



CBSS Survey On the Northern Dimension Beyond 2006

FINAL REPORT

(As of 21 March 2006)

By Senior Adviser Philipp Schwartz

Preface

The Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) was already from the very beginning of 1999 involved in the elaboration of the Northern Dimension (ND) policy and its 1st and 2nd Action Plans for 2000-2003 and 2004-2006 respectively.¹ In a follow-up to the Communiqué of the 13th CBSS Ministerial Session in Szczecin, Poland on 9-10 June 2005², the CBSS Secretariat initiated during the Icelandic CBSS Presidency (2005-2006) a survey on the future of the ND beyond 2006. The purpose of the survey was to map the visions and expectations of the Baltic Sea region on the future of the ND beyond 2006, and to deliver comprehensive regional input to the ongoing discussion.

On 8 September 2005, on behalf of the Icelandic Chairman of the CBSS Committee of Senior Officials (CSO), a letter was sent out to the CBSS Structures and Working Bodies, Strategic Partners and Special Participants. These structures were asked to contribute their views on and expectations of the ND beyond 2006 (an indicative questionnaire was enclosed).

Immediately after the ND Ministerial meeting in Brussels on 21 November 2005, and the adoption of the *Guidelines for the Development of a Political Declaration and a Policy Framework Document for the Northern Dimension Policy from 2007*, this document – together with the Joint Press release – was sent out on 23 November 2005 to the CBSS Structures and Working Bodies, Strategic Partners and Special Participants. Referring to the second conclusion from the *Guidelines*³, the CSO Chairman asked all those who had not yet contributed to do so, and those who had already contributed to eventually update their contribution, while taking into account the adopted Guidelines. A final attempt to derive input from the business community was undertaken after the CSO meeting in Brussels on 14-15 February 2006, during which the draft report was presented to the CSO.

At this meeting, the CSO also decided to present the final report to the European Commission as the official CBSS contribution to the discussion on the ND beyond 2006, and to distribute it to the CBSS Structures and Working Bodies, Strategic Partners and Special Participants.

This Survey Report compiles and analyses all of the answers received by 21 March 2006.⁴ It is meant to provide a clear picture of the views and expectations of the CBSS Structures and Working Bodies, Strategic Partners and Special Participants on the ND beyond 2006. Finally, it should be underlined that the given statements – and the aggregate evaluation that stems there from – do not necessarily reflect the official CBSS standpoint.

¹ A historical overview on the CBSS contribution to the ND policy and Action Plans can be found in the annexes to this survey.

² Point 6: “*The Council looked forward to a Northern Dimension policy after 2006 agreed by all parties, and to playing an active role in its elaboration. ...*”

³ “*The ND Ministerial Meeting invites all ND parties and actors to participate in the debate on a new ND. ...*”

⁴ Please be informed that the CBSS Secretariat took the liberty to, when necessary, correct some grammatical errors contained in the responses from the organisations surveyed. Therefore, some quotations will appear slightly altered from the original form, from a grammatical point of view.

Content

Brief Analysis.....	4
I) Statistical Evaluation	4
II) Summary	7
Received Comments to the <i>Guidelines for the Development of a Political Declaration and a Policy Framework Document for the Northern Dimension Policy from 2007</i>	8
Annexes:	
- <i>Guidelines for the Development of a Political Declaration and a Policy Framework Document for the Northern Dimension Policy from 2007</i>	24
- The CBSS and the Northern Dimension (de Schaezen).....	28

Brief Analysis

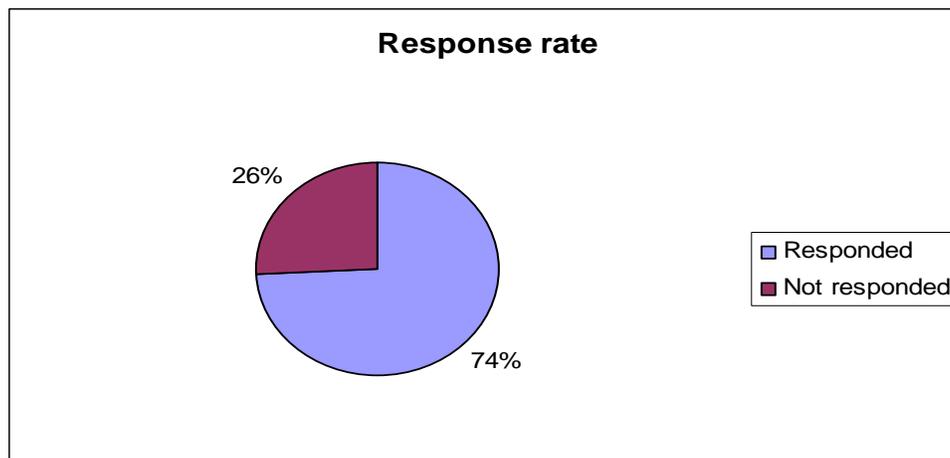
I) Statistical Evaluation

The original survey questionnaire was distributed on 8 September 2005 to the 27 CBSS Structures and Working Bodies, Special Participants and Strategic Partners⁵ inquiring:

1. What should the *Northern Dimension after 2006* include in order to better support the activities of your organisation?
2. How can the *Northern Dimension after 2006* be improved in order to ensure the active participation of all the partners in the region?

In a follow-up letter sent on 23 November 2005, the CBSS Structures and Working Bodies, Special Participants and Strategic Partners were asked to respond to the questions above (if they had not yet done so) or to eventually update their responses, taking into account the adopted *Guidelines for the Development of a Political Declaration and a Policy Framework Document for the Northern Dimension Policy from 2007*.

Regarding the survey response rate, 74% (20) of the recipients replied, while – despite having been reminded on several occasions – 26% (7) did not answer at all (BASREC; BAC; WG-T; B7; UBC; BDF; Baltic Sea Forum – Pro Baltica).



⁵ Working Group on Economic Cooperation (WGEC); Working Group on Democratic Institutions (WGDI); Working Group on Nuclear and Radiation Safety (WGNRS); Lead Country Function for Civil Security (LC-CS); Lead Country Function for EuroFaculty Kaliningrad (LC-EFK); Baltic Sea Region Energy Co-operation – Group of Senior Energy Officials (BASREC-GSEO); Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea Region – Senior Officials Group (Baltic 21 – SOG); Working Group for Cooperation on Children at Risk (WGCC); Working Group on Youth Affairs; Northern eDimension Action Plan – Senior Officials on Information Society (NeDAP-SOIS); Business Advisory Council (BAC); Ad-Hoc Working Group on Transport (WG-T); Ars Baltica Organising Committee (ABOC); Baltic Sea Monitoring Group on Heritage Cooperation; Task Force on Organised Crime (TF-OC); Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference (BSPC); Baltic Sea Seven Islands Cooperation Network (B7 Baltic Islands Network); Baltic Sea States Sub-regional Co-operation (BSSSC); Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions – Baltic Sea Commission (CPMR-BSC); Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC); Baltic Development Forum (BDF); Baltic Sea Chamber of Commerce Association (BCCA); Baltic Sea Forum – Pro Baltica; Baltic Sea NGO Forum; Baltic Sea Trade Union Network (BASTUN); The Helsinki Commission (HELCOM); Visions and Strategies around the Baltic Sea 2010 (VASAB 2010)

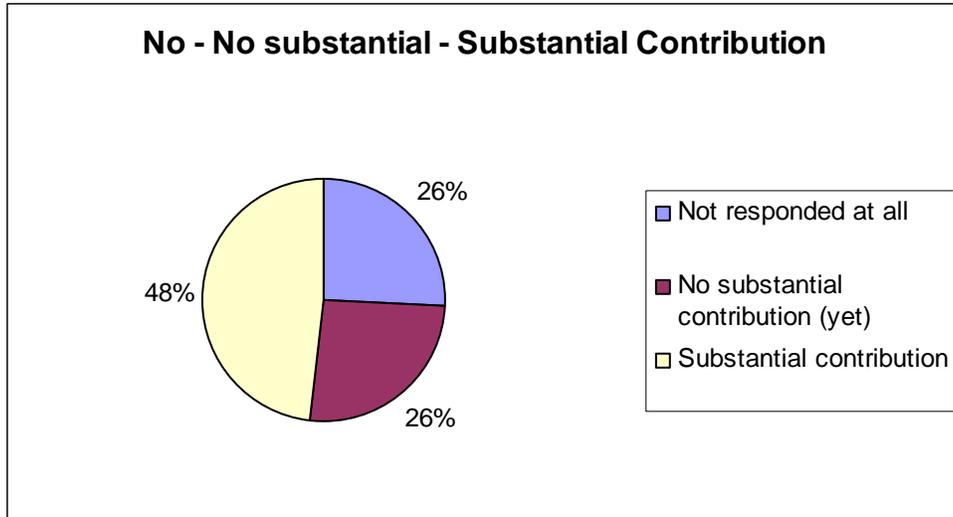
Although 20 out of 27 survey recipients replied to the questions, it should be emphasised that the response policy and response rate were both far from satisfactory. In particular, it took quite a lot of effort on the part of the CBSS Secretariat to engage those surveyed to reply in any way (meaning even to decline the Secretariat's invitation to contribute input to the survey) to the two letters sent out by the CSO Chairman. This situation could be interpreted in the following ways:

