

CLOSING WORDS

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Friends,

Let me start with thanking again all the speakers, experts and participants for coming to Gdańsk and your involvement.

While summing up the Forum, I have to bring back the challenges we face. These are mainly: rapid changes in technology, loss of trust in democratic institutions, demographic changes and migrations of people and – first of all – climate crises. We have to realise that the situation is extremely serious. About one million species are endangered and more than 2 thousand conflicts over natural resources are taking place. This is really a warning message for all of us.

That is why I do believe that actions are needed really quickly to make the best use of the still existing positive potential, so we can address many of the challenges mentioned.

We cannot just be waiting for experts to devise new innovative solutions. We have to act in a really ambitious way to bring a serious change now. It is our chance for innovative solutions and better, healthier life. What I see as necessary is:

- fundamental transformation of economies and consumer habits,
- systemic solutions in legal and economic systems coupled with individual actions on all levels,
- coherent and non-sector oriented global solutions,
- proper education since early stages,
- involvement of media including social media with a big change of narrative which should be more attractive to all generations, and
- strong involvement of youth.

There are also actions we should undertake in the Baltic Sea Region, such as:

- annual Baltic Sea Dialogue continued, but with stronger involvement of political decision makers, business and academia,
- establishing a Baltic platform for circular economy as a public-private collaboration tool,
- implement innovative actions like Baltic Circular Cities initiative – which should be educative, involving and fun,
- closer cooperation with global players and promotion of their initiatives and policies,
- stronger and more visible campaign of the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals.

I believe that macro-regional approach can be a great asset. However, it needs bigger involvement of all levels, including regions, cities and civil society. I also believe that while we need systemic overall approach, support for small bottom-up actions is necessary, too. To be able to use the potential of our citizens and especially of the youth.

Hoping for ambitious and coordinated actions I would like to once again thank the co-organisers of the Forum – President Roger Ryberg and the BSSSC as a whole, European Commission and Polish Ministry of Foreign Relations. As well as the Council of the Baltic Sea States, and all the institutions and Baltic Sea organisations involved in the many events happening during the Forum. And last but not least the Pomorskie team preparing the Forum.

And let's remember – Future really does start now!

Thank you.