Dear ladies and gentlemen!

Esteemed guests!

Cooperation partners!

Representatives of the Council of Baltic Sea States!

Before we sit down to have a pleasant festive meal let me say a few introductory words.

First of all - thank you all for being here tonight.

It means a lot.

It means a lot to our hero of the day – the Council of Baltic Sea States Expert Group on Children at Risk.

It means a lot to the Latvian Presidency of the Council of Baltic Sea States.

Today we praise the success story of the Council of Baltic Sea States. With strong determination, the Council has promoted regional cooperation to ensure the rights and wellbeing of every child in our region. For 20 years.

The two Council entities that should be especially praised tonight are the Expert Group on Children at Risk, representing public administration from all the region, and the Children at Risk Unit operating within the Council Secretariat.

Without doubt one can say that the Council of Baltic Sea States has made a positive impact to ensure the rights and wellbeing of every child in the region. And its valuable work is being continued.

Let us wish to the Expert Group and the Council of Baltic Sea States many more years of a successful work and great achievements to make our region a place of happiness and wellbeing for every child.

With the powers of the host I would like to introduce to you my “deputy host” – Mr. Ansis Bogustovs who will now take over from me the moderating of tonight’s dinner.

Thank you!