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The Baltic Assembly

REPORT

submitted on behalf of the Committee for Parliamentary and Public Relations
by Mr. Masseret, Chairman and Rapporteur

ASSEMBLY OF WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION

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1. Adopted unanimously by the committee.

2. *Members of the committee*: Mr. Masseret (Chairman); Sir Russell Johnston, Baroness Gould of Potternewton (Vice-Chairmen); Mr. Amaral, Mrs. Beer, MM. *Benvenuti*, Birraux, Decagny, Dionisi, Sir Anthony Durant (Alternate: Baroness Hooper), Mr. Erlar, Mrs. Err (Alternate: Mrs. *Brasseur*), Mr. Eversdijk, Mrs. Fernandez Sanz, MM. Ghesquière, Gouteyron, Sir *John Hunt*, MM. Kempinaire, Korahais, *Kotsonis*, *Lunnmer*, *Martins*, Mattina, Robles Fraga, Sainz Garcia, Selva, Mrs. Terborg, Mrs. Verspaget.

N.B. *The names of those taking part in the vote are printed in italics.*

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Draft Order
on the Baltic Assembly

The Assembly,

- (i) Noting with interest the progress achieved by Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in inter-state and inter-parliamentary co-operation with a view to joining European and transatlantic co-operative structures;
- (ii) Welcoming the driving rôle played by the Baltic Assembly in this area in fostering a rapprochement between the three states and between their peoples and their full participation in establishing a system of security and stability in Europe;
- (iii) Emphasising the progress made in pursuing the process of reforming their economic and security structures with a view to their rapprochement with the European Union, NATO and WEU;
- (iv) Welcoming the signing of association agreements between the three Baltic states and the European Union as an important step towards their integration in the Union;
- (v) Noting the fears expressed by Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania regarding their security;
- (vi) Welcoming initiatives taken by the three countries in co-operation in security and defence matters and the formation of a Baltic states joint battalion for United Nations operations;
- (vii) Stressing the importance of aid from NATO and WEU countries for developing such co-operation and strengthening the joint security of the three states and of Europe as a whole;
- (viii) Recalling Order 90 affirming that “ more intensive co-operation between the WEU Assembly and the Central European parliaments constitutes an important element in the process of integration of these countries in the structures of European political and defence co-operation ”,

I. INSTRUCTS ITS PRESIDENTIAL COMMITTEE

- 1. To ensure development of close co-operation between the WEU Assembly and the Baltic Assembly in security and defence matters;
- 2. To promote contacts between like committees of the two Assemblies;
- 3. To envisage the possibility of receiving officials of the Baltic Assembly in the Office of the Clerk of the Assembly for a period and according to arrangements to be defined between the two institutions, with a view to training them in the procedures and working methods of the WEU Assembly;

II. REQUESTS ITS COMMITTEE ON BUDGETARY AFFAIRS AND ADMINISTRATION

To include in the Assembly's budget for the 1996 financial year, in accordance with Order 90, a provision for setting up an Assembly support fund for parliamentary co-operation with the parliaments of associate partner countries.

Explanatory Memorandum

(submitted by Mr. Masseret, Chairman and Rapporteur)

I. Introduction

1. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, associate partners of WEU since the Council of Ministers created this status of association with the Central European countries at the Kirchberg meeting on 9th May 1994¹, occupy a special place in Europe. Their specific character is due not to geographic location but to their common history, for, unlike the other countries of the region, they existed as sovereign independent states for twenty-one years before an interruption which lasted almost fifty, during which time they formed part of the Soviet Union.

2. Nevertheless, neither mass deportations nor their relative isolation succeeded in weakening their hopes of rejoining the international community of states and regaining their place in Europe as sovereign nations. Progress since 1991 in the political and economic spheres, achieved through major national effort, demonstrates their will to integrate into European co-operation structures.

3. Since Latvia became a member of the Council of Europe, in January 1995, the three countries now have a presence in European organisations although their possible accession to the European Union, with which they signed association agreements on 12th April 1995, and membership of NATO, with which they have links through the partnership for peace programme, seem unlikely before next century.

4. At the same time, significantly, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, anxious that there should be no recurrence of the conditions leading to their earlier annexation by the USSR, have instituted three-way co-operation between themselves and on an inter-regional basis. They thus gave new impetus to the Baltic Council, created on 12th May 1990, in co-ordinating the process leading to the independence of the three countries. On 6th March 1992, they joined the Council of Baltic States, established on the initiative of Germany and Denmark, comprising states bordering on the Baltic sea².

1. Document 1442: Kirchberg declaration, II. Document on a status of association with WEU for the Republic of Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Hungary, the Republic of Latvia, the Republic of Lithuania, the Republic of Poland, Romania and the Slovak Republic, 24th May 1994.

2. Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russian Federation and Sweden.

5. The Baltic Council has, in addition to the Council of Ministers and its secretariat, a parliamentary arm, the Baltic Assembly. To a greater extent even than intergovernmental co-operation, this institution is called upon to play a major rôle in the development of co-operation between the three states. Through discussions held in this forum and the resolutions it adopts directed to the Council of Ministers, and by virtue of the important rôle parliament plays in the national political life of these states, the Assembly exercises considerable influence on the actions of national governments.

6. The Baltic Assembly also intends to develop its external relations by intensifying contacts with other regional and European interparliamentary institutions. Through such relations, the Assembly promotes a better understanding of the special characteristics of the three countries and of the unit they form within the region. At the same time, it draws upon the experience of older institutions, for example in procedural matters and in relation to the organisation of work.

II. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania: from political to parliamentary co-operation

7. The three states do not form a homogenous whole despite a rather superficial tendency to present them as such. Their economies, cultures and languages differ and, apart from their geographic position, all they seem to share is a common history under Soviet occupation. Moreover, these differences proved a major handicap in the 1920s and 1930s by creating an obstacle to closer co-operation between them³ and partly contributing to the circumstances of their annexation by the Soviet Union – virtually without a blow being struck.

8. In 1991, having regained their independence, they found themselves back where they started, but with an economic, environmental, social and political heritage that was harder to manage. Their respective situations are once again different. While Lithuania has succeeded in reaching satisfactory settlement of the problems of the Russian military presence and the question

3. A treaty on concord and co-operation was signed by the three states in Geneva in 1934, but never applied because of disagreement between them. Six years later, in 1940, they were annexed by the Soviet Union.

of the status of its Russian-speaking and other minorities, Latvia and Estonia had to engage in a long-drawn out process of negotiation with the Russian Federation over these matters, a process they recently concluded, not without difficulty⁴.

(a) Inter-state co-operation

9. The awareness of the need for co-operation between the three states came fairly shortly after independence. Faced with the same difficulties and resolved to create, internally, the conditions required for joining European and transatlantic political, economic and defence institutions, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania decided to co-ordinate their policies with a view to preparing for entry on the most favourable terms and, at the same time, strengthening their negotiating position with the Russian Federation over the withdrawal of Russian troops and the status of Russian-speaking minorities.

(i) The Baltic Council

10. The Baltic Council was created in 1990, by reference to the 1934 treaty on concord and co-operation between the Baltic states, with the aim of co-ordinating the efforts of the three countries to regain their independence from the Soviet Union and thus re-establish continuity of their statehood, broken in 1940. In 1991, after the failed Moscow coup of 19th-21st August, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania once again became sovereign states.

