

1



Berlin, 27 – 29 August 2023

2

3

4

5

29 August 2023, 12.12

6

7

8

9

10

Conference Resolution

11

12

13

14

Adopted by the 32nd Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference (BSPC) on 29 August 2023.

15

16

17

The participants, elected representatives from the

18

19

Parliament of Denmark

20

Parliament of Estonia

21

Parliament of Finland

22

Parliament of the Federal Republic of Germany

23

Parliament of Iceland

24

Parliament of Latvia

25

Parliament of Lithuania

26

Parliament of Norway

27

Parliament of Poland

28

Parliament of Sweden

29

Parliament of Åland

30

Parliament of the Hanseatic City of Bremen

31

Parliament of Faroe Islands

32

Parliament of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg

33

Parliament of Greenland

34

Parliament of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern

35

Parliament of Schleswig-Holstein

36

Baltic Assembly

37

European Parliament

38

Nordic Council,

39

40

41

42

assembling in Berlin on 29 August 2023

43

44

45

46

- do not slacken in repeating again and again in the strongest possible terms our condemnation of the completely unjust and full-scale brutal military attack and invasion by the Russian Federation against the sovereignty, independence, and people of Ukraine;

47

48

49

50

51

- underline the imperative to fully restore the territorial integrity of Ukraine, which explicitly includes the Crimean Peninsula;

52

53

54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
100
101
102
103
104
105
106
107
108
109
110
111

- firmly condemn the Russian Federation’s continued massive violations of international law, including the UN Charter, the infringement of the very foundation of the rules-based international order and the trampling on the principles that had been the cornerstone of peace and stability for many decades;
- whilst regretting that the international community until now has not been able to prevent the deportations and forcible transfers of thousands of Ukrainian children and civilian adults to the Russian Federation, Belarus or temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, draw attention to the need to take urgent corrective measures to put an end to such criminal and incomprehensible activities that are a part of the full-scale unprovoked, unjustifiable, and illegal war of aggression by the Russian Federation against democratic and sovereign Ukraine;
- decry the continued war crimes against civilians, which Russia also commits through the targeted destruction and exposure of critical infrastructure such as the Nova Kakhovka dam and the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant;
- in this respect, fully endorse the content of the statements made by the Foreign Ministers of the Democratic States of the Baltic Sea Region in their CBSS declaration on 2 June 2023 as a result of their 20th ministerial summit in Wismar concerning the violation of international law by Russia, about Belarus being an accomplice in this unjustified aggression, regarding the unwavering solidarity with Ukraine and concerning the threats for the security in the Baltic Sea region; https://cbss.org/wp-content/anauploads/2023/05/cbss-wismar-declaration_2-june-2023.pdf
- given the fundamental challenges the BSPC member countries face in these geopolitical times of change, see the absolute necessity to strengthen the resilience of their democratic societies based on the values that unite the democratic Baltic Sea region countries, as pointed out in the BSPC Statutes and Rules of Procedure, and rigorously promote innovation, digitalisation, connectivity and sustainability through close cooperation and joint strategic efforts;
- underline the need for even more joint action on politically relevant core areas to strengthen the political force of shaping the implementation of common challenges and interests to actively preserve human rights, peace, security and stability in the Baltic Sea region;

call on the Governments in the Baltic Sea Region, the CBSS, and the EU

Regarding peaceful and reliable neighbourliness and intense cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region based on fundamental values to

1. strongly increase and intensify the efforts to strengthen democracy, rule of law, equality, and human rights in the Baltic Sea Region and beyond and acknowledge that these values in today's shifting geopolitical realities are under threat in our own region;
2. achieve in the fields of common political interest more significant progress by joint practical measures – analogous to the handling of the topic of offshore wind

112 and the agreement reached on it [https://cbss.org/wp-](https://cbss.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/230509_berlin-declaration-on-baltic-offshore-wind-by-cbss-foreign-ministers_final_consented.pdf)
113 [content/uploads/2023/05/230509_berlin-declaration-on-baltic-offshore-wind-](https://cbss.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/230509_berlin-declaration-on-baltic-offshore-wind-by-cbss-foreign-ministers_final_consented.pdf)
114 [by-cbss-foreign-ministers_final_consented.pdf](https://cbss.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/230509_berlin-declaration-on-baltic-offshore-wind-by-cbss-foreign-ministers_final_consented.pdf) – and thus develop the Baltic Sea
115 region into a best-practice example for other macro-regions and acquire in this
116 way push effects for further advancement within the framework of broader
117 cooperation formats;
118

