BALTIC ASSEMBLY: BORN DURING THE AWAKENING

BROTHERHOOD

FREEDOM

INDEPENDENCE

INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENTS
To a large extent, the Baltic Assembly was created thanks to the Popular Front of Estonia – Rahvarinne, the Lithuanian Reform Movement – Sąjūdis, and the Popular Front of Latvia – Tautas Frante.

13–14 May 1989

The popular movements of the Baltic States establish their assembly in Tallinn.

31 August 1989

Regular meeting of representatives of the popular movements of the Baltic States.

23 August 1994

FREEDOM WAY
This is the way to democracy. This is the only way to freedom, equality, and brotherhood on our common shores of the Baltic Sea.

1 December 1990

FINDING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE BALTIC STATES
In Tallinn on 12 May 1990, Arnold Rüütel, Chairman of the Supreme Council of Estonia, Anatolijs Gorbunovs, Chairman of the Supreme Council of Latvia, and Vytautas Landsbergis, Chairman of the Supreme Council of Lithuania, testified to their nations’ shared commitment to strengthen cooperation by signing the Declaration of Unanimity and Cooperation of the Baltic States. On that day, the Baltic States’ Council was established. The Declaration reenacted the Treaty of the Baltic Entente of 12 September 1934 and established the Council of the Baltic States, which included the chairmen and deputies of the supreme councils. Its meetings were attended by prime ministers, foreign ministers, and other invited officials.

8 November 1991

BALTIC ASSEMBLY ESTABLISHED BY PARLIAMENTS THAT DECLARED INDEPENDENCE

24–26 January 1992

First session of the Baltic Assembly:
“We have to answer this question not only for today but also for the future perspective: Will the Baltic States be strong enough to come together, join hands, and create Benelux-like solidarity for the Baltics? Cooperation is meant for strong countries rather than weak ones, as cooperation implies compromises, concessions, and bargaining. Are we ready for that?”

Vytaras Landsbergis
Chairman of the Supreme Council of Lithuania

13 June 1994

FOUNDING OF THE BALTIC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
The Baltic Council of Ministers, an organisation for cooperation of the executive branch, is established.

1 December 1990

EVENTS OF THE AUGUST COUP

20 August 1991

AUGUST COUP
Events of the August Coup

23 August 1994

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WITHDRAWAL OF RUSSIAN TROOPS FROM THE BALTIC STATES

4 May 1995

Demolishing of the Skrunda radar station.

1 December 1990

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Foundations of the Baltic Assembly

STRUGGLE FOR THE NATIONS’ RIGHTS TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND SOVEREIGNTY

REGAINING AND STRENGTHENING OF THE BALTIC INDEPENDENCE

JOINT DEFENCE OF BALTIC TERRITORY

COMMON GOALS

BALT ASSAMBLEE
BALTIJAS ASAMBLEJA
BALTIJOS ASAMBLĖJA

SHARED HISTORY

4th Session of the Baltic Assembly in Jūrmala

13–14 May 1994

Statement Concerning Pressure from the Russian Federation on the Baltic States:

[...] both now and in the future, all forms of threats or pressure from anywhere exerted on any of the Baltic States will be considered as impinging on the security of all three Baltic States

13–15 May 1994

13–14 May 1994

5 February 2010

Meeting of the Baltic Assembly Presidium and the Budget and Audit Committee in Riga

5–6 October 1996

9th Session of the Baltic Assembly in Riga

COMMON GOALS

STRONG ECONOMIC UNION

PROTECTION OF THE BALTIC ECONOMIES AND CREATION OF THE SINGLE BALTIC MARKET

SINGLE DIGITAL MARKET

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

FOREIGN TRADE STRATEGY

COORDINATED FOREIGN POLICY

SINGLE EDUCATION AND SCIENCE AREA

1097x2247
REGAINING AND STRENGTHENING OF THE BALTIC INDEPENDENCE

COMMON GOALS

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SINGLE EDUCATION AND SCIENCE AREA

Meeting of the Baltic Assembly Presidium in Palanga

23 September 2011
2 June 1991

Baltic defence ministers sign a protocol on the cooperation between Baltic defence ministries within the common security framework.

GOALS:
- To develop national defence frameworks
- To promote effective development and application of defence capabilities
- To foster compatibility with allies
- To ensure effective cooperation in peace-keeping and crisis-management operations

8 February 1993

**BALTBAT**

Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian presidents, as well as foreign and defence ministers take part in the official inauguration of the Baltic Peacekeeping Battalion in Aldazi.

27 February 1995

**Agreement on Baltic Cooperation in the Fields of Defence and Military Relations**

"[...] acknowledging the necessity of strengthening mutual cooperation in defence and security issues, including voluntary formations [...]"

2 December 1995

The Baltic Assembly adopts the Resolution on Defence Cooperation and the Resolution on the Principles of Unity of the Baltic States.

