Decision
by the Council of the Baltic Sea States
on a review of the CBSS long term priorities

Adopted through silent procedure on 20 June 2014

The Council

Mindful of the call to review the CBSS long-term priorities established by the Riga Declaration and the CBSS Committee of Senior Officials recommendations in this regard;

Reconfirming the core role of the Council of the Baltic Sea States as a forum for all multilateral intergovernmental cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region in areas agreed by its Members;

Reconfirming that the CBSS serves as a forum for political and policy dialogue in the region and is guided by a commonly agreed vision for the region set out in the Vilnius Declaration A Vision for the Baltic Sea Region by 2020 (Vilnius Declaration);

Agreeing that the CBSS should strive to improve regional cooperation, where added value can be attained, seek synergies and ensure coherence with other actors, enhance competitiveness, develop cross-border activities promote sustainable use of resources and improve communication to implement the Vilnius Declaration and other regional strategic documents as appropriate;

Acknowledging the importance of elaborating practical recommendations in order to improve coherence amongst existing regional cooperation formats;

Stressing that the renewed CBSS long term priorities will be implemented by the Committee of Senior Officials, CBSS expert groups, task forces, intergovernmental networks, and in cooperation with CBSS Observers and Strategic partners;

Agreeing that the work of the CBSS should reflect the principles of democracy, social inclusion, sustainability, cultural diversity and non-discrimination, including gender equality; and that these principles should be mainstreamed in all its work;

Decided after the evaluation and review of the CBSS long term priorities approved at the 7th Baltic Sea States Summit held in Riga in 2008 to mainstream the renewed long term priorities

for the CBSS – Regional Identity, Sustainable and Prosperous Region and Safe and Secure Region in all activities of the organization;

Endorses the renewed CBSS long term priorities as follows:

Regional Identity:

Bearing in mind the long history of ties and cooperation between the nations of the Baltic Sea region;

Taking into account that a Baltic Sea Region identity is being forged through exchanges and networking, intercultural dialogue and educational practices and is developing across boundaries;

Agrees that the regional identity long term priority will have the following goal, objective and strategic activities for the CBSS and its working bodies.

Goals:

To foster a Baltic Sea Region identity and **intensify** contacts supporting its further development;

Objective:

To develop the concept of Baltic Sea Region identity for and a sense of belonging to the Baltic Sea Region through engagement, participation and multilevel governance, in a community spirit and **to create** a notion of regional unity across borders by developing people-to-people contacts through dialogue, macro regional networks and institutions;

Strategic activities:

Foster innovative actions through youth exchanges and intercultural dialogue; **support** open grassroots dialogue, discussions and studies in the field of regional identity; and **provide** a deeper insight into questions of identity, in order to develop an inclusive Baltic Sea Region;

Promote university cooperation and new educational approaches in the region;

Support the preservation of cultural and natural heritages and their sustainable use in tourism;

Promote sustainable cultural and ecological tourism throughout the region;

Encourage dialogue and cooperation in the fields of contemporary culture and creative industries and **support** cultural operators in innovation and cross-sectorial cooperation;

Strengthen neighbourliness through mobility and network capacities, specifically through science and research;

Develop a common brand for the region;

Sustainable and Prosperous Region:

Recognizing that many of the challenges related to sustainability worldwide are also prevalent in the Baltic Sea Region:

Acknowledging that the Baltic Sea Region countries have acquired considerable experience in the development of viable solutions in various fields, including climate change adaptation and mitigation, food production, land use, urban-rural interaction, waste management, sustainable consumption and production as well as renewable energy;

Emphasizing that cities are engines for business and innovation in the region and, if well managed, they can provide jobs and growth, while ensuring sustainability;

Acknowledging the importance of the joint development of sustainable tourism in the Baltic Sea Region, offering a strong potential for growth and employment, especially in the field of maritime and coastal tourism;

Agreeing that regional differences remain with respect to economic development as well as to the de facto implementation of sustainable practices, and **underlining** the need for further progress in both respects;

Emphasizing the importance of taking steps towards an integrated maritime policy aimed at developing the Baltic Sea Region as a model maritime region creating conditions for sustainable growth of the maritime economy with competitive, environmentally sustainable and safe maritime traffic and of promoting dialogue between regional actors in the maritime field;

Agrees that the long term priority Sustainable and Prosperous Region will have the following goals, objectives and strategic activities for the CBSS and its working bodies:

Goals:

To develop the Baltic Sea Region as a model region of sustainable societies able to manage and use resources efficiently, to tap the economic, technological, ecological and social innovation potential of the region in order to ensure its prosperity, environmental protection and social cohesion;

To contribute to the eradication of obstacles hampering the comprehensive and sustainable development of the region;

Objectives:

To improve the overall competitiveness of the Baltic Sea region through sustainable economic growth and labour markets, research and development, innovative infrastructure, an integrated maritime policy, transport and communications;

To support the transition of the Baltic Sea region towards a competitive, green and low-carbon economy thereby ensuring sustainable development and inclusive growth;

To support further action to reach a good environmental status and a healthy ecosystem supporting a prosperous Baltic Sea Region;

To strengthen the region`s capacity to adapt to climate change and the resilience capacity of ecosystems and societies;

To ensure further mainstreaming of sustainable development at all levels and in all policy sectors, integrating economic, social and environmental aspects;

To promote sustainable and green technologies and initiatives in order to protect the ecosystem and biodiversity of the Baltic Sea region;

Strategic activities:

Proceed with the identification of objectives and topics in the CBSS priority areas and **mobilize** funding for priority projects at regional and international level, with the active involvement of the business community, international financial institutions and banks;

Further develop the Pilot Financial Initiative, aimed at providing financing for small and medium-sized enterprises in the field of innovation and modernisation, as well as for public private partnership projects, into a Baltic Sea Financial Initiative, involving new regional partners;

