



Written Contribution
on behalf of the Swedish Presidency in the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS)
for the 14th Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council
(Brussels, 4-5 December 2006)

- It is our pleasure, to use this opportunity to present a contribution on behalf of Sweden, the country holding the Chairmanship in the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) from July 2006 until end of June 2007. We would like to apologise and inform you with regret that due to an intense working schedule and previous commitments that we have in our vibrant regional co-operation, we were not able at this stage to send a high-level representative to Brussels.
- The Baltic Sea region is one of the most dynamic regions for growth in Europe, and in the world. The region possesses great potential. Political and practical co-operation within many areas is, and will continue to be of great importance for the regions' development. In this regard the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) plays an important role. The CBSS was established as an overall political forum for practical regional intergovernmental co-operation consisting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs from each Member State and a member of the European Commission. The region's Foreign Ministers in Copenhagen founded the CBSS in 1992 as a response to the dramatic geopolitical changes that took place in the Baltic Sea region with the end of the Cold War (www.cbss.org).
- Since its founding, the CBSS has contributed to ensuring a positive development within the Baltic Sea region and has served as a driving force for multi-lateral concrete co-operation. Furthermore, the CBSS continues to demonstrate success in a number of fields such as, i.e.: trafficking in human beings, removing regional economic barriers to trade and investment; improving nuclear and radiation safety; confidence building through cross-border co-operation; transforming curricula and teaching methods through the EuroFaculty Kaliningrad Programme. As the final example, CBSS is called to actively contribute to policy frameworks for Northern Europe such as the Northern Dimension, adopted recently at the EU-Russia Summit in Helsinki on 24 November 2006 by the Northern Dimension Partners – the European Union, Iceland, Norway and the Russian Federation.
- The overall objective of the Swedish CBSS Presidency is cooperation to achieve common objectives, greater visibility and concrete results in collaboration with other regional councils, structures and organisations, and with countries in the vicinity of the Baltic Sea States. To promote a continued economic growth and a sustainable development in the region the Swedish Presidency focuses on practical and concrete co-operation. The areas “*Energy and Environment*”, “*Trade and Investment*” and “*Civil Security*” are the three priorities of the Swedish CBSS Presidency 2006-2007. In the field of Energy and Environment, the objective is to improve the protection and preservation of the environment and to increase the energy efficiency in the Baltic Sea region. In the field of Trade and Investment, the objective is to promote remove remaining barriers to trade and investment in



the Baltic Sea region and by working actively towards greater contact between businesses in the region. Regarding Civil Security, the CBSS intends to promote democracy, human rights and social security, stability, security and prosperity in our region. During this time, the CBSS intends to work actively to further expand the co-operation with the Observer states to the CBSS, in particular, Ukraine. To the politically possible extent, Sweden in its capacity as President of the CBSS would attempt to develop practical and concrete expert level contacts with Belarus, in areas where such contacts and practical co-operation could be considered to be of mutual benefit to the CBSS MS, and to Belarus. All three priorities will be implemented by practical and concrete measures and activities which you can read more about in the leaflet and on the website of the Swedish Presidency of the CBSS 2006-2007 (<http://www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/6819>).

- Apart from the above said, we are well aware of that the Belgian OSCE Chairmanship features a special theme for its OSCE Chairmanship, and for this year's Ministerial meeting, namely, "trafficking of children" and other issues related to combating trafficking in human beings. Trafficking in human beings is a serious problem all over the world, and the Baltic Sea Region is not spared from this scourge. It is a multi-faceted phenomenon. Consequently, the actions taken must have a trans-boundary, multi-dimensional and cross-sectoral approach to be truly effective. The "anti-trafficking" is not about a single solution; it needs several ones, and the different "life cycles" of the trafficked persons need different approaches. This topic has a strong correlation with the Swedish Presidency programme of work, indeed.
- We should note that the "anti-trafficking" activities in the Baltic Sea region take place within several working formats: two CBSS working structures, and the Northern Dimension Partnership on Public Health and Social Well-being (NDPHS), where the CBSS is one of the active parties. The newly established CBSS Task Force against trafficking in human beings focuses on adults and will carry out concrete and hands on work in close cooperation with the other relevant working bodies and structures, and national entities of the Member States. The Task Force will build on the concrete results achieved by the former Nordic-Baltic Task Force. The Task Force will complement the valuable work of one of our existing Units, the Working Group for Co-operation on Children at Risk (WGCC) and furthermore co-ordinate its work also with the CBSS Task Force on Organised Crime.
- The WGCC has worked to prevent trafficking of children in the region since 2003 when the "Plan of Action on Unaccompanied and Trafficked Children" was launched at a conference hosted by the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The WGCC activities presently include a training programme where more than 50 experts from 10 countries in the region are trained in protection, care and rehabilitation of children and victims of trafficking; a programme funded through the EU-Programme Daphne II. Along with the training, the WGCC is also conducting a mapping of cases of trafficking that involve children, in order to accumulate more knowledge as to support and coordination, how it functions and how affected children themselves describe the assistance they have been offered.



- In mid-November 2006, the WGCC hosted a large conference on “The rights of Children in Institutional Care” in Stockholm. Gatherings like this, composed of Senior Officials, researchers, experts and not least the kids themselves contribute to ensure the future safety of girls and boys who later could find themselves in situations where crime and abuse are normative. This cannot be successfully done without including the neighbour to the BSR countries, such as the Ukraine and Belarus.
- The CBSS Secretariat in Stockholm also “co-hosts” the Secretariat of the “Northern Dimension Partnership for Public Health and Social Well Being”, and we envisage that the two entities (The Task Force and the WGCC) will co-operate with also the NDPHS to strengthen the hands on work within existing networks, in order to connect experience and successes to best combat trade in human beings.

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