

2000 CBSS 9th Ministerial Session - Bergen Communiqué

Council of the Baltic Sea States 9th Ministerial Session

Bergen, 21-22 June 2000

COMMUNIQUÉ

At the invitation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Norway, the Foreign Ministers of Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Russia, State Secretaries from Poland and Sweden, and representatives of the Presidency of the European Union and of the European Commission met on 21-22 June 2000 in Bergen in the framework of the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) for the 9th Ministerial Session of the Council. Representatives from France, Italy, Ukraine, the United Kingdom and the United States participated in the session as observers.

Since the last ministerial meeting of the CBSS, several important events have set the agenda for Baltic Sea Regional Co-operation into the new Millennium. In particular, the Council took note of the Third Baltic Sea States Summit in Kolding in April and Ministerial Meetings in the areas of culture, energy, trade and economics and education aiming at a result oriented program of co-operation. The Council highly welcomed this approach, and declared its willingness to take on the role of co-ordinating intergovernmental regional co-operation among the group of CBSS member countries and to act as a focal point of information in order to avoid duplication and to achieve the best possible use of the region's resources.

Baltic Sea Co-operation thus has confirmed its role as a dynamic instrument in a period of rapid economic growth and social change in the region and the coming enlargement of the European Union. The CBSS has proved to be an efficient forum for dialogue among EU members, applicant countries, and non-member partner countries. The CBSS has an important role in identifying joint approaches to new challenges and in giving perspective to the development of the Baltic Sea region.

Follow up on the Third Baltic Sea States Summit

The Council welcomed the conclusions from the Kolding Summit and the role accorded to the CBSS for follow-up. Notably, the Council agreed on a set of concrete measures to further improve framework conditions for trade and investment, promote regional development of information technology, further regional co-operation on energy issues, support a joint task force on health, advance joint approaches to regional environment and climate issues, promote a dialogue on labour market issues, enforce a co-ordinated approach towards children at risk and promote people-to-people contacts in the region, according to the Agenda for Follow-up and Action in [Annex 1](#).

Northern Dimension

The Council welcomed the Action Plan for the Northern Dimension in the external and cross-border policies of the EU endorsed by the European Council and confirmed its intention to play an active role in its further development and implementation in key areas. The CBSS is actively involved in regional co-operation in a number of areas covered by the Action Plan. The Council stands ready to come up with concrete proposals for inclusion in the evolving Action Plan. The Council furthermore stands ready to offer the resources of its working bodies for co-ordination and as possible instruments for implementation and concretisation of elements of the Action Plan in areas such as health, information technology, energy, trade and investment, environment and the combat against organised crime. The CBSS can also act as a channel of co-operation with sub-regional actors.

The Council noted that the results of the conference "The Northern Dimension and Kaliningrad Region: European and Regional Integration" in Copenhagen in May were reflected in the EU Action Plan for the Northern Dimension. The conclusions of the Chair and other contributions presented at the Conference form elements for consideration in the further work on the EU Northern Dimension initiative and in promoting regional co-operation. The Council emphasises in particular the need to deepen the dialogue between the Russian Federation and the European Union within the framework of the PCA on all issues relevant to the development of this Russian region and its involvement in regional and cross-border co-operation in the light of the forthcoming EU enlargement.

The Council stressed the need for co-ordination of development projects in the framework of PHARE, TACIS and INTERREG, as well as bilateral assistance in order to promote balanced growth in the region.

CBSS Commissioner

The Council took note of the Commissioner's annual report and expressed its satisfaction with his work. Taking into account the important development towards strengthening democratic institutions and the protection of human rights in the Baltic Sea Region the Council adopted a revised mandate for the Commissioner for the period from 1 October 2000 to 30 September 2003 as set out in [Annex 4](#).

The Council appointed Ms. Helle Degn as Commissioner of the Council of the Baltic Sea States on Democratic Development until 30 September 2003.

EuroFaculty

The Council took note of the annual report from the EuroFaculty. In order to strengthen the EuroFaculty, the Council adopted revised statutes for the EuroFaculty as set out in [Annex 3](#). The Council furthermore decided to establish a EuroFaculty Kaliningrad project for support to the faculties of Economics and Law of Kaliningrad State University from 1 September 2000.

Baltic 21

The Council reaffirmed its political commitment to steer society on a sustainable route while recognising the long-term and complex character of the endeavour. In this light it expressed its satisfaction with the progress made in the implementation of the Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea Region (Baltic 21) as outlined in its first biennial report.