1. A certain amount of interest in the ND has been exhausted. That is, after 7 years of ND policy, the enthusiasm surrounding the first 2 Action Plans has diminished from the point of view of the organisations surveyed.
2. Those organisations surveyed felt no direct relation to the ongoing discussion on the ND due to: a) its rather general political nature (until the ND Ministerial meeting on 21 November 2005); and b) the fact that the ND was rather influenced by discussions between the parties to the ND (EU, Iceland, Norway, Russian Federation).

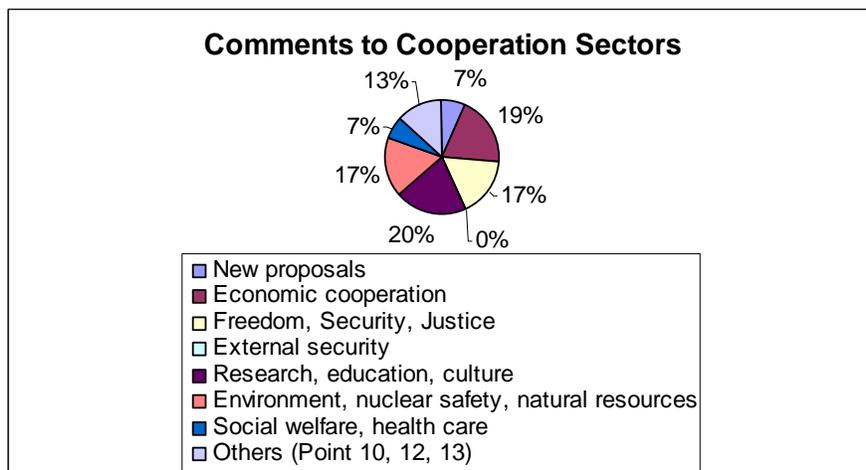
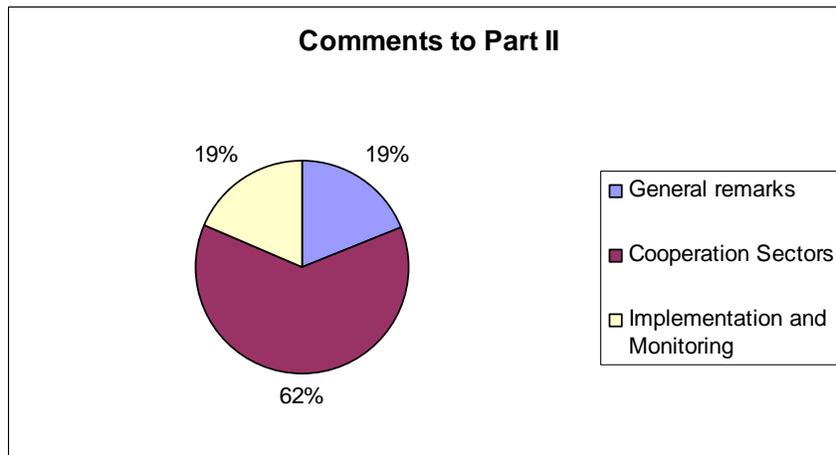
The 20 replies received can be divided into the following two categories:

- a) Nothing substantial to contribute or promised to reply at a later point in time, however failed to (7, 35% of the received replies and 26% of the total recipients):
 - At its meeting on 2-3 February 2006 in Stockholm, the WGEC decided to postpone the item until the next meeting in Reykjavik in May 2006.
 - The WGDI responded: "*So far we have not seen that we, at this stage, have any contributions and therefore do not intended to answer the ND survey for now.*"
 - The WGNRS responded: "... as nuclear safety is mentioned in the adopted guidelines ..." it would provide "...no further comment." [translated from German].
 - A representative of the WGYA responded: "... I am aware that the survey was sent some time ago. Then, the WGYA decided that they would not be able to give their comments and contributions to it. However, I have sent the information again, knowing that it will be important to participate in this process. ..."
 - The NeDAP-SOIS responded: "... the Survey on the Northern Dimension will be discussed at the next meeting (27-28 October) of the Senior Officials on Information Society Group..." and that after the meeting they would prepare input to the survey.
 - The Baltic Sea Monitoring Group on Heritage Cooperation promised to submit its contribution immediately after the the winter holiday season 2005/2006.
 - VASAB 2010 responded that after having reviewed the Guidelines, it did not appear that it would be possible for it to "...contribute directly in any sector of cooperation mentioned..."
- b) Substantial reply (13, 65% of the replies and 48% of the total recipients): LC Civil Security; LC EF-K; Baltic 21; WGCC; ABOC, TF-OC, BSPC; BSSSC, CPMR-BSC⁶, BCCA, Baltic Sea NGO Forum Consultative Committee, BASTUN, HELCOM.

⁶ The respective contribution was even published in the CPMR-BSC Newsletter August 2005, mentioning that this "paper has been sent to the Council of Baltic Sea States (CBSS) as the BSC contribution to the Ministerial meeting on Northern Dimension on 21 November 2005".



Most replies concerned Part II of the Guidelines “A Northern Dimension Policy from 2007 Onwards”. From 77 single remarks, comments, suggestions etc., 48 are made with reference to Part II – 30 of which deal with the proposed cooperation sectors.



II) Summary

Taken together, the replies received indicate that the CBSS Structures and Working Bodies, Strategic Partners and Special Participants have a generally positive attitude towards the idea of the ND as such, and especially towards a new ND policy beyond 2006. However, some critical remarks and additional proposals are made with regard to the concept expressed in the *Guidelines for the Development of a Political Declaration and a Policy Framework Document for the Northern Dimension Policy from 2007*.

First of all, despite being the regional expression of the four Common Spaces, many contributions emphasised the need to keep the broad geographical scope of the ND to encompass the Baltic Sea Region, the Arctic, the Barents and Northwest-Russia.

Although the ND policy beyond 2006 is a policy jointly agreed upon by the ND parties, the active role and commitment of the EC (and the EP) should be maintained (respectively established). Beside these bodies, the coordination function of the regional organisations (e.g. the CBSS in the implementation of the ND policy beyond 2006) is highlighted in the replies. Additionally, for the ND beyond 2006 to be fully successful, the major cooperation actors at the sub-national level (including civil society) should be involved in future implementation efforts.

With regard to implementation, the ND Partnership model is very highly appreciated and therefore its extension to fields of cooperation beyond 'environment' and 'public health and social well-being' should be considered. However, the focus should remain on concrete and result-oriented activities (such as the so-called Lighthouse Projects by Baltic 21). In addition, the need for sufficient financial resources for the implementation of the ND beyond 2006 was emphasized.

The cooperation sectors proposed in the *Guidelines* are welcomed, however, several comments made, which include more detail, are reproduced in the overview following this summary. Further, some additional cooperation sectors were proposed, such as the protection of environment against man-made and natural disasters and safe community programs development or labour market questions.

Received Comments to the Guidelines

The views on and expectations of the ND beyond 2006 expressed by the recipients of the survey questionnaire were assigned according to the structure of the *Guidelines for the Development of a Political Declaration and a Policy Framework Document for the Northern Dimension Policy from 2007*⁷ - beside general comments with regard to the ND or the *Guidelines* as such.

