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Mr. Co-Chairman

1. It's a great honour and privilege for me to present in this discussion panel the most recent work of the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission – also known as HELCOM - as regards safety of navigation and thus, measures to protect the marine environment of the Baltic Sea area.

2. Please allow me to first give you a brief outline of the two things that need to be taken into account when assessing the risk for maritime incidents

- The sensitivity of the sea area; and
- The character of the traffic, including the number of ships and the type and amount of cargo transported.

triple and oil transportation is thought to increase by 40%. Expansion of existing as well as new oil terminals in the Gulf of Finland and the still increasing economic growth in the Eastern Baltic countries may lead to further increases.

5. The Baltic Sea States quite early realized that something multilateral

basis for this is the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area, from 1974 and revised in 1992, as well as

- Joint initiatives of the Baltic Sea States within the International Maritime Organization and the 1989 Basic Memorandum of Understanding;

- Implementation by the Baltic Sea States of regulations within the International Maritime Organization and International Hydrographic Organization, where possible with the strictest demands; and

Initiation of regional actions to make use of the possibility of HELCOM

the maritime traffic and as a basis for risk analyses. Denmark and Germany have already set up a 24-hour AIS monitoring for the Kattegat – a heavily

trafficked area in the south-western part of the Baltic.

21. The Baltic Sea States also decided to strengthen the compliance with maritime safety regulations:

- By providing electronic guidance and information for safe navigation; and
- By establishing necessary procedures for investigations into accidents to

promote safety and environmentally conscious practices – having due regard to that around 80% of all accidents at sea are due to human failure.

22. A decision by the Baltic Sea States to refrain from making use of any exemption and relaxation provisions will ensure that single-hull oil tankers will be phased-out at the earliest date possible under the IMO regime.

23. Several of the measures decided on concern a more active