

3rd Conference of the CBSS Ministers of Culture (Lübeck, 22 Sept. 1997)

Declaration of Lübeck

The Ministers of Culture of the Baltic Sea States met in Lübeck on September 21 - 23, 1997 for their third Conference.

The Ministers expressed their satisfaction with the progress achieved in the cultural cooperation following the second conference of the Ministers of Culture of the Baltic Sea States in Tallinn on September 10-12, 1995. At the meeting the ArtGenda Project as well as the activities of the Baltic Sea Culture Center Gdansk were presented. The Ministers took note of the important role of the cultural centers and invited to consider the possibilities of developing a network of the cultural centers around Baltic Sea.

The Ministers took note of the Presidency Declaration of the Baltic Sea States Summit in Visby on May 3 -4, 1996, and welcomed the Kalmar "Action Programmes for the Baltic Sea States Cooperation" , in which the cultural co-operation and the involvement of Ars Baltica is mentioned as a stable element, and which should be developed as an informal body for multilateral cultural co-operation.

They stressed the importance of strengthening the common identity among the Baltic Sea States.

The Ministers agreed that special attention should be given to cultural heritage which is an important part of the environment and an important factor for economic and social development. At the invitation of Sweden, a special working group will be established by the end of this year. It shall present its work and its results to the next conference of the Ministers of Culture of the Baltic Sea States for consideration.

The Ministers expressed their will to enhance efforts to eliminate structural and practical obstacles for the free flow of cultural exchange. Intellectual property rights must be respected in accordance with international agreements.

The Ministers stressed the importance of the new media, i.a. net communication (i.a. INTERNET) for the further development of cultural exchange. After the Presentation of the project "Baltic Interface Net" as a specific tool of communication between artists and institutions in the region the Ministers agreed that this subject should be developed in an expert seminar 1998 in Stockholm.

The Ministers of Culture emphasized the importance of the co-operation within the Baltic Sea Region as well as the co-operation with other regional bodies within the future architecture of Europe.

The Ministers are aware of the need of funding cultural initiatives at a national level in the Baltic Sea Region.

The Ministers of Culture agreed that a preparatory meeting for the next Conference of Ministers will be held in Iceland and that the 4th conference of Ministers will be held 1999 in Poland. The Russian Federation invited the conference in 2003 to St.Petersburg which then will celebrate its 300th anniversary.