

Conference Report

The II General Conference and Assembly of the Union of the Baltic Cities was held on 24-25 September 1993 in Svetlogorsk, Kaliningrad Region, upon the invitation of the authorities of Kaliningrad.

The Conference was attended by the Delegation of 23 City Councils as well as several international organizations and institutions.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

SPEECH OF WELCOME AND OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE

Mr Vitaly Shipov, Mayor of the City of Kaliningrad, gave the welcome speech to all participants.

General Conference was opened by Mr Anders Engström, President of the Union of the Baltic Cities.

INAUGURATION OF THE CONFERENCE

During the first session of the Conference the following persons gave keynote addresses:

* Mr Jan P. Syse, President of the Nordic Council, gave the strong support for the establishment of co-operation on many levels and between different groups of the Baltic Sea region.

* Mr John Morgan, Vice-President of Council of Europe's Standing Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE), who touched in his address problems of local and regional democracy.

* Mr Vitaly Shipov, Union of the Russian Cities, on behalf of the President of URC

Mr Valery Kirpichnikov expressed will of establishing forms of cooperation between both networks.

* Mr Vasiliy Rodionov, Technological Secretary of the Helsinki Commission, dealt in his speech with matters concerning environmental protection of the Baltic Sea region and enterprises undertaken and supported by HELCOM.

* Ms Eve Kuusmann, representative of the Council of the Baltic Sea States Expert of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Estonia, reported on reasons, goals and activities of CBSS.

CONTINUATION OF SPEECHES AND PRESENTATION

PLENARY SESSION

Succeeding keynote speeches the following persons gave addresses on the Plenary Session:

* Ms Mari Hakkala, Representative of the City Authorities of Turku, speaking on behalf of Mayor Mr Juani Leppä introduced the Environmental Policy of the Union of the Baltic Cities.

* Mr Olaf P. Christensen, Deputy Mayor of the City of Aarhus, described the main outlines of Baltic Sustainable Cities Programme - an overall headline of Union's Commission on Environment Action Plan 1994-1996.

* Mr Nils Lindstedt, Investment Manager, Nordic Environment Finance Corporation (NEFCO), who drew the attention of the meeting on the subject of "Joint public and private investment in municipal services companies".

Representatives of 10 cities from countries under economical transition submitted presentations concerning Present Status of Public Utilities in these cities:

- Mr Dariusz Knowski, Head of Liaison for International Affairs, City of Gdańsk,

- Mr Maciej Brzeski, Deputy Mayor of the City of Gdynia,

- Mr Vigantas Jablonskis, Deputy Mayor of the City of Klaipėda,

- Representative of the City of Riga on behalf Mr I. Vismins, Mayor of Liepāja,

- Mr Piotr Chelkowski, Mayor of the City of Łeba,

- Mr Andris Teikmanis, Mayor of the City of Riga,

- Mr Klaus M. Kilimann, Mayor of the City of Rostock,

- Mr Sławomir Szafranski in the name of Mayor of the City of Szczecin,

- Mr Andreas Levald, Environmental Counsellor from the City of Tallinn,

- Mr Vitaly Shipov, Mayor of the City of Kaliningrad.

* Mr Xavier Bonnefoy, Regional Adviser for Environment and Health Planning / Ecology, World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe, who drew the attention of the meeting to the Healthy Cities Project and expressed the will of closer co-operation with the Union of the Baltic Cities.

* Mr Pasi Rinne, Programme Coordinator of International Council for Local Environment Initiatives, presented outlines of ICLEI Baltic Eco-Cities Programme.

* Mr Folke Plejmark, World Wide Fund for Nature, who pictured the management plans for the Baltic coastal lagoons and wetlands.

* Mr Eric Martin, Coalition Clean Baltic, "No harm can come from educating the public" -the current Public Awareness and Environmental Education problems were specified in his speech.

* Ms Hiroko Yamane, Political Counsellor, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development characterized present status of EBRD involvement in Baltic municipalities and pointed out new possibilities of cooperation.

* Mr Stephen F. Lintner, Principal Environmental Specialist, World Bank, presented general overview of World Bank environmental activities in the Baltic Sea region.

* Mr Jan Kuligowski, Chairman of the Group of Focal Points, who introduced the outlines of project so called Vision and Strategies around the Baltic Sea 2010.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Mr Anders Engström, the President of the Union, expressed his gratitude to all who gave their addresses and presentations emphasizing their great contribution to the work of the Union.