General Comments:

- The Task Force on Organised Crime in the BSR expressed its view that "...the Guidelines in general support the mandate of the Task Force." (TF-OC)
- The CPMR-BSC expressed that "...the Northern Dimension policy is of great importance to the work of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission." (CPMR-BSC)
- BASTUN reported: "The document [Guidelines] is in many ways a good basis" from which to "start the drafting of the final document." (BASTUN)

I) Introduction

1. [Geographical Scope of the ND]

The BSSSC responded that it "welcomes the initiative to reshape the Northern Dimension concept into a political and operational framework for promoting the implementation of the EU-Russia Common Spaces. Nevertheless, the broad geographical scope of the ND area – comprising the whole of the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) as well as Northwest Russia and the Arctic area – shall be maintained..."

Elaborating on the latter point, the BSSSC stated that "...the whole of the Northwest Russian regions should be covered by 'ND from 2007' instead of limiting this scope to those Russian regions immediately bordering the Baltic Sea. This would require also to give sufficient resources in legal and financial terms as well as regards personal capacities to these allowing them to participate in co-operation projects in equal terms." (BSSSC)

According to the CPMR-BSC: "When rewriting and reshaping a Northern Dimension Action Plan, the whole geographical area of Northern Dimension should be maintained even though special attention must be given to the EU-Russia common spaces." (CPMR-BSC)

The BSPC expressed that "...the issues and challenges of the Arctic and Barents region should be given continued attention in the new Northern Dimension." (BSPC)

2. [The ND Parties]

As regards the process of further developing and implementing the ND, the BSSSC claimed that: "...an active role and commitment from the European Commission should be maintained. The "2004 Annual Progress Report on the Implementation of the Northern Dimension Action Plan" tabled in May 2005⁸ is proving the importance of this active role by presenting numerous projects and activities of the Commission's services." (BSSSC)

⁷ The text of the Guidelines can be found in the annexes.

⁸ SEC(2005) 688

According to the CPMR-BSC: “To strengthen the support for the Northern Dimension, the implementation of a new Action Plan is vital and it is important that the European Union, Iceland, Norway and Russia agree and stay devoted and follow adopted strategic documents. Hence, it is also important that EU agreements with Norway, Iceland (EFTA) and especially Russia (Partnership agreement and the road maps) are reflected in and supported by the Northern Dimension.” (CPMR-BSC)

The BSPC welcomed the “re-activated and continued commitment from the European Commission, the Russian Federation, Iceland and Norway to further develop the Northern Dimension policy,” and also, “appreciated the dedication of the European Parliament to the progress of Northern Dimension, as demonstrated in its resolution of November 16, 2005.” (BSPC)

3. [The Regional Organizations in the North of Europe as important actors]

BSSSC (cf. below 14)

According to the Finnish representative within the WGEC, “one of the most interesting questions relating to the Northern Dimension policies is the role of the international regional councils. They could play an important role both in carrying out various projects as well as in developing new ways and means of regional cooperation. Such an ambitious plan must of course be backed by all the members and partners.” (Finland within WGEC)

The Task Force on Organised Crime in the BSR “...considers the coordination of activities within its mandate as a priority on par with its main goal of initiating operational law enforcement activities against organised crime within the region. The Task Force has underlined the importance of a close co-operation with and participation of not only Task Force member states but also external partners and third parties to ensure coherence and compatibility in the operational work carried out by the various bodies dealing with organized crime in the Baltic Sea Region. This objective for enhanced coordination is well described in paragraph 3 of the Guidelines.” (TF-OC)

The BSPC reported: “...it is of crucial importance for the credibility and implementation of the Northern Dimension to strengthen coordination and cooperation between regional organizations in Northern Europe.” (BSPC)

4. [Important Role of sub-national/regional/local entities and civil society]

The BSSSC pointed to the fact that “...a multitude of already existing co-operation fora and projects in the Baltic Sea Region strongly contribute to the objectives and implementation of the ND.

This applies in particular to the activities of regional and local actors: Without their active commitment the implementation of the current NDAP could be realised only to a lesser extent. Hence, the BSSSC calls upon the ND Ministerial meeting [on 21 November 2005] to build on regional and local expertise, capacities and engagement by reshaping the ND....

The BSSSC reiterates its commitment to the overall objectives of the Northern Dimension concept. Beyond all changes which this concept has undergone, and will undergo, the BSSSC points to the long-standing and experienced co-operation in the BSR as a far-reaching ground for the implementation of the ND. In particular this applies to subregional co-operation at regional and local level.

Against this background, the BSSSC underlines the necessity to include the major co-operation actors at sub-national levels in the future implementation of the ND. This applies also to the regional authorities in all individual ND partner countries.” (BSSSC)

According to the CPMR-BSC, “the Northern Dimension is not [comprised of] only projects and programmes, but [is] also a forum for dialogue, and therefore it should actively involve, in a clear and coherent way, regional and local level actors and their networks...

The experience of the Northern Dimension Action Plans has demonstrated that its implementation is not possible without the active involvement and contribution of regional and local actors and their far-reaching and well established co-operation networks. In implementing a new Northern Dimension Action Plan, we regard it as essential to build on this experience. Numerous ongoing projects - for example within INTERREG III B Baltic Sea Region Programme demonstrate the abilities of the regional level and should be seen as a positive and important contribution to the implementation of Northern Dimension.” (CPMR-BSC)

The Baltic Sea NGO Forum Consultative Committee expressed their view that “the northern region of Europe should be for the people and the development must be anchored in popular legitimacy and sustainability. Active and participatory citizens and civil society organisations are an essential base for democracy. The role of civil society has been increasingly acknowledged by European institutions, following the shift from a logic of government to one of governance. Thus, strengthening civil society should be an integral part of developing the EU’s northern region and the public authorities.

The Northern Dimension should be given a civil society dimension and the co-operation between civil society and official authorities should be designed. NGOs should be consulted in drafting and implementing action plans, as known from other EU-strategies. This will contribute to a strengthening of civil society and democracy in the northern region.” (Baltic Sea NGO Forum Consultative Committee)

5. [Kaliningrad]

Baltic 21 (cf. below Conclusions)

As regards geographic coverage of ‘ND from 2007,’ the BSSSC “recommends still to give specific status to the Kaliningrad region due to its specific geographic situation and pre-conditions.” (BSSSC)

6. [NDEP, NPFS, Partnership Model]

Baltic 21 (cf. below 12)

The Finnish representative within the WGECC stressed that, as “...most of our concrete ND related activities in the WGECC deal with border crossing problems...the question...is [whether] a new partnership to promote logistics [would] be useful?” (Finland within WGECC)

According to the Lead Country Function for EuroFaculty - Kaliningrad, “EuroFaculty is ...the only CBSS partnership project in the social sector. It is highly successful and has proven the validity and importance of this kind of projects as an alternative – or supplement – to the increased bilateralisation of CBSS members’ assistance to Russia. My recommendation is therefore that the possibility is left open for this kind of project in the field of education, as in other fields.” (LC EF-K)

The BSSSC stated: “Both the current ND Partnerships show that the partnership model as such is successful. Hence, the BSSSC welcomes [the probability] that this model will be applied to other co-operation sectors, but recommends that any further ND partnerships require full commitment from both sides of the ND partners.

