



## **BSSSC Board Meeting**

**Sorup Herregard / Region Zealand, 13 October 2009, 2 – 5 p.m.**

### **Present:**

BSSSC Chairman Carsten Lüdemann (DE), Mr Stefan Herms (DE), Ms Birgit Küstner (DE), Mr Per Bennetsen (DK), Mr Kristian Ebbensgaard (DK), Ms Inge Hyldebrandt (DK), Ms Anne Mette Baek Jespersen (DK), Ms Lisette Kragh-Pihl (DK), Mr Asger Larsen (DK), Mr Peter Madsen (DK), Ms Anette Prilow (DK), Mr Kristian Primdal (DK), Mr Christian Rietz (DK), Ms Ülle Erman (EE), Mr Toivo Riimaa (EE), Mr Gerd Tarand (EE), Mr Arne Tilk (EE), Mr Risto Ervelä (FI), Ms Paula Mikkola (FI), Ms Kirsi Stjernberg (FI), Mr Mindaugas Ehtasaius (LI), Ms Inara Zariene (LI), Mr Andris Jaunsleinis (LV), Mr Tom E.B. Holte (N), Ms Ann Irene Sæternes (N), Mr Magnar Simensen (N), Mr Oddvar Skaiaa (N), Mr Olgierd Geblewicz (PL), Mr Pawel Maciezewski (PL), Ms Malgorzata Ludwiczek (PL), Ms Liana Maximova (R), Mr Uno Aldegren (S), Mr Sören Berg (S), Mr Ingvar Thell (S), Mr Christer Pursiainen (CBSS), Mr David Hunt (B7), Mr Tommy Eliasson (B7), Ms Marlene Rothe (DE), Mr Stefan Musiolik (DE), Mr Lars Friedrichsen (DE), Ms Birgit Hagemann (DE), Ms Judith Köhler (DE), Mr Uwe Ram (DE), Mr Jan Thiele (DE)

### **1. Opening of Board Meeting**

Mr Peter Madsen, host region Zealand, welcomed to the Board Meeting and wished good success. Mr Carsten Lüdemann, Chairman of BSSSC, welcomed to the Board meeting. The Board adopted the meeting agenda and the minutes of the Board meeting in Malmö, Region Skane, Sweden, on 19 May, 2009.

### **2. Annual Conferences**

#### **2.1 Annual Conference 2009**

Mr Kristian Primdal presented organizational news regarding the Conference. Subsequently Mr Jan Thiele elaborated on the resolution which has been drafted by the BSSSC Secretariat, together with comments by the responsible organizers of the Conference, the workshop coordinators and the Board Members. The resolution was kept very short and precise, focusing on the two topics *Climate Change Challenge and the UN Climate Summit* and the *EU Baltic Sea Strategy*. The two-page resolution, once it is adopted, should be disseminated via BSSSC, the Brussels Antenna, via the regional and national governments. Mr Oddvar Skaiaa stressed the importance of taking up the climate change challenge especially in relation with circumstances in Africa and approved of the resolution, as do the other BSSSC Board members. The resolution was thus adopted.

#### **2.2 Annual Conference 2010**

Mr Toivo Riimaa explained the drafting for the Annual Conference 2010 in Estonia and pointed out that it will not take place in a regional setting but in the city of Tallinn, as it is easy to be reached by all Board Members and participants. The dates were set on 13 – 15 October 2010 (BSSSC Annual Conference) and 12 – 15 October 2010 (youth event). As Estonia is not structured into regional entities in this respect, two associations will be responsible for

organizing the meetings – the Association of Estonian Cities and the Association of Estonian Municipalities. The participation fee would be raised to 250€, there might be a conference structure of 2 groups of 3 workshops. A possible topic was “qualification (of the work force)”. Ms Inge Hyldebrandt pointed out that a statement on the realization status of the flagship projects of the EU Baltic Sea Strategy would be an interesting addition to the conference topic. Mr Lüdemann highlighted the good cooperation between Region Zealand and the BSSSC Secretariat and expressed his confidence that it will be the same for the Estonian organization process.

### **3. Follow up of the Work Plan**

#### **3.1 Science and Education**

Mr Stefan Herms noted that the landscape of education possibilities around the Baltic Sea was very rich and diverse. The Ministry of Education in Hamburg was very interested in intensifying projects. So far the project of establishing an education network which connects the countries of the Baltic Sea was concerned with the question of qualification of teachers. Hamburg and Copenhagen were very committed to develop these intentions further.

The establishment of the Science Corridor connecting universities and research entities from Oslo to Hamburg in the field of material science was successfully on its way, especially because of the good co-operation between ESS, Lund and DESY, Hamburg. Nevertheless, other promising projects should be developed further.