2011 ESTONIA
2014 LATVIA
2015 LITHUANIA

**INTRODUCTION**

**SCHENGEN AREA**

"Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are standing on the NATO threshold. This position is not accidental nor is it surprising – we have worked hard to achieve this goal. Although the Alliance evaluates each of the Baltic countries separately, it remains common practice to view the Baltic States as one region and their cooperation is highly appreciated. Thus the keyword for our progress is cooperation as it testifies to our will and ability to cooperate with different partners in a variety of military affairs."

Sven Mikser
Estonian Defence Minister
24 May 2002

"[...] the Baltic Assembly urges the governments of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania to immediately engage in shaping uniform policy and take effective preparatory action – organisational, administrative, military, and political – to foster prompt accession of the Baltic States to NATO [...]"

6 October 1997

The Baltic States resolve to join NATO.

2011 ESTONIA
2014 LATVIA
2015 LITHUANIA

**UNITED IN THE EUROPEAN UNION**

"The Baltic Council declaration stressing the aspirations of the Baltic States to join the secure and stable Euro-Atlantic community and emphasising the need to engage in an active political dialogue with their neighbouring countries..."

9 May 1998

The Baltic Assembly sends out a clear message: the Baltic States are united, and an accident or problem in one of the three countries is perceived as an adversity and danger for all three countries.

24 May 2002

Estonian Defence Minister

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Photos by Ernests Dinka, Reinis Inkēns, Uldis Pāže, Uldis Briedis, Valts Kleins, JSC Latvijas valsts meži, Chancellery of the President, NATO, Seimas of Lithuania.
I believe that we should focus our cooperation on three main areas: the Baltic Sea region as a favourable environment for living and business, energy supplies and infrastructure.

Ene Ergma
Speaker of the Riigikogu
25 November 2005

"[...] to arrive at a common vision for developing the Rail Baltica infrastructure project; to jointly set the schedule for implementing this project and to agree that after the TEN-T policy review, the Via Baltica route should be integrated into the main EU transport network [...]"

22 October 2010

"[...] to intensify negotiations with Finland and Poland on their involvement in the North Sea-Baltic TEN-T Corridor and thus the Rail Baltic/Rail Baltica project [...]"

29 November 2013

Joint venture of the Baltic States for the implementation of Rail Baltica II is founded; it is entered into the Enterprise Register of the Republic of Latvia on 12 November as JSC RB Rail

28 October 2014

Ministers of Economy of the Baltic States sign the Declaration on Energy Security of Supply of the Baltic States

14 January 2015

"[...] We share the same values and are profoundly committed to elaborating solutions for enhancing energy security in our region [...]"

"[...] We are committed to strengthening regional cooperation in the Baltic region and making sure that sufficient interconnectors, synchronizers or Baltic States with the European Continental Networks, balancing arrangements between the Baltic States, capacity mechanisms and market integration are contributing to energy security, and at the same time ensuring the right balance between costs and overall benefits of these developments [...]"

20 November 2015

GAS AND TRANSPORT

INTERCONNECTIVITY

A UNITED, SECURE,
OPEN REGION

INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

Declaration on Energy Security of Supply of the Baltic States

"[...] We share the same values and are profoundly committed to elaborating solutions for enhancing energy security in our region [...]"

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2013

Beginning of active regional cooperation in the energy sector

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Joint Action – Shared Achievements

**COOPERATION **

**WELFARE IN THE REGION**

26 March 1992

The Protocol on the Development of Free Trade Regime Between the Baltic States signed

13 September 1993

The Baltic States sign the Free Trade Agreement, accelerating their integration into the international trade system and making their common market more attractive for foreign investors.

13 September 1997

The Agreement on Free Trade in Agricultural Products signed by the Baltic States

24 October 2014

The Baltic Assembly Appeal to the European Commission on Support for Milk Producers of the Baltic States

**E-GOVERNANCE**

**JOINT MARKETING**

**STRATEGY**

**SUSTAINABLE TOURISM**

**PROCUREMENT**

**EXPORT**

**INVESTMENT**

**JOINT BRANDS**

Take concerted action to attract foreign direct investment to the region:

- To develop a common approach to the export of agricultural products to international markets
- To define common interests and strategies of the Baltic States in agricultural and rural development, initially with regard to specific branches and products
- To encourage the Baltic States to coordinate their tax policies and ensure stable and predictable tax systems

**CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION IN THE PROVISION OF AMBULANCE SERVICES**

Baltic Assembly recommendation (2013 and 2014): To urge Latvia and Lithuania to sign an agreement on cross-border cooperation in the provision of ambulance services in the Lithuanian–Latvian border area

**DIGITAL SINGLE MARKET**

Baltic Assembly recommendation (2013): To develop a Baltic digital single market and eliminate all obstacles that hinder its creation.