Furthermore, the BSSSC “strongly recommends that co-operation at regional and local level be incorporated in those ND partnerships which cover respective capacities and expertise at these levels too.” (BSSSC)

In the BSPC’s view, “... the Northern Dimension Environmental Partnership and the Northern Dimension Partnership in Health and Social Well-Being are successful examples of practical achievements within the Northern Dimension, and that they should be continued. The application of the Partnership model to other priority areas, such as transport and logistics, should be considered.” (BSPC)

7. [ND Information System]

Baltic 21 (cf. below 12)

II) A Northern Dimension Policy from 2007 Onwards

8. [ND as political and operational framework for promoting the implementation of the EU-Russia Common Spaces]

The Task Force on Organised Crime in the BSR has “considered it important that the Operative Committee of the Task Force and the Chairmanship takes into account the relevant objectives in the EU-Russia Road Map for a Common Space of Freedom, Security and Justice. The Guidelines thus reflect the views of the Task Force in supporting common objectives of different cooperation mechanisms that are within the mandate of the Task Force.” (TF-OC)

The BSSSC “welcomes the initiative to reshape the Northern Dimension concept into a political and operational framework for promoting the implementation of the EU-Russia Common Spaces. Nevertheless, the broad geographical scope of the ND area – comprising the whole of the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) as well as Northwest Russia and the Arctic area – shall be maintained.” (BSSSC)

According to the BSPC, “the Northern Dimension that is now emerging is intended as a political and operational framework for the implementation of the four EU-Russia Common Spaces, (common economic space, common space of freedom,

security and justice, common space of co-operation in the field of external security, common space on research, education and culture) which the participants of the [3rd Parliamentary] roundtable [on Northern Dimension on 30 January 2006] regarded as a constructive and a much wanted step forward....and...that it is valuable that the Northern Dimension aims at filling the four EU-Russia Common Spaces with concrete content, while at the same time resting on a comprehensive view of the challenges in all parts of the Northern Dimension region.” (BSPC)

The CPMR-BSC reported: “When rewriting and reshaping a Northern Dimension Action Plan the whole geographical area of Northern Dimension should be maintained even though special attention must be given to the EU-Russia Common Spaces.” (CPMR-BSC)

9. [ND as regional expression of the Common Spaces]

TF-OC; BSPC; BSSSC; CPMR-BSC (cf. above 8)

Given that Baltic 21 “would like to contribute to the implementation of the EU-Russia Common Spaces, [it] supports the view that assuring the full economic and social integration of these priority areas within the dynamics of the ND region - while at the same time preserving national sovereignty - should indeed be an ND objective.” (Baltic 21)

Cooperation Sectors

10. [Re-focusing of the current ND cooperation areas in line with the Common Spaces]

According to the BSSSC, “although the main fields of ‘Four Common Spaces’ as well as the objectives of the current 2nd NDAP need to be kept in the future political context of ND, the BSSSC demands that more focussed priorities shall be given to ND from 2007 in order to enhance visibility and effectiveness.” (BSSSC)

11. [ND Sector Division]

• NEW Proposals:

“Protection of Environment against man-made and natural disasters and safe community programmes development (Eurobaltic programme for civil protection)”
(LC Civil Security)

In BASTUN’s view, “the document [Guidelines] is in many ways a good basis from which to start the drafting of the final document,” but stated that, “we find one remarkable weakness in it.” Labour market questions are practically missing. We therefore propose a separate Labour Market Chapter to be included in the final version.⁹ Our proposal performs a common platform for decision makers, social partners and civil society consisting a genuine social dialogue, full employment, more and better jobs, and decent working conditions.

BASTUN also stated that “in order to [incorporate] important labour market questions into the Northern Dimension Policy, we propose a complement in the Guidelines, consisting of the following amendments...to the part “Cooperation

⁹ A detailed outline of the proposed labour market chapter is included in the reply from BASTUN.

Sectors”, point 11: [cf. below *Economic cooperation and Freedom, Security and Justice*]” (BASTUN)

• **Economic cooperation:**

Finland within WGEC (cf. above 6)

According to Baltic 21, “three Cooperation Sectors (as reflected in the proposed “Guidelines for the development of a political declaration and policy framework document for ND policy from 2007”) would be of particular interest to Baltic 21, namely: environment, nuclear safety and natural resources; research, education and culture as well as economic cooperation.” (Baltic 21)

BASTUN proposed: “...promotion of trade, investments and business level cooperation **as well as social dialogue with labour market partners**¹⁰, and development of the energy, transport and information technology infrastructure...” (BASTUN, proposed amendments in bold red, cf. above *NEW Proposals*)

The BSSSC stated: “Enhancing co-operation with neighbouring Russia also requires the integration and involvement of Russian partners in pan-Baltic co-operation in these fields. This applies in particular to business as well as transport related co-operation. Over the past years, sub-regional actors have seriously engaged in multilateral projects aimed at developing strategic transport routes in specific parts of the BSR. In addition, sub-regional actors have entered into practical co-operation projects aimed at enhancing maritime safety (incl. preparedness and prevention) in the BSR.

In particular, the INTERREG III B BSR Programme has proven to be a major tool for intensifying project co-operation in these fields.¹¹ Implementation of the ‘ND from 2007’ in these fields requires equal access for Russian partners to this programme – or at least the use of an ENPI programme fully interoperable with the future objective 3 transnational co-operation programme in the BSR.

The capacities of the Baltic Sea Region to serve as an efficient transport hub are of strategic importance for the whole of Europe. The BSSSC points to the need to develop a specific BSR transport strategy in the frame of ‘Transeuropean Networks’. This strategy should encompass sea and land transport, harbours, harbour-hinterland connections as well as logistics and should integrate concepts such as ‘Motorways at Sea’ and ‘Short Sea Shipping’ as well. In order to enhance the acceptance of sea transport as the most environmentally friendly transport system, this strategy should address the needs of improving Maritime Safety also.

Against the background of a ‘European Maritime Policy,’ further to be elaborated during the months to come, the BSSSC points to the respective

¹⁰ “In order to create an ideal working environment for enterprises and employees, faire and explicit regulations are needed. The social partners in Europe are important actors in the social dialogue at different levels in Europe. This model should have a place also in the relations between the EU and Russia.”

¹¹ An “Overview on current INTERREG III B projects with active regional partners”, compiled by the BSSSC ad-hoc Working Group Northern Dimension (status as of September 2005), was attached to the BSSSC reply.

potentials and needs existing in the BSR. In particular, the importance of maritime issues for regional and local development in all the BSR countries is underlined. Hence, the 'ND from 2007' should enable open access and facilitate equal participation of Russian partners in co-operation in the frame of a 'European Maritime Policy' in the BSR." (BSSSC)

The CPMR Baltic Sea Commission "welcomes the European Commission's proposal on the revision of the TEN T-guidelines, which have a vital impact on the Northern Dimension Policy. The introduction of Motorways of the Sea to the list of priority projects offers a realistic objective both to reach intermodal shift effects and better connect geographically disadvantaged regions by transnational maritime links. The CPMR Baltic Sea Commission recognises the need of building efficient transport systems in order to cope with future cargo flows due to increased trade between Russia and China on the one side and Western Europe and USA on the other. At the same time because of the harsh natural conditions in the Baltic Sea sufficient funding should be guaranteed for research and development to keep the transport systems safe and running around the year. By building efficient and environmentally sustainable transport systems that use rail and sea, we believe that it is possible to create regional development through out the region. One important issue will be to assure that Motorways of the Sea fits into existing or new TEN-corridors in order to attract intermodal logistic chains. Moreover, current approved and already existing INTERREG-projects, such as 'Baltic Gateway,' as well as the NETA-project, should be taken into consideration." (CPMR-BSC)

The BCCA stated that "from the perspective of Baltic Sea Chambers of Commerce Association's vision 3T – Triple Trade in Ten Years, the Northern Dimension should focus more on the same themes we identify in our action list," and that "...since the forming of BCCA in Rostock in 1992 we have been convinced that the Baltic Sea Region, which from our perspective represents the critical mass for development in our part of Europe, has very interesting potentials. The development since 1992 has also proven that a lot of the possibilities are being fulfilled step by step. But in a global world where the competition could and should be considered tougher than ever, it is of great importance that the nations around the Baltic stand to face these global challenges together. The Northern Dimension is one of the tools for this.

Triple Trade in Ten Years is not a complicated vision, but focuses on one really important thing - the development of trade. Therefore, we would prefer more initiatives and actions in following fields:

Changing attitudes – The commitment to our region's potential is widespread among different organisations and companies. But the commitment among ordinary citizens is a lot weaker. To change these often negative attitudes, facts and more contacts are needed. Exchange on all levels and between all types of organisations, companies i.e. should be supported from both private and public sector.

Involving Russia – From a business perspective, Russia is a part of the Baltic Sea Region and should always be considered a natural member. The potentials in Russia for trade and development are massive and can in the longer

perspective be the driving force for economic development in our part of Europe. Hence, there is a direct connection between involving Russia in the region and our ability to compete on a global scale.

Post-enlargement – Experiences from previous enlargements of the European Union show that the post enlargement process is of great importance. If the internal market is fully functional as quickly as possible, this will generate will great effects on the economical development. In the Baltic Sea Region, with only Norway, Iceland and Russia standing outside the cooperation within the European Union, it is important that special focus is given to smooth boarder crossings, simple VISA-procedures. This might be considered by some to be a minor issue, but everything that makes contacts and exchange across borders more complicated for people and goods is going to have a negative effect on [our] economies in the long run.

