

**MINUTES FROM THE 31st MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE
BOARD OF THE UNION OF THE BALTIC CITIES
Malbork, Poland, 16 June 2001**

INTRODUCTION

The 31st meeting of the Executive Board of the Union of the Baltic Cities was held on the 16th of June 2001 in the City of Malbork, Poland, upon the invitation of Mr Mieczyslaw Roeding, Mayor of Malbork.

The meeting was attended by the Members of the Executive Board. The list of participants is attached to this report.

1. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda.

The 31st meeting of the UBC Executive Board was opened by Mr Anders Engstrom, the President of the Union. Mr Engstrom greeted all participants and wished them a successful meeting.

Mr Mieczyslaw Roeding, Mayor of Malbork, welcomed all delegates and wished them the fruitful discussions and a pleasant stay in Malbork. Mr Roeding made a short presentation introducing the city of Malbork and the famous Malbork teutonic castle.

The meeting adopted the agenda which is attached to this report.

2. Election of two persons who, together with the President, will check the minutes.

Mr Kaj Kjaer, Aalborg and Mr Jan Otto Evjen, Bergen, were elected to check the minutes together with the President.

3. New Member Cities.

Mr Pawel Zaboklicki, Secretary General, informed the Executive Board about the applications for Union membership submitted by the cities of Paldiski (Estonia) and Berlin (Germany).

Decision:

The Board decided to accept Paldiski as 99th member and Berlin as 100th member of the Union of the Baltic Cities and wished them fruitful cooperation with other UBC member cities. The updated list of member cities is attached to the minutes.

4. VI General Conference in Rostock.

4.1 Status of preparations.

Ms Petra Hamann, Rostock, informed that conference invitation has been sent out to all member cities. The deadline for registrations is 31 July 2001. Ms Hamann informed that there are no scheduled flights to Rostock, the closest airports are Hamburg and Berlin (2 hours drive). There is a possibility to organise a charter flight from Copenhagen to Rostock – deadline for registrations is 30 June. Invitation also includes the call for presentations to the conference workshops. Invitations to partner organisations will be soon distributed.

Mr Arno Poker, Mayor of Rostock, recalled that at the last meeting in Cesis, the Board suggested to have the panel discussion between key speakers during the thematic conference. This has been done. The speeches will last for 15-20 min and will be followed by the panel discussion. The Board in Cesis suggested also to invite a speaker from NGO. Mr Poker managed to invite the Secretary General of German Caritas.

The Board expressed its satisfaction to the city of Rostock for the professional preparations to the VI General Conference.

4.2 UBC Social Charter.

Ms Petra Hamann reminded that in Cesis the Board created the working group led by Rostock aimed at creating the draft of the UBC Social Charter to be adopted at the General Conference in Rostock. Working group prepared the first draft of the Charter. The Charter includes the social goals for the UBC and its member cities. The document is attached to the minutes.

Following the presentation of the Charter, the Board discussed whether the Charter shall be binding for the member cities or it should be rather treated as a guideline.

Decision:

After extensive discussion the Board decided that the Charter shall be treated by the member cities as a guideline and it is up to each city to follow the UBC Social Charter. Member cities are requested to send comments on the draft Charter to the city of Rostock, before the General Conference.

4.3 Conference resolution.

Mr Juhan Janusson reminded that in Cesis the Board created the working group to prepare the resolution for the General Conference. The resolution should deal with the most important questions concerning the UBC and the Baltic Sea Region such as for example:

- involvement of local authority level in the EU enlargement process
- support for activities aimed at preparing the cities for EU membership
- support for cities involvement in the implementation of Agenda 21

- support for policies and activities that strengthen the Baltic Sea Region
- better adaptation of Interreg III to the BSR conditions, taking into consideration maritime borders, eligible actions and project sizes

Mr Janusson informed that soon a letter will be sent out to the member cities, commissions and networks, asking to submit proposals of issues to be highlighted in the resolution.

The Board asked the working group to continue its work on the resolution.