11. However, real co-operation between the three countries began to develop only in 1994 with the signature of several important political, economic and defence agreements. This can in part be explained by the will, paramount at the outset, to assert their national identity, at times at the expense of their neighbours. Once the economic and political situation stabilised, however, inter-state co-operation began in earnest.

12. A free trade agreement was signed between the three countries in Tallinn on 13th September 1993 for developing inter-state trade and harmonising customs policies and visa requirements for the transport of goods and free movement of nationals of each country. This is an important step that augurs well for signature of association agreements with the European Union.

13. There have been major developments in political and military co-operation in 1994 since the withdrawal of the remaining Russian troops stationed in Estonia. The heads of government of the three countries, meeting in Tallinn on 13th June 1994, adopted the statutes of the Baltic

Council governing its operation at ministerial level. On 13th September 1994, the Baltic Council of Ministers adopted a resolution calling for the development of a common foreign and security policy. This policy, coupled with economic co-operation, aims to strengthen regional co-operation and foster integration into European and transatlantic economic, political and security structures.

(ii) Prospects for inter-state co-operation

14. Progress achieved in 1994 in co-operation between the three countries and development of their economic and political relations with European and transatlantic institutions represents a major contribution to the region's stability, the effects of which will undoubtedly be beneficial to integration and in their relations with the Russian Federation.

15. Differences are, nevertheless, still observable between them, although it is normal and desirable that a degree of competition should exist, especially in the economic sphere. In foreign policy, particularly in their relations with the Russian Federation, differences of approach are apparent, for example with regard to the status of Russian-speaking minorities, or settling the question of the departure from their respective territories of Soviet, then Russian, troops, withdrawal having been relatively rapid in Lithuania's case, more protracted in that of Latvia and Estonia.

16. Sensitive areas concerning, for example, harmonisation of border control procedures and visa policy between the three states are not yet entirely resolved in spite of a declared willingness to do so and requests to this effect from the Baltic Assembly. There is little attempt to play down these differences which are tackled more or less openly by those with responsibility whether in official meetings or before parliamentarians or media. This encourages the search for solutions and greater transparency in relations between countries. Thus, the Baltic Assembly adopted a resolution at its 6th plenary session, held in Riga on 21st and 22nd April, on the harmonisation of border control procedures and calling for the establishment of a joint computerised information system in this area, mirroring the action taken in the context of the Schengen agreements and European procedures for the free movement of goods and persons.

17. Inter-state co-operation is still in its infancy which partly explains any hesitancy and also continuing differences of assessment of certain areas of common interest. Apart from bringing the three states closer together, development and institutionalisation of the links between them affords them greater room for manoeuvre within their regional environment than if they acted alone. This is an essential advantage to them in their

4. Latvia's late entry to the Council of Europe is largely due to the delay in resolving the question of the status of the resident Russian-speaking minority in Latvia.

approach to the European and transatlantic organisations of which they ultimately hope to become full members.

(b) Inter-regional co-operation

18. The development of inter-state co-operation has facilitated the reintegration of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania into their natural geopolitical environment: the Baltic Sea area. Two regional organisations with which the three countries co-operate, both for economic purposes and in the interests of the stability and security of that part of Europe are the Nordic Council and the Council of Baltic Sea States. At the same time, they are actively seeking to join European and transatlantic organisations for co-operation and security.

(i) Nordic and Baltic co-operation

19. The Nordic Council, established in 1952, is composed of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. It has a parliamentary Council, the seat of which is in Stockholm, and a Council of Ministers with a secretariat in Copenhagen. The aim of the Nordic Council is to promote political co-operation between the Nordic countries and it plays an important rôle vis-à-vis the three Baltic countries.

20. The Council has established a number of economic, cultural and environmental programmes directed towards Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, within the framework of political, economic and parliamentary co-operation. Hence, a parliamentary co-operation agreement was signed in Palanga, Lithuania, on 30th May 1992 between the Baltic Assembly and the Nordic Council, covering a number of fields ranging from culture to security and including the environment, the economy, communications and energy. Since Finland and Sweden's entry into the European Union on 1st January 1995, the Nordic Council also serves as a point of contact between the three Baltic countries and the Union.

21. The Council of Baltic Sea States, established in 1992 on the initiative of Germany and Denmark, aims to assist the process of economic and political reform currently underway in the three Baltic countries, Poland and the Russian Federation. The intention is also, through this approach, to promote regional stability and security. Furthermore, the presence of Poland and the Russian Federation facilitates discussion with the three countries, for example on border issues.

22. In security matters, inter-regional co-operation lay at the root of the agreement signed by Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden on 3rd June 1994, on the formation and training of a battalion to participate in United Nations peace-keeping operations. The

heads of government of the three Baltic countries signed a trilateral agreement in Riga, on 14th September 1994 on participation in this joint battalion, known as BALTBAT, which was formed in February 1995⁵.

(ii) European and transatlantic co-operation

23. Accession to the European Union, WEU and NATO is the major foreign policy objective of the three states and the expression of a common aspiration, although their approach may not always be co-ordinated. An important stage along the way is the signing of Europe agreements with the Union, which was one of the objectives of the French presidency of the Union for the first half of 1995. Application of these agreements places the three countries on an equal footing with other Central European countries that already benefit from them⁶.

24. In security matters, WEU and NATO, the first through its associate partner status, the second via the partnership for peace programme, have associated the three countries in their work without, however, offering them security guarantees. Although this may fall short of expectations, it would nevertheless be dangerous and misleading to give further commitments in this area, while the political will and necessary means are not forthcoming.

25. Incidentally, it should be noted that associate partner status affords substantial participation in WEU's activities, unlike the observer status Austria, Finland and Sweden now have. Nevertheless, the latter are full members of the European Union and are thus called upon to take a position at the 1996 intergovernmental conference on the common foreign and security policy and consequently on WEU, confirmed, since Maastricht, in its rôle as the defence component of the Union.

III. The Baltic Assembly: rôle and prospects

26. The Baltic Assembly held its first plenary session in January 1992. Since then it has met regularly, twice a year, and adopts resolutions addressed to the Baltic Council of Ministers. These resolutions are not binding, but, due to the influence of the parliaments in the national political life of each state, their impact is considerable and ministers must take account of them.

27. Its rôle of interparliamentary legislator has further expanded since the meeting of the Praesidium of the Assembly in Riga on 25th and 26th September 1993, when it was decided to address

5. Jane's Defence Weekly, Vol. 23 No. 9, 4th March 1995.

6. Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania and the Slovak Republic.

resolutions to the parliaments with a view to their being incorporated in national legislation. This is an innovatory and interesting aspect and one which illustrates the close links between the Assembly and the parliaments of each country.

28. The Assembly also attributes great importance to external relations and is seeking to develop contacts with other interparliamentary institutions in Europe so as to enable it to present the three Baltic countries' views on topical issues concerning Europe and also to demonstrate their wish for integration in European organisations for co-operation in political, economic and defence matters.

(a) The political rôle of Baltic interparliamentary co-operation

29. The creation of the Baltic Council in 1990, drawing on the 1934 agreements, aimed to co-ordinate the movement for a return to independence in the then Soviet Republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Once the project had been successfully completed, it was necessary to give the Council a new rôle. The newly-gained independence was precarious and deterioration in relations with the Russian Federation led to increased co-operation between the three states that might not otherwise have occurred, given the differing situations of each from an economic, political and cultural point of view.

30. Nevertheless, true co-operation has gradually been established, with creditable results in view of the short time involved and the difficulties the three countries have had to deal with at home and abroad. By introducing a parliamentary dimension in the framework of inter-state co-operation, the three states have contributed to intensifying their relations, with the Assembly in turn taking initiatives inviting governments to act, leading to practical results.