The Council decided on a transitional arrangement for the Baltic 21 Secretariat limited in time up to 31 December 2000 as set out in [Annex 2](#).

The Council requested the Baltic 21 Senior Officials Group to propose, by the end of November 2000, an appropriate solution for the Secretariat function of Baltic 21 to the Council for decision.

People-to-people contacts and sub-regional co-operation

The Council underlined the need to promote people-to-people contacts within the region and advance sub-regional co-operation.

The Council accepted, in general terms, the Danish proposal, which is presented in [Annex 5](#), to establish a financing facility for sub-regional co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region as a complement to existing national and EU mechanisms. It requested the CSO to report back to the Ministers with a final proposal consisting of a legal text within six months.

Strengthening of the CBSS co-operation

The Council recognised the need for improved efficiency and co-ordination within the Baltic Sea co-operation and, while preserving the independence of the existing sectoral co-operation, decided to fully implement the recommendation made by the Third Baltic Sea States Summit concerning a new structure and working methods of the CBSS. The Council instructed the CSO to take all necessary steps in this regard, in particular those mentioned in [Annex 6](#).

Final provisions

The Council thanked Norway for chairing the CBSS during 1999/2000 and for organising the 9th Ministerial Session in Bergen. The Council entrusted Germany with the Presidency for the period 2000/2001. During this period Norway, Germany and Russia will compose the Troika. The 10th Ministerial Session of the CBSS will be held in Hamburg in 2001.

Annex 1: Agenda for Follow-up and Action

Growth and sustainable development

The Council calls upon its Business Advisory Council to closely follow business related developments in the region and advise the CBSS on implementation of relevant decisions as well as proposing new measures, if necessary, to promote growth and integration. Member Countries will encourage active participation in the Advisory Council of their national business organisations.

In follow up to the Third Baltic Sea States Summit, the Council

1 instructs the CSO, the WGEC and the Secretariat to monitor and support the implementation of the Action Plan from the meeting of Ministers for Trade and Economic Co-operation on 7-8 February 2000 and report to the Council by June 2001.

2 asks the ministries for labour market policy of the CBSS countries and the social partners to follow up on the initiative to establish a dialogue on labour market issues and related topics. The Council asks the CSO to monitor developments in the area.

3 asks the CSO and the WGNRS to examine possible steps to complement other efforts to improve the safety of nuclear power plants, management of nuclear and radioactive wastes and reliable isolation from the biosphere.

4 asks the GSEO to follow up on the momentum provided by the Summit for accelerated integration of the regional energy networks and renewed efforts towards effective economically and environmentally sound energy systems. Notably, it should explore the potential for increased co-operation on climate issues, and for development in the Baltic Sea Region of flexible mechanisms according to the Kyoto Protocol, including the possibility of launching pilot projects of joint implementation.

5 finds it appropriate to identify precise areas of co-operation with the objective to develop and strengthen the Baltic Sea Region's leading position in the IT sector. The Council welcomes the readiness of Finland and Estonia to convene a meeting of experts in order to propose setting up suitable mechanisms, such as an ad hoc working group, for the carrying out of such co-operation. One aim will be to put forward concrete IT proposals for inclusion in the Action Plan on the EU's Northern Dimension.

6 asks the CSO to look into ways of promoting people-to-people contacts in the region, including youth exchanges and NGO co-operation, and keep itself informed about the on-going work on preservation of the region's rich cultural heritage, carried out by structures set up by the Baltic Sea Ministers for Culture.

Strengthening Regional and Sub-regional Co-operation

Following up on the conclusions of the Third Baltic Sea States Summit, the Council

7 asks the CSO to maintain close contacts with established fora of sub-regional co-operation between municipalities and counties, particularly with the Baltic Sea States' Sub-regional Co-operation and the Union of the Baltic Cities.

8 instructs the CSO, in cooperation with the CBSS Secretariat to elaborate further the Danish proposal for a funding facility for sub-regional co-operation in Annex 5, i.a. with respect to minimum contributions, legal status and administrative structures, and report back to Ministers with a final proposal consisting of a legal text within six months.

