



Bornholm Declaration

On 19 May 2020, the Foreign Ministers of Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia and Sweden and a high-level representative of the European Union held a video conference, as the COVID-19 outbreak prevented them from meeting in Bornholm, Denmark as foreseen.

The Foreign Ministers and high-level representative reaffirmed the role of the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) as a platform uniquely suited to add value to the development of the Baltic Sea region, through intergovernmental dialogue and practical cooperation between all countries in the region, by fostering mutual understanding, building trust, ensuring stability and promoting people-to-people contacts.

The Foreign Ministers and high-level representative adopted revised Terms of Reference of the CBSS and of the CBSS Secretariat. They noted with satisfaction that this step marks the completion of the successful implementation of the Roadmap of the **CBSS reforms 2018-2020** endorsed at Jurmala in June 2019. The reforms, initiated through the 2018 Vision Group Report and the Stockholm Declaration, should increase the relevance, efficiency, transparency and visibility of the organization. In particular, they should foster more focus and flexibility in the work of the CBSS, improve CBSS co-operation with other international fora and formats active in the region, and enable concrete results in areas in which the CBSS is uniquely suited to add value.

The Foreign Ministers and high-level representative then proceeded to exchange views on some topical issues for the Baltic Sea Region.

Regarding the **COVID-19** outbreak, they underlined the importance of strengthened cooperation in the field of civil protection and encouraged the CBSS Civil Protection Network to focus on prevention, preparedness and relevant research actions. They also recommended continuing relevant cooperation through the Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social Well-being.

Regarding the **engagement of young people**, they underlined the need to foster active and meaningful youth participation and representation in institutions and decision-making processes in the region. In this context, they welcomed the new *Baltic Sea Youth Platform* established by the CBSS and directed the organisation to give increasing emphasis to its work in this field.

Regarding **environment and climate-related challenges**, they welcomed important ongoing regional initiatives in line with the 2030 Agenda to promote sustainable development, address climate change and protect the marine environment, notably the current updating of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan and promotion of increased use in the region of off-shore wind power, carbon capture and storage in line with national legislation and shore-side power supply for ferries and cruise ships. These measures help strengthen the position of the Baltic Sea Region as a world leader in green research, innovation and technologies, in clean shipping and as a green tourist destination. They also welcomed the intention of the incoming German Presidency of HELCOM to give high priority to addressing acute environmental tasks to restore a healthy Baltic Sea ecosystem.



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Regarding the fight against **cross-border organised crime**, they underlined the persistent common challenges for the region and the need for strong cooperation in this field. In this respect, they noted the important work of the Baltic Sea Task Force on Organised Crime (BSTF-OC) and welcomed ongoing work on its new mandate and the intention to align closer the rotation of the Task Force Presidency with that of the CBSS Presidency.

The Foreign Ministers and high-level representative expressed their gratitude to Denmark for its successful 2019-2020 Presidency of the Council of the Baltic Sea States and for organizing this video conference.