Improving infrastructure – The competitiveness of a region like the Baltic Sea Region or Northern Europe is a sum of factors in various countries, and our region's heterogeneity is an advantage for us. But the process of planning infra-structural investments is in many aspects still a national issue. From our perspective, this is very unfortunate. Among our members we have identified a number of bottlenecks around the Baltic Sea, which all share one feature – they are of importance for 'the neighbouring countries' tax payers,' and not only for the tax payers that are going to pay for the investment from a strict nationalistic perspective. Therefore, we would like to see an even more active role by the EU and/or the CBSS when it comes to co-ordinating joint infrastructure projects.

Promote free trade – Based on our strong belief in more trade in our region and our potential to be competitive on the global scale, we must constantly defend the idea of free trade. In this perspective, the politicians in the Baltic Sea Region must defend free trade also in matters connected with the production of services. It is therefore an unfortunate setback that the discussion about the service directive within EU has so far not produced proposals that will bring out the full potential for more trade between the member countries." (BCCA)

• ***Freedom, Security and Justice:***

The Lead Country Function on Civil Security proposed: "*Freedom, Security and Justice* (facilitation of people-to-people contacts, prevention of trafficking in human beings, drugs trafficking, illegal immigration and other cross-border crime, development of border monitoring, **civil protection and** rescue services and good governance, and the efficiency of the judicial system)." (LC Civil Security, amendments in bold red)

The TF-OC stated: "...the priorities in the ND sector of Freedom, Security and Justice described in the Guidelines are parallel to those of the Task Force [on Organised Crime in the BSR]." (TF-OC, cf. also above 8)

According to the WGCC: "[The ND beyond 2006 should include an] unambiguous focus on civil security and recognition of the fact that sustainable development and economic developments, rely on citizens' feelings of security and trust. Protection of children and young people at risk should be seen as one important instrument in achieving this.

Continued political support for improved protection on a regional level, of young persons' safety and care, i.a. in situations where cross border criminality endanger their developments as in cases of trafficking or in cases of children brought from one country to another." (WGCC)

In the BSSSC's view, "although competencies mainly lie with the national levels, objectives like e.g. good governance or development of civil society require respective efforts and work on regional and local level too. Any 'ND from 2007' should also address the needs of capacity building at regional and local level in neighbouring Northwest Russia, including capacities for cross-border and cross-maritime co-operation with partners in other parts of the ND area (i.e. BSR).

Provided these fields are covered by 'ND from 2007', the BSSSC recommends that attention be paid to respective sub-regional co-operation." (BSSSC)

The CPMR Baltic Sea Commission "supports actions taken within Northern Dimension that foster a secure and efficient management of the EU-Russia border to prevent illegal movements and at the same time allows an easy passage for legitimate trade and travel, reducing waiting times, improving infrastructure, increasing co-operation between relevant border authorities, and of the harmonisation of legislation, standards and procedures." (CPMR-BSC)

BASTUN proposed the "(facilitation of people-to-people contacts, prevention of trafficking in human beings, drugs trafficking, illegal immigration and other cross-border crime, development of border monitoring, rescue services and good governance, **misuse of labour regulations**¹² and the efficiency of the judicial system)." (BASTUN, proposed amendments in bold red)

• **Research, education and culture:**

Baltic 21 (cf. above *Economic cooperation*)

According to the Lead Country Function EuroFaculty – Kaliningrad, "EuroFaculty is...the only CBSS partnership project in the social sector. It is highly successful and has proved the validity and importance of this kind of projects as an alternative – or supplement – to the increased bilateralisation of CBSS members' assistance to Russia. My recommendation is therefore that the possibility is left open for this kind of projects in the field of education as in other fields." (LC EF-K)

The BSSSC stated: "Regional and local actors as well as e.g. regionally oriented universities have developed strong co-operation projects in these fields. Most of these are carried out in the frame of the current INTERREG III B BSR programme.

¹² "Equal treatment of workers is often more difficult with foreign employees. Therefore special emphasis should be given to create systems of supervision not only at national levels but also across the borders."

Provided these fields are covered by the 'ND from 2007', the BSSSC recommends that respective co-operation work at regional and local level be facilitated.

This applies in particular to 'people-to-people' contacts, which are regularly implemented at the regional and local level or in the frame of NGO work. Since the implementation of this objective would depend upon respective efforts at these levels, active facilitation by ND related programmes would be required." (BSSSC)

The CPMR Baltic Sea Commission "would like to underline the importance of the cultural qualities and the diversity that exists within the Northern Dimension area. Greater focus should be put on strengthening the regions' possibility to develop their own identity as well as to find good answers to the challenges they face. Projects to strengthen the cultural identity in the Northern Dimension area should be given priority - among others to strengthen people-to-people relations between regions and countries. Northern Dimension influences the development of future societies and the new generations. It is therefore important to focus on young people's participation, engagement, interests and ideas when concrete projects and actions are shaped - among others through the implementation of a new Northern Dimension Action Plan.

Research and development needs to strengthen its position in all areas of co-operation. The CPMR Baltic Sea Commission believes that further development of meta co-operation networks such as the ScanBalt initiative, aimed at the development of a network of networks in the life science field in Northern Europe with to goal to establish this region as a major player in the European and global biotechnology arena." (CPMR-BSC)

ARS BALTICA is "strongly convinced of the crucial role of creating a well-working network within the region of countries connected with the Northern Dimension," and believes that "our mission is to support cultural projects within the Baltic Sea countries, but that we also cannot forget about the importance of encouraging a wider co-operation with the states staying in a close relation to ARS BALTICA region. Administrating with a list of cultural institutions that operate in the Northern Dimension countries could help us to promote joint projects.

ARS BALTICA is of a position that the first step is to create a list of contacts and institutions that would be interested in a closer co-operation within the respective countries in the targeted regions. A network of such contact points could help to ensure the active participation of partners." (AB-OC)

• ***Environment, nuclear safety and natural resources:***
Baltic 21 (cf. above *Economic cooperation* and below 13)

According to the BSSSC, through active participation in related INTERREG projects, "regional and local authorities have proven their experience and commitment in the fields of environment and preservation of natural resources.

Future ND co-operation in these fields should encompass subregional co-operation at regional and local level also." (BSSSC)

The CPMR-BSC reported: "There are significant natural and mineral resources in the area of Fennoscandia, where the arctic nature is very sensitive. The European Union is dependent on natural resources and minerals outside of its external borders and through the Northern Dimension co-operating, supporting and building environmentally friendly production and mining techniques e.g. in northwest Russia. The European Union may also strengthen its self-sufficiency in natural resources and minerals by preserving the nature in Northern Dimension area.

The coastal regions are suffering from the harmful effects of oil spills and the citizens and businesses in the coastal regions will suffer from the consequences of a lack of maritime safety. The regions therefore call upon the national governments to have proactive attitudes towards maritime safety and to develop a safety culture in the application of their national policy. This concerns both preventive action as well as [integrating] systems to deal with the incidents that actually occur. Regional authorities offer their participation as a working partnership with national governments and across national and regional borders.

The development of large oil-harbours in Russia - in the north as well as in the coastal areas of Gulf of Finland close to St. Petersburg - will lead to increased tanker-transport along the Norwegian coast, as well as in the Baltic Sea - Kattegat - Skagerrak into the North Sea. The consequences of an oil catastrophe in the Northern Dimension area will be remarkable, and we therefore strongly recommend that this issue will receive particular attention in the implementation of a new Northern Dimension Action Plan.

Based on the implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive - that due to the EEA agreement is also binding for Norway - great challenges arise for regions and municipalities in the Northern Dimension area. Many of the new EU member states and Russia have large environmental problems connected to water and water supply.

Regional and local authorities in the North Sea and Baltic Sea Regions have experience and competence in this field, and can contribute to positive developments among others by getting a better overview of pollution in rivers and lakes, water quality management programmes, freshwater supply, knowledge transfer and competence development. Water quality management and the cleaning of river and lake areas should therefore, to our mind, be included and taken into consideration when implementing a new Northern Dimension Action Plan." (CPMR-BSC)

HELCOM is "currently drawing up a HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, which will be an essential instrument for actions needed to achieve a good environmental status of the Baltic marine environment..."