9 instructs the CSO, in close co-ordination with Russian authorities and relevant EU institutions to support concrete projects and actions aimed at expanding cross-border co-operation, in particular involving Kaliningrad Oblast and other North-western regions of the Russian Federation, adding value to efforts being made within the framework of other fora. The CSO should also support the ongoing negotiations on projects to improve the water sector and waste water treatment facilities in St. Petersburg and Kaliningrad, as well as toxic wastes treatment in Leningrad Oblast, as indicated in the Kolding Summit Chairman's Conclusions.

10 urges municipalities and counties to increase and deepen co-operation and involving partners in Kaliningrad Oblast and other north-western regions of the Russian Federation.

Human Security

The Council notes with satisfaction the prolonged mandate of the Task Force on Organised Crime until 2004, and

11 requests the CSO to establish close contact with the Task Force of personal representatives of Heads of Government on Communicable Disease Control in the Baltic Sea Region and support the process of elaboration and implementation of a plan to enhance disease control throughout the region.

12 instructs the CSO and the WGDI to support the newly established reference group of senior officials from ministries responsible for child matters in its efforts to enforce a co-ordinated and multidisciplinary approach towards children at risk in the Baltic Sea region and to further develop the Child Centre for Children at Risk IT network for intergovernmental exchange of information and experiences in the area of child welfare and protection.

13 asks all CBSS members to continue to support regional cooperation in the fields of disaster prevention and surveillance, search-and-rescue operations and joint disaster relief oriented crisis management, where Sweden has acted as the lead country, and welcomes in this context the proposal of Poland to convene a meeting of experts from competent authorities and specialists with the aim of setting priorities for further work on compatible and efficient surveillance and rescue facilities in the region.

14 instructs the CSO and the WGDI to carry on with their efforts aimed at providing practical assistance to democratic institutions in the Member States and promoting human rights, both on the legislative level and in the field of their implementation. Emphasis shall be placed on development and strengthening of national remedies, such as national Ombudsmen, including ombudsmen for children and other vulnerable groups of society.

15 instructs the WGDI to focus on a selected number of key issues, including i.a. the rule of law, civil society, good lawmaking, good administration, local democracy, co-operation with the CBSS Commissioner, as well as Children's issues.

16 asks the CBSS Commissioner to carry forward his/her work according to the new mandate on promotion of democratic institutions and human rights and report to the Council on his/her actions.

Annex 2: Baltic 21

The Council made the following decisions concerning the arrangements for a transitional solution for the Baltic 21 Secretariat.

1. The Baltic 21 Secretariat will remain in Stockholm on the current premises for a transitional period of 6 months, 1 July to 31 December, 2000. Sweden will continue as employer of two staff members from the current secretariat and be responsible for other administrative arrangements during this period of time.

2. The costs for the Secretariat during the half year transitional period is budgeted to SEK 1.140.000 divided into the following items:

- Rent and maintenance 240.000
- Salaries and related costs 650.000
- Travel 50.000
- Other costs, including travel support to CITs 200.000
- Total SEK 1.140.000

3. These costs of the Secretariat will be shared in the following way.

Sweden will finance rent and maintenance (SEK 240 000);

Denmark, Finland, Germany, Norway and Sweden will contribute equally to the remaining costs, that is,

- Sweden SEK 180.000
- Finland 180.000
- Denmark 180.000
- Germany 180.000
- Norway 180.000

The contributions from Finland, Denmark, Germany and Norway should be paid to the Swedish Government not later than 1 November 2000. Participation in the costs for the transitional arrangement is open to all member states.

4. The sharing of costs for the transitional secretariat will be without prejudice in relation to the establishment of the regular Baltic 21 Secretariat.

Annex 3: EuroFaculty

The academic co-operation programme EuroFaculty has long term policy goals to be reached by 2005 on curricula, teacher's training, libraries and IT support in the three universities in Tartu, Riga and Vilnius.

In order to streamline the structure of EuroFaculty for the second half of the project period, the Council adopted the revised statutes below, and concurred with the Steering Committee that the role of the EuroFaculty centres at the universities should be enhanced. The Council furthermore decided to establish a three-year EuroFaculty project in Kaliningrad for support to the economic and law faculties of the Kaliningrad State University.

The statutes below do not apply to the EuroFaculty project in Kaliningrad unless the CSO so decides.

Revised EuroFaculty statutes

Article 1

EuroFaculty is an independent international body established by, and answerable only to, the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) through the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO). EuroFaculty shall operate on a non-political basis and all its decisions concerning its activities shall be made on the basis of academic freedom of conscience and academic objectives.

