



Roadmap of the CBSS reforms

2018-2020

The need for the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) to reform was determined by the Stockholm declaration adopted by the Foreign Ministers and high-level representatives on 18 June 2018, with the Vision Group report “Vision for the Baltic Sea Region beyond 2020” as a reference document. A process of reflection and consideration has been carried out during the Latvian Presidency of the CBSS. The Stockholm Declaration marked three main directions to be followed in the reform process reaching political agreement on a substantial roadmap for reform of the CBSS, with the goal of reaching tangible progress by 2020:

1. More focus and flexibility in the work of the CBSS.
2. Improving co-operation with other international fora and formats active in the region.
3. Enabling concrete results in areas in which the organisation is uniquely suited to add value.

The Stockholm declaration will be implemented by the following practical steps, to increase the relevance, visibility, efficiency and transparency of the organisation. This will enable the CBSS to strengthen its ability to deliver on its mission of building collaboration and trust between all countries in the region and to support the region in its strive to become one of the most prosperous and integrated cooperation spaces in the world.

1. More focus and flexibility in the work of the CBSS

Since the founding of the CBSS in 1992, co-operation in the region has increased extensively and a multitude of fora and formats has emerged at all levels. The last decades of intensive regional integration and development have created an excellent foundation on which to build on. The Council needs to better deliver on the demands and expectations of the Member States and thus calls for a more flexible organisation that can embrace new innovative ways of working and respond more agilely to new ideas, changing agendas and developments in the region.

An important element in this will be the ability to adjust the format and level of meetings to ensure the most productive discussion on a given topic. This means that the frequency of Summits will vary over time. The Summits should take place when the Member States consider such political discussions opportune, while consistency and continuity of the political dialogue in the region should be ensured by the Council meetings. The Council meetings should serve to facilitate a broad discussion on topical issues for the region, not limited to activities at level of the CBSS.

Each presidency is also encouraged to arrange sectoral meetings at an appropriate level, including the ministerial ones. The guidance and oversight of the organisation in its daily work through the Committee of Senior Officials of the CBSS is provided either by the political level leadership meetings (Summit, Council) or other forms of communication at the political level. Also, the presidency should make use of the option to call a meeting in the CBSS in any format they see most fit for the foreseen discussion.

Efforts towards practical cooperation in the region need to be increased. A stronger focus on this part of the work of the CBSS is a continuation and extension of the latest reforms decided upon in 2008, which have enabled the organisation to gain considerable experience and unique competence, widely recognized in the region.

| Aim | Means |
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| Adjusted regularity of the high-level political meetings | Changes in Terms of Reference of the CBSS (without any changes to the paragraph 22 of the current Terms of Reference that provides the principle of consensus) |
| Fostering practical cooperation in the region to be included in paragraph 5 of the Terms of Reference of the CBSS to reflect the focus on practical cooperation since the reforms of 2008 | Changes in Terms of Reference of the CBSS |

2. Improving co-operation with other international fora and formats active in the region

With all the Baltic Sea states as members and with a stronger focus on practical cooperation, the CBSS has the potential to promote dialogue and practical cooperation between the many fora and formats active in the region. Taking up a more active role here, the CBSS could help ensure that regional actors have a common knowledge of each other's activities, foster coherence and synergies, avoid gaps and overlaps, and economize on the time and resources of the regional actors. This would create a more effective cooperation culture, help bring policy alignment across the various political fora in the region and open up new avenues for a comprehensive and substantial regional dialogue and practical cooperation.

The practical work of the CBSS as a trusted partner should reinforce the effects of the policies and strategies adopted by the CBSS member states in other relevant fora such as, but not limited to, the Northern Dimension and regional strategies.

To ensure that enhanced cooperation will take place and the results of such cooperation can affect the work of the CBSS, the Secretariat and rotating presidencies should seek to develop a regular structured dialogue in the context of existing cooperation formats with other relevant organisations, just as Member States are encouraged to bring such perspective into CBSS meetings.

| Aim | Means |
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| The CBSS takes a more active role in bringing together relevant regional actors to ensure common knowledge of each other's activities, facilitate synergies and cohesion and highlight potential for economizing the time and resources of various actors | No need for change in Terms of References (follows from paragraph 5) |
| The CBSS Secretariat is tasked to seek to develop a regular structured dialogue in the context of existing cooperation formats in the region and use this to seek enhanced dialogue, co-operation and alignment with other regional actors | Addition to Terms of Reference of the CBSS secretariat |
| The CBSS serves to reinforce the effects of regional policies and strategies adopted by its Member States in other fora by creating and making best use of regional synergies and cohesion | Addition to Terms of Reference of the CBSS |

3. Enabling concrete results in areas in which the organisation is uniquely suited to add value:

Over time, the CBSS has established a wide outreach and a unique network of stakeholders and non-government actors such as interest-based organisations, experts, youth groups, other people-to-people formats, local authorities, academia and the private sector. Bringing together such stakeholders from across the region to discuss issues of concrete and practical relevance to the CBSS three long-term priority areas Safe and Secure, Prosperous and Sustainable and Regional Identity and when relevant providing these stakeholders with opportunities to meet and discuss with representatives of the Member States, is a role which the CBSS is uniquely positioned to undertake. This kind of vertically integrated practical cooperation should be the model for the activities undertaken by the CBSS.

Sectoral cooperation and dialogue within the CBSS as well as with other actors in the region remains important but should be carried out in a more objective-driven and results-oriented manner to produce concrete results of interest and use to the Member States and to avoid unproductive overlapping with policy discussions taking place in other fora.

To enable the CBSS to increase its activities, outreach and visibility in the region without expanding its core budget financed by the Member States or making the organisation vulnerable to demands or priorities of external sponsors, principles and guidelines for fundraising from external sources should be explored.

To ensure that the CBSS Secretariat is able to support and implement the stronger focus on practical cooperation, and to facilitate dialogue among the many actors in the region, the Terms of Reference of the CBSS Secretariat must be revised and the job descriptions of the core staff must be redefined.

| Aim | Means |
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| The CBSS activities are designed to spur vertically integrated practical cooperation, bringing a variety of stakeholders at different levels together to discuss issues of practical and concrete relevance to the region and CBSS priorities | Operational guidelines for CBSS practical cooperation |
| The Secretariat is redesigned to ensure the right composition of competencies for the future focus of the organisation and to increase efficiency and flexibility | Changes in Terms of Reference of the CBSS Secretariat |
| Fundraising efforts should be explored | If needed Changes in Terms of Reference of the CBSS Secretariat AND/OR principles and guidelines to allow such exploration |

Upon implementation of the Roadmap the CBSS Presidency and the Secretariat have to present to the Member States an overview of the accomplished reforms by the end of the Danish Presidency 2019-2020.