

**First Preparatory Conference of the Sixteenth OSCE Economic and
Environmental Forum**

**“Maritime and inland waterways co-operation in the OSCE area: Increasing
security and protecting the environment”**

Speaking Points

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- The general context. The EU's maritime regions account for 40 % of its GDP. Some 90 % of the goods traffic to and from the EU is transported by sea. The development of pan-European axis, including the Motorways of the Sea and inland waterways.
- An environmentally sustainable all-embracing maritime policy is one of the Commission's strategic objectives for 2005-2009. The publication of the Green Paper in June 2006. The consultation period. The intention is to present a broad-ranging Maritime Policy Package in the coming months. Increasing security and protecting the marine environment are key elements of that.
- I touch briefly upon three issues:
 1. The Commission's position and Community measures in the field of maritime and inland waterways cooperation with a focus on increasing security.
 2. Protecting the environment.
 3. The Northern European regional cooperation experience, in particular the Baltic situation with a short outlook to other regions.

1. Maritime cooperation and security

- Taking into account the global dimension of shipping, the Community policy is primarily based on internationally agreed standards, protecting as well as facilitating legitimate sea-going trade. Within the EU this is an area where there is wide and clearly established Community competence. The European Community has developed its own legislation on the basis of internationally agreed instruments, transposing them into mandatory EU legislation. It added implementing and /or interpretation provisions without reducing the scope and aims of those international agreements.

- This means that the standards in use in the EU are:
 - *For ship and port facility security:*
Regulation EC 725/2004 (based on SOLAS Chapter XI/2 and the ISPS Code)
Commission Regulation 884/2005
 - *For port security:*
Directive 2005/65/EC (based on the ILO/IMO Code of practice for port security)
 - *For the security of cargo bound to and outside the European Community:*
Regulation EC 648/2005
Commission Regulation 1875/2006/EC (both texts including the WCO SAFE framework of standards and the AEO guidelines)

- The implementation of these dispositions and in particular the ISPS Code has led to the improvement of security. Concerning the ISPS Code currently all EU member States are reporting 100% compliance, confirmed by Commission inspections. But challenges still remain. The most important among them:
 - The human resources devoted to flag state controls in the Member States and abroad, and for the inspection of their port facilities;
 - The control of Member States on the tasks delegated to RSOs
 - Keeping awareness alive
 - Harmonization between EU Member States in order to comply with the "basic" EC rules of fair competition between EU Member States.

- Interaction with international organizations active in the field.

We keep close relationship with international actors involved in this field in respect of their own competences, like the IMO – where the Commission is observer – the ILO and the OSCE.

- The European Commission recognizes the great potential of inland navigation as an alternative transport mode. River Information Services are important to exploit this potential. The publication of the White Paper on Transport and the adoption of the RIS Directive reflects the strong political support for a European-wide and harmonised implementation of River Information Services.
- The TEN-T project DaTraM (Dangerous Cargo Transport Monitoring on Inland Waterways) focuses on the safety and security issues of RIS. During the project a special test stretch is being implemented on the northern Hungarian Danube stretch to monitor dangerous goods carrier vessels. The project will also elaborate initiatives for river security measures.

2. Environment

- In October 2005, the Commission launched the EU marine strategy, which aims to strengthen marine environmental protection. The marine strategy is the environmental pillar of the overall maritime policy. The Marine Strategy Framework Directive, the legislation that will underpin this development, is currently under co-decision in the European Parliament and Council and it is expected to be adopted in the coming months. The Commission proposes in the directive that marine strategies should be developed by the Member States in their own regional contexts, designed to achieve good environmental status by 2021. Both the European Parliament and the Council agree that the existing mechanisms of regional seas cooperation (HELCOM for the Baltic Sea, OSPAR for the North-East Atlantic, Barcelona Convention for the Mediterranean Sea and Bucharest Convention for the Black Sea) would need to be employed to develop these strategies. Thus it is expected that existing multilateral marine environmental co-operation frameworks will be used by Member States as platforms to implement this new (expected) Community legislation, avoiding the creation of additional parallel structures.
- In case of accidents, the response to emergencies is ensured since 2001 within the Community Mechanism for civil protection and the Monitoring and Information Centre (MIC).
- In the wake of the Erika and Prestige accidents, the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) was set up by Regulation *1406/2002 of 27 June 2002*.
- The Agency is required to provide Member States and the Commission with technical and scientific assistance in the field of accidental or deliberate marine pollution by ships and to support the pollution response mechanisms of Member States.

