Danuta Maria Hübner
Chair of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs

Ms. Martina Proosa
Chair of the VASAB Committee
on Spatial Planning and Development of the Baltic Sea Region

Brussels, 10th September 2014

Dear Chair,

On the 20th anniversary of the strategic document – Vision and Strategies around the Baltic Sea 2010, agreed in 1994 in Tallinn - I would like to congratulate all members of VASAB family who have contributed to the development of the transnational strategic approach to policy challenges and opportunities that exist around the Baltic Sea.

VASAB Long-Term Perspective for the Territorial Development of the Baltic Sea Region supplies the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region with territorial dimension and facilitates an institutional framework in the Baltic Sea Region. Since my time as Commissioner for Regional Policy, I have always seen this region as a successful "EU Enlargement Laboratory". I took also the opportunity to address participants of the 6th Conference of Ministers Responsible for Spatial Planning and Development in the BSR in Gdansk on September 19th, 2005. I did it because I highly valued VASAB`s role as a political process in which old and new Member States as well as the neighbours to the European Union (Belarus, Norway and Russia) created sustainable networks for territorial co-operation and policymaking at various levels of governance. It is a way to foster political relations as well as economic integration in the whole Baltic Sea Drainage Basin including Ukraine, a priority partner country within the European Neighborhood Policy and the Eastern Partnership.

I hope that co-operation of ministers responsible for spatial planning and development will continue to be an effective way to develop the Baltic Sea Region into a model case of cross-border and transnational spatial planning and development towards territorial cohesion. And I am convinced that VASAB Committee will have a leading role for the land – based spatial planning in the Region.

Sincerely,

Danuta Hübner