To enhance the synergies between various processes and programmes, maximise the use of resources available within the Baltic region, and to avoid possible overlaps, HELCOM finds it very important that the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan will be linked to the Northern Dimension policy from 2007." (HELCOM)

- ***Social welfare and health care:***

According to the BSSSC, “as already outlined by the ‘Declaration concerning the establishment of a Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social Well-being’ (NDPHS), sub-regional co-operation at regional and local levels is indispensable as far as implementation is concerned.¹³

Against this background, the BSSSC strictly recommends to fully integrate regional and local capacities in respective ND co-operation work. As far as respective funding will be foreseen broad and open access for regional and local actors should be provided.” (BSSSC)

In the CPMR-BSC’s view, “in order to have a balanced development of the whole region, building a sufficient social welfare systems are of crucial importance especially in Russia, who still suffers from the swift shift from a central planning system to a market economy. Many regions do not have tools, mechanisms and resources to influence their own regional planning and development. The new EU member states in the Baltic Sea area will also be depending on good tools and methods to prepare plans and implement actions in relation to EU regional policy and the use of new financial instruments. It will be of outmost importance to strengthen the exchange of experiences and models for regional planning and development between East and West in Northern Europe, and to establish and strengthen centres of competence in the regions. Therefore, cross border co-operation and partnerships with regions in Northwest Russia should find special support in the implementation of a new Northern Dimension Action Plan.” (CPMR-BSC)

12. [ND cooperation to focus on realistic number of themes]

Baltic 21 proposes that “an increased focus is placed in the *Northern Dimension after 2006* on the development and implementation of concrete, result-oriented activities. This approach has been adopted by Baltic 21 in its Strategy Guidelines adopted in 2004, which, *inter alia*, call for the development and implementation of the so-called Lighthouse projects. The first year of their implementation has proven that these projects entail concrete and sensible actions that produce valuable results. The Baltic 21 Lighthouse Projects concept aims to develop and implement a focused set of projects designed to demonstrate sustainable development in action. They are envisaged as transnational in scope and should ensure high-visibility and engage as many participating countries and sectors as possible in proving the value-added of sustainable development. Currently there are three fully-fledged Lighthouse Projects that are ongoing within the Baltic 21 framework, each of which is co-financed by with the INTERREG III B Programme.

Recognition of Baltic 21 Lighthouse Projects as a contribution to the Northern Dimension policy, in terms of sustainable development in the Baltic Sea region, would boost their level of development and implementation. It would increase the interest of partners at different levels and thus improve cooperation, triggering more

¹³ ““Relevant regional and local authorities within the Northern Dimension area should be encouraged to play a crucial role in the implementation of activities by Partners and Participants within the framework of the Partnership. Their direct involvement in all stages and at all levels of the co-operation procedures under the Partnership should be ensured.” (cf. “Declaration concerning the establishment of a Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social Wellbeing”, adopted by i.a. Ministers of Health and Social Affairs in Oslo on 27 October 2003)”

active participation in this type of project programme by bringing together the views and best practices of decision-makers, experts, implementation practitioners, as well as research and business communities. An ideal way for the ND to recognise Baltic 21 LHPs would be to present a description of the projects which are ongoing, in the appropriate 'Action Plan Priority Area' section of future editions of the Northern Dimension Information System...This would enable interested parties access to up-to-date information on Baltic 21 LHPs, and their role in implementing and bringing added-value to the Northern Dimension's overall set of activities. In particular, since the Northern Dimension places an emphasis on ensuring the active participation of all stakeholders in the North (including regional organizations, local and regional authorities, the academic and business communities, and civil society), the nature of Baltic 21's multi-stakeholder membership and cooperation network, will undoubtedly enable LHPs to bring added-value to the ND's implementation. Furthermore, LHPs can bring added-value to implementing the ND, insofar as it is stated that one of the key purposes of the ND Action Plan is to set out concrete activities." (Baltic 21)

13. [Cross-border cooperation as cross-cutting theme; sustainable development]

Baltic 21 stated that "during the 5th Baltic Sea States Summit in June 2004 in Estonia, while taking note of the Baltic 21 Five-Year Report, the Heads of Government underlined the importance of integrating the principles of sustainable development into policy making by all relevant stakeholders and expressed their interest in the Baltic 21-proposed concept of making the Baltic Sea region an Eco-Region for Sustainable Development covering the economic, ecological and social spheres. Baltic 21 recommends that this concept be clearly integrated into the forthcoming Political Declaration and a Policy Framework Document for the ND Policy from 2007.

Consequently, in order to better support the goals and activities of Baltic 21 the *Northern Dimension after 2006* should put more emphasis on (i) effectively integrating sustainable development into policy-making in the policy areas of relevance to sustainable development, as well as (ii) strengthening and encouraging cross-sectoral initiatives for sustainable development. In order to achieve a focused working method, the selection of issues to be addressed should follow the work cycles of the UN Commission for Sustainable Development (as agreed in Luleå).

Furthermore, Baltic 21 would like to stress the importance of continued efforts to ensure proper links between research and decision-making in the field of sustainable development. Along these lines, a proposal for developing a Baltic Sea Region Sustainable Development Research Network to produce policy relevant outputs, is currently under discussion within the Baltic 21 framework. A possible role for the proposed sustainable development research network could be to provide regionally coordinated information and views about developments in the ND's key priority thematic areas, which also bear relevance to the Baltic 21 Sectors, Joint Actions, and Spatial Planning. These areas would be specifically education, the environment, natural resources, and regional development. Furthermore, the proposed research network could, perhaps, coordinate its input on the abovementioned themes, with research institutions in the Northern Dimension Advisory Network." (Baltic 21)

As regards “the particular competencies and expertise at the regional level, the BSSSC recommends to give the status of a cross-cutting issue to cross-border and transnational co-operation at sub-regional and local levels, similar to the cross-cutting issues mentioned in the current 2nd NDAP (Kaliningrad, Arctic).” (BSSSC)

Implementation and Monitoring

14. [Structures of Cooperation Mechanisms]

Finland within WGEC (cf. above 3); BSPC (cf. above 2)

The BSSSC stated that “when setting up a new political frame of ND from 2007, BSSSC recommends that the duplication or multiplication of steering and monitoring bodies be avoided where ever possible: Already, the number of existing co-operation and steering bodies in the BSR require enhanced co-ordination efforts, whereas more lean co-operation structures could contribute to more effective co-operation in the area...

As regards the implementation of the ‘ND from 2007’...the BSSSC calls upon the CBSS to become engaged with respect to its focal role as an overall coordination point. This also should include an active and committed contribution of the BSR co-operation framework to the implementation of the ‘ND from 2007,’ which needs to be prepared and elaborated on in a co-ordinated manner.

In this regard, the BSSSC points to the annual co-ordination meetings of the major BSR co-operation bodies as well as to the experiences won by the series of ‘BSSSC Northern Dimension seminars’ held alongside the annual BSSSC Conferences 2002, 2003 and 2004.” (BSSSC, cf. above 2)

The CPMR Baltic Sea Commission “...recognises the European Commission’s commitment and its active role as hub and co-ordinating actions as crucial. The European Commission’s role is consequently of great importance in the process of developing, implementing and following up the activity within the Northern Dimension and shall be preserved.” (CPMR-BSC)

15. [Financing of ND Activities]

According to the WGCC, “cooperation with neighbouring countries requires some financial resources. There is a need for funding opportunities in order to gain active participation in projects beyond political meetings. Gaps should be identified, but when they are identified, measures need to be taken to fill them and these measures require funding.” (WGCC)

The BSSSC underlined that “from 2007 on the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) shall be used as a major tool for implementing EU-Russia partnership as well as the ‘ND from 2007.’ Against this background, the BSSSC recommends that the ENPI be implemented with Russia in the full scope as suggested by the Draft ENPI regulation¹⁴, including cross-border co-operation as well as in the whole BSR being a ‘common sea basin.’

In order to enable the full participation of Russian partners in BSR co-operation projects, the BSSSC recommends that any ENPI common sea basin programme in

¹⁴ COM 2004/628 final (Article 8, 1c)

the BSR be adjusted to future objective 3 transnational co-operation programme in the BSR (currently the INTERREG III B BSR programme). As far as possible, this should also apply to future steering structures and project application/decision procedures.” (BSSSC)

According to the CPMR-BSC, “a new Action Plan could thus be better co-ordinated with the new financial instrument within the structural funds (the future objective three transnational co-operation programme) in the Baltic Sea region and the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument, which will operate in the new financial perspective 2007-2013.

