UN-evening forum: First event of the Baltic Sea Forum as an NGO
"An ecological economy in stead of an economy of greed"

The Baltic Sea Forum celebrated its acceptance as a Non-governemmental Organization at the UN at the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea. More than 100 guests were spectators of a firework of ideas, how we can make the world a better place. One of the honour guests was the president of the Conference of Non.Governmental Organisations in Consultive Relationship with the United Nations (CoNGO), Liberato Bautista.

Not only the resources are missing, but also political goals.
The Philippine reported that there are round about 600 NGOs in the world. Besides the BSF he also welcomed the new member SER Foundation (second host of this UN-forum), which supports the understanding between cultures and religions, especially the caretaking of children. Moreover, Bautista reminded us in his keynote speech that not the ressources are missing to push forward worldwide changes but political goals. Concrelely: Since sixty years the NGOs have made big efforts to implement goals like peace, tolerance and harmony. In the face of economical crisis he postulated an ecological economy in stead of an economy of greed.

Connector between politics and population
The NGOs are the connector between population and politics. They pursue a civic global code and solidarity. War is not the solution. War must be punished as a failure of our imagination. The Glausewitz principle, that war is the continuation of diplomacy with other meaning, must not be accepted anymore. Therefore, it is absolutly necessary to come along with the global disarment.

Free und Hansecity of Hamburg is member of the BSF too.
The councilor of justice of the city of Hamburg, Mrs Carola Pacencky, welcomed the acceptance of The BSF and SER-Foundation as an NGO at the UN: She said, their acceptance as NGOs with Special Status adviser was an honour for Hamburg too. After all, the city is member of the BSF. Not at least because the BSF supports the protection of the seas.

Cultural cooperation as a key for connection
The secretary of Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Erich Stather, emphazized that is necessary to open international trade for developing countries. He said that the NGOs have always contributed to the idea of making undesirable developments visible. Moreover, he pointed out that cultural cooperation is a key for connecting countries. Then Stather listed a couple of achievements: The death toll of measeles patients has been reduced over fifty percent – thanks to comprehensive immuniation. Four million children more go to school in Ghana, Uganda and Tansania – thanks to international aid.

However, a lot of must be done. Example: The seven million aids infected people in Afirca – only two million are now under treatment.
Decade of reconciliation
The SER-chairman Prof. Korn outlined the scope of duties of his foundation which was founded in 1996. He suggested the expansion of the actual year of reconciliation for a whole decade – according to the principle of the former UN-secretary Kofi Anan that reconciliation is the highest form of dialog.

Connecting people and overcoming frontiers
Before this, the BSF chairman Mr Bodwig and former Minister a.D. had described the history of Baltic Sea Forum: From the beginning, after the fall of The Iron Curtain, as a German and Finnish initiative under the designation Pro Baltica until the present structures of partnership of the whole Baltic Sea region. Irrespective changes the motto has remained constant: Connecting people and overcoming frontiers.
Also he pointed out that it was inescapable to liberate Russia out of one sided thinking and to integrate it into the Baltic Sea community, because dialog was better than confrontation. Bodewigs special thanks goes to the cofounder of the forum, the Nobel Peace Price winner Martti Ahtisaari.

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