



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO MR. JAN LUNDIN, DIRECTOR GENERAL
OF THE COUNCIL OF THE BALTIC SEA STATES SECRETARIAT**

As delivered by Ambassador Guttorm Vik
to the Permanent Council,
Vienna, 10 June 2011

Mr. Chairperson,

Speaking on behalf of the country presently holding the Presidency of the Council of the Baltic Sea States, it is a particular pleasure for me to echo the words of welcome expressed by previous speakers to Director General Jan Lundin. Let me also thank him for his comprehensive and informative report, highlighting the outcome of the Ministerial Council meeting just three days ago in Oslo. Norway took over from a very active Lithuanian Presidency in July last year, and will hand over to Germany on 1 July this year.

I can fully subscribe to the views just put forward by the European Union, and I was also heartened by the very supportive statements by the USA and the Russian Federation. Like the Russian Ambassador, speaking before me, I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome the active and positive involvement of the EU as such in CBSS activities, in addition to all the contributions by EU member states.

We commend the Chair for continuing the practice of inviting sub-regional organisations playing complementary roles to the OSCE to report on their work to the Permanent Council. The CBSS is a case in point, since it is active in promoting many of the same goals and values as the OSCE at the sub-regional level.

Mr. Jan Lundin was appointed Director General a year ago, and during his first year in office the CBSS has been heavily involved in a number of co-operation activities in the region: the reform programme of the organisation has been taken forward, with particular emphasis on project development; a new information and communication strategy is in place and has proved to be a useful instrument for the secretariat; the organisation has got new and very functional premises in the heart of Stockholm, thanks to the generosity of the host country Sweden. It is our hope that

these premises will contribute to making the CBSS secretariat even more of a hub for co-operation in the region and thereby also developing the region's identity.

Norway has during its Presidency had two specific operative priorities, **maritime policy and fight against trafficking in human beings**. I noted with appreciation the strong support expressed by the Ambassador of the USA for that choice. In addition, we have placed a strong **focus on developing the CBSS as an organisation, to make it more efficient, more relevant and not least more visible**. However, the work during our presidency has certainly not been limited to these priorities alone: the CBSS adopted a reform in its Riga Declaration of 2008 and selected five long-term priorities for the organisation: **energy, economic development, environment, education and culture and civil security and the human dimension**. Any CBSS presidency needs to follow up these priorities laid down by the organisation itself.

Norway has selected **maritime policy and trafficking** for a number of reasons: first of all, the two areas are most important for the region's economic development and for the security of its citizens. Secondly, they are priority areas also for the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference, the parliamentarian branch of the co-operation in the region. Also, both maritime policy and trafficking in our region are closely linked to similar challenges both within the whole Northern Dimension area and also in a wider European and even global context.

Development of an integrated maritime policy has been most central for the EU during the last years and such an EU policy is being applied to the Baltic Sea. So, the CBSS work on maritime policy does not take place in a vacuum. The EU Strategy on the Baltic Sea Region is one important instrument to carry it out. One aspect of such an integrated maritime policy is shipping. Shipping in the Baltic Sea is most important for the economic development of the region and the volume of goods carried on vessels is already big seen in a global context and will increase rapidly in years to come. Shipping must be competitive with other modes of transport; at the same time we must make shipping "greener". The Norwegian Presidency has actively worked to fulfil both targets for shipping in the region. As a contribution to making shipping "greener" we have placed work with transition to environmentally friendly fuels, first of all Liquefied Natural Gas, LNG, high on the agenda for the CBSS. Such fuels will replace the extensive use of heavy fuels at present for the propulsion of vessels in the region. It will be a transition that helps shipping in the Baltic Sea meet the strict rules and regulations adopted by the International Maritime Organisation on emission to the air, to be introduced in the region from 2015/16. During our Presidency we have experienced increased understanding for this work, both with the shipping industry itself, with classification companies and with maritime authorities.

Unfortunately, trafficking in human beings is a huge problem in our region. We need to meet it with resolve, and all sorts of trafficking must be identified and tackled. So far, much of the CBSS focus on trafficking in the region has been on trafficking in women and children. This work has been carried on during the Norwegian Presidency. However, we see that trafficking is making its way into the labour market, and it has become a great challenge to differentiate between social

dumping and forced labour. The Norwegian Presidency has paid particularly strong attention to trafficking for labour exploitation and has initiated, in close co-operation with the CBSS secretariat and its Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings, a number of projects.

The CBSS presidencies last for only one year. It is therefore important to see several presidencies together, with close co-operation between them. We know that the incoming German Presidency has close contact with the following Russian Presidency, and we share the hope and expectation expressed by the US Representative that the specific priorities of the Norwegian Presidency will be carried on in the two years to come and beyond.

With regard to co-operation with other regional councils and organisations in Europe the CBSS has a primary focus on the other regional councils in Northern Europe and the Northern Dimension with its partnerships. However, our secretariat in Stockholm also has co-operation with similar structures in Southern Europe. In fact, the CBSS secretariat will be hosting a meeting on June 17 with representatives from regional organisations both in Northern and Southern Europe. There is no doubt that such co-operation both towards the north and the south is most fruitful for the CBSS. Also, we like to think that the experiences and positive results achieved in the Baltic Sea cooperation could serve as an example and inspiration for similar cooperation in other sub-regions of the OSCE area.

By way of conclusion we wish the CBSS and its Secretariat every success in its endeavours, both for the remaining weeks of the Norwegian Presidency and under the incoming German and Russian Presidencies.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.