

JOINT STATEMENT OF THE 14TH BALTIC COUNCIL

The Baltic Assembly and the Baltic Council of Ministers convened on 5 - 6 December 2008 in Viljandi, the Republic of Estonia, for the 14th Baltic Council to evaluate progress on joint priorities of co-operation for 2008 and to set cooperation priorities for 2009.

The Baltic Assembly and the Baltic Council of Ministers agreed to:

- 1) deepen and expand coordination of common activities of the Baltic States on parliamentary and governmental level to respond to economic, environmental and security challenges;
- 2) pay special attention and contribute to the settlement of conflict in Georgia;
- 3) increase co-operation in the field of cyber security with the aim to develop better capacity to respond to the threats originating in cyber space;
- 4) develop mutual co-operation and sharing of good practices among the Baltic States in developing competitiveness in vocational education and training systems;
- 5) develop joint coordinated and predictable support mechanisms for development of the creative industries in the Baltic States;
- 6) continue increasing energy security by development of functioning energy market and implementation of energy infrastructure projects that connect the Baltic States with the energy networks of other EU member states;
- 7) pay special attention to climate change mitigation issues and develop strategies and measures to reduce the vulnerability to the possible consequences of climate change.

The Baltic Assembly and the Baltic Council of Ministers defined the following priorities for co-operation in 2009:

1. Security Policy
 - cooperation on defence, environmental security, information security issues;
2. Energy policy
 - Cooperation in developing a common electricity and gas market;
 - Cooperation in ensuring reliable energy supply to the Baltic States;
3. Eastern Policy
 - Cooperation with partners of European neighbourhood policy.

The Baltic Assembly and the Baltic Council of Ministers announce 2009 as the year of the 20th Anniversary of the Baltic Way.

The next 15th Baltic Council will be held during the Lithuanian presidency on 26-28 November 2009 in Vilnius, the Republic of Lithuania.

Trivimi VELLISTE
President of the Baltic Assembly

Urmas PAET
Chairman of the Cooperation Council of
the Baltic Council of Ministers

Viljandi, 6 December 2008