**FIGHT AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

Recommendations of the Baltic Assembly, Benelux Parliament, Nordic Council, Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference:

- To streamline the national legal acts, eliminating loopholes in the fight against human trafficking and to draft policies, strategies and comprehensive measures for fighting human trafficking
- To undertake cooperation initiatives, exchange of experience and information among legislatures, the executive and non-governmental sector in order to achieve common goals in preventing human trafficking

**FIGHT AGAINST SHADOW ECONOMY, VAT FRAUD**

Baltic Assembly calls on the governments of the Baltic States:

- To organise regular mutual consultations on VAT and to facilitate harmonisation of the VAT policy in the Baltic States; to elaborate concrete proposals for improving the fight against tax evasion; to combat tax fraud involving third countries
- To continue looking for the most appropriate ways of combining efforts at the national, European Union and global level in the fight against tax fraud and tax evasion
- To consider the possibility of implementing the split payment model as a tool for fighting against VAT fraud

**Baltic Assembly recommendations**

- To develop an action plan which would serve as the basis for mutually beneficial and constructive cooperation between the Baltic States in the field of health care
- To prepare an assessment of the feasibility of creating a common Baltic system for procuring state-funded medicines and medical equipment, establishment of a common sperm bank and a system for exchanging organs for transplantation, as well as establishment of joint specialised medical centres in the region
- To coordinate the provision of emergency medical services in border towns and settlements adjacent to borders

**Baltic Assembly recommendations**

- Partnership Agreement between the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Latvia, the Ministry of Social Affairs of the Republic of Estonia and the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Lithuania on Joint Procurements of Medicinal Products and Medical Devices and Lending of Medicinal Products and Medical Devices Procureable Centrally

**2016**

Exhibition created by the Latvian delegation to the Baltic Assembly and the Public Relations Department of the Saeima in collaboration with the Baltic Assembly Secretariat. Dr. Marika Laizane-Jurkāne, Ernests Dinka, Reinis Inkēns, Uldis Pāže, Uldis Briedis, Valts Kleins, JSC Latvijas valsts meži, Chancellery of the President, NATO, Seimas of Lithuania
The Baltic Assembly and the Baltic Council of Ministers focused mainly on social and health-care issues, cooperation in the sphere of education, research and culture, common labour market and emigration, environmental protection, and development of information technologies.

This period is marked by intensified contacts with the Nordic Council, and gradually developing relations with the Visegrád Group and EU’s new neighbouring countries.

Issues related to the accession of the Baltic States to the Schengen Area, strengthening of economic cooperation in the region, and cross-border cooperation were high on the agenda of the cooperation between the Baltic Assembly and the Benelux Parliament.

“Stability in the European Union depends on its cooperation with its Eastern neighbours. It is of utmost importance to support the countries of the EU Eastern Partnership in building democracy in particularly adverse circumstances. A sustainable and powerful democracy cannot be formed overnight [...]. The Baltic Assembly rises to the challenges faced by our societies, and safeguards their values by assisting the Eastern Partnership countries in backing democracy, the rule of law, and human rights.”

Jānis Vucāns
President of the Baltic Assembly
15 September 2016

“...”The Baltic States and GUAM countries historically have had mutually supportive and good relations. We understand one another. It is of particular importance now, when the GUAM countries are committed to moving towards the European Union. We have been and will always be true friends of Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova...”

Raimonds Vējonis
President of the Baltic Assembly
December 2013

30 May 1992
Cooperation agreement with the Nordic Council signed in Palanga

18 November 1994
Cooperation agreement with the Benelux parliamentary body signed in the Hague

19 June 2009
Cooperation declaration with the GUAM Parliamentary Assembly signed

May 2009
The Prague summit of the European Union adopts the Eastern Partnership, whose policy is implemented with an active involvement of the Baltic States

October 2009
The EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region is adopted to provide integrated solutions to the main problems faced by the region

Original agreements

2003–2007

The Baltic Assembly in the International Arena
The Baltic Assembly Prizes for Literature, the Arts and Science are established to promote the development in literature, the arts and science in the Baltics and to reward the best achievements in these areas, as well as to promote awareness of these achievements in all three Baltic States. The Prizes, which are 5000 euros each, are awarded once a year at the annual session of the Baltic Assembly.

The Baltic Innovation Prize is awarded annually to the most innovative enterprise (business) in the Baltic States. The aim of the Prize is to reward and spotlight those Baltic businesses that have employed economically successful innovations in the development of their products, services or business models.

The medal of the Baltic Assembly is awarded for upholding the unity and cooperation of the Baltic States. The medals are awarded to the members of the Baltic Assembly, as well as other persons for their outstanding contribution to strengthening the unity and cooperation of the Baltic States.

The Baltic Innovation Fund, which is based on an agreement between the European Investment Fund, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, promotes science and innovations on joint activities in developing education, culture and science.

The Baltic Assembly in Education, Science and Culture of the Baltics.
25th Anniversary of the Baltic Assembly

Ubi concordia, ibi victoria

32 parliamentarians from ESTONIA, LATVIA, LITHUANIA come together to further the Baltic efforts to shape a secure and developed Baltic region

We are the Baltic Unity!

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