Although the Baltic Sea Commission would prefer an independent budget line for Northern Dimension, we are convinced that a sufficient budget allocation within the financial instrument as INTERREG Northern Periphery and INTERREG Baltic Sea Region would allow the regions to access sufficient funding to efficiently implement activities within the Northern Dimension.

To get the utmost of available financial instruments in co-operation with regions within and outside of the European Union after 2006, the use of the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument must be interoperable with the financial instruments within the structural funds.

The CPMR Baltic Sea Commission also believes, that the introduction of ‘Tripartite Contracts’ could help facilitate project co-operation of a cross-border nature in several priority fields for the Northern Dimension.” (CPMR-BSC)

The BSPC stressed that “...the EU should provide sufficient manpower and financial resources for a successful development of the Northern Dimension.” (BSPC)

16. [Principle of co-financing]

In the BSSSC’s view, “current, as well as future ND projects, can be co-financed by various sources, spanning from EU programmes to international, Nordic or national funds and others. In order to enhance transparency and to generate additional creativity of tentative project partners to develop projects according to ND objectives, the BSSSC recommends that the ND stakeholders list funds and programmes from which the co-financing of projects could be sought. As regards EU funds and programmes, the BSSSC recommends that future ND implementation reports given by the European Commission indicate which EU funds and programmes have been used for co-financing project work.” (BSSSC)

III) The New Political Declaration and Framework Document to Be Adopted in 2006

17. [ND basic texts to be negotiated and adopted jointly by the ND parties]

The Task Force on Organised Crime in the BSR and its Finnish Chairmanship “will be interested in contributing to a further development of the ND basic texts...taking into account that the current mandate of the Task Force runs out at the end of 2008.” (TF-OC)

The CPMR Baltic Sea Commission “supports the Northern Dimension policy and welcomes future development of strategic documents such as a third Action Plan for Northern Dimension.” (CPMR-BSC)

18. [Permanent nature and regular reviews of the new ND political declaration and framework policy document]

According to the CPMR-BSC, “the current Northern Dimension Action Plan comprises a two-year period. The policy sets the vision and the Action Plans give guidelines for specific actions to take within the Northern Dimension. CPMR Baltic Sea Commission believes that a long term planning would make the Northern Dimension more durable.” (CPMR-BSC)

Conclusions [Participation of all ND parties and actors in the debate on new ND]

TF-OC (cf. above 17); Baltic Sea NGO Forum Consultative Committee (cf. above 4)

The Finnish representative within the WGEC expressed that “...developing the Northern Dimension certainly implies a close cooperation between all interested parties. One could, for example, invite Russian views on the role of the Russian regions in developing economic cooperation, promoting investments and infrastructure.” (Finland within WGEC)

Baltic 21 “welcomes the fact that the Northern Dimension (ND) policy – which aims, inter alia, at providing a common framework for strengthening sustainable development in Northern Europe – increasingly places the focus on North West Russia. Baltic 21 hopes for a broader and deeper involvement of Russian stakeholders in regional cooperation for sustainable development, since North West Russia is the largest territory covered by the ND policy, including the Kaliningrad oblast with its particular geographical situation as well as the extensive Arctic and Sub-arctic areas.” (Baltic 21)

In the BSPC’s view, “the process of elaborating and implementing the new Northern Dimension shall involve actors at all levels and aim at achieving results of practical importance for the citizens. Participants noted with satisfaction that the November 2005 Ministerial Meeting on Northern Dimension invited all Northern Dimension parties and actors to participate in the debate on a new Northern Dimension. ...Parliamentary involvement in the further development of the Northern dimension should be strengthened. The meetings in the recently established Extended Standing Committee of the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference (BSPC) could serve as one of the fora for regular parliamentary deliberations and monitoring of the new Northern Dimension.” (BSPC)

**GUIDELINES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A POLITICAL DECLARATION AND
A POLICY FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT
FOR THE NORTHERN DIMENSION POLICY FROM 2007**

I) INTRODUCTION

1. Established in 1999, the Northern Dimension (ND) policy aimed at providing a common framework for the promotion of dialogue and concrete cooperation, strengthening stability, wellbeing and sustainable development in northern Europe. The Northern Dimension covers a broad geographic area stretching from the Arctic and Sub-Arctic to the southern shores of the Baltic, and from North-West Russia in the east to Iceland and Greenland in the west. The ND focus increasingly in North West Russia, the largest territory covered by the ND policy, with its specific challenges affecting also the other ND parties. The ND policy is now becoming a joint project of its parties and should ensure that no dividing lines are re-established in the North of Europe.
2. The ND parties are the EU Member States, the Russian Federation, Norway, Iceland and the European Commission. The Northern Dimension provides also a frame of reference for intensified transatlantic cooperation of the ND parties in matters concerning the northern regions of the world, through the observer status of USA and Canada.
3. The regional organizations in the North of Europe, i.e. the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS), the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC), and The Nordic Council of Ministers (NCM) are important actors embracing a wide range of cooperation in their respective geographical area. The ND aims to enhance the synergies of these organizations, maximizing the use of the resources available for the region, while avoiding any possible overlapping. The Arctic Council (AC), with a wider geographical coverage, maintains strong links and shared objectives with the European regional organizations in the North and with the Northern Dimension. All four Northern regional organizations identify needs for development and cooperation in their respective areas and support project implementation in different ways.
4. The sub-national, regional and local entities have an important role in the implementation of projects and activities, in line with the principle of subsidiarity. The International Financial Institutions active in the North, as well as civil society in general, particularly the business sector and non-governmental organisations are relevant ND actors which have provided important contributions to the implementation of the ND policy.
5. The Kaliningrad oblast with its particular geographical situation as well as the extensive Arctic and Sub-arctic areas, notably those of North West Russia are priority areas for the ND policy. Assuring the full economic and social integration of these priority areas within the dynamics of the ND region while preserving at the same time national sovereignty is a ND objective.
6. At present there are two Partnerships within the ND framework: the Northern Dimension Environmental Partnership (NDEP) and The Northern Dimension Partnership in Health and Social Wellbeing (NDPHS). The NDEP has proved to be a success by combining efforts and commitment of ND parties and by establishing a model of cooperation between

international financial institutions. Its Fund has allowed the implementation of important environmental projects. The NDEP may be considered as a pattern for future Partnerships.

7. A permanent flow of information is a key element of the Northern Dimension policy. All ND stakeholders should provide update information concerning their projects, either bilateral or multilateral, to the ND Information System. The ND annual reports should be endorsed jointly by all ND parties.

II) A NORTHERN DIMENSION POLICY FROM 2007 ONWARDS

8. Taking account of the enlargement of the European Union (EU) in May 2004 and the adoption of the Road Maps for the four Common Spaces between the EU and the Russian Federation in May 2005, the ND requires some reshaping in order to better fit into the new operational environment. While keeping the broad geographical coverage, the ND policy should be used as a political and operational framework for promoting the implementation of the EU-Russia Common Spaces at regional/sub-regional/local level in the North with full participation of Norway and Iceland. In addition, Belarus could be encouraged to participate in expert level cooperation in the ND framework.
9. The new ND should be considered therefore as a regional expression of the Common Spaces. Therefore, the new ND policy framework should identify areas of cooperation where a regional emphasis would bring added value. However it should continue to include some additional objectives of specific relevance in the North, i.e. its fragile environment, indigenous peoples' issues, health and social well being, etc. Russia and the EU are invited to make ND a cross-cutting topic where appropriate for the dialogues launched or considered within the framework of implementation of the road maps.