- 119 3. ensure inclusive, socially and environmentally sustainable economic growth and
120 development as well as energy security;
121
- 122 4. cooperate as closely as possible in pursuit of the goal of ensuring energy security,
123 self-sustainability and security of supply by concrete measures and the
124 development of joint strategies, aiming to reduce dependency on Russian fossil
125 resources, promote clean and affordable energy and the underlying industrial
126 value chains, develop an integrated and resilient European energy market, as
127 well as encourage deeper collaboration in energy and sustainability R&D;
128
- 129 5. intensify and deepen cooperation to develop better protection for critical shared
130 underwater infrastructure;
131
- 132 6. search for more streamlined funding mechanisms for the development of truly
133 interconnected, sustainable and resilient cross-border transport infrastructure,
134 as well as the transition to a single European digital market resilient to internal
135 and external threats;
136
- 137 7. in view of the Glasgow Climate Pact and the commitments of the Paris
138 Agreement, mobilize government, businesses and civil society to jointly
139 accelerate strategic cooperation in climate change mitigation, preservation of
140 nature and biodiversity, as well as just transition towards a climate-neutral
141 economy;
142
- 143 8. in view of the current geopolitical challenges that require more cooperation and
144 coordination of activities, return to meetings of heads of government, alternating
145 with foreign ministers;
146
- 147 9. extend sectoral ministerial conferences – as had been the case with the VASAB
148 Conference of Baltic Sea region ministers responsible for spatial planning and
149 development together with the CBSS summit of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs
150 on 1-2 June 2023 in Wismar – to jointly tackle the relevant Baltic Sea region
151 challenges in politically significant core areas;
152
- 153 10. expand cross-border, transnational, and inter-regional cooperation (Interreg)
154 and strengthen synergies between the different Baltic Sea policy cooperation
155 formats;
156
- 157 11. underline the continued importance of strengthening social resilience in the Baltic
158 Sea Region and support the ongoing process of setting up an annual award for
159 local authorities to shine as a “Baltic Sea Region Cultural Pearl” by fostering
160 resilience through cultural activities;
161
- 162 12. strengthen the role of the EU strategy for the Baltic Sea region, focusing on the
163 current political core challenges in the Baltic Sea region, expanding the
164 involvement of the democratic neighbour countries, and including support for
165 Ukraine during the war and afterwards for the reconstruction and strengthening
166 democracy in Ukraine;
167

- 168
169
170
171
172
173
174
175
176
177
178
179
180
181
182
183
184
185
186
187
13. supporting democratic developments in the neighbouring countries of the Baltic Sea Region, especially strengthening democratic stakeholders for a democratic development of Belarus and Russia;
 14. underline the continued importance of social sustainability along with the green and digital transitions and pay insofar particular interest, on the one hand, to the demographic change with an ageing population and the need for upskilling and reskilling along with adequate pension systems as well as, on the other hand, to the integration of migrants and all vulnerable groups in need of support to enter or remain in the labour market, and gender equality;
 15. increase and support the involvement of civil society in Baltic Sea policy activities;
 16. support and perpetuate the now-established involvement of youth in the CBSS work to include the concerns of the young generation in the core concerns of the Baltic Sea region issues;

188
189

Regarding enhancing democratic resilience and boosting capabilities to face modern digital challenges to