Article 2

EuroFaculty operates academic programmes at the University of Tartu, Estonia, University of Latvia, in Riga, and Vilnius University, Lithuania, based on contracts between EuroFaculty and each host university. EuroFaculty may expand to sites in other States, in particular in Russia (specifically, but not exclusively, Kaliningrad and St. Petersburg) as approved by the Governing Board, cf. Article 5, provided the necessary funding is made available. EuroFaculty is established to assist the host universities in reforming higher education in 1. Economics and Business Administration, 2. Law, and 3. Public Administration.

Article 3

To implement the above objective EuroFaculty is pursuing the following long-term goals:

- a. Introduction and transformation of core curricula in each field up to and including the level of Master's degree to internationally accepted academic standards.
- b. Retraining and training of local academic staff and new professionals to ensure that the host universities have the means to sustain the new curriculum.
- c. Development of libraries and computer networks in support of teaching and research at the host universities.

Article 4

Operating funds for EuroFaculty are provided by Members and Observers of the CBSS participating in EuroFaculty on a voluntary basis. EuroFaculty is free to accept additional funding from any and all possible sources within and outside the Member States of the CBSS.

Article 5

Each member of the CBSS is entitled to nominate one member to the Governing Board. The Board is approved by the CSO for a period of three years. The CSO is entitled to grant representatives of other contributing countries the status of a member of the Governing Board. The Governing Board decides on the budget and funds for the achievement of the EuroFaculty goals on the basis of an academic implementation plan for the academic programme and activities proposed by the Academic Board, cf. Article 6. The Chair of the Academic Board is a full member of the Governing Board.

The Governing Board elects a Chair and a Vice-Chair and has the right to organise and structure its work as it sees fit.

The Governing Board meets once a year with the possibility of calling extraordinary meetings as needed. The Governing Board adopts three-year rolling budgets with minimum requirements and projections for the future based on strategy targets, key data and the academic implementation plans.

Article 6

The Governing Board appoints an Academic Board consisting of two representatives in each of the three academic fields and one representative from each host university for a period of three years. The EuroFaculty Director, cf. Article 8, and the Chair of the Governing Board are full members of the Academic Board.

The Rector's Conference for each participating country nominates at least one member in each field, and the Governing Board decides on the final representation to ensure a balanced composition of the Academic Board.

The Academic Board meets once a semester. The Academic Board elects a Chair and a Vice-Chair and has the right to organise and structure its work as it sees fit.

The main task of the Academic Board is to make proposals for academic implementation plans and to revise and adopt the academic plans according to the decision of the Governing Board on available funding.

Article 7

An Executive Committee is formed consisting of the Chair and the Vice-Chair of the Governing Board, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Academic Board and the Director. The Executive Committee is the chief authority of EuroFaculty between Governing Board meetings.

Article 8

The Director is appointed by the Governing Board on the recommendation of the Academic Board. The Chair of the Governing Board will sign a contract with the Director.

The Director is the Chief Executive Officer of EuroFaculty and acts as secretary to the Governing and Academic Boards and the Executive Committee and shall implement their decisions. The Director provides three-year rolling budgets on an annual basis for the approval of the Governing Board. The Director provides annual accounts and the audit report

produced by the auditor to be approved by the Governing Board. The Director provides half-yearly reports on academic progress to be presented to the Academic and Governing Boards.

Article 9

EuroFaculty shall have the right to award certificates for courses given by EuroFaculty lecturers. Degrees and diplomas are awarded by the EuroFaculty host universities or faculties. Course credits are determined by the degree awarding universities and faculties.

Article 10

The Governing Board prepares guidelines for the audit of the EuroFaculty accounts and appoints a licensed internationally respected auditor to audit the accounts and report to the Governing Board, and on the basis of this report approves the annual report and accounts of EuroFaculty.

Article 11

The EuroFaculty budgets, annual report and audited accounts shall be presented to the CSO. When EuroFaculty matters are discussed in the CSO, EuroFaculty will be represented by the Chairman of the Governing Board or, if the Chairman is prevented, by the Director.

Annex 4: CBSS Commissioner on Democratic Development

1. MANDATE

1.1. The Commissioner is an instrument for promoting and consolidating democratic development in the Member States, based upon respect of human rights. The Commissioner acts independently and is accountable to the Council.

1.2. The Commissioner is guided by the aims, principles and provisions of the UN Charter, the Council of Europe and OSCE standards, as well as other international standards relevant for democracy and human rights, and by relevant documents of the CBSS.

