

THIRD SESSION

Addresses by observers of the BSPC



Mr. Mieczysław Struk

Address by Baltic Sea States Subregional Cooperation,
Chairman of the BSSSC, Marshal of the Pomorskie Voivodeship

29th Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference – digital – August 24th; 9:00 – 12:00

Address by Mr Mieczysław Struk – BSSSC Chairman – 11:00 – 11:30 session

Mr President, Ministers, representatives of the Baltic Sea Region parliaments, friends from the Baltic Sea Region institutions and organisations.

First of all I would like to thank President Simulik for inviting the BSSSC to address this honourable forum. It is a pleasure to be here in the role of a partner organisation representing local and regional authorities as well as our youth.

BSSSC as a platform: to voice the interests of regions, debate and lobby for issues most urgent to them, as well as to support and initiate projects and bottom-up cooperation, organises its activities against the background of European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, Sustainable Development Goals, Baltic 2030 Action Plan, Helcom Baltic Sea Action Plan, Northern Dimension, European Green Deal and EU Digital Agenda to mention just the key policies and visions.

Having a nearly 30- year history behind us we see how much has already been done for this part of Europe and its citizens. But the current challenges: climate crises, ageing societies, digitalisation and all sorts of cyber threats, decrease in trust in traditional democratic mechanisms, to mention just a few, demand an even more active and concerted approach. When we add the experience from COVID – 19 we see that we have to rethink and remodel many areas of our life and prepare better for what comes next. We have to act together to stop society disruption, spread of fake news, increase of populisms and nationalisms and loss of trust in science and logic.

To address those challenges successfully we need to follow good governance principles: rule of law, transparency, accountability and consensus. We need solidarity in all aspects: with those in need, including migrants, with future generations and with nature. That is definitely what we stand for in the BSSSC.

As the Pomorskie Chairmanship in the BSSSC we opened this year's work with a seminar on democracy: showing how important it is for all the aspects of our life to thrive. Discussing the need to redefine the democratic model, and showing new forms of deliberative democracy, like citizens' assemblies involving all levels of citizenship. In this respect we are looking forward to the Conference on the Future of Europe but also to the initiatives like "Citizens take over Europe".

Building on the past developments, we take care to involve the youth in all our activities and to provide cooperation and discussion platforms for them. Examples are plenty: BSSSC Spring Youth Event (and here I would like to thank the BSPC director for being with us) as well as the planned BSSSC Autumn Youth Event, involvement in the Baltic Sea Youth Camp and the Baltic Sea Youth Platform, where we are happy to be partners of the CBSS. But we are also proud that both initiatives have originated among the BSSSC Youth.

During our biggest event – the annual conference to be held this year in virtual form on September 29 – October 1st we will discuss developments within the EUSBSR and the Strategy for the West North Regions of Russian Federation. We will look into the new Territorial Agenda and showcase best examples of Interreg cooperation, preparing on this basis ideas for the future initiatives. This will be done in the areas of: Culture, creativity and Baltic Identity, Plastic Free Baltic, Intelligent Transport and Mobility, Energy Islands and Circular Economy. Talking about Interreg we cannot forget the 30th year anniversary of this great financial instrument to be celebrated in October. We appreciate to have this important

financial support to be able to implement ambitious and necessary solutions. And in this respect we are looking forward to the Youth Manifesto on European Territorial Cooperation to be presented there. We are proud to be part of the discussions.

Coming to the end I would like to convey a very strong plea from the regional and local level to the legislative on the macroregional level but also within the nations to involve us and the youth in the decision making processes. Only acting truly together we can have a success. I would also like to invite you to participate in our annual online conference and follow our other activities.

Thank you