(i) Co-operation between the Baltic Council and the Baltic Assembly

31. In Riga, on 13th September 1994, the heads of government of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania signed an agreement between the three countries on parliamentary co-operation and co-operation between governments. This agreement defines the areas and modalities of such co-operation, and also the respective rôles of the Council and of the Assembly.

32. The Baltic Assembly is defined as the instrument of co-operation between the national parliaments (Article 3). The Council and Assembly meet in joint session at least once a year within the framework of the Baltic Council (Article 6) and the ministers must then submit a report on co-operation implemented during the past year and on proposed future activities and initiatives

(Article 6). There is a perceptible similarity here with Article IX of the modified Brussels Treaty⁷.

33. The Assembly submits proposals and recommendations to the Council and its members may put questions to the Baltic Council of Ministers on inter-state co-operation during plenary sessions. The two institutions transmit information to one another through their respective secretariats (Article 7). The Assembly is entitled to make its views known on questions relating to co-operation between plenary sessions (Article 8).

34. On regional co-operation, the agreement provides that the Council and the Assembly must endeavour to develop their relations with the Nordic Council, the Council of Baltic Sea States and other institutions in pursuit of the ultimate goal of integration into European structures (Article 9).

(ii) The way the Assembly operates

35. The Praesidium of the Assembly, meeting in Tallinn on 31st October 1993, adopted rules for the latter, better adapted to the new conditions created by the development of political co-operation. These rules define the Assembly as a consultative and co-ordinating institution which expresses its views by submitting proposals and recommendations to the governments and parliaments of the three states and to international and regional organisations.

36. It consists of 60 parliamentarians, 20 from each country, appointed according to the procedures in force in each parliament. Meeting in plenary session, the Assembly appoints the Praesidium, its Chairman, the committees and members thereof and the secretariat. The Chairman nominates the Secretary of the Assembly who is elected by the latter.

37. The Praesidium is the most important body of the Assembly. Comprising two members from each delegation, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the latter, it co-ordinates the work of the Assembly between sessions, prepares the sessions and monitors implementation of the resolutions it adopts. The Praesidium also has responsibility for external contacts and relations between the parliaments and governments of the three countries. It submits a report on its activity for consideration by the Assembly.

38. There are six committees for: legislation; economic and social affairs; environment and energy; communications; education, science and culture; foreign and security policy.

7. "The Council of Western European Union shall make an annual report on its activities and in particular concerning the control of armaments to an Assembly composed of representatives of the Brussels Treaty powers to the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe".

39. Additionally, ad hoc or standing committees may be established such as the Assembly's budget and audit committees.

40. The secretariat, consisting of the Secretary of the Assembly in Riga and the Secretaries of the national delegations, ensures the smooth running of the regular business of the Assembly. The Clerk of the Assembly is elected for a three-year term of office, renewable for one further term. Members of the Assembly may also form political groups (with a minimum of four members from two countries).

41. The Assembly also places great emphasis on cultural activities in the three countries, awarding prizes in art, literature and the sciences. These awards were instituted at the October 1993 session and consist of a medal, a diploma and a sum worth approximately 5 000 ecus. The names of the prize-winners and their works are published in the official journal and distributed in the three countries. Under present economic conditions, this represents a not inconsiderable contribution to making the literary, artistic and scientific creative works of each country accessible to the wider public, enables the prize-winners to pursue their activity and encourages the emergence of new talent.

(b) The Baltic Assembly: regional and European political perspectives

42. The link between the Baltic Assembly and the national parliaments provides the former with substantial scope for political action. Resolutions adopted, once submitted to the parliaments, are the subject of debate and lead to positions being taken that bring additional pressure to bear on governments to act in the areas concerned. One of the advantages of Baltic interparliamentary co-operation is its effect both internally and on the regional and European scale.

(i) Inter-state security and defence co-operation

43. Through its statutes and by reference to the agreement on parliamentary and governmental co-operation of 13th September 1994, the Baltic Assembly has wide powers in the framework of political co-operation between the three Baltic countries. It has thus adopted positions at a fairly early stage on subjects with implications beyond the framework of the state, at times eliciting reactions from or calling for positions to be taken by other countries and international parliamentary, political and security organisations.

44. In inter-state relations, the Assembly is paying increasing attention to military co-operation between the three countries and to resolving the question of harmonising their respective policies on visas and border controls. This last item has several times been the subject of declarations

by the Baltic Council of Ministers and progress has been made recently in this connection. The question is a crucial one, as the situation which prevailed until now acted as a brake on the free movement of goods and had repercussions on the development of trade between the three states and the outside world.

45. Security and defence are two priority issues for the three states. Although they have limited economic and human resources, they must try to re-establish national armies to act as a deterrent to a possible aggressor. It was clear that without increased co-operation in this area, the armed forces of the three countries would be reduced to inadequately equipped and poorly-trained paramilitary units, with the possible exception of one or two élite units. An initial important measure in this connection which has received support from several NATO and Nordic countries, was the initiative taken in 1994 to create a joint Baltic battalion, BALTBAT⁸. The Assembly in its turn requested, in a resolution adopted in Vilnius on 13th November 1994, that the three countries should prepare a mutual defence agreement, an initiative which, if it leads to firm results, will have a positive effect on the stability of the states concerned and the region to which they belong.

(ii) Regional and European policy

Relations with the Russian Federation

46. If the major objective of the foreign policy of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania is integration into the European Union, WEU and NATO, this is not merely on economic and domestic policy grounds or for reasons of international prestige; it is also because they feel themselves under threat from the Russian Federation, with which they have disputes of various kinds to resolve. The Chechen crisis, to name but the most recent example⁹, has obviously done much to confirm them in this attitude.

47. Estonia is in conflict with the Russian Federation over border questions dating back to the implementation of the 1920 Treaty of Tartu under which Soviet Russia recognised Estonia's independence. Latvia is concerned about the presence on its territory of a Russian-speaking population without Latvian nationality, regarded by Latvians as illegal immigrants who came to the country during the years of Soviet occupation. Lithuania, like Estonia, is also in dispute with the Russian Federation over the implementation of the 1920 peace treaty and is concerned with the Kaliningrad question and the Russian Govern-

8. Jane's Defence Weekly, Vol. 23, No. 9, 4th March 1995.

9. The Russian Federation's interventions in Tajikistan, Georgia and Moldova (Trans-Dniestr), and statements referring to the defence of Russian interests in the "near abroad" are a constant source of concern to the three Baltic states.

ment's claim to a right of passage for its military forces between its own territory and Kaliningrad.

48. This issue was the subject of a resolution of the Assembly on 13th November 1994, asking for the Kaliningrad question to be dealt with in a multilateral framework and for a multinational conference to be convened on the issue. Furthermore, the Assembly decided in favour of reinstating the old names in the former Koenigsberg region. Russia was quick to react. On 15th November the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Mr. Andrei Kozyrev, issued a declaration denouncing what he considered to be blatant intervention in the internal affairs of the Federation of Russia and reaffirming that Kaliningrad was an integral and inalienable part of Russian territory.