4.4 Environmental award 2001.

Mr Risto Veivo, Turku, informed that the booklet introducing the conditions of the UBC environmental award 2001 contest has been published and sent out to all member cities. Member cities are welcome to present successful practices which include environmental and social goals. The deadline for applications is the end of September. The description of the contest is attached to the minutes. Mr Veivo proposed the same evaluation committee as during the first addition of the award in 1999 ie. Mr Mikko Jokinen (Turku), Mr Carl Nielsen (Aarhus), Mr Guldbrand Skjonberg (Nacka), Mr Pawel Zaboklicki (UBC Secretariat).

Decision:

The Board approved the composition of the award evaluation committee and authorised the Commission on Social Affairs to delegate its representative to the committee.

4.5 Elections

4.5.1 Presidium

President Anders Engstrom reminded that in Cesis the Board appointed a working group responsible for the preparation of the elections to be held during the General Conference in Rostock. Mr Engstrom put forward a question whether the UBC Presidium should be enlarged to four persons ie. the President and three Vice-Presidents.

Decision:

After discussion and voting the Board proposed the General Conference to make appropriate amendments in the UBC Statute in order to elect four members of the Presidium. The current valid UBC Statute is attached to the minutes.

The Board proposed the following candidates to the new Presidium:

Mr Per Bodker Andersen, Mayor of Kolding, for the President

Mr Armas Lahoniitty, Mayor of Turku, for the first Vice-President

Ms Liisa Pakosta, Vice-Mayor of Tallinn, for the Vice-President

Mr Arno Poker, Mayor of Rostock, for the Vice-President

4.5.2 Executive Board

Decision:

The Board requested the Board members to contact member cities in their countries to discuss the candidate city for the Board in the next period. Proposals shall be sent to the Secretariat three weeks before the General Conference.

4.5.3 Board of Audit

Decision:

According to the UBC Statute, the Board of Audit consists of three members from three member cities - who are not members of the Executive Board. The candidates to the Board of Audit will be proposed at the next Board meeting in Rostock, when the candidate cities to the Executive Board are known.

4.6 10th Anniversary arrangements

Mr Pawel Zaboklicki reminded that in Cesis the Board appointed a working group responsible for the UBC 10th Anniversary arrangements. The group had a meeting in Gdansk in April and suggested the following arrangements to be organised on the occasion of the 10th anniversary:

- colour booklet devoted to the history, present and future of the Union
- exhibition of photographs taken at General Conferences, Board Meetings etc.
- exhibition of paintings from the Children Drawing Competition
- anniversary ball or party on Saturday 13 October evening
- poster or calendar (if possible)
- some gifts for all participants eg. linen or leather gadgets

Additionally Mr Tonu Karu, Tallinn, informed about his planned trip around the Baltic Sea aimed at visiting member cities and making a movie showing the daily life of our cities. The movie would be shown at the General Conference in Rostock.

Decision:

The Board asked the working group to continue its work on anniversary arrangements.

The Board supported Mr Karu's proposal and asked all member cities to support him during his interesting trip.

4.7 Seminar for city youth managers

President Anders Engstrom reminded that UBC should more involve youth in the work of the Union. He proposed to hold the seminar for city managers dealing with youth questions, during the General Conference in Rostock. Mr Engstrom informed that Ms Ina Werner, head of the Baltic Sea Secretariat for Youth in Kiel agreed to be involved in such seminar.

Mr Arno Poker, Rostock, informed that all human resources are involved in the organisation of the General Conference and Rostock has no capacity to organise another seminar, unless the youth managers would register as the regular GC participants.

Decision:

After discussion the Board decided to hold the seminar for city managers dealing with youth matters, during the General Conference in Rostock, provided that the Baltic Sea Secretariat for Youth would be responsible for the organisation of such seminar.

4.8 General Conference in 2003

President Engstrom reminded that in 1999, following the proposal from Mr Eugenijus Gentvilas, UBC Board recommended to hold the UBC General Conference in 2003 in the city of Klaipeda. This year Mr Gentvilas stepped down as a Mayor of Klaipeda and became a Minister for Economics of Lithuania. Mr Engstrom said that we don't know if Klaipeda is still interested to host the General Conference in 2003.

