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**Swedish Presidency
of the European Union**

Joint Declaration on the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region

Stockholm Joint Declaration
on the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region

Stockholm, 18 September 2009

Ministers representing European Union Member States, as well as representatives from the European Commission and the European Investment Bank, convened in Stockholm on 18 September 2009 to discuss Macro-Regional Strategies against the background of the envisaged adoption of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (“Strategy”).

Without prejudice to the ongoing negotiations for Council Conclusions on the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, the European Union Affairs Ministers of Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden

- confirm their respective Government’s strong commitment to take the necessary action for its implementation, together with the European Commission

- recognize the importance of the Strategy for addressing challenges in the areas of environmental sustainability, prosperity, accessibility and

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attractiveness together with safety and security, for the benefit of the region, as well as for the European Union as a whole

- recognize that existing national and regional authorities and organisations are of decisive importance for the implementation of the Strategy and for achieving results in all its priority areas,

- welcome the contributions of national and regional authorities, NGOs, pan-Baltic organisations and other stakeholders to the formulation of the Strategy and underline the importance of maintaining a high level of involvement and broad ownership among all the stakeholders in the region, and their utmost importance for and key role in the implementation of concrete actions

- call upon all relevant policy and decision makers to take the Strategy into account and to support the cross-sectoral integration of the Strategy in EU-programmes and instruments as well as in, regional and national policies

- Invite the Commission to assist and coordinate various financing instruments and programmes and coordinate closely with the Member States and financial institutions in this regard

- invite the European Investment Bank and other International Financial Institutions active in the region to contribute to the Strategy with financing as well as technical expertise

- invite the European Commission to play, in partnership with the Member States, an active and facilitating role in coordinating the implementation of the Strategy

- commit themselves to develop this Strategy in ways that allow it to serve as an example and inspiration for *all* EU Member States as to how challenges and opportunities of a macro-region, may be addressed by an EU-internal integrated multi-sector strategy

- Invite *all* EU Member States to participate in the implementation of the Strategy.