- 190
191
192
193
194
195
196
197
198
199
200
201
202
203
204
205
206
207
208
209
210
211
212
213
214
215
216
217
218
219
220
221
222
223
17. consistently and resolutely counter the growing threat to the democratic community posed by disinformation campaigns, with a particular focus on information warfare carried out by the Russian Federation;
 18. point out again the necessity – particularly in times of war and crisis – of strengthening efforts to increase confidence in democratic structures and values, to counter digital hate speech, promote tolerance and open-mindedness, freedom of media and expression, and robust democratic NGOs as cornerstones of democracies in the Baltic Sea region;
 19. protect the rights and ensure the safety of refugees, ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+ people, women, children, the elderly and other vulnerable groups who are particularly at risk in times of war and threatened by intolerant attitudes;
 20. defend sexual and reproductive autonomy and respect the right to reproductive health;
 21. improve legislation and measures to protect democratic processes and institutions from cyber threats;
 22. increase public awareness and digital literacy to enable citizens to identify and mitigate the risks of misinformation and disinformation;
 23. ensure that digital platforms and technology companies operate according to the ethical standards of the democratic countries around the Baltic Sea and are held accountable for inadequate content moderation practices, algorithms, and data handling;
 24. expand research and innovation capacities in cybersecurity and digital resilience;
 25. promote responsible digital behaviour and ethics in the public and private sectors and adopt ethical guidelines e.g. to ensure anti-discrimination and equality, codes of conduct, and accountability mechanisms to ensure responsible digital practices and protect democratic values;

224
225
226
227
228
229
230
231
232
233
234
235
236
237
238
239
240
241
242
243
244
245
246
247
248
249
250
251
252
253
254
255
256
257
258
259
260
261
262
263
264
265
266
267
268
269
270
271
272
273
274
275
276
277
278
279
280

26. enhance the security and resilience of the Baltic Sea Region by strengthening cooperation in areas such as defence, energy security, and cyber security;

Regarding strengthening the resilience of maritime ecosystems to

27. alongside the ambitious actions that the BSPC resolution urges concerning marine resilience and resilience of climate and biodiversity, also take into account other important dimensions in achieving a sustainable development in line with the Agenda 2030, such as social and economic aspects. Conflicting interests should be taken into account and analysed, for example those between climate policy and biodiversity preservation;
28. cooperate and act decisively towards a clean, healthy, and productive Baltic Sea with resilient marine and coastal ecosystems;
29. intensify cooperation to reach the goals of the Lisbon Declaration adopted at the UN Ocean Conference held in 2022;
30. increase joint efforts to reduce the outlet of nutrients, which contributes to eutrophication, biodiversity loss, and weakening the Baltic Sea as an attractive travel destination;
31. aim at putting in place an internationally legally binding agreement that allows a shift to a more sustainable plastics economy that minimises plastics waste and its impact on the environment and human health with the goal of ending plastic pollution and the ambition to reduce additional plastic pollution to zero by 2040;
32. implement coastal management plans to protect and restore coastal ecosystems, which can act as carbon sinks and buffer zones against sea-level rise (*WG/Climate 9*);
33. expand the existing Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) network and improve cooperation and transboundary management between marine protected areas in the Baltic Sea to ensure proper enforcement to protect vulnerable habitats and species;
34. contribute to the rapid entry into force of the landmark international legally binding instrument on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ) from 19 June 2023 and use its tools and possibilities in intensive cooperation within the CBSS and HELCOM to reach the goals mentioned above (*WG/Biodiversity 16*);
35. ensure a quick and strict implementation of the updated Baltic Sea Action Plan and its associated action documents within the agreed timelines in all democratic HELCOM member states to achieve a good ecological status of the Baltic Sea by the end of the decade and consider as far as possible implementing further measures from the policy-relevant suggestions for various policy areas in the HELCOM 2021 Climate Change in the Baltic Sea Fact Sheet to reach this goal;
36. establish and enforce recognisable, legally binding sustainable fishing quotas in the Baltic Sea Region with diversification for species, including regulations on fishing nets or other methods, ensuring that fish stocks remain healthy and sustainable in the long term. All actions should be based on respected, up-to-

- 281 date research. To prevent population crashes, the aim should be to reduce fishing
282 quotas down to or below scientifically advised thresholds in the Baltic Sea;
283
284 37. strengthen regulations and enforcement mechanisms to prevent pollution and
285 minimise the discharge of pollutants into the Baltic Sea;
286
287 38. introduce stricter controls on industry, shipping, and agriculture to reduce inputs
288 of nutrients, hazardous wastes, and harmful emissions to protect biodiversity
289 and the ecological balance of the marine environment;
290
291 39. raise public awareness of the importance of marine ecosystems and the need for
292 their conservation by conducting education campaigns, engaging local
293 communities, and promoting citizens' initiatives to increase a sense of
294 responsibility and encourage public participation in efforts to protect and restore
295 the ecological health of the Baltic Sea;
296
297
298

