

**MINUTES FROM THE 37TH MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE
BOARD OF THE UNION OF THE BALTIC CITIES
Rostock, Germany, 18 June 2003**

The 37th meeting of the Executive Board of the Union of the Baltic Cities was held on the 18th of June 2003 in the City of Rostock, Germany, upon the invitation of Mr Arno Poeker, Mayor of Rostock. In connection with the Board meeting the participants had a pleasure to visit the impressive International Gardening Exhibition in Rostock.

The list of meeting participants is included as an annex to this report.

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

Mr Arno Poeker, Mayor of Rostock, welcomed all delegates and wished them the fruitful discussions and a pleasant stay in Rostock.

The meeting was opened by Mr Per Boedker Andersen, the President of the Union. Mr Andersen greeted all participants and wished them a successful meeting. The meeting adopted the agenda attached as an annex to this report.

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

Mr Arno Poeker, Mayor of Rostock and Mr Aulis Laaksonen, Deputy Mayor of Pori, were elected to check the minutes.

3. VII General Conference in Klaipeda.

3.1 Invitations, organisational matters.

Ms Ina Sidlauskienė informed the Board about the status of preparations to the VII UBC General Conference in Klaipeda, 17-19 October 2003.

City of Klaipeda made a tender for printing the invitation brochures and organisation of the conference. The results of the tender will be known on 27 June.

Ms Sidlauskienė informed that invitation brochures will be printed and sent out to all member cities, international organisations and others in July. The deadline for registrations will be September 20.

Member Cities will have an opportunity to make small exhibitions at the conference venue. Already several cities booked the exhibition stands. Interested cities shall contact the city of Klaipeda as soon as possible.

Ms Sidlauskienė informed that President Paksas will not be able to attend the General Conference.

The Council of Europe awarded the City of Klaipeda with the Europe Prize 2003. The Award ceremony will take place at the beginning of the General Conference.

3.2 Conference Programme.

Mr Pawel Zaboklicki, Secretary General, presented the preliminary programme of the General Conference. First conference day will be fully devoted to the conference theme: "The Baltic Sea Wave - Business Development in the New Europe". UBC has invited the following keynote speakers:

- Mr Algirdas Brazauskas, Prime Minister of Lithuania
- Mr Tiit Naber, Chairman of the CBSS Committee of Senior Officials
- Mr Albert Bore, President of the Committee of the Regions
- Mr Erkki Liikanen, EU Commissioner for Enterprise and Information Society
- Mr Leif Pagrotsky, Minister of Industry, Employment and Communications
- Mr Piotr Chelkowski, NCC / Hydrobudowa SA
- Mr Hubert Frommel, SWEDBANK

President Andersen informed that Mr Bore sent a letter informing that he would be very interested to attend the UBC General Conference but can not yet confirm his participation.

Mr Mikko Lohikoski informed that Mr Liikanen will not be able to participate in the General Conference, but instead a representative of Enterprise Directorate General might come to inform about EC programs for business sector. Mr Lohikoski also proposed to invite the Chairman of CBSS, Foreign Minister of Estonia, instead of Chairman of the CSO.

Mr Zaboklicki informed that the following workshops will be held during the first conference day:

- I. Best Practices on City role in Business Development in the new Europe.
 - II. Public Private Partnership (PPP) at the local level.
 - III. Business Sector Responsibility for Social Justice. (follow up of Rostock GC)
- Member cities are asked to contribute actively to the conference workshops.

The second day of the conference will be devoted to internal UBC matters such as reports, elections, finances etc.

The Council of the Baltic Sea States Committee of Senior Officials (CBSS CSO) is planning its meeting during the UBC GC in Klaipeda.

The preliminary programme of the General Conference is attached to the minutes.

3.3 Proposal of amendment in the Statute.

Mr Zaboklicki informed the Board, that the UBC Presidium at its last meeting in Turku in May, noted that currently there is contradictory situation as regards the budget approval. The Article 5 point 4 of the UBC Statute says that the GC approves the UBC budget. At the same time GC authorised the Executive Board to make adjustments in the UBC budget. Having in mind above, the Presidium is of the opinion that the budget should be approved by the Board.

