

The world is facing one of the most severe geopolitical crises since the end of the Second World War. With its unprovoked, unjustified and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine, Russia is grossly violating the UN Charter and international law and undermining the foundation of the rules-based international order as well as numerous paradigms of international cooperation, including our agreed approaches to security and cooperation in the economic, environmental and social dimensions. We can no longer consider Russia a credible partner and reliable energy supplier. The fact that Russia uses energy as a weapon, demonstrated inter alia by limiting or completely cutting off gas deliveries to a number of European countries, leads us to seek to phase out Russian energy supplies as soon as possible.

This geopolitical and energy security crisis hits us at a time when we are faced with an increasingly acute global climate crisis that will become ever more dangerous for the future of our region, continent and planet. To address these challenges, we remain committed to making a push for an increase in regional renewable energy production, diversification and energy security. We support Germany in these efforts during its Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) presidency.

Promoting Baltic Sea offshore wind production will help the region to pursue energy sovereignty and tackle the climate crisis. Upping the capacity of Baltic Sea offshore wind power generation will allow us to reduce both our dependency on fossil fuels and our respective imports; it will in fact facilitate the cut-off from imports of energy commodities from Russia in line with the REPowerEU ambition – as well as reduce our collective greenhouse gas emissions. Increasing offshore wind power generation capacity in the Baltic Sea will also help reduce energy prices. Considering the above objectives, the CBSS Foreign Ministers formally adopted the following political declaration during the opening of the Baltic Offshore Wind Forum in Berlin on 9 May 2023:

We, the Foreign Ministers of Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland and Sweden declare that we...

note that Russia has withdrawn its membership and is no longer a member of the Council of the Baltic Sea States following the launch of its war of aggression against Ukraine, a CBSS observer state;

build upon the Kristiansand CBSS ministerial declaration of 19 May 2022, the Vilnius II ministerial declaration of 1 June 2021 and other relevant CBSS policy declarations, as well as the Baltic Energy Market Interconnection Plan (BEMIP) declaration of 30 September 2020 and the Marienburg Declaration at the Baltic Sea Energy Security Summit on 30 August 2022;

acknowledge that energy security and the fight against climate change are crucial for the future of our region, continent and planet. Through this declaration we aim to give a strong political signal for the need to take urgent and immediate action to further accelerate our respective efforts to reduce fossil fuel consumption in a socially and economically sustainable manner reflecting the diverging challenges of each Member State and to promote the deployment of offshore wind energy for increased energy independence and resilience in the Baltic Sea region even further;

underline that those ambitions have become increasingly important because of Russia’s unprovoked, unjustified and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine and the Russian weaponisation of energy against Europe. We reaffirm our determination to rapidly phase out Russian energy and energy carriers imports and acknowledge that CBSS Member States cannot realise strategic energy security and independence without a steadfast energy transition;

agree that – in line with the RePowerEU Plan of the European Commission – it is of critical importance to phase out fossil fuels, in particular Russian oil, coal and gas. Here offshore wind energy from our region can play an important role by contributing to energy security and climate neutrality and further strengthening regional cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region;

reiterate the importance of the ambitious combined targets of the Marienborg Declaration for offshore wind capacity of at least 19.6 GW by 2030 bearing in mind the substantial potential for offshore wind power in the Baltic Sea reaching up to 93 GW for the entire Baltic Sea region, updated by the sea-basin goals agreed non-bindingly by the EU Member States for the Baltic Sea on 19 January 2023 of 22.5 GW by 2030, 34.6 GW by 2040 and 46.8 GW by 2050 in line with the provisions of the revised TEN-E Regulation¹, which could deliver more than one third of EU offshore wind capacity needed by 2030;

stress the importance of supporting, in close cooperation with our Energy and Climate Ministers, the removal of obstacles to the development of joint or cross-border sustainable projects on renewable energy that take advantage of the substantial potential of offshore wind energy in our region and are reflected in national strategies, expand the deployment of this green energy source in a sustainable and efficient manner, and simultaneously take advantage of building on local value-chains that may contribute to reaching the ambitions of the Marienborg Declaration and the sea-basin goals for the Baltic Sea agreed non-bindingly by the EU Member States;

emphasise the crucial role of the private sector and industrial developers in all related endeavours. The CBSS Foreign Ministers encourage in particular transmission system operators and offshore wind project developers to cooperate in order to facilitate secure grid operation, optimal utilisation of grid and generation infrastructure, implementation of technically viable solutions, and market-oriented and cost-effective integration of offshore wind energy in line with national energy and climate plans and the relevant provisions of EU legislation.

Against the abovementioned backdrop, we, the Foreign Ministers of Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland and Sweden intend to push forward on the following issues:

We, as CBSS Member States, commit to engage, cooperate and coordinate in the protection of the Baltic Sea critical energy infrastructure. A more dispersed offshore wind power system – vis-à-vis a fossil-dominant energy system – may be less vulnerable to physical attacks and hence imply a more secure energy infrastructure. However, due to the necessary increase in digitalisation, it will also be more vulnerable to digital attacks. We have the responsibility to advance our efforts as regards the protection of critical energy infrastructure in the Baltic Sea region, taking into account respective EU and NATO efforts. We therefore encourage all offshore project development and grid planning going forward to more strongly include infrastructure protection considerations.

We commit to further strengthening existing regional cooperation, where applicable via the BEMIP High-Level Group, together with our Energy Ministers, in removing obstacles to the development of offshore wind projects and of the related transmission systems aiming for a more

¹ Regulation (EU) 2022/869 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2022 on guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure, amending Regulations (EC) No 715/2009, (EU) 2019/942 and (EU) 2019/943 and Directives 2009/73/EC and (EU) 2019/944, and repealing Regulation (EU) No 347/2013

flexible and resilient energy network. Where applicable and in close cooperation with our Energy and Climate Ministers, we aim to more strongly pursue common grid planning and stronger interconnections between our countries, which are essential for the cross-border exchange of offshore wind energy. We also intend to increase cooperation on the promotion and development of large-scale green hydrogen production and infrastructure development, paving the way for extensive decarbonisation in industry, transport and the construction sector.

We will work towards strengthening financing instruments for offshore wind as part of our governments’ efforts and respective legislative endeavours. We furthermore call on relevant regional International Financial Institutions operating in the region, such as the European Investment Bank, the EBRD, the Nordic Investment Bank (NIB) and the Nordic Environment Finance Corporation (NEFCO), to deepen their already active support to the build-out of offshore wind generation across the Baltic Sea region. We recall the instrumental role of the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) and other EU financing instruments in the build-out of energy infrastructure between our countries.

We commit in our diplomatic efforts to more strongly referring to the geostrategic, energy security and climate benefits of a swift ramp-up of offshore wind power generation. We will increase best-practice experience sharing on offshore wind with other states and regions in order to speed up the global offshore wind power generation capacity ramp-up.

We commit to consider joining the Global Offshore Wind Alliance and promoting offshore wind through our energy diplomacy globally.

We will actively engage, together with Energy and Climate Ministers, with the private sector and civil society on Baltic Sea offshore wind aspects. The 2023 Baltic Sea Offshore Wind Forum, hosted by the German CBSS presidency on 9 May 2023 in Berlin, is an opportunity for such engagement in high-level exchange between political decision-makers and private sector actors in order to provide room for and advance concrete and ambitious projects that underpin our common goal of a speedy expansion of offshore wind energy in the region.