299 **Regarding strengthening the resilience of climate and biodiversity to**

300 Climate Change

- 301
302
303 40. increase the efforts and speed to implement ambitious national climate targets
304 and adapted extensions – corresponding to the current scientific and
305 measurement results – in line with the Paris Agreement's goal of limiting the
306 increase in the global average temperature to well below 2 degrees Celsius above
307 pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to
308 1.5 degrees Celsius above those;
309
310 41. strengthen regional collaboration and information exchange among the
311 democratic Baltic Sea countries and the Arctic to intensify joint strategies and
312 policies addressing climate change and regularly adapt them to the newest
313 research results, not neglecting the need to ensure a socially just transition;
314
315 42. urge at every opportunity the world's three largest CO₂ emitters, which currently
316 account for more than 50 % of global CO₂ emissions, to step up their efforts to
317 achieve ambitious climate targets;
318
319 43. incentivise renewable energy development by shortening the permitting process
320 for wind, solar, other clean and stable energy sources;
321
322 44. taking into account the risks connected with the increasing dependence of the
323 European market on the suppliers of rare metals and other raw materials,
324 increase the speed in implementing national strategies for transitioning away
325 from fossil fuels and towards low-carbon energy systems, and wisely diversifying
326 our energy mixes so that there is no shortage of energy, the energy comes from
327 reliable sources and is economically viable, avoiding energy poverty and sudden
328 price increases;
329
330 45. acknowledging the different energy strategies and focuses in different states to
331 reach these goals, increase the focus on the communal and regional levels on
332 implementing adequate climate change measures and to raise awareness in the
333 responsible administrations;
334
335 46. support increased research and innovation in climate change mitigation and
336 adaptation technologies, encouraging collaboration between academic
337 institutions, industries, and governments;
338

- 339 47. develop incentives and support for integrating climate change education and
340 awareness-raising programmes into curricula, public campaigns, and
341 professional development programmes;
342
- 343 48. foster cross-border cooperation on regional climate initiatives, engaging
344 neighbouring countries and international organisations in joint efforts to address
345 climate change in the Baltic Sea region;
346
- 347 49. convene annual Baltic Sea Climate and Biodiversity Summits to raise public
348 awareness, track progress, share best practices, and refine regional strategies
349 to accelerate increased climate action and adaptation;
350

351
352 Biodiversity
353

- 354 50. make strong efforts to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030 and contribute
355 to making the democratic Baltic Sea region as much as possible a macro-regional
356 best practice example in this regard for the world;
357
- 358 51. fully implement as fast as possible the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity
359 Framework (GBF) adopted at the 15th Conference of the Parties to the Convention
360 on Biological Diversity (CBD-COP15) on 19 December 2022 with its mission to
361 halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030, adapt the existing national and Baltic
362 Sea broad strategies and programmes and to cooperate intensively among the
363 democratic Baltic Sea States to realise a swift and effective implementation of
364 the GBF so that the Baltic Sea region becomes a global best practice example in
365 implementing the Global Biodiversity Framework;
366
- 367 52. consider an ecosystem-based management approach when revising and
368 adapting action plans and strategies to achieve these goals and implementing
369 these measures. This means management that considers the whole ecosystem
370 and all human activities, which is aware of and incorporates all pressures and
371 interactions and aims to protect, restore, or enhance the resilience and
372 sustainability of the aquatic ecosystem to ensure the sustainable provision of
373 ecosystem services and maintain the biodiversity;
374
- 375 53. further, commit to protecting biodiversity and increasing carbon sequestration
376 and natural storage with common and national policies for:
377 a. conservation of carbon-rich ecosystems such as forests, wetlands, seagrass
378 meadows and natural rivers;
379 b. continuation of sustainable forest management;
380
- 381 54. develop and execute plans to enhance the resilience of the Baltic Sea ecosystem
382 to climate change, including protecting coastal habitats and restoring wetlands;
383
- 384 55. reverse land degradation by 2030, and promote sustainable forest and peatland
385 management given their importance for climate and biodiversity;
386
- 387 56. significantly increase efforts to fundamentally improve nutrient management in
388 agriculture, industry, and wastewater treatment plants to reduce nutrient runoff
389 into the Baltic Sea, which contributes to eutrophication and biodiversity loss;
390
- 391 57. develop and adopt regional strategies to deal with transboundary emergencies,
392 including forest fires, eutrophication, and spreading pathogens, some of which
393 are exacerbated by climate change and pollution. The strategies should include
394 research into the causes of such emergencies, cooperation between rescue
395 services, and joint monitoring programmes that indicate the risks of such
396 emergencies;

