimed by the United Nations, in order to reach the goal of delivering the ocean we need for the future we want;
14. further strengthen the relationship between the UN Sustainable Development Goals and human rights whilst recognising their close relationship and mutual reinforcement;
15. take preventative measures and immediate actions to improve the quality of waste-water effluents and halt untreated discharges without delay and to show determination to clean up the heavily polluted sea;
16. take urgent efficient action on the worrying levels of plastics and micro-plastics in the seas; support and implement the regulations on reducing or

banning single-use plastic as quickly as possible; promote public awareness of microplastic pollution throughout the Baltic ecosystem and encourage customers to avoid personal care products containing plastic microbeads;

Regarding Sustainable Energy, Smart energy distribution platforms, to

17. enhance and efficiently use cross-border transmission connections by building and expanding fluent electricity networks to enable new energy markets and new forms of energy services and products to better integrate renewable energies, as well as use undersea electricity connection to integrate grids;

Regarding Migration and Integration, to

18. acknowledge objective differences in the political system as well as in the historical and cultural background due to the scars of the Second World War, continue discussions and reflections about flight and migration, and share best governance practices to raise awareness in our societies;
19. initiate a Baltic Sea-wide data basis on integration conditions and measures to improve the public discussion on a factual basis;
20. intensify the dialogue on migration and integration between the countries bordering the Baltic Sea;
21. increase the offer of migration-specific advisory services and language training in order to intensify integration efforts;
22. enlarge projects for advising and supporting volunteers, local institutions and civil society organizations working in the field of integration and taking into account the unifying and integrating role of sports;
23. consider migration and security perspectives in relevant other political agendas such as trade, labour rights and environmental preservation;
24. seek holistic and multi-faceted solutions to the challenges posed by current refugee and migration policies which include a well-coordinated combination of migration management, humanitarian assistance, political solutions, European and international collaboration, fair trade agreements and development assistance;

Regarding Economic development and growth in the Baltic Sea Region

25. support the Implementation Strategy for the sustainable Blue Growth Agenda for the Baltic Sea Region;
26. acknowledge, that the Baltic Sea is a crucial line of sea transportation (a motorway of the sea) for all its neighbours, a resource for nutrition (fishing) and energy (oil, gas, wind and wave) as well as a recreation area for millions

- of tourists, therefore use all opportunities of Baltic Sea cooperation to enable managing and considering all interests and aspects of economy, environment and the neighbours;
27. further develop the Trans-European Networks for transport in the Baltic Sea region, take initiatives to synchronize toll systems in Europe, in particular the Baltic Sea neighbours, to make transport via sea and rail most economic compared to trucking;
 28. aim to make the Baltic Sea a pioneer area for automatic shipping.

Furthermore, the Conference decides to

welcome with gratitude the kind offer by the Parliament of Norway to host the 28th Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference in Oslo on 25-27 August 2019.

*Parliaments and Parliamentary Organizations:

Baltic Assembly,
Free Hanseatic City of Bremen,
Denmark,
Estonia,
European Parliament,
Faroe Islands,
Federal Republic of Germany,
Finland,
Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg,
Iceland,
Kaliningrad Region,
Karelian Republic,
Latvia,
Leningrad Region,
Lithuania,
Mecklenburg-Vorpommern,
Nordic Council,
Norway,
Poland,
Council of the Federation of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation,
State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation,
City of St. Petersburg,
Schleswig-Holstein,
Sweden,
Åland Islands.