49. The conflict in Chechnya only complicated further the relations between the three Baltic countries and the Russian Federation. On 7th November 1994, the Chechen presidency launched an appeal to the Baltic Assembly asking it to transmit Chechnya's call for independence to the United Nations, a call which was discussed at the Assembly's November 1994 session without a definite position being taken on how to respond. The intervention of the armed forces of the Russian Federation, to which close attention was paid by the three Baltic states, led, on 9th January 1995, to a position being taken by the Praesidium of the Assembly directed to the OSCE¹⁰, asking it to establish a mission to enquire into human rights violations and criticising the actions of the Russian armed forces. At the 6th session, held in Riga on 21st and 22nd April 1995, the Assembly adopted a resolution inviting the OSCE to raise the question of the right of self-determination of the Chechen people in the United Nations and accusing the Russian Federation of genocide.

50. The declarations of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Russia, Mr. Andrei Kozyrev, on the possibility of having recourse to force to defend Russian-speaking communities that might be under threat within states that were formerly part of the USSR¹¹, were also a source of major concern to the three Baltic countries and the Assembly, at its 6th session, adopted a declaration in this connection calling upon "all democratic states and international organisations to give an open, clear and unambiguous evaluation of those Russian Federation actions and expressed intentions that violate human rights and pose a threat to the security of other states"¹².

51. The instability of the political situation in Russia, the return to a more national foreign policy,

the affirmation of divergencies in relations with the United States and the states of the European Union over the Bosnian and Chechen conflicts or the enlargement of NATO help to increase the feeling that it is urgent to bring about a rapprochement between the three Baltic states and the institutions for European and transatlantic co-operation. In this perspective, the Baltic Assembly has increased its contacts with other parliamentary institutions in Europe, in parallel with action by the governments directed towards the European Union, NATO and WEU.

European co-operation

52. Co-operation with the states of the Nordic region is an important aspect of the Assembly's work and the latter has called for a deepening of relations between the Baltic Council and the Nordic Council with a view to strengthening joint security and preparing for integration into European structures¹³. Integration in the European Union is at the heart of the foreign policy of the three countries and at its November 1994 session, the Assembly adopted a resolution urging governments to co-operate further in order to accelerate the negotiation process leading to the signing of Europe agreements with the European Union.

53. With a view to rapprochement with the European institutions, the Assembly and the Benelux Interparliamentary Consultative Council¹⁴ signed a joint declaration on parliamentary co-operation in The Hague, on 18th November 1994. In conformity with this document, the two Assemblies gave a mutual undertaking to co-operate in the following areas¹⁵:

- the development of democratic institutions;
- exchange of experiences, information and training programmes in parliamentary matters;
- co-operation in legislative matters;
- co-operation in foreign policy matters;
- communications;
- energy, economy and environmental protection;
- culture, education and science;
- cross-border co-operation.

13. Three of the five members of the Council are members of the European Union: Denmark, Finland and Sweden. Iceland and Norway are members of NATO and associate members of WEU.

14. The Council is composed of parliamentarians of Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands.

15. Benelux Interparliamentary Consultative Council; report on activities 1994, 13th January 1995, page 12.

10. Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

11. The Times, 19th April 1995; Le Figaro, 20th April 1995.

12. Baltic Assembly; Riga, 22nd April 1995.

The declaration also lays the foundations for close co-operation between the Praesidium of the Assembly and the Bureau of the Council, and between their committees and secretariats. The development of this type of relations with the parliamentary institutions of Western Europe is an important stage on the road to integration into the European Union and other co-operative structures. To this end the Assembly adopted a resolution on 22nd April, recommending that the Baltic Council of Ministers proceed to bring the legislation of the Baltic states into line with European legislation and co-ordinate their actions in relation to the European Union.

54. On 15th May 1994, the Baltic Assembly appealed to the WEU Assembly to develop co-operation between the two institutions following the decision taken by the WEU Council of Ministers at Kirchberg on 9th May 1994 to grant Central European countries associate partner status. In this document, the Baltic Assembly asked to be considered as a collective partner in co-operation with the WEU Assembly. The latter, for its part, is prepared to establish a close relationship with its Baltic counterpart, while retaining its own specific character as a European parliamentary institution drawn from national parliaments and specialising in security and defence matters.

55. This co-operation may be pursued in different ways such as exchanges of contacts and information between committees of the two assemblies, or regular attendance by delegations in their plenary sessions; at secretariat level, the WEU Assembly might envisage receiving officials of the Baltic Assembly for a period of training, the duration and arrangements for which would be defined by the two institutions. Implementation of this co-operation is set in the wider framework of contacts between the WEU Assembly and the parliaments of associate partner coun-

tries. The Committee for Parliamentary and Public Relations, in view of the nature of its activities, has an important rôle to develop in this direction.

56. The attention the committee paid to these problems led to two reports on the subject¹⁶ and, on a proposal from the committee, the Assembly adopted an order at the June 1994 session requesting that a provision be included in the Assembly's budget for the 1995 financial year "for setting up an Assembly support fund for parliamentary co-operation work" with the associate partners¹⁷. These activities, undertaken jointly with national parliaments, would thus be extended to include interparliamentary co-operation structures in Central Europe. This co-operation must be encouraged with a view to better preparing these countries for integration into European and transatlantic political, economic and security structures.

57. From this point of view the Baltic Assembly is an encouraging example of parliamentary co-operation, owing to its aims and taking into account the practical results obtained in a short time. The development of co-operation between the three Baltic states in economic, political and security matters is in large part due to the work undertaken by the Assembly through its resolutions and their practical follow-up. It contributes to the rapprochement of the three countries and to strengthening their awareness of their common destiny, an essential factor for their successful integration into European and transatlantic organisations. In this perspective, one can but wish for close co-operation to be established with the WEU Assembly, the parliamentary component of European defence, with the common aim of strengthening security and stability in Central Europe and throughout the entire continent, given the extent to which interests in this area are now shared by all.

16. Document 1365 on the development of relations between the WEU Assembly and the parliaments of Central European Countries, Rapporteur; Mr. Kempinaire, 17th May 1993. Document 1414 on parliamentary co-operation with the countries of the WEU Forum of Consultation, Rapporteur: Sir Russell Johnston, 4th May 1994.

17. Order 90, June 1994.

APPENDIX I

Co-operation between Baltic countries – the Baltic Assembly

The Baltic Assembly was born in Tallinn, the capital of Estonia, on 8th November 1991 as an instrument of co-operation between the parliaments of the three Baltic states – Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

It has a consultative as well as a co-ordination function in respect of issues and matters which are of mutual interest to all three states. The Assembly's activities are equally financed by all three states and Assembly sessions are convened twice each year on a rotation basis.

Structurally the Assembly is formed by the delegations from Estonia's, Latvia's and Lithuania's parliaments with 20 deputies from each. Each of the parliamentary delegation members work in one of six working committees – Legal; Socio-economic; Ecology and Energy; Communications; Education, Culture and Technology, and Foreign Relations and Security committees.

The Praesidium of the Assembly with the assistance of the Secretariat co-ordinates the work of the Assembly's institutions and committees between Assembly sessions and organises the preparatory work for the Assembly sessions themselves. Each delegation nominates two delegation members to the Assembly Praesidium.

The President of the Baltic Assembly is elected on a rotation basis for a six month period, that is, from one session of the Assembly to the next.

To date the Assembly has held six sessions following its establishment in Tallinn, November 8th, 1991:

- 1st session in Riga, 24th-26th January 1992;
- 2nd session in Palanga, 31st May 1992;
- 3rd session in Tallinn, 31st October 1993;
- 4th session in Jūrmala, 13th-15th May 1994;
- 5th session in Vilnius, 11th-13th November 1994;
- 6th session in Riga, 21st-22nd April 1995.

