BSF Report 2011 - by Kurt Bodewig, chairman


- Statement to the United Nations Social Division during the 49th Session of the Commission for Social Development “Economic development as program for a fairer world - Northern Europe’s best practise in fighting against poverty”.

February 2011: - In the German Embassy to the UN BSF held the so-called “Baltic Sea Event Lunch” with George B. Assaf, director and representative of UNIDO as Honorary speaker at February 10. His remarks were on “Business development as an economic program for a fairer world – best practice examples from Northern Europe in the fight against poverty”. BSF continues the cooperation with the UN in 2012 (cf below, outlook).

- As promoter and partner of the MARKENBÜRO HAMBURG BSF invited to the congress “Baltic Brand Conference Riga: Brands above all borders - From Local Jewels to Global Brands” in the prestigous SSE estate in Riga. The BSF has organised conferences with that focus earlier already. More than hundreds experts participated, the German-Baltic Chamber of Commerce supported the conference.

- In cooperation with Ostsee-Netzwerk the HWWI (Hamburg WeltWirtschafts-Institut) made a survey “Future Baltic Sea area - Potentials and Challenges” supported by the BSF, the Chamber of Commerce Hamburg, the Europäischen Bewegung Deutschland (EBD) and the German Federal Foreign Office. The Chairman of BSF attended workshops in Berlin, Brussels and Hamburg.

March 2011: The Baltic Sea Forum supported members of the parliament of the Land “Lower Saxony” (largest parliament in Northern Germany) on an official visit to the Baltic Sea area. During five days the maritime experts of all parliamentary parties visited various companies and institutions around the Baltic Sea. Johann-Heinrich Ahlers, chairman of Parliament’s commission “Harbours and Shipping” guided the delegation, beginning at 20th of March with Finland, followed by Russia, Denmark and Sweden. Main issues were to intensify contacts already existing, to build up new ones, to eye up state of the art of constructing and infrastructure projects and to get an idea of the logistic challenges of harbours in the Baltic Sea area.

May 2011: - In cooperation with EAB (Europäische Akademie Berlin) the BSF organized the conference: “Northern Lights in Europe”. In the time of the ongoing Arab Spring and the consequences of the nuclear disaster in Japan the conference communicated the aims of the coming German presidency of the Baltic Sea Council to the public. The Baltic Sea community had a remarkable meeting in Berlin.

- The BSF supported the “Hamburg Baltic Sea Conference” coping with the challenges of climate change. In the course of the last two decades the impact of the Baltic Sea area in the fields of political, economical and cultural issues has increased remarkably. Combined measures in improving sustainability were taken to protect the living environment Baltic Sea. In May 2011 a conference: „Adapting to Climate Change – Case Studies from the Baltic Sea Region“ was held in Hamburg, organized by “State Chancellery of Hamburg’s Government” and the “‘Helmholtz-Zentrum Geesthacht’ - Centre for Materials and Coastal Research” to support necessary answers to the climate change.

June 2011: - BSF took part in the discussion „Green economy in the Baltic Sea Region“ organized in Berlin. In the focus of the discussions held with representatives from Poland, the Baltic and Scandina-
via countries there was the importance of sustainability in the economic development of the Baltic Sea area.

- The board of BSF met in Russian Kaliningrad (Königsberg). Board member Dr. Stephan Stein launched talks with the regional government and companies. They were continued at a reception given by the Chamber of Commerce with representatives of policy, economy and society, mainly focusing on the future outlook of the Kaliningrad Oblast.

- BSF’s Chairman represented the network in the 2nd strategic talks „International Cooperation for Energy Security“, where German and Baltic think tanks and the foundations IRI, ESV and FES met at the University of Vilnius (June 9 – 11). The new German energy policy and its consequences were a main focus. At June 20, BSF presented the efforts for “Clean Shipping” to the EU Commission. BSF’s Brussels based representative, Dr. Dietmar O. Reich, underlined the experiences.

- June 2011 was highlighted by the invitation from the General Assembly of the UN to a hearing dealing with “Handling of Non-Contagious Diseases”. BSF was represented by Prof. Johannes Bircher, chairman at large of the Swiss Chamber of Medicine. He presented an alternative interpretation to the current WHO-definition of healthfulness. His remarks triggered a further invitation by the General Assembly in September to a high-level meeting on the Prevention and Control of Non-Contagious Diseases to be held in September 2011. BSF and Bayer HealthCare AG (Germany) were the only two NGOs invited by the General Assembly.