397
398
399
400
401
402
403
404
405
406
407
408
409
410
411
412
413
414
415
416
417
418
419
420
421
422
423
424
425
426
427
428
429
430
431
432
433
434
435
436
437
438
439
440
441
442
443
444
445
446
447
448
449
450
451
452
453
454

- 58. cooperate to prevent the introduction and spread of new invasive alien species, work to effectively eradicate invasive species in the Baltic Sea Region and to develop and exchange best practices;

Considering the special attention the BSPC devoted to the issue of dumped ammunition in the Baltic Sea, particularly during the Presidency of the German Bundestag, the Conference strongly welcomes

- 59. the intensive consideration of the issue of dumped ammunition in the Baltic Sea by the Council of the Baltic Sea States during the German Presidency – and during the 20th session of the Council of the Baltic Sea States on 1 and 2 June 2023 in Wismar;
- 60. the initiation of a cross-sectoral, multidisciplinary, and macro-regional dialogue on underwater munitions in line with its previous demands during the round table of experts in Kiel in December 2022 and the joint consultation of HELCOM and the CBSS in April 2023;
- 61. the German government's decision – based on the resolution of the German Bundestag to provide € 100 million for this purpose – to initiate a national immediate action programme for the recovery of underwater munitions in the Baltic and North Seas, including the development of a mobile platform for munitions clearance, and to share the experience gained from this;

In addition, the BSPC states that responsible precautionary policy begins with active and sufficient action at that point in time when necessary action must be taken to avert later enormous and subsequently unpreventable massive damage to people and the environment in the Baltic Sea region. In the view of the BSPC, this point in time has come after years of intensive treatment of the issue of ammunition deposits in the Baltic Sea, according to the findings of its rapporteurs, the statements in the BSPC resolutions since 2019 as well as based on the reports submitted by the BSPC and an intensive exchange with leading experts in this field, which has been deepened in the past year. Based on current activities and measures, according to the consensus of leading scientists, removing the munitions deposits would take some 100 years. At the same time, significant damage to humans and the environment can be expected in 20-30 years. Therefore, the initiation and implementation of a joint strategic approach and effort by the Baltic Sea States are called for to avoid the damage to human safety, environment safety, security, and the economy that would otherwise occur, according to current scientific knowledge, from the 400,000 tonnes of conventional and 40,000 tonnes of chemical munitions dumped in the Baltic Sea. To achieve the goal of eliminating the hazard situation within the next 20 years, which is considered highly relevant for the BSPC, it is necessary not only to push the clearance with increased efforts and coordinated cooperation but also, in particular, to rapidly advance by reducing the bottleneck of effectively rendering the munitions harmless, i.e., the final disposal as well as storage capacities on land.

in light of the foregoing, the BSPC calls on the Governments in the Baltic Sea Region, the CBSS, and the EU to

- 62. go beyond the previous agreements of the governments and initiate a joint strategic approach and effort of the democratic Baltic Sea states - as has been achieved concerning the expansion of offshore wind capacities -, also based on the continuation of the cooperation between CBSS and HELCOM, as well as consider establishing a joint financial instrument to succeed in the goal, which the BSPC considers of great importance, of eliminating the hazardous situation

455 caused by ammunition dumped in the Baltic Sea within the next 20 years at the
456 latest;

457
458 63. continue close cooperation between the CBSS, HELCOM, and other relevant
459 organisations to fill knowledge gaps, develop best environmental practices for
460 risk assessment, and explore funding opportunities for the development and
461 implementation of the best available techniques for environmentally sound and
462 safe management.

463
464
465

Furthermore, the Conference Decides to

466
467
468 64. establish a two-year Working Group on Energy Security, Self-sustainability,
469 Resilience and Connectivity - based on the decisions of the BSPC Standing
470 Committee - to submit a first report at the 33rd BSPC and

471
472 65. welcome with gratitude the kind offer by the Danish Folketinget to host the
473 33rd Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference in Helsingør on 25-27 August 2024.

474
475
476
477
478
479
480
481
482
483
484
485
486
487
488
489