The first two sessions, which occurred when the Baltic states had only recently regained their inde-

pendence from the USSR, were mainly concerned with issues relating to the removal of Russian troops from the Baltic states. It was only at the third session (again in Tallinn) that the Assembly came of age in the sense that:

1. all members of the delegations were from parliaments which had been elected after the restoration of independence, and
2. the session addressed itself in large measure to issues other than those of foreign relations and security.

The fourth and the fifth sessions continued this direction and approved documents reflecting both external and internal issues and problems, the most important of these being the document concerning the establishment of the Baltic Council of Ministers which, together with the Baltic Assembly, will form the Baltic Council. Another important document was the establishment of the Baltic Assembly prizes for literature, art and science.

Between sessions the work of the committees and the Secretariat goes on. The Praesidium and the committees meet on average at least twice in the inter-sessional period. These meetings are arranged and co-ordinated through the Baltic Assembly Secretariat in co-operation with the national delegation secretariats.

The Baltic Assembly as an international organisation has established formal relations with similar organisations in Europe. In 1992, the Assembly signed a formal agreement of co-operation with the Nordic Council. This was an important agreement not only in political terms but also in terms of practical assistance and advice in the formative stages of the Assembly's work.

A formal agreement with the Benelux Interparliamentary Assembly was signed on 18th November 1994.

To conclude this brief overview of the activities of the Baltic Assembly, it should be emphasised that the work of the Assembly is important not only in the sense of furthering co-operation between the Baltic states but also in presenting a united Baltic viewpoint to Europe and the world.

APPENDIX II

***Regulations of the Baltic Assembly of the Republic of Lithuania,
Republic of Estonia and Republic of Latvia******Main provisions***

The Baltic Assembly shall be a body for co-operation among the parliaments of the Republic of Lithuania, the Republic of Estonia and the Republic of Latvia.

The Baltic Assembly shall be a consultative and co-ordinating institution set up to discuss common issues and joint projects.

The Baltic Assembly may express its policy in the form of addresses, proposals or recommendations to the parliaments and governments of the Republic of Lithuania, the Republic of Estonia and the Republic of Latvia, as well as to international and regional organisations

The working bodies of the Assembly shall be its sessions, the Praesidium and the Secretariat of the Baltic Assembly.

The official languages of the Assembly shall be Lithuanian, Estonian and Latvian. The working language of the Baltic Assembly shall be agreed on by consensus among the delegations.

The sessions of the Baltic Assembly

The Baltic Assembly shall be made up of sixty parliamentarians of the Baltic states: twenty delegates each from the Republic of Lithuania, the Republic of Estonia and the Republic of Latvia.

The parliaments represented in the Baltic Assembly shall each establish their procedure for making up the delegations. The Baltic Assembly shall be deemed legitimate when no less than two-thirds of each of the delegations to the Baltic Assembly take part in its work.

The sessions of the Baltic Assembly shall be convened twice a year. Special sessions may be convened at the request of one of the states, in which case the time and the venue of the session shall be established by the Praesidium of the Baltic Assembly. Members of the governments of Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia dealing with the issues of Baltic co-operation and, upon necessity, other members of the governments shall be invited to attend the sessions of the Baltic Assembly.

Representatives of the parliaments and administrative units of other states may be invited to the sessions of the Baltic Assembly with the status of guests and observers.

The session of the Baltic Assembly shall appoint the Praesidium, the Chairman of the Praesidium of the Baltic Assembly, the committees of the Baltic Assembly, their members and the Secretariat upon their nomination by the Baltic Assembly. Upon the nomination by the Praesidium of the Baltic Assembly the session shall elect the Secretary of the Baltic Assembly.

Records shall be made of the Assembly sessions. The records of the session shall be signed by the Chairman of the Praesidium and his (her) deputies. The records shall be in the working languages of the Assembly.

Initiation and resolution of issues

The right to submit draft documents for discussion during the sessions of the Baltic Assembly shall be vested in the committees, party groups, and the delegations of the Baltic Assembly. Drafts may also be submitted by the presidents of Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia, and by their respective governments; the latter shall submit their drafts via the members of respective governments who deal with issues of Baltic co-operation.

The policies of the Baltic Assembly and its working bodies shall be adopted by voting. Members of the Baltic Assembly shall vote individually; however, upon request by one of the delegations, all issues, with the exception of procedural questions, shall be resolved by consensus among the delegations. Decisions which do not require consensus shall be deemed adopted by a majority vote.

Co-operation agreements with other international and regional organisations shall be adopted only by consensus of the members of the Baltic Assembly.

The Praesidium

Assisted by the Secretary, the Praesidium of the Baltic Assembly shall co-ordinate the work of all the Baltic Assembly bodies in between the sessions, shall prepare sessions of the Baltic Assembly, and shall supervise the implementation of resolutions adopted by the Baltic Assembly. The Praesidium of the Baltic Assembly shall maintain ties with international organisations, as well as the parliaments and governments of Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia and other states.

The Praesidium of the Baltic Assembly shall be made up of two members from each national delegation: the chairman and the deputy chairman of the delegation, appointed by the national parliaments.

During the sessions of the Baltic Assembly the Praesidium shall appoint from its members a chairman and two deputy chairmen. The Chairman of the Praesidium shall be a member of the delegation whose country is to host the next session of the Baltic Assembly. The deputy chairmen shall be from each of the other states.

The Praesidium shall meet no less than four times a year.

The Praesidium of the Baltic Assembly shall submit a report on its activities to each session of the Baltic Assembly for the evaluation thereby.

Records shall be made of the meetings of the Praesidium of the Baltic Assembly and distributed to all members of the Baltic Assembly during all sessions. The records shall be signed by the Chairman of the Praesidium and his (her) deputies during the same or the next meeting of the Praesidium. The records shall be prepared by the secretariat of the country that hosted the Praesidium meeting.

The committees of the Baltic Assembly

The Baltic Assembly shall set up the following standing committees:

- (i) Legal;
- (ii) Social and Economic Affairs;
- (iii) Environment and Energy;
- (iv) Communications;
- (v) Education, Science and Culture;
- (vi) Security and Foreign Affairs.

The Baltic Assembly may decide to set up other standing and ad hoc committees, including a budget and audit committee to control the expenditures of the Baltic Assembly.

The Baltic Assembly shall set the main guidelines for the work of the committees.

The committees of the Baltic Assembly shall meet no less than four times a year.

At the end of the session, each committee shall elect its chairman and inform the session thereof. A committee shall be usually chaired by a member of the committee from the country that will host the next session of the Baltic Assembly. The chairman of a committee shall co-ordinate the work of the committee. Documents adopted by a committee take the shape of addresses which may be directly passed on to the Baltic Assembly, as well as to the parliaments of the member states of the Baltic Assembly.

Each delegation shall nominate its members to the committees. Other members of the Baltic Assembly, representatives of the governments and experts may be invited to the meetings of a committee.

The Secretariat

The Secretariat shall ensure the regular activities of the Baltic Assembly.

The Secretariat of the Baltic Assembly shall consist of the Secretary of the Baltic Assembly based in Riga and secretaries of the Baltic Assembly delegations from the parliaments of the Republic of Lithuania, the Republic of Estonia and the Republic of Latvia. The candidacy of the Secretary of the Baltic Assembly shall be nominated by the Praesidium of the Baltic Assembly and submitted for approval by the session of the Baltic Assembly. The Secretary of the Baltic Assembly shall be elected for a term of three years with the right to be re-elected for a second term. The activities of the Secretary of the Baltic Assembly shall be equally financed by the three parliaments. The working premises of the Secretary of the Baltic Assembly shall be provided by the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia. The sessions of the Baltic Assembly alone shall decide the issues of increasing the Baltic Assembly expenditures, divided into three equal parts, as well as issues of establishing additional staff positions.

