

JOINT STATEMENT OF THE 15TH BALTIC COUNCIL

On 27 November 2009 in Vilnius, the Republic of Lithuania, the Baltic Assembly and the Baltic Council of Ministers convened for the 15th Baltic Council to evaluate progress on joint priorities of co-operation for 2009 and to set cooperation priorities for 2010.

The Baltic Council highly estimates the joint commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the Baltic Way which took place within 2009. The Baltic Way was a historic act of the Baltic solidarity and non-violent protest against the Soviet occupation of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania as a consequence of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact. The recent decision to include the Baltic Way in the UNESCO Programme Memory of the World International Register is a confirmation of the historic significance of this world-wide phenomenon.

The Baltic Council confirms the need for full scale trilateral cooperation of the Baltic States on parliamentary and governmental level and expresses strong determination to further strengthen the ties among Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in shaping EU and NATO policies based on shared values and strategic interests of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

The Baltic Council declares the following:

1) recalling recent resolutions of the European Parliament and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, we welcome the initiative to proclaim the 23rd of August as a Europe-wide Day of Remembrance for the victims of Stalinism and Nazism. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania will continue their joint efforts with a view to preserve historical memory and ensure honest and open appraisal of common European totalitarian legacy of the 20th century;

2) we shall pay special attention to the stabilisation of economies of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, underlining achievement of sustainable growth promoting competitiveness and encouraging development of knowledge economy and research activities;

3) we shall provide increased support to joint energy and transport infrastructure projects such as Baltic Railway (Rail Baltica), Via Baltica, and projects included in the Action Plan of BEMIP, which will increase competitiveness of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania on regional and global level; we shall seek close cooperation while implementing the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region;

4) we shall enhance awareness of the present international security situation and the new security threats and challenges, among them – energy security, climate change and cyber crime;

5) we shall promote an integrated and optimized regional approach to ensure energy security by creating new generation capacities, diversifying energy supplies, creating a common Baltic energy market and developing interconnections of infrastructure with the rest of the EU;

6) we shall pay special attention to climate change issues and develop strategies and measures for mitigation and for reducing the consequences through adaptation;

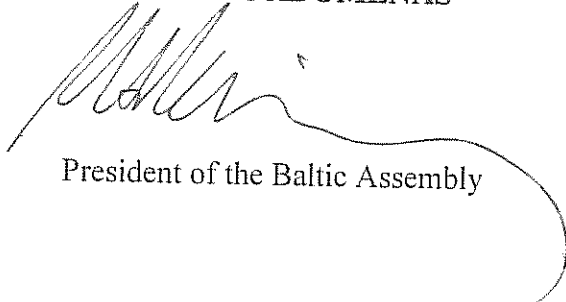
7) we shall coordinate policies to ensure a flexible and secure labour market by developing crosssectoral approaches combining social security policies, life-long learning and vocational education and economic development strategies.

The Baltic Council defines the following priorities for co-operation in 2010:

- economic stabilisation and increase of competitiveness;
- security, including energy security and environment issues;
- strategic cooperation between Baltic and Nordic countries.

The next 16th Baltic Council will be held during the Latvian presidency on 21–23 October 2010 in Rīga, the Republic of Latvia.

Dr. Mantas ADOMĖNAS



President of the Baltic Assembly

Vygaudas UŠACKAS



Chairman of the Cooperation Council of
the Baltic Council of Ministers

Vilnius, 27 November 2009