- At the “Maritime Business Lunch” of BSF with its regional partners ZDS (Zentralverband der Deutschen Seehafenbetriebe), VDR (Verband Deutscher Reeder) und Zentralverband Deutscher Schiffsmakler e.V., the director of Brussels EU-DG Mare, Dr. Paul Nemitz, gave a presentation of the Integrated European sea policy in the coming decade. The numerous guests from maritime business, policy and associations discussed intensively sustainable outlooks for the North und Baltic Sea.

- As consulting partner BSF participated on the “Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference” in Helsinki supporting the “Baltic Sea Action Plan” in particular.

- Third time running BSF chairman Bodewig held the final speech at the “Baltic Sea Summer School” in Berlin’s Nordic Embassies were the universities of Copenhagen, Tartu, Riga, Vilnius, Gdansk, Turku and the Humboldt University participated. The strategic dimensions of energy production and energy supply dominated the auditor’s discussion.

October 2011: - A project “Fireside Conversation on Renewable Energies” was launched in Hamburg together with a public discussion in the Hamburg Chamber of Commerce with honour speaker Stephan Kohler, CEO “Deutsche Energie Agentur” DENA, on “Construction and Expansion of the Energy Supply Infrastructure”. The event was supported by our BSF-member Rödl und Partner and the Hamburg Chamber of Commerce.

- As part of the discussion „Öresund - Hamburg: future logistic opportunities“ in Hamburg BSF supported field studies from the Öresund region and underlined the chances and challenges both for German and Scandinavia companies, which could be expected by Fehmarnbelt Fixed Link. BSF board member Brigitte Langenhagen chaired the discussions.

- BSF’s managing director represented the network at the “Day of Baltic Sea Strategy” in Gdansk. Parallel to this BDF-summit (Baltic Development Forum) a meeting of EU-Project “Clean Shipping” took place in Gdansk too.
- As a deputy member of the EU Maritime Expert Group Kurt Bodewig helps to prepare the “European Maritime Day” which will be held in Göteborg in May 2012. BSF is also invited to attend the NGO-Conference of the Federal Ministry for Traffic and Building in January 2012.

**November 2011:** - BSF contributed to a workshop of the Baltic Sea Labour Network including chairing the presentation of its results. Many results of this conference will be integrated in the project „Social Partnership“ where BSF is managing partner.

- BSF consulted the Federal German Environmental Ministry for its supporting the “HELCOM YOUTH Forum” which will take place 2012 in Rostock.

- Together with **HAFEN HAMBURG Marketing e. V** BSF won the pitch for the EU-Project „Amber Coast Logistics“ (ACL). This is a collaborative logistics project that supports the coordinated development of multimodal Logistics Centres and thus fosters the connection of remote areas in the southern and eastern Baltic Sea Region. (more info at www.baltic-sea-forum.org)

- BSF’s annual general meeting 2011 was held in the International Court for the Law on the Sea in Hamburg. The successful meeting was coronated by a public event with HELCOM’s general director Anne Christine Brusendorff outlining the project “Clean Shipping”.

- Together with INEA and I.P.I. BSF prepares as a joint project „Social partnership“ an application for a major EU-project for the investigation of main issues of social partnership in Europe and its contribution to crisis management since the economic crisis in 2010.

**December 2011:** - The coordination of the Baltic Sea-Network was handled over to BSF by the Hamburg Chamber of Commerce. This coordination tasks start in 2012.

**Outlook 2012**

The Baltic Sea Forum BSF organises a program conference on behalf of the ECOSOC and in cooperation with Andrei Abramov from the department for NGOs of the United Nations / Department for Economic and Social Issues. The agenda to deal with concentrates on the status quo of realization of the “Millennium Development Goals (MDG)”. The program conference is intended as the first step to consultative talks with governments, international institutions including the UN itself in the areas of civil society, second sector, science and society. The aim is to prepare an UN-conference in New York on the main issues of the MDGs. In its preparation BSF cooperates with ECOSOC, DESA and NGO-networks. Some 20 specialized NGOs are integrated in the preparatory steering committee.

- First “Fireside Conversation on Renewable Energies” in 2012 will take place in spring 2012 in Vilnius, followed by meetings in Tallinn and Helsinki.

- A Conference on ‘tourism by car around the Baltic Sea’ is supposed to be held in November 2012 in cooperation with INEA (Institute for European Affairs) and the Drivers Association ADAC, additional cooperation with ADAC-partner associations of countries around the Baltic Sea is welcome.

- For an evening forum at the Helmut Schmidt University (Hamburg) the Danish Ambassador in Germany joins BSF.