The Secretary shall draw up annual expenditures estimates which are subject to approval by the Baltic Assembly.

Co-operation among party groups

Members of the Baltic Assembly may united into regular or ad hoc groups which will be treated on equal terms with the committees during the discussion of drafts submitted to the Baltic Assembly. A party group may consist of no less than four members from two states.

Party groups shall be registered by the Secretariat of the Baltic Assembly.

Co-operation between the Baltic Assembly and the Baltic Council of Ministers

Co-operation between the Baltic Assembly and the Baltic Council of Ministers shall be implemented through the Praesidium of the Baltic Assembly and its standing committees and be co-ordinated through the Secretariats of the Baltic Assembly and the Baltic Council of Ministers.

The Baltic Assembly and the Baltic Council of Ministers, together called the "Baltic Council", shall hold annual joint sessions. The time

and place of the joint session together with its agenda shall be co-ordinated through the respective Secretariats based upon agreements reached between the Praesidium of the Baltic Assembly and the presiding Baltic state of the Baltic Council of Ministers.

The Baltic Council of Ministers shall, at each annual joint session, submit a report on Baltic co-operation concerning the past year's co-operation and plans for further co-operation.

At the annual joint sessions as well as between them, the Baltic Assembly members, individually or in the name of either the state delegation, the individual standing committee or registered Baltic Assembly political faction or bloc, may submit questions, either verbally or in writing, to the Baltic Council of Ministers on matters concerning Baltic co-operation.

The Baltic Assembly may make appeals, proposals and recommendations to the Baltic Council of Ministers.

The exchange of current information between the Baltic Assembly and the Baltic Council of Ministers shall occur via their respective Secretariats.

Final provisions

The regulations of the Baltic Assembly may be altered at a session of the Baltic Assembly only.

The activities of the Baltic Assembly shall be terminated only upon a respective decision by the parliaments of the Republic of Lithuania, the Republic of Estonia and the Republic of Latvia.

Baltic Assembly
Praesidium Chairman

Egidijus BICKAUSKAS
Republic of Lithuania

Baltic Assembly
Deputy Praesidium
Chairman

Maris BUDOVSKIS
Republic of Latvia

Baltic Assembly
Deputy Praesidium
Chairman

Ülo NUGIS
Republic of Estonia

Tallinn, 31st October 1993

With additions adopted at Vilnius, 13th November 1994.

APPENDIX III

*Statutes on the Baltic Assembly prizes for literature, the arts and science**1. General provisions*

1.1. The Baltic Assembly prizes for literature, the arts and science (henceforth the prizes) were established upon the suggestion of the Baltic Assembly session of 31st October 1993, in order to facilitate the development of literature, the arts and science in the Baltic states, to assess the most distinguished achievements in these fields and to disseminate these achievements in the three Baltic states.

The prizes have been established in order to:

- demonstrate the mutual interests of the countries in this region for the upholding of their national identity and self-esteem by supporting outstanding achievements in literature, the arts and science;
- maintain a continuous interest among the people in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and about developments in their neighbouring countries by creating the possibility to learn about their neighbours' achievements;
- strengthen co-operation among the Baltic states in the fields of literature, the arts and science;
- create an interest among a growing number of people for the acquisition of the intellectual values and languages of the Baltic nations;
- raise the general level of literature, the arts and science in the Baltic countries.

1.2. The prizes are to be awarded within the framework of the mutual international co-operation programme of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, upon the basis of the resolution passed by the joint judging committee (experts) approved by the Baltic Assembly.

1.3. Financial resources are allocated by the Council of Ministers of the Baltic states and are recommended not to be less than 5 000 ecus for each prize.

The nominal value of the prizes shall be set annually in accordance with the resources allocated in the budget. The monetary prize to be presented to the winners shall be tax exempt.

2. Procedure for awarding the prizes

2.1. The Baltic Assembly prize for literature shall be awarded annually at the session of the Baltic Assembly for a novel, a play, a collection of poems, short stories or essays, or any similar written composition in one of the Baltic state languages. The work must have been published for the first time in the original language within the past two years but no later than six months before the date the prize is to be awarded.

Requirements for the work to be submitted and the list of documents to be attached shall be set out in the rules of the competition which shall be drafted by the joint judging committee (experts) and shall be approved by the Baltic Assembly Secretariat.

2.2. The Baltic Assembly prize for the arts shall be awarded annually at the session of the Baltic Assembly for an original work of art or a series of works created within the past two years in fine arts, applied arts, in music, architecture or cinema. It also may be awarded to a group of performers, to soloists, actors or other performing artists for an outstanding artistic achievement accomplished within the past two years.

2.3. The Baltic Assembly prize for science shall be awarded annually at the session of the Baltic Assembly for a significant original work or a research series in the humanities, social or natural sciences and which is considered to be a contribution to the research of the Baltic region or is of international importance and has been published within the past three years. Nomination for the prize for science may include large fundamental scientific works (monographs) which, although not published within the last three years, are considered to advance human knowledge in that particular field.

3. The joint judging committee (experts)

3.1. The joint judging committee (experts) of the Baltic Assembly prize (henceforth the Joint Judging Committee) shall consist of nine people. The applicants for each prize (in literature, the arts and science) shall be assessed by the respective experts. Each country shall independently determine the three persons to be delegated to the committee and the procedure for their selection.

3.2. The members of the Joint Judging Committee shall be outstanding specialists in the fields of literature, the arts and science.

3.3. The experts and alternate experts shall be changed every three years.

After the first three years, counting from the date of the establishment of the Joint Judging Committee, every year, until the proper rotation of judges is attained, one Joint Judging Committee member from each country shall be released, by lot.

One and the same person may be nominated for the Joint Judging Committee for no more than two consecutive terms.

3.4. The Joint Judging Committee shall elect a chairperson and two vice-chairpersons from their midst who shall change each year in accordance with the procedure for their rotation (among the countries).

3.5. The Joint Judging Committee meetings shall be convened at least once a year and shall be recorded in writing in the languages of all three countries and translated into English. The Joint Judging Committee decides its own internal working procedures.

The Joint Judging Committee meetings shall take place alternately in Tallinn, Riga and Vilnius.

3.6. The Joint Judging Committee meetings shall have full powers if at least two representatives from each country participate.

In addition to the regular meetings for awarding prizes, the Joint Judging Committee may convene other meetings if the necessity arises. The committee meetings may be convened upon the suggestion of the Baltic Assembly, the Joint Judging Committee chairperson or the jury representatives from any of the respective countries. Every year members of the Joint Judging Committee shall be entitled to discuss the rules of the competition and the procedure for awarding prizes, and to propose amendments to the statutes.

The Joint Judging Committee shall be entitled to make a decision not to award any one of the prizes. The prize shall also not be awarded in the year concerned if the Joint Judging Committee has not been able to reach an agreement, that is, to make a concrete decision by a simple majority vote. The unused resources shall be transferred to the following year's budget.

In any case, the Joint Judging Committee shall make its decisions and the substantiation for them known to the public.

3.7. The prize nominees from each country shall be assessed by National Judging Commit-

tees. Only the National Judging Committee shall be entitled to select works for submission to the joint Baltic competition and the works shall be submitted together with all the necessary information (the biography of the nominee, reviews, and other related documents).