Mr Armas Lahoniitty, Mayor of Turku, informed that the city of Turku would be interested to host the General Conference in 2003. Mr Tonu Karu, Tallinn, added that the city of Tallinn would be interested to host the GC in 2003, in case if Turku would change its mind.

Decision:

The Board asked Mr Alfredas Lankauskas, Siauliai, to contact Mr Gentvilas and find out whether Klaipeda is still interested to host the General Conference in 2003.

5. UBC Action Plan – evaluation of implementation.

President Anders Engstrom went through the UBC Action Plan 2000-2001. The document is attached to the minutes. Mr Engstrom drew the conclusion that UBC has been active and successful in such areas as:

- EU enlargement in the Baltic Sea region
- Implementation of Agenda 21 locally
- Deepening cooperation with the BSR organisations and networks
- Promotion the Local Authority Level with regard to the EU Northern Dimension

President Engstrom admitted that UBC was not successful in the question of involving Belarus cities in the UBC work. There were problems with arranging a meeting with Belarus opposition representatives. Besides UBC did not receive any application from any Belarus city. Only representatives of Belarus government inquired such possibility.

Mr Engstrom said that UBC was also not successful with sufficient involvement of youth in the UBC work and did not manage to create the strong UBC youth network due to various reasons.

6. Information from the Board of Audit.

The Board of Audit was created and elected at the V General Conference in Stockholm in 1999. Originally three members were elected: Mr Bartlomiej Sochanski (Szczecin), Ms Silvia Lobner (Wismar) and Mr Kim Roessell (Copenhagen). Mr Roessell left his office, so presently the Board of Audit consists of two members.

According to the UBC Statute, the Board of Audit “checks the auditor’s report for correctness and proper use of the resources for purposes laid in decisions of the General Conference and the Executive Board...”.

Mr Bartlomiej Sochanski informed that the Board of Audit spent one day before the Board meeting in the UBC Secretariat in Gdansk and reviewed various documents and resolutions provided by the Secretariat. He added that the report from the Board of Audit will be presented to the General Conference in Rostock.

Mr Pawel Zaboklicki, Secretary General, informed that the Auditor’s Report for the 1999 and 2000 has been forwarded to the Board of Audit. The report is attached to the minutes.

The Board took note of the information.

7. UBC LA21 Action Program 2002-2003.

Mr Risto Veivo, Turku, reminded that at the last meeting in Cesis the Board authorised the Commission on Environment Secretariat and the UBC LA21 Working Group to start preparations on the new action program for the period 2002-2003. Mr Veivo presented the first draft of the Action Program. The total budget of projects proposed in the program equals to 2.5 MEURO. The paper is attached to the minutes.

Additionally Ms Sara Smith, Turku, presented the sustainability guidelines for the UBC, aimed at providing information how to make UBC activities more sustainable. The guidelines are attached to the minutes. The Board encouraged all UBC bodies to use the guidelines in their daily work.

8. Seminar for UBC EU-Coordination in Kotka.

Ms Charlotte Pedersen, Aalborg, informed that the 4th Seminar for UBC EU-Coordination was held in Kotka on 6-7 May 2001. During the seminar participants discussed how to develop the network. There were also interesting presentations showing how different cities deal with the EU matters.

The meeting resulted in the decision to create a working group to define a strategy for future activities of the network. The group consists of Mr Tonu Karu (Tallinn), Mr Antti Nouvouri

(Kotka), Ms Charlotte Pedersen (Aalborg) and Mr Juhan Janusson, who met in Brussels on 11th of June. The group asks EU-Coordinators in all cities to express their expectations from the network and to participate in the work. Also there is a wish to create national contact points – a national UBC EU-coordinators. The network has focused on the enlargement process and is seeking to initiate capacity building projects in order to facilitate the enlargement process at the city level.

9. Report from the UBC EU-Coordinator.

9.1 UBC-LVRLAC cooperation – update.

Mr Juhan Janusson reported on project developments since the Board meeting in Cesis. He informed that in April, fifteen high-level LVRLAC decision makers from the cities of Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania had a study tour in the Baltic Sea Region. The study tour concentrated on environmental protection issues. The representatives of LVRLAC visited the cities of Stockholm, Nacka, Turku, Kalmar, Gdynia and Gdansk. The group also visited UBC Secretariat in Gdansk and Secretariats of the Commissions on Environment (Turku) and Sport (Gdynia) in order to learn about UBC structure and activities.

