

An aerial photograph of a multi-lane highway bridge crossing a wide river. The bridge has several lanes in each direction, with a central median. The surrounding landscape is green and hilly. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent white rectangular box in the center of the image.

JOINT POSITION
ON
REGIONAL COOPERATION
IN THE
SOUTH BALTIC
DEVELOPMENT ZONE

GDĄŃSK, 25 JUNE 2004

**JOINT POSITION ON
REGIONAL COOPERATION IN THE SOUTH BALTIC DEVELOPMENT ZONE**

Whereas:

- 1) the project *South Baltic Arc*, part of INTERREG III B for the Baltic Sea Region also funded from PHARE CBC, has been a success;
- 2) the Boards of the regions of Pomorskie, Warminsko-Mazurskie and Zachodniopomorskie signed a *Declaration of Intent* on 16 October 2001 in Gdansk;
- 3) the Marshals of the regions of Pomorskie, Warminsko-Mazurskie and Zachodniopomorskie and the Prime Minister of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern signed a *Joint Position of Coastal Regions on Action Aimed at Integrating and Stepping Up the Sustainable Development of the Southern Part of Baltic Europe* on 22 February 2002 in Szczecin;
- 4) representatives of 15 of Baltic Sea Regions, including regions of the signatories of this Position, signed a *Joint Political Statement on the Role of the Regions in Developing an Integrated South Baltic Transport System* on 23 April 2004 in Malmö;
- 5) the Chairmen of the legislative bodies of the regions of Pomorskie and Zachodniopomorskie and the Lander of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and Schleswig-Holstein signed a *Joint Declaration on Inter-regional Cooperation of the South Baltic Parliaments* on 27 April 2004 in Gdansk;

*the representatives of the Land of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (Germany)
Polish regions of Zachodniopomorskie, Pomorskie and Warminsko-Mazurskie
and Kaliningrad Oblast (Russia)
met in Gdansk on 25 June 2004;*

and have formulated this position:

1. The main challenge for the *South Baltic Arc*, an area of a potential supra-national development zone consisting of the coastal regions of Germany, Poland and Russia as well as Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, is to improve the area's socio-economic situation by:
 - a) improving its spatial cohesion (including transport),
 - b) stimulating and utilising its endogenous potential,
 - c) bridge development gaps,
 - d) strengthen political, economic and social ties.
2. Meeting this challenge calls for a stronger cooperation between the signatories of this Position, as a continuation of the *South Baltic Arc* cooperation. The signatories of this Position shall take up action to prepare a new joint project under the working title of *South Baltic Arc II*, which will help explore further the cooperation, extend its geographical and theme coverage, and will thus help improve the competitiveness, attractiveness and image of the *South Baltic Development Zone*.
3. Key to the continued cooperation in *South Baltic Arc II* will be to encourage potential partners from Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian and Russian regions to an active involvement in the project. Efforts should be made to involve in the project the relevant national central authorities.

4. The preparation of a concrete project proposal, following the rules of the Baltic INTERREG III B and with the main theme being the creation of space and regional incentives to stimulate the economies of the *South Baltic Development Zone*, shall be the responsibility of a working group, comprising representatives of the signatories of this Position. The work shall be initiated and coordinated by the region of Pomorskie.
5. Taking into account the fact that Kaliningrad Oblast of Russian Federation is the region of the only non-EU country of *South Baltic Arc*, the signatories highlight its importance as an integrated part of *South Baltic Development Zone* as well as the full-fledged partner, who participates in the decision making process. In this connection the signatories agree to allocate adequate budget for fruitful and effective work of Kaliningrad Partner in the *South Baltic Arc II* project.

This Position shall be made public and known to those institutions in particular with a potential interest in the new project.

On behalf of
Mecklenburg-Vorpommern



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Klaus Sühl
Secretary of State
Ministry of Labour, Building
and Regional Development

On behalf of
the Kaliningrad Oblast



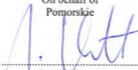
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Veniamin Ereemeev
authorised by
Igor Krasnyanskiy
Deputy Governor
of Kaliningrad Region

On behalf of
Zachodniopomorskie



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Mariusz Holicki
Member of the Board
Zachodniopomorskie Region

On behalf of
Pomorskie



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Jan Kożłowski
Marshal
Pomorskie Region

On behalf of
Warmińsko-Mazurskie



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Bożena Wrzeszczyńska
Deputy Marshal
Warmińsko-Mazurskie Region