3.8. Works and their authors shall be nominated for the prize by the Joint Judging Committee. The Joint Judging Committee shall assess the works nominated by the respective National Judging Committee of each country.

4. *Nominating the work and awarding the prize*

4.1. Works shall be submitted to the National Judging Committee in accordance with the rules of the competition before 15th March of that year. In one month's time, the National Judging Committee shall assess these works and no more than the best two works from each field shall be nominated for review by the Joint Judging Committee.

In order to assess a musical work, fine art and theatrical productions, concerts, exhibitions and performances may be organised.

4.2. The decision on awarding the prize shall be submitted by the Joint Judging Committee to the Baltic Assembly Secretariat no later than two weeks before the spring session of the Baltic Assembly.

The prizes may also be awarded at the Baltic Assembly autumn session in October. In this case, the works must be submitted to the National Judging Committee before 15th August of that year.

4.3. The same person may not receive the prize more than once.

5. *Presenting the prize*

5.1. The prize – a special medal, diploma and monetary prize – shall be presented by the Chairman of the Praesidium of the Baltic Assembly at a Baltic Assembly ceremony, and the names of the prize winners and information on their achievements shall be published in the official press of all three Baltic states.

5.2. The literary work, the author of which has been awarded the Baltic Assembly prize, shall be published (communicated to the public) within two years from the reception of the prize in the languages of both neighbouring countries.

The country in which the literary work has been created shall render financial assistance in publishing the work, thus recognising the international importance of the Baltic Assembly prize. The award-winning works in the arts and science shall be given publicity in the same manner with the support of the respective country.

6. *The administration and Secretariat of the Joint Judging Committee*

6.1. The Joint Judging Committee shall be coordinated by the Baltic Assembly Secretariat, which also provides assistance to the National Judging Committee.

6.2. Each year, the Joint Judging Committee shall request from the Council of Ministers of the Baltic States the resources necessary for the prizes, for ensuring the necessary work of the experts, organising exhibitions and concerts and for similar needs.

6.3. The administration of the Joint Judging Committee shall be conducted and the accounts of the financial resources shall be kept in accordance

with the laws of the respective countries and the regulations of the Council of Ministers of the Baltic States.

7. *Duties of the Joint Judging Committee*

7.1. The Joint Judging Committee, in conjunction with the Baltic Assembly Secretariat, shall be responsible for the proper utilisation of allocated funds.

7.2. The Joint Judging Committee shall provide the Baltic Assembly with a report on its activity.

The statutes on the Baltic Assembly prize for literature, the arts and science shall be adopted, amended and, if necessary, suspended by the Baltic Assembly.

Chairman of the
Praesidium of the
Baltic Assembly

Maris BUDOVSKIS
Republic of Latvia

Deputy Chairman of
the Praesidium of the
Baltic Assembly

Ülo NUGIS
Republic of Estonia

Deputy Chairman of
the Praesidium of the
Baltic Assembly

Egidijus BICKAUSKAS
Republic of Lithuania

Jurmala (Kemeris), 15th May 1994

Includes amendments, adopted in Vilnius, 13th November 1994.

APPENDIX IV

*Texts adopted by the Baltic Assembly**Appeal by the Baltic Assembly
to Western European Union*

The Baltic Assembly, meeting in Jurmala (Kemer) from 13th-15th May 1994, welcomes the efforts of Western European Union to co-operate with the Baltic states – Estonia, Latvia and

Lithuania – in the sphere of European security, especially 9th May 1994 agreements which granted the Baltic states associate partnership in Western European Union, and appeals to the Assembly of Western European Union to consider the Baltic Assembly as its collective partner in such co-operation.

Chairman of the
Praesidium of the
Baltic Assembly

Maris BUDOVSKIS
Republic of Latvia

Deputy Chairman of
the Praesidium of the
Baltic Assembly

Ülo NUGIS
Republic of Estonia

Deputy Chairman of
the Praesidium of the
Baltic Assembly

Egidijus BICKAUSKAS
Republic of Lithuania

Jurmala (Kemer), 15th May 1994

***1. Resolution
concerning the demilitarisation of the Kaliningrad region
and its future development***

The Baltic Assembly is of the opinion that the future of the Kaliningrad region is of concern to all of Europe and it requires joint actions.

Proceeding from this, the Baltic Assembly:

1. Suggests that the demilitarisation of the Kaliningrad region should be treated as an essential element for the security process in Central Europe and the entire continent.
2. Supports the motion for a resolution concerning respect for placenames as the cultural heritage of Europe, and the restoration of old placenames in the Kaliningrad region, which is under discussion at the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

Therefore, the Baltic Assembly appeals to the Baltic Council of Ministers and urges it to convene an international round-table conference on the issue of the demilitarisation of the Kaliningrad region and its future development.

Chairman of
the Praesidium
of the Baltic Assembly

Egidijus BICKAUSKAS
Republic of Lithuania

Deputy Chairman
of the Praesidium
of the Baltic Assembly

Maris BUDOVSKIS
Republic of Latvia

Deputy Chairman
of the Praesidium
of the Baltic Assembly

Ülo NUGIS
Republic of Estonia

Vilnius, 13th November 1994

2. Statement

The Baltic Assembly expresses its deep concern about the threats to use Russian Federation military forces in neighbouring countries under the guise of an alleged necessity to protect the human rights of the Russian minorities and Russian-speakers living there, expressed by the Russian Federation's Foreign Minister, Mr. A. Kozyrev on 18th April 1995.

Drawing the attention of the states of the world and international organisations to the fact that:

- the Russian Federation often demonstrates through its actions and statements its aggressiveness in the international arena;
- in many of its statements concerning other, especially neighbouring, states the Russian Federation is not complying with universally-recognised norms of international law;
- human rights are being violated in the Russian Federation on an extreme scale – its troops are killing civilians; and
- the abovementioned actions of the Russian Federation have not been restrained by the negative reactions of the majority of states and international organisations,

the Baltic Assembly urges all democratic states and international organisations to give an open, clear and unambiguous evaluation of those Russian Federation actions and expressed intentions that violate human rights and pose a threat to the security of other states.

Deputy Chairman of
the Praesidium of the
Baltic Assembly

Arnold RÜÜTEL
Republic of Estonia

Chairman of the
Praesidium of the
Baltic Assembly

Maris BUDOVSKIS
Republic of Latvia

Deputy Chairman of
the Praesidium of the
Baltic Assembly

Egidijus BICKAUSKAS
Republic of Lithuania

Riga, 22nd April 1995

3. Resolution on Chechnya

The Baltic Assembly,

Realising that the Russian Federation has ignored all international calls for putting a stop to the murderous war and genocide in Chechnya by its forces and is in effect trying to use international organisations to cover up its actions in Chechnya and to organise mock elections there;

Resolutely condemns aggression in Chechnya which – no matter under what guise it takes place – may end with the physical extermination of a small nation;

Appeals to the OSCE and other international organisations to consider it their moral duty to make every effort to stop the war and genocide in Chechnya immediately.

Furthermore, the Baltic Assembly calls on the Russian Federation to halt the genocide of the people of Chechnya and to withdraw its army and militarised police forces from the territory of Chechnya and appeals to the OSCE to raise the issue in the United Nations of the right of the Chechen nation to self-determination and to freedom from colonialism.