Currently Mr Guldbrand Skjonberg, Nacka, is in Uganda in order to launch the environmental pedagogical centre, similar to the one established in Nacka, Sweden.

Mr Janusson informed that SIDA wishes to have UBC representative working on spot in Uganda. The job offer has been spread to all member cities and so far he received seven applications.

9.2 UBC initiative on Interreg III B - update

Mr Juhan Janusson reminded that UBC has taken initiative to create a facility within the Interreg III B program to fund the local and regional cooperation projects within the Baltic Sea Region. A working group including also representatives from BSSSC and CPMR BSC was created. The results of the WG work were sent to the European Commission. UBC has received basically positive answer to its initiative from the European Commission /Ms Elisabeth Helander/.

Mr Risto Veivo informed that according to his knowledge the deadline for Interreg III B applications will be in October 2001.

10. Proposals from Rostock.

10.1 Conference on Transport & Logistics in the BSR in 2002

10.2 Hanseatic Sunshine Ride 2003

Mr Arno Poker, Rostock, reminded that written description of planned Conference on Transport & Logistics in the BSR in 2002 as well as Hanseatic Sunshine Ride 2003 have been sent in

advance to all members of the Board. Mr Poker asked the Board to give UBC support to mentioned initiatives.

Mr Tonu Karu, Tallinn, informed the Board that the year 2003 has been declared as international year of disabled and proposed this fact could be reflected in the Hanseatic Sunshine Ride.

Mr Poker agreed with this proposal.

Decision:

The Board decided UBC shall support the initiatives proposed by the city of Rostock.

The written descriptions of the projects are attached to the minutes.

11. Reports from the conferences and meetings attended by Union representatives.

President Engstrom informed that since the Board meeting in Cesis, UBC representatives attended the following conferences:

- International Association Cities & Ports General Meeting, Gdansk, 11-12 May 2001 (Pawel Zaboklicki)
- NCM Conference on Cross-Border Cooperation in BSR, Birstonas, 28-29 May 2001 (Anders Engstrom)
- CBSS NGO Forum, Lubeck, 28-29 May 2001 (Petra Hamann)
- CPMR Baltic Sea Commission General Assembly, Tallinn, 29 May 2001 (Pawel Zaboklicki)
- 10th Ministerial Session of the CBSS, Hamburg, 7 June 2001 (Anders Engstrom)
- Hansa Days in Riga, 8-10 June 2001 (Anders Engstrom)

Board members received written reports from mentioned conferences. The Board took note of the reports. The reports are attached to the minutes.

12. Baltic Cities Bulletin on Youth in the BSR.

Secretary General Pawel Zaboklicki introduced the latest issue of the UBC Baltic Cities Bulletin devoted to “Youth in the Baltic Sea Region”. The bulletin includes stories sent by member cities introducing projects, activities and events directed to youth and initiated by youth. The bulletin also provides information on latest UBC meetings and activities as well as news from the member cities. The bulletin is printed in 5000 copies and has been sent out to all member cities as well as to numerous Baltic and European institutions and organisations including the EU.

The Board urged the contact persons in all member cities to distribute the bulletin among departments in each City Hall and send it to various city institutions such as universities, libraries, ports, chambers of commerce etc.

The Board expressed its satisfaction to the Editorial Board and the UBC Secretariat for maintaining the high profile of the UBC Bulletin.

13. Questions raised at the meeting.

No further questions have been raised.

14. Next Meeting of the Executive Board.

Decision:

The Board decided to hold its 32nd meeting in Rostock on 11 October 2001, on the eve of the VI UBC General Conference.

15. Closing of the Meeting.

Mr Anders Engstrom expressed his thanks to all participants for the fruitful meeting and to the City of Malbork for its warm hospitality and closed the 31st Meeting of the Executive Board of the Union of the Baltic Cities.

Mr Anders Engstrom
Chairman

Mr Pawel Zaboklicki
Secretary

Mr Kaj Kjaer
Adjuster

Mr Jan Otto Evjen
Adjuster