#### **3.2 Co-operation in the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region**

Mr Stefan Herms referred to Mr Knud Andersen's wish to resign from the post of the rapporteur which he voiced at the last Board meeting in Malmö, Region Skåne. Mr Herms thanked Mr Andersen – who unfortunately was absent at the Board Meeting – for his wholehearted dedication to his responsibility. Then he suggested Mr David Hunt (B7) as the new rapporteur. Ms Inge Hyldebrandt accepted the thanks on behalf of Mr Andersen and supported the election of Mr Hunt. There were no objections from the Board members, therefore Mr David Hunt was elected as the new rapporteur. Mr Hunt expressed his thanks and assured the Board of his strong commitment. He intended to strengthen the role and responsibility of the regions in the implementation process of the EU Baltic Sea Strategy.

#### **3.3 Maritime Policy**

Mr Stefan Musiolik stated the fact that the Clean Shipping project had become part of the EU Action Plan within the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. Four lead partners still had to be identified though. The coordinating role would be taken by the Danish partners and it was proposed that CBSS would take the lead of the new expert group on Maritime Policy. Mr Christer Pursiainen (CBSS Sec.) pointed out that further action would be started after the Action Plan was fully approved by the end of October 2009. Mr Stefan Herms highlighted the success of the continuous involvement of BSSSC and the regions which resulted in including the Clean Shipping project as a flagship project in the Action Plan.

Mr Stefan Musiolik mentioned the Interreg project *Green Ferry*, which failed in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Interreg approval round, but confirmed that another try would be made at the 3<sup>rd</sup> call for Interreg projects, hopefully with more and better partners and on a broader basis.

#### **3.4 Climate Change and Sustainable Development**

Ms Ann Irene Saeternes first introduced the newly appointed Norwegian Board Member, Mr Tom Holthe. Ms Saeternes then continued to inform about the publication of the new Energy

Report "Energy Perspectives of the Baltic Sea Region – Study on the enhanced regional energy cooperation". It was the result of a co-operation between the *Joint Platform on Energy and Climate* and the *Baltic Development Forum* and showed different scenarios on the reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. The report strove to address a level in between the individual and the national platform.

The next meeting would be in Vilnius on November 24, 2009. Ms Saeternes stressed the importance of sending the BSSSC resolution which has just been adopted as a message to COP 15 in Copenhagen.

Ms Saeternes also spoke about the importance for, among others, the *Joint Platform on Energy and Climate* to involve Russia more actively. While the engagement of Kaliningrad was already quite good, further actions had to be taken.

### **3.5 Youth**

Mr Stefan Herms thanked Region Zealand for their efforts of organizing the BSSSC Annual Conference together with the youth event so that a direct connection between the two events was possible.

Mr Oddvar Skaiaa informed the Board about the first day of the youth event *YESS – Youth Event on Sustainable Societies* at which he took part. He found the youth delegates very active and keen for each one of them to participate actively. Starting from this year, there would be a change regarding the youth representatives to the Board, instead of electing two new representatives only one person would be newly elected, the other one would stay one more year in the function of a mentor. This way there would be term intervals and each year one new representative would be elected. This year Mr Gerd Tarant would stay as a mentor.

Mr Stefan Herms pointed out that the funding of the EU fund *Youth in Action* has ended and that a new application was being prepared in Hamburg.

### **3.6 Public Health and Quality of Life**

Mr Sören Berg stated that the Stockholm County Council – apart from being quite preoccupied with the Swine Flu and its vaccination consequences – was working on the Baltic Co-operation on Communicable Diseases. This included for example Tuberculosis and its resistance against antibiotics as well as teamwork with Russia. At the Board Meeting in Stockholm in summer 2010 a seminar on this subject would be organized.

Mr Stefan Herms reported from the successful 3<sup>rd</sup> *Baltic Sea Conference on E-Health* in Hamburg on 15-16 September 2009. There were speakers from the Stockholm County Council and also from Russia. It has been very well received all around the Baltic Sea which once again underlined the importance of the topic Public Health.

### **3.7 Transport and Infrastructure**

Mr Uno Aldegren informed the Board about the successful application of the Interreg project *TransBaltic* which aspired to improve the transport and communication system in the Baltic Sea Region. For this project, 21 partners from 9 countries could be found and 5.5 million € could be set aside. The Kick Off has been launched beginning of September 2009 in Malmö. Sweden and Lithuania were responsible for the identification of transport infrastructure. Mr Aldegren briefed the Board about the plan to establish a forum for discussions on infrastructure and mobility. At a meeting in the following week persons would be identified who would be responsible for the follow up. Mr Aldegren noted that the *EU Green Corridors Conference* takes place on 9 December 2009 in Brussels.

Mr Herms highlighted the *TransBaltic* project as a big success and explained that the *Amber Route* project has been declined in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Interreg round, but that a new approach would be taken at the 3<sup>rd</sup> call in 2010.

### **3.8 Co-operation with Russia and Northern Dimension**

Regarding the cooperation with Russia Mr Stefan Herms briefed the Board on the close contacts between the Hanse Office, St. Petersburg and the Leningrad Oblast. St. Petersburg was active in the BSSSC youth policy and represented by Ms Vera Ageeva who was taking part at the youth event in Roskilde. Mr Herms expressed his hope that the Leningrad Oblast would participate in the next year's conference.