- The European Community is party to the most relevant regional agreements:
 - The Convention of 1974 and 1992 on the protection of the marine environment of the Baltic Sea area (HELCOM)
 - The Convention of 1976 for the protection of the Mediterranean Sea against pollution
 - The Agreement of 1983 for cooperation in dealing with pollution of the North Sea by oil and other harmful substances
 - The cooperation Agreement signed in 1990 for the protection of the coasts and waters of the North-East Atlantic against pollution, however this last Agreement is not yet in force

- Although inland waterway navigation is in general considered as an environmentally friendly transport mode, it might have harmful effects to the environment (as examples; Disruption of the water flow and also waves that disturbs flora and fauna. Accidental and/or deliberate spill in the water). These need to be addressed according to the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) of which the aim is to achieve good status for all European waters in 2015.

- Implementing the Water Framework Directives, many initiatives exist to better reconcile navigation and sustainable water management. For example, in the Danube River Basin District a Joint Statement is drafted, which will help water managers and navigation developers of existing and future projects in reconciling navigation developments and guaranteeing proper water management.

- The EU is sharing a range of rivers with its neighbours,
 - in the Rhine river basin - with Switzerland and Liechtenstein
 - in river basins in Scandinavia – with Norway
 - in river basins in the Baltic region - with the Russian Federation and Belarus
 - in the Danube river basin and in South-Eastern Europe – with Switzerland, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Albania and Turkey.

- For the Danube and Rhine river basins, river conventions are operational under International Law, devoted both to water quality and flood prevention/protection. The bodies of these Conventions have committed themselves to the objectives and tools of EU water legislation, in particular the Water Framework Directive and the Floods Directive.

- Experience has shown that transboundary river basin cooperation is serving as a valuable and indispensable tool not only for coordination, but also for establishing priorities and selecting the best possible solution within a particular river basin or sub-basin.

3. The Northern European experience, outlook for other regions

- The Baltic Sea has to a large extent become the European Union's inland sea. Eight of the ten countries bordering the Baltic Sea are EU members. Norway and Russia are also working closely with the EU. The sea is free once again to unfold its full integration potential
- The strict implementation of rules related to safety and security of navigation, adapted to the specificities of the Baltic region.
- .HELCOM plays an outstanding role. The Commission is its member.
- The Baltic Sea Action Plan, expected to be adopted in November 2007 will include a part dedicated to response aspects of maritime activities, focussing on large oil spills.
- For the Baltic region, river conventions covering basins such as Nemunas, Daugava and Bug-Vistula are under development, and the Council of the European Union issued in 2006 a mandate for the Commission to negotiate such river conventions.
- Regional cooperation has noble traditions and deep roots in the North. The four regional councils. Particular roles for CBSS, BEAC and AC and NCM.
- IFIs, NGOs, a whole array of regional groups and initiatives.
- The Northern Dimension and its new phase.
- The Northern Dimension Environmental Partnership, and particularly its non-earmarked (non-nuclear) envelope as the best example. The NDEP Fund has demonstrated, with relatively limited grants, a remarkable capacity to attract funding for large scale projects that have an important and immediate effect on the quality of the Baltic Sea waters (the envelope with total grants of less than 100 million euros has been able to build up projects of more than 1,500 million euros). The Commission chairs the NDEP Assembly as the EU is its main contributor.

- The biggest project completed so far is the St. Petersburg South West Wastewater Treatment Plant (total project cost € 193 mill with NDEP grants of € 5,80 mill) which is significantly improving water quality across the Gulf of Finland
- Other notable NDEP projects (either undergoing or to be initiated) that improve the water quality in the Baltic Sea are: the St. Petersburg Flood protection barrier (€1000 mill NDEP grant €1 mill), St Petersburg NW Wastewater incinerator (€90 mill with NDEP grant of €6,35 mill), Municipal Environment Investment programme in the Leningrad Oblast (€23 mill NDEP grant €4 mill), Kaliningrad Project Implementation unit (€3 mill grant) and Kaliningrad Water and Environmental Services (+/- €110 mill and NDEP grant of € 10 mill)
- Ideas to establish new partnerships.
- Proposals to create a system, better coordination, even division of labour among the different organisations. Proposals to develop a Baltic Strategy. The work done in CBSS. ND as an umbrella policy.
- Initiatives in the European Parliament directed to an EU Baltic Sea Strategy. Reflection in the Commission.
- Experience in Northern Europe probably the most advanced. It is useful elsewhere. Cooperation with Russia.
- The other seas. The Mediterranean. The Black Sea Synergy initiative.
- The Black Sea Strategic Action Plan (environment) – following Baltic examples - is expected be signed at a Ministerial Meeting in Ukraine in 2008. Preparedness (vessels and equipment) in the region could be further developed.
- The strengthened ENP. The possibility to create Partnerships.