Cooperation Sectors

10. The current ND cooperation areas (economy, business and infrastructure; human resources, education, culture, scientific research, and health; the environment, nuclear safety and natural resources; cross-border cooperation and regional development; justice and home affairs) should be re-focused in line with the Common Spaces as described in § 9 above.
11. The following ND sector division could be established:
 - *Economic cooperation* (promotion of trade, investments and business level cooperation, and development of the energy, transport and information technology infrastructure);
 - *Freedom, Security and Justice* (facilitation of people-to-people contacts, prevention of trafficking in human beings, drugs trafficking, illegal immigration and other cross-border crime, development of border monitoring, rescue services and good governance, and the efficiency of the judicial system);
 - *External security* (civilian crisis management);
 - *Research, education and culture* (increased cooperation and exchange programmes, people-to-people contacts);

- *Environment, nuclear safety and natural resources:* (reduction of the risk of nuclear and other pollution, marine safety, protection of the Arctic ecosystems and biodiversity, forests and fish stocks; cooperation in the field of water policy, supporting a fruitful continuation of the Northern Dimension Environmental Partnership and its support fund);
- *Social welfare and health care:* (prevention of communicable diseases and life-style related diseases, supporting the work of the Partnership in Health and Social Wellbeing).

The areas for cooperation should be developed jointly, taking account of the interests of all ND stakeholders.

12. While maintaining the comprehensive ND nature and underlying its main objective of becoming the privileged forum for discussing the challenges of northern Europe, its cooperation activities should focus on a realistic number of themes to be decided jointly in order to maximize the use of the limited resources.
13. Cross-border cooperation should continue to be a cross-cutting theme producing added value at the sub-regional and trans-national level, enhancing regional development, the involvement of civil society and people-to-people contacts keeping in mind the objective of visa free travel between the EU and Russia as stipulated in the St. Petersburg Summit of May 2003. The ND also promotes the development of national and regional strategies for sustainable development, in line with internationally recognized principles, as well as good governance, transparency and participation, gender equality, the rights of minorities, social cohesion, non-discrimination, the protection of indigenous peoples and supports the further strengthening of civil society and democratic institutions.

Implementation and Monitoring

14. The structures of cooperation mechanisms under the ND will be agreed upon by the ND Parties at a later stage. It is clear that they will function at Ministerial and Senior Officials level and will provide policy guidance and monitoring. The agendas of all the meetings within the ND framework should be prepared in full consultation of all ND parties.
15. ND activities are implemented by various actors and financed from different sources, such as the existing EU financing programmes, national budgets, international regional organizations, international financial institutions, regional and local public organizations, other public bodies, such as universities, and private sources, including civil society. As far as the EU is concerned, from 2007 on, the new European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) should be a central source of EU financing for ND activities, notably focussing on cross-border cooperation, along the lines of the relevant EU-Russia financial cooperation arrangements to be developed. The ND should also benefit from other applicable EU programmes.”
16. Adequate financial support is an important factor for the efficient functioning of the ND policy. The principle of co-financing from the EU, Russia, other ND parties, as well as

from international (EIB, EBRD ...) and private financial institutions where appropriate, should be the general rule.

III) THE NEW POLITICAL DECLARATION AND FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT TO BE ADOPTED IN 2006

17. The new ND basic texts should be negotiated and adopted jointly by the EU, the Russian Federation, Norway and Iceland, leading to a consolidated common Northern Dimension policy, to which the parties should provide their full commitment. They should consist of a joint political declaration and a framework policy document stating the objectives and identifying the necessary structures for achieving them. The ND document should be considered a common achievement which could be agreed in the second half of 2006 and enter into force in 2007.
18. The new ND political declaration and framework policy document should have a permanent nature. Nevertheless it would be important to ensure regular reviews. All ND parties and actors should provide their assessment to the ND meetings in order to facilitate the regular reviews.

CONCLUSION

The ND Parties agree to set up a joint expert level steering group that will be charged with the drafting of the abovementioned documents.

The ND Ministerial Meeting invites all ND parties and actors to participate in the debate on a new ND. Russian participation in this debate is crucial in order to obtain an active Russian involvement in all ND meetings and activities.

The CBSS and the Northern Dimension

(by CBSS Secretariat Communications Officer Didrik de Schaetzen)

In the lead-up to the second EU Foreign Minister's Conference on the Northern Dimension in Luxembourg on 9 April 2001, the CBSS prepared, in close co-operation with partner organisations from the region, a "**List of Priorities and Projects towards the Northern Dimension Action Plan 2000-2003**" as its contribution toward the implementation of the Action Plan¹⁵.

During the Russian CBSS Presidency 2001-2002, the CBSS Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) delegated specific Member States to take the lead in monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the nine different sectors identified within the CBSS "**List of Priorities and Projects**". The CSO held its first **Special Session at Brussels on 25 January 2002**¹⁶, devoted to reporting by the "sector lead countries" on the CBSS contribution to the implementation of the NDAP. A number of European Commission experts participated and commented on each of the nine sectors, providing an overview of the Commission's ongoing and planned activities within the framework of the Northern Dimension Action Plan. Representatives of certain CBSS partner organisations who had been actively involved in the preparation of the "**List of Priorities and Projects**" also participated, as did representatives of the EBRD and EIB.

The Danish EU Presidency in 2002 organized two EU "15+7" ministerial conferences on the Northern Dimension: (i) Ilulissat, Greenland (28 August 2002), devoted to opening the "Arctic window" of the Northern Dimension, and also featuring a discussion of the Commission non-paper on "The Northern Dimension after Enlargement"; and (ii) Luxembourg (21 October 2002), at which the "Guidelines for a new Action Plan" were accepted as a basis for the elaboration of a new Northern Dimension Action Plan for 2004-06. The key role of the CBSS and other regional organisations was recognised in the Guidelines in terms of the elaboration and implementation of a new Northern Dimension Action Plan.

As part of the preparation of the CBSS input to the new Action Plan, a "**Progress report of NDAP 2000-2003**"¹⁷ has been compiled to reflect the CBSS contribution to the implementation of the NDAP for 2000-2003. It is also the direct result of the 2nd Coordination meeting of Chairmen of Baltic Sea Regional Organisations, chaired by the CBSS at Lillehammer, Norway on 23 October 2002. At that meeting, the CBSS was mandated by its main partner organisations from the region to compile the comprehensive "**Progress report**".

In this context, the Committee of Senior Officials of the CBSS decided to organize, in close cooperation with the European Commission, a **Special Session at Brussels on 6-7 March 2003** devoted to elaborating CBSS input to the NDAP for 2004-06. As part of its preparation for the special session and as part of its input to the elaboration of a new Action Plan for 2004-06, the CBSS canvassed its working bodies and related

¹⁵ The CBSS "*Priorities and Projects - Contribution to the NDAP 2000-2003*" is available at www.cbss.org/documents/cbsspresidencies/9german/prioritiesandprojects.

¹⁶ The documents regarding the CSO Special Session at Brussels on 25 January 2002 are available at www.cbss.org/documents/cbsspresidencies/10russian/dbaFile1184.html

¹⁷ The CBSS "*Progress Report on the implementation of the NDAP 2002-2003*" is available at www.cbss.org/documents/cbsspresidencies/11finnish/cbssprogressreportofndap00-03.pdf

organisations to draft their contributions to the new Action Plan according to the modalities proposed by the Commission and endorsed by the CSO. This compilation resulted in a working document "**Contributions towards NDAP 2004-2006**"¹⁸, which has proven to be a valuable source of material for the CBSS rapporteurs who present the main strategic objectives of the CBSS vis-à-vis the new Action Plan.

At the outset of the Estonian Presidency of the CBSS on 11 June 2003, the EU Commission published as a Working Document its proposal for a Second NDAP. In order to formulate a common CBSS position on the Commission proposal, the CSO Chairman tasked the Secretariat to prepare the "**Comments on the EU Commission Working Document**"¹⁹, with comments and suggestions from CBSS Member States, CBSS Structures and Working Bodies and related organisations.

At the request of the EU Commission, the CBSS Secretariat also compiled in March 2004 all written contributions from CBSS working bodies and Partner organisations to the "**Northern Dimension Information System**"²⁰.

¹⁸ The CBSS "*Contributions towards the second NDAP 2004-2006*" is available at

www.cbss.org/documents/cbsspresidencies/11finnish/cbsscontributionstothe2ndndap.pdf

¹⁹ The CBSS "*Comments on the EU Commission Working Document: the 2nd NDAP 2004-2006*" is available at

www.cbss.org/documents/euand_baltic_region/eund/dbaFile2422.html

²⁰ NDIS Contribution: www.cbss.org/documents/euand_baltic_region/eund/report-northerndimensioninformationsystem.pdf