1.3. The Commissioner supports the functioning and development of democratic institutions, including human rights institutions, in the Member States, in particular concentrating his/her efforts on such issues as democracy at national, regional and local level, good governance and administration, good law-making, local self-government, strengthening of civil society and promotion of human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities.

1.4. The Commissioner may recommend/organise seminars and meetings on subjects comprising his/her Mandate, serves as a centre for exchange of information on available technical assistance and expertise, national and international programmes aimed at strengthening democratic institutions in the CBSS Member States.

1.5. In the beginning of each activity year, the Commissioner presents to the CSO a programme of planned seminars and meetings.

1.6. The Commissioner may receive communications from individuals, groups and organisations regarding functioning of democratic institutions and human rights issues. These communications are reviewed by the Commissioner confidentially. On these communications the Commissioner may report to the Council confidentially. The Council may, however, decide to publish the full report or parts of it. If the communications indicate the need for technical assistance, the Commissioner may propose concrete measures to assist CBSS Member States to such effect.

1.7. In addition to direct support to the Member States, the Commissioner studies and reports to the Council on issues relevant to his/her Mandate, provides the Council with advice on these issues and follows up when appropriate.

1.8. The Commissioner seeks to establish and maintain co-operation with national institutions relevant to his/her Mandate, in particular with national Ombudsmen, Chancellors of Justice, as well as non-governmental organisations.

1.9. The Commissioner seeks to co-operate and co-ordinate his/her activities with the Council of Europe, OSCE, UN institutions on human rights, as well as other relevant international institutions. The Commissioner draws upon the facilities of these institutions, as appropriate, in particular to enhance information exchange. The Commissioner also seeks to establish and maintain co-operation with international non-governmental organisations.

1.10. The Commissioner exercises his/her mandate in a manner to avoid duplication with other activities within the field of his/her Mandate.

2. APPOINTMENT AND SUPPORT

2.1. The Commissioner shall be an eminent international personality from whom impartial performance of the function is expected.

2.2. The Commissioner is appointed by the Council of the Baltic Sea States upon recommendation of the CSO for a term of three years, before the expiry of which the Council reviews the future need and functions of the Commissioner. The same person shall henceforth be appointed to the office of the CBSS Commissioner for no more than two consecutive terms.

2.3. Financing of the Commissioner's activities shall be carried out from the special Commissioner Fund, which the Member States shall contribute to in accordance with an established scale of distribution. The fiscal year of the Commissioner starts on 1st January and ends on 31st December.

3. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

3.1. The Commissioner has the right to collect the information he/she requires.

3.2. Member States of the CBSS undertake not to persecute individuals and/or organisations for providing information to the Commissioner, and shall also provide the Commissioner with information upon his/her request.

3.3. Member States of the CBSS shall not prevent persons and organisations on their territory from communicating with the Commissioner.

4. CONDITIONS FOR TRAVEL BY THE COMMISSIONER

4.1. The Commissioner has the right to undertake visits to the CBSS Member States.

4.2. Prior to an intended visit, the Commissioner shall inform the State concerned about the purpose of the visit. Within two weeks, the State concerned shall consult the Commissioner on the objectives of the visit, which may comprise the promotion of dialogue, confidence and co-operation. During the visit, the State concerned shall allow the Commissioner to travel and communicate freely.

4.3. During such visits the Commissioner is entitled to receive confidentially from every individual, group or organisation directly concerned, information on matters pertaining to his/her mandate.

4.4. Upon completion of a visit, the Commissioner shall issue a short account of his/her findings to the Member State concerned.

5. ACCOUNTABILITY

- 5.1. After termination of the involvement of the Commissioner in a particular issue, the Commissioner reports to the Council on the findings, results and conclusions.
- 5.2. The Commissioner monitors the implementation of the Council's decisions in areas covered by his/her Mandate.
- 5.3. The Commissioner shall prior to the annual Ministerial Session of the CBSS present the Council an activity report for the previous year.
- 5.4. The Commissioner may make his/her annual report public after it has been presented to the Council at the annual Ministerial Session of the CBSS, unless the Council decides otherwise.
- 5.5. The Commissioner may decide to make his/her reports to the Council available to the public no sooner than one month after the report has been presented to the Council or the CSO, unless there is a consensus against publication. The Commissioner shall notify the Council or the CSO in writing of his/her intention to release the report no later than one month before publication.
- 5.6. The Commissioner shall conclude his/her term of office by providing the Council with a final report on matters related to his/her mandate.