The Agenda of the Conference was adopted.

ANNUAL REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE UNION

Mr Anders Engström, the President of the Union, presented the activities of the Union for the period May '92 - September '93.

The Assembly adopted the Report.

REPORTS AND ACTION PLANS FROM THE WORKING COMMISSIONS

Following the presentation of UBC Annual Report, five Union's Working Commissions met in separate working groups. Representatives of the Commission's lead cities submitted reports from the last two years as well as action plans for another period.

Participants approved action plans presented by the lead cities after adjoining new proposals and project put forward by the member cities. Technical problems of improving the daily work of the Commissions were also discussed.

Action Plan of the Commission on Culture - submitted by the City of Szczecin.

Action Plan of the Commission on Environment - submitted by the City of Aarhus.

Action Plan of the Commission on Social Affairs - submitted by the City of Rostock.

Action Plan of the Commission on Telecommunication - submitted by the Cities of Kalmar and Riga.

Action Plan of the Commission on Transportation - submitted by the Cities of Gdańsk and Kaliningrad.

STRATEGY OF WORK OF THE UNION OF THE BALTIC CITIES

Mr Piotr Krzyżanowski, the Secretary of the Union, presented Strategy of Work of the Union for the future. Above document along with the Action Plans of the Working Commissions will create the framework for elaboration of Programme of the Union of the Baltic Cities.

OTHER REPORTS

Ms Hjördís Höglund, Sundsvall, reported on the First Women's Conference of the Union of the Baltic Cities, which was held in Svetlogorsk on May 13-15, 1993.

Mr Per Bergman, Project Manager, Confederation of Norden Associations, reported on Environmental Summercamp for Youth in Latvia 1993, organized under auspices of the Union of the Baltic Cities.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Mr Piotr Krzyżanowski, the Secretary of the Union, presented the Financial Report of the Union for the period May '92 - September.

The Assembly approved the Financial Report and described Union's present financial position as satisfactory.

PROCEDURAL MATTERS

MEMBERSHIP FEE FOR THE NEXT YEAR

The General Conference decided to maintain the membership fee for next two years period on unchanged level, i.e. USD 2,000/year per member city. Analogously to previous years the Secretariat was commissioned to collect the membership fees from member cities.

ELECTION OF PRESIDENT AND TWO DEPUTY PRESIDENTS

The General Conference decided to reelect Mr Anders Engström as a President of the Union and Mr Michael Bouteiller, Mayor of Lübeck as a Vice-President for the next two year period. Mr Andris Teikmanis, Mayor of Riga was elected as a second Vice-President.

ELECTION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

The following member cities were reelected as members of the Executive Board of the Union for next two year period: Aarhus, Gdańsk, Kaliningrad, Klaipėda, Kristiansand, Riga, Rostock, Sundsvall, Tallinn, Turku.

LOCATION OF THE UNION SECRETARIAT FOR A TWO YEAR PERIOD

The Meeting decided not to change the location of the Secretariat for next two year period. Mr Piotr Krzyżanowski was voted to be the Secretary of the Union for another two year period.

TIME AND VENUE OF THE NEXT CONFERENCE

The General Conference appreciated the proposal of the Deputy Mayor of the City of Aarhus to organize the next General Conference of the Union. Mr Olaf P. Christensen warmly invited representatives of all member cities, as well as international institutions to his home city.

The next General Conference of the Union will be held in autumn 1994 or spring 1995.

RESOLUTION ON COOPERATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL AID

President of the Union, Mr Anders Engström submitted statement underlining the necessity of strengthening cooperation and environmental aid within Baltic Sea area accordingly to the programme named Agenda 21 adopted by High Level Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, June 1992.

LETTER FROM MEDCITIES NETWORK

Mr Antony D. Haggipavlu, Mayor of Limassol, Chairman of Medcities Network addressed the letter to the President of the Union of the Baltic Cities on the occasion of the annual conference. He wished participants "all the best and every success in deliberations".

Mr Antony D. Haggipavlu supported all issues undertaken by the Union and expressed the will of close mutual cooperation between Union of the Baltic Cities and Medcities Network.

CLOSING OF THE CONFERENCE

Mr Anders Engström, President of the Union, verbalized his thanks to all the participants, experts, guests and hosts for their great contribution to the success of the Conference, meetings and the work in the commissions.