Deputy Chairman of the
Praesidium of the
Baltic Assembly

Arnold RÜÜTEL
Republic of Estonia

Chairman of the
Praesidium of the
Baltic Assembly

Maris BUDOVSKIS
Republic of Latvia

Deputy Chairman of the
Praesidium of the
Baltic Assembly

Egidijus BICKAUSKAS
Republic of Lithuania

Riga, 22nd April 1995

APPENDIX V

*Appeal to the Organisation for
Security and Co-operation in Europe*

The Praesidium of the Baltic Assembly is watching with great alarm the deepening of the Chechnya conflict, the increase in the number of casualties among the civilian population there and the increasing violations of human rights.

In connection with these events, the Praesidium of the Baltic Assembly:

1. Appeals to the leadership of the OSCE member countries and proposes that the OSCE examine the possibility of setting up a mission of the OSCE, as provided by the document of the OSCE Moscow conference on the human dimension of 3rd October 1991, with the aim of investigating the facts of mass violation of human

rights in Chechnya and working out recommendations on the prevention of such violations.

2. Draws attention to the incompatibility of the actions of the armed forces of the RF in performing internal missions with the code of conduct signed by all the OSCE member countries at the Budapest meeting which obliges them strictly to adhere to the provisions of international conventions not to violate human and civil rights and also to take due care to avoid injury to civilians and their property in performing internal missions.

On behalf of the Praesidium of the Baltic Assembly,

Maris BUDOVSKIS
President of the Baltic Assembly

Riga, 9th January 1995.

APPENDIX VI

*Agreement on parliamentary co-operation between
the Baltic Assembly and the Nordic Council*

This agreement on parliamentary co-operation is to determine the priority areas of co-operation of mutual interest to both parties. Priority areas may be revised on a yearly basis. Amendments to this agreement of parliamentary co-operation are to be approved by the Praesidia of the Baltic Assembly and the Nordic Council.

The Praesidia have agreed to co-operate within the following priority areas:

(a) Development of democratic institutions

Parliamentary democracy:

- parliamentary scholarship programme

Legislative co-operation:

- assistance in the establishment of Baltic legislative co-operation,
- exchange of legal experts,
- exchange of law literature,
- protection of human rights.

(b) Co-operation in specialised areas

Environmental protection:

- action programme for cleaning the Baltic Sea,
- development of modern purification technology.

Security policy:

- withdrawal of foreign military forces,
- nuclear safety in the Baltic Sea area.

Culture and education:

- scholarship programme for students.

Trade and market economy:

- exchange of experts on economic co-operation.

Agriculture:

- restructuring of agriculture.

Communications:

- construction of Via Baltica

Energy:

- renationalisation of energy consumption.

Organisational forms of parliamentary co-operation:

- Representatives are to be invited to participate at parliamentary sessions, seminars and other international events arranged by the Baltic Assembly or the Nordic Council whenever topics of mutual interest are to be discussed;
- The Praesidia of the Baltic Assembly and the Nordic Council meet whenever needed to discuss and settle general principles for their co-operation;
- The joint working committee, chaired by the presidents, will meet whenever needed;
- Committee level contracts, meetings and co-operation should take place whenever needed;
- Secretariat level contacts to take place on a regular basis;
 - Training and technical assistance to the national secretariats of the Baltic Assembly.
- Information exchange on a regular basis:
 - by the national secretariats to the Baltic Assembly;
 - by the Nordic Information Offices as local points.

Technical realisation

- Joint meetings will be chaired by host organisation;
- Number of participants should be limited and not exceed the number of invited delegates;
- The national administration will be in charge of travel costs (in the Nordic area: only flights to the Nordic capitals);

- Hotel accommodation and meals are paid by the host organisation;
- All other arrangements will be specified by separate agreement.

Palanga, 30th May 1992

On behalf of
The Praesidium of the
Baltic Assembly

Aurimas TAURANTAS
President

This agreement on parliamentary co-operation between the Baltic Assembly and the Nordic Council has been written in two identical and equally valid copies in English and Russian signed in

Helsinki,

On behalf of
The Praesidium of the
Nordic Council

Iikka SUOMINEN
President

APPENDIX VII

***Common declaration of parliamentary co-operation between
the Baltic Assembly and the Benelux Consultative Interparliamentary Council***

This declaration expresses the will of the Baltic Assembly and the Benelux Consultative Interparliamentary Council to establish parliamentary co-operation and sets the directions, the priorities and the common interests of this co-operation.

All amendments to this declaration will be discussed and decided by the Baltic Assembly and the Benelux Consultative Interparliamentary Council.

The Baltic Assembly and the Benelux Consultative Interparliamentary Council declare to promote co-operation between the national assemblies *represented at the Baltic Council and the Benelux Consultative Interparliamentary Council* in the fields mentioned under A and B. Therefore they will, in concertation, propose initiatives to their national assemblies, their national governments and for what concerns the Benelux, the general-secretariat of the Economic Union.

A. The development of democratic institutions

1. Exchange of experience concerning parliamentary activities, information and training programmes.
2. Legislation:
 - co-operation in the co-ordination of the legislation of the Baltic and Benelux countries;
 - foster exchange programmes for legal experts;
 - exchange of documentation concerning legislation and legal reference materials;
 - protection of human rights.

B. Co-operation in special areas

1. Foreign policy: stimulation of the measures promoting the rapprochement between the Baltic states and Europe.
2. Communications:
 - stimulation of co-operation between the ports of the Baltic states and Benelux;

- reactivation of the co-operation between the cities and the municipalities of the Baltic states and Benelux;
- visa procedures among the countries.

3. Energy, market economy and environmental protection.
4. Culture, education and science.
5. Transfrontier co-operation.

The Baltic Assembly and the Benelux Consultative Interparliamentary Council declare to co-operate as follows:

C. On the level of co-operation forms

1. The Praesidium of the Baltic Assembly or the Bureau of the Benelux Consultative Interparliamentary Council can invite representatives of the Baltic Assembly or the Benelux Consultative Interparliamentary Council to the parliamentary sessions organised by both parties.
2. The Praesidium of the Baltic Assembly and the Bureau of the Benelux Consultative Interparliamentary Council shall meet whenever necessary to discuss common issues.
3. With the agreement of the Praesidium of the Baltic Assembly and the Bureau of the Benelux Consultative Interparliamentary Council joint committee meetings can be organised.
4. The meetings of the Secretariats of both assemblies shall be approved by the Praesidium of the Baltic Assembly and the Bureau of the Benelux Consultative Interparliamentary Council.

D. On the level of the procedures

1. In cases of exchange of delegations, the host Assembly makes beforehand, in concertation with the other Assembly, a detailed programme of activities. The programme provides for joint meetings organised by the host Assembly which are the object of preparatory notes distributed in advance by both Assemblies.

A written report is made afterwards on every exchange of delegations.

2. The number of participants for exchanges as is meant under C of this declaration is determined in concertation and on a reciprocal basis.

The composition of the delegations is determined by representativeness and expertise.

The Hague, 18th November 1994

In the name of the Baltic Assembly

M. BUDOVSKIS
President

3. Travel expenses to the meetings shall be covered by the participants. Hotel expenses (bed and breakfast) of the official guests are covered by the host Assembly.

This declaration has been written in Dutch, English, Estonian, French, Latvian and Lithuanian. The six texts are authentic and of equal value.

The Hague, 18th November 1994


In the name of the Benelux Consultative
Interparliamentary Council

Drs. D.J.D. DEES
President

APPENDIX VIII

The Baltic states and Kaliningrad



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