Annex 5 Establishment of a financing facility for sub-regional co-operation

Establishment of a financing facility for sub-regional co-operation in the Baltic Sea region

Proposal by Denmark

Background

At the CBSS Ministerial Session in Palanga last year Denmark presented the idea of the establishment of a common financing facility for sub-regional co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region and at the Baltic Sea States Summit in Kolding April 12-13, 2000, the idea was further elaborated. The Danish idea met with great interest. The Summit in Kolding recommended further steps to strengthen the sub-regional co-operation between municipalities and counties and continued work on flexible mechanisms for financing cross border projects. The Danish proposal should be seen in this context.

Establishment of a financing facility

Denmark recommends to ministers to establish a financing facility (e.g. "the Fund for Sub-regional Co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region") for sub-regional co-operation in the Baltic Sea region based on the following elements:

Objectives of the facility

The main objective of the facility shall be to provide supplementary financing for sub-regional/decentralised co-operative activities (projects) across the national borders in the Baltic Sea region involving regional or local authorities in at least two CBSS Member States of which at least one of the partners must be situated outside EU/EEA.

Particular attention should be paid to projects strengthening society at regional and local levels or projects with the aim to develop further links between EU/EEA and candidate countries and the Russian Federation. Projects with regard to expanded cross-border co-operation, in particular involving Kaliningrad and St. Petersburg and other north-western regions of the Russian Federation should be encouraged. Particular attention should be given to the transfer of knowledge and the development of new projects in the social, administrative, health and educational sectors, as well as the development of business activities.

1.Membership and financing

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2. All members and observers of the CBSS can become members of the facility. Funding for the project activities will be made available through voluntary contributions from members and observers of the CBSS, international organisations including the EU and from other sources deemed suitable. Contributions should be minimum 25.000 EURO. Each member of the facility shall undertake to pay an equal share of the administrative budget on a yearly basis. Any beneficiary member country of the CBSS whether it is a member of the financing facility or not could receive financing for sub-regional projects from the facility.

3. Administrative structure

The facility should be served by a minimal administrative structure and should be based on already existing structures in the Baltic Sea region, e.g. the CBSS Secretariat, and with direct involvement of regional and local authorities in the member states. Approval of requests for funding will be processed rapidly and flexibly in accordance with established guidelines and priority criteria.

4. Legal status

The facility should have the status of an independent legal personality that inspires confidence in i.a. donors and other financial institutions with whom it may wish to enter into co-financing arrangements.

The legal setting up of the facility should be finalised by experts within the framework of the CSO. A board representing the interests of the CBSS should be established. The board's main task should be to provide supervision and guidance so that the aims and objectives of the facility are met and report hereon to the CBSS. It should issue the terms of reference for the operations of the facility.

5. Start of operations

The facility shall start its operations when financial contributions to the amount of 3 mio. EURO have been committed and the legal and administrative aspects have been finalized. Contributions should be paid in either at once or over a three year period.

Annex 6: Implementation of new structure and working methods

In order to increase co-ordination and ensure better results of the current wide range of activities taking place in the Baltic Sea region, the Third Baltic Sea States Summit recommended that the CBSS should in the future encompass all regional intergovernmental, multilateral co-operation among the group of CBSS countries. The annual meeting of the foreign ministers and a member of the European Commission will be a forum for co-ordination (and direction of the work) in the restructured CBSS. Such co-ordination will not infringe on the responsibility of field ministers for their own field of competence and expertise. Field ministers will meet on an ad hoc basis in accordance with their own decisions.

The Council instructs the CSO to take all necessary steps to fully implement the recommendations from the Third Baltic Sea Summit with respect to the structure and working methods of the CBSS. In particular the Council:

- instructs the CSO to monitor all multilateral regional intergovernmental co-operation taking place among the group of CBSS members, to facilitate the flow of information between the various fora, and to proceed with the establishment of a public register of contact points in the relevant sector ministries and agencies.
- asks the incoming Presidency to continue the process of reviewing, and updating as necessary, the working methods and the terms of reference for the working groups.
- asks the CSO and its working groups to take practical steps to ensure co-ordination between the Council of the Baltic Sea States, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, and appropriate EU institutions, particularly in the context of implementation of the action plan on the Northern Dimension.
- asks the CSO to continue and further develop the close contacts and exchange of information between the CBSS and the observer states and the special participants.