

05 July 2024
Tallinn, Estonia

Dear colleagues

Estonia took over the presidency of the Council of the Baltic Sea States from Finland on July 1, 2024. We are very grateful to Finland for the work and progress it has made, and we want to continue with the same dedication during our presidency.

Unfortunately, the security situation in Europe has not improved much during the year. The same concerns and problems that we faced a year ago have only increased over time and become more and more relevant. In addition to the challenges caused by climate change, we are also faced with the Russian Federation's continued military activities in Ukraine and several hybrid attacks in many parts of Europe. As civil protection agencies, we must be ready to respond to all kinds of crises, including cross-border ones, and therefore cooperation with partners is becoming more and more important, both domestically, regionally and across Europe. Cooperation between fields is also necessary, i.e. civil-military cooperation must be enhanced.

Estonia highly values cooperation in the family of the Baltic Sea States, because the countries that are part of it have similar concerns. We can share our success stories with each other and also learn from our failures. We have made **practical cooperation one of the overarching principles of our presidency.**

Estonia's priorities in Civil Protection Network are **raising population's crisis awareness, enhancing the effectiveness of early warning systems, and issues related to mass evacuation and sheltering.** We also pay great attention to the involvement of partners in civil protection, including the involvement of volunteers and young people.

During our presidency, we would like to further intensify the cooperation between the members of the Council of the Baltic Sea States, and in order for our presidency to offer maximum added value to everyone, we will **organize the KICK-OFF meeting on September 5 starting at 9 CET (10 EET) online.** The meeting consists of two parts - the first half is intended for the discussion of the directors-general, and the second half is for experts, who will be given more detailed information about the planned events.

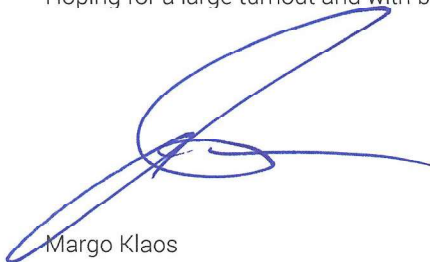
Directors-general, please think about how your country can contribute to the implementation of Estonia's presidency priorities: what lessons-learned and good practices you can share with the network?

The thoughts of the directors-general are a very valuable input for the experts' further work.

We will send the online meeting link (TEAMS) about a week before the meeting starts.

Any questions regarding this meeting can be sent to estonianpresidency@rescue.ee.

Hoping for a large turnout and with best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Margo Klaos".

Margo Klaos
Director-General

DRAFT AGENDA

September 5, 2024

08.45 CET	Lines are open
09.00 – 09.10	Margo Klaos, Director-General, Estonian Rescue Board
09.10 – 09.20	Tõnis Nirk, Ambassador of Estonia to the Baltic Sea cooperation
09.20 – 09.30	Andrus Merilo, Commander of the Defence, Estonian Defence Forces
09.30 – 09.35	CBSS Director General
09.35 – 10.30	Directors-General discussion
10.30 – 12.00	Introduction of Estonian Presidency events