Support opportunities for research, development and innovation in the Baltic Sea Region;

Build capacity, **foster** the exchange between experts and intensify co-operation between multilateral and national actors through management leadership and talent programmes;

Promote innovative, clean and high-quality transport, including clean shipping as well as auxiliary and logistic infrastructure, for a seamless integration of the Baltic Sea region into global transport systems, stressing the importance of the maritime economy including maritime spatial planning for sustainable growth and jobs in the Baltic Sea region;

Mobilize the full potential for sustainable tourism development in the Baltic Sea Region by strengthening tourism cooperation, by promoting the Region as a common tourism destination and by developing joint products and services in the tourism sector;

Contribute to well-functioning labour markets including the social aspects of cross border mobility in the Baltic Sea Region in order to address problems of unemployment and social exclusion, and contribute to the attractiveness of the region for living, working and doing business, by supporting economic growth and sustained competitiveness in the Baltic Sea Region;

Support the development of policies for the Region to become a front runner in the development and implementation of actions towards green economy in accordance with the Rio+20 outcomes;

Promote the inclusion of sustainable production and consumption, such as energy efficiency standards, ecodesign and energy labelling, green public procurement, environmental footprint labels in sectorial policies by exchanging best practices in the region;

Promote innovative environmental technologies both at member states level and at the level of the Baltic Sea Region through concrete projects;

Promote urban-rural interaction and better management of urban areas;

Mainstream climate change adaptation across relevant sector policies and **strengthen** dialogue across national and sectoral borders by promoting and implementing the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, including the establishment of the BSR-wide Climate Change Adaptation Stakeholder Platform by contributing to and using the on-line platforms such as the European Climate Adaptation Platform CLIMATE ADAPT and Russian Hydrometeorology Service (Roshydromet);

Increase coordination, coherence and synergies among initiatives on sustainable development in the Baltic Sea Region;

Safe and Secure Region:

Emphasizing the importance of social inclusion, social protection, infrastructure development and accessibility to services to protect people of the Region from disasters, exploitation and disease;

Contributing to the development of a safe and secure Baltic Sea Region with necessary capacity to sustain the vital functions and values during emergencies and disasters;

Fostering a continuous process of investing in social protection and the reduction of disaster risks in order to better safeguard people of the Baltic Sea Region from life and health risks;

Agrees that the long term priority Safe and Secure Region will have the following goal, objective for the CBSS and its working bodies and strategic activities;

Goal:

To enhance societal security and safety in the Baltic Sea Region and to ensure that people of the Region are protected from and resilient to violence, accidents and emergencies through preparedness, and safeguarded against harm caused by criminal exploitation and human trafficking;

Human trafficking

Objective:

To counteract all forms of trafficking in human beings, in the Baltic Sea Region via preventive and protective activities and projects based on a coherent and multidisciplinary approach;

Strategic activities:

Facilitate and **promote** co-ordination, exchange of knowledge, results and best practices among local, regional, national and international actors, to help ensure that a multi-dimensional and cross-sectorial approach is applied in and between countries in the Baltic Sea Region to address human trafficking;

Build capacity and **train** key actors at different levels in the region to identify instances of exploitation, and assist victims of all forms of human trafficking, such as sexual exploitation, labour exploitation, organ removal, petty crimes and practices similar to slavery, through enhanced partnerships, improved data collection and intensified organizational approaches;

Involve diplomatic and consular missions of countries of origin, transit and destination in the CBSS Member States in order to increase efforts to assist victims of trafficking, and eradicate trafficking in human beings in and to the Baltic Sea region;

Rights of the Child

Objective:

To promote comprehensive and sustainable child protection in order to prevent and respond to all forms of violence against children through a multi-sectorial approach and increased cooperation between relevant authorities and other stakeholders in the Baltic Sea Region;

Strategic activities

Showcase good practices and **identify** challenges in developing effective child protection systems to combat violence, including abuse, neglect and exploitation against children; and support innovation, cooperation and policy development; and promote child participation in decision making process to the extent possible;

Explore the impact of risk areas on the lives of children; **disseminate** available knowledge in order to strengthen the expertise and awareness of professionals and others working *with* children's rights including their right to protection;

Focus on early intervention, prevention and protection of children from all forms of sexual abuse and exploitation; the protection of migrant children and child victims of trafficking; the rights of children in residential care and other forms of out-of-home care and encourage governments to secure the rights of children left without parental care and focus on providing them with a family upbringing;

Civil Security and Emergency preparedness

Objectives:

To strengthen societal resilience to disasters and hazards in all stages of crises through adequate prevention, preparedness, response and recovery;

To enhance interoperability and strategic macro-regional cooperation enabling assistance and rapid response to cross-border accidents and emergencies, including disasters that may have cross-border consequences and impact;

Strategic activities

Improve macro-regional all-hazards risk assessments, including capacity mapping, as well as to strengthen macro-regional civil security capacities through strategic planning, cross border exercises, training and joint actions, applying full cycle disaster management approaches;

Overcome institutional and sectorial boundaries and **achieve** an advanced level of cross-sectorial flexibility in order to deal with complex disasters, including oil spills, nuclear accidents and cyber-attacks, and to foster initiatives including Public-Private Partnership (PPP) to engage the society in the full-cycle of disaster management in the Baltic Sea Region;

Build on the work of the Council to further operationalize data and capacity exchanges in monitoring of environmental and nuclear radiation situation as well as to support joint activities, aiming at making the region a centre of excellence for chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear safety and security respecting highest international standards;

Facilitate public awareness raising campaigns on *societal security* and safety matters, and **support** the development of communication systems, operational know-how and cross border information exchanges in order to ensure a rapid reaction to major disasters.