Regarding the Northern Dimension Ms Ann Irene Saeternes admitted that at the moment actions were a bit slow. The next meeting of the RELEX Commission, *Northern Dimension substate cooperation with a particular emphasis on the Baltic Sea region*, would take place November 26-27 2009 in Helsingborg. Ms Birgit Kuestner stated that BSSSC would be represented by Mr Knud Andersen. Ms Saeternes suggested that Mr Lars Friedrichsen, Mr Uno Aldegren and herself have a small meeting on the contemporary status of the relations to the Northern Dimension and to discuss possibilities of stronger involvement in this area. Topics through which this involvement could be achieved were health, transport, the relations to Russia, the CBSS Bureau in Lithuania.

Ms Inge Hyldebrandt informed the Board of Mr Knud Andersen's new role as a rapporteur to the Council of Europe. The Council conducted a study concerning local and regional democracy in Russia, for which several experts would be appointed by the Council. These studies were compiled on a regular basis on the European countries.

Mr Stefan Musiolik suggested bringing up the project of Kaliningrad as a visa-free zone once again, maybe it could be discussed further in the next Board meeting in Brussels after some time of preparation. Ms Liane Maximova supported this suggestion and explained that all partner regions of Kalinigrad work in this direction, as could be seen at a meeting beginning of October where a resolution was also adopted. The question of visa caused a severe limitation to activity in the area of Kaliningrad.

## **4. Baltic Sea Region Programme**

### **4.1 Status quo report by rapporteur Ann Irene Saeternes**

The Monitoring Committee of the Baltic Sea Region Programme met in Oslo on 15-16 September 2009 and approved further 17 projects. Projects which have been supported by BSSSC are *TransBaltic* (approved in June 2009) and *FirstMotion* which has just been approved in September 2009. Ms Saeternes stressed the fact that through these projects BSSSC had a direct input in political work and the EU Baltic Sea Strategy. The 3<sup>rd</sup> call for projects would be launched early 2010, a date would be set by the *Task Force Programme Strategy* which meets in Berlin on 27 October 2009.

The treaty regarding economic co-operation between Russia and the EU has not been signed in time by Russia, therefore no financial aid could be applied for by Russia. Nevertheless new developments might be possible via a cross-border programme.

The next Baltic Sea Region Programme Conference would take place in November or December 2010 in Finland and then in 2012 in Norway.

Mr Stefan Musiolik reminded the Board that a restructural development of the EU funds will occur soon and suggested to re-establish the former Working Group on this subject which was

hosted by the Danish Regions. Ms Inge Hyldebrandt would inquire whether this is possible.

## **5. Report from Brussels**

Dr Lars Friedrichsen briefed the Board on new developments in Brussels and enhanced the fruitful role of strong BSSSC lobbying via different methods and instruments in reference to the compilation of the EU Baltic Sea Strategy. Dr Friedrichsen admitted that the regions have only been assigned little responsibility regarding the implementation of the EU Baltic Sea Strategy. Within the framework of the Strategy an annual review on the status quo of the implementation process was planned in form of an annual forum. Dr. Friedrichsen mentioned the suggestion to connect this review with the BSSSC Annual Conference which would establish an ideal combination of the two instruments.

Next, Dr Friedrichsen gave an overview of the *Open Days – European Week of Regions and Cities*, which were staged in Brussels 5-8 October 2009. High-level politicians participated in this event, the press conference was very successful with many journalists and active discussions. BSSSC was very well presented and very active during these days.

The next BSSSC Board Meeting will be in the Hanse Office in Brussels on 3-4 December 2009, registration will be opened asap.

## **6. Board Meetings in 2010**

3-4 December 2009 in Brussels  
February 2010 in Szczecin  
June 2010 Stockholm  
October 2010 in Tallinn  
December 2010 in Finland,  
Concrete days have yet to be set.

## **7. Reports from meetings and events**

Union of the Baltic Cities, General Conference in Kristiansand, Norway, 23-26 September 2009

The Future of the Baltic Sea Region in Europe, Hamina, Finland, 27-28 August 2009

## **8. Coming events**

19th meeting of the RELEX Commission and seminar on *Northern Dimension substate co-operation with a particular emphasis on the Baltic Sea region*, 26-27 November 2009 in Helsingborg, Sweden

B 7 Annual Conference and 20th anniversary of the B 7 co-operation, 30 November–2 December 2009 in Öland, Sweden

BSSSC Board meeting, 3-4 December 2009 in Brussels, Belgium

## **9. Any other business**

Ms Inara Zariene declared that there are structural reforms at the moment in Lithuania and that uncertainty prevailed regarding the actual outcome.

Mr Musiolik brought up again the project idea of a Baltic History Book which should shape a

common Baltic Sea identity. It was decided that detailed information should be prepared for the next Board meeting in Brussels, so that further decisions regarding this idea can be made.

BSSSC Secretariat