Decision:

The Board shared the opinion of the Presidium and proposed the General Conference to make a respective alteration in the UBC Statute. The proposal of the amendment is attached to the minutes.

3.4 Elections – candidates to the Presidium.

President Andersen informed the Board that himself as well as Vice-Presidents Armas Lahoniitty and Arno Poeker are ready to candidate for the next period. Mr Andersen asked Mr Gundars Bojars, Mayor of Riga, whether he would be interested to candidate for UBC Vice-President. Mr Bojars replied that he would be honoured to become a candidate for the UBC Vice-President.

Mr Christopher Ödmann, Stockholm, put forward a question, why the candidate is not a woman. President Andersen explained that currently there is no woman mayor among the eastern UBC member cities, and in order to keep the balance in the UBC Presidium, the candidate should represent the eastern city.

Decision:

The Board decided to nominate the following persons as the candidates to the UBC Presidium:

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

Mr Armas Lahoniitty, Mayor of Turku, for the 1st Vice-President

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

Mr Gundars Bojars, Mayor of Riga, for the Vice-President

3.5 Fees and budget.

Mr Zaboklicki presented the proposal of new membership fees for 2004 and 2005, already discussed by the Board at the previous meeting in Umea.

The new membership fees are needed in order to cover the necessary costs and to give respective resources to the commissions and networks.

The Board agreed that in 2004 the fees for “eastern” cities should be 65% lower than fees paid by “western” cities (in 2005 60% lower). The Board stressed that gradually the fees for member cities in all countries should be levelled, eg. in 10-13 years time perspective.

Subsequently Mr Zaboklicki presented the budget proposals for 2004 and 2005. The main budget lines are: Commissions/Networks (42%), Meetings (13%), Services/maintenance (13%), Publications/marketing (9%), Communication (9%).

Decision:

The Board decided to propose mentioned fees and budget to the General Conference. The proposals of fees and budget for 2004 and 2005 are enclosed to the minutes.

3.6 Venue of the GC in 2005.

Mr Armas Lahoniitty, UBC 1st Vice-President, Mayor of the City of Turku, proposed to hold the VIII UBC General Conference in Turku, Finland.

Decision:

The Board welcomed Turku invitation and decided to propose the General Conference in Klaipeda to hold the VIII GC in 2005 in Turku.

3.7 Best Environmental Practice in Baltic Cities Award.

Mr Risto Veivo informed that following the success of the 1999 and 2001 awards, the Commission on Environment has decided to organise the award again this year. Following the theme of the General Conference, emphasis will be put on involvement of local business in good environmental practices.

Decision:

The Board endorsed the award and called for the organisers of the General Conference to cooperate with EnvCom Secretariat in organising the award ceremony and presentation of good practices on the occasion of the conference.

4. UBC Strategy revising process.

President Andersen informed that the strategy working group submitted the first draft of the new UBC Strategy. The WG consists of: Juhan Janusson who acts as the secretary of the group, Pawel Zaboklicki - Gdansk; Mikko Lohikoski - Turku; Anita Boje - Rostock; Tonu Karu - Tallinn.

The Strategy paper consists of the following parts: Origins of the UBC, Why City Cooperation, Common History and Destiny, Common Role of the Cities, Common Values, Vision, Mission, How We Work, Aims of the Commissions.

Mr Lohikoski stressed the most important chapters are: the Vision of the Baltic Sea Region by 2015 and the Mission which describes the UBC role in the BSR.

Decision:

The Board decided that Board members should submit their comments on the Strategy to the Secretary General. Subsequently the Strategy paper shall be sent to all member cities.

5. Decision on the UBC Youth Network.

On 15-18 May 2003 the City of Kalmar hosted the UBC Conference “Young voices of the Baltic Sea Region”. Following the conference, the City of Kalmar and the youth task force made a proposal to create the UBC Youth Network coordinated by the Baltic Sea Secretariat for Youth Affairs in Kiel, and the UBC Commission on Youth Participation coordinated by the city of Kalmar.

The Board expressed an opinion that the UBC body can not be coordinated by the other organisation, so it is not possible for the Baltic Sea Secretariat for Youth to coordinate the UBC organ. The UBC structure can be coordinated only by the member city.

The Board decided that the concept of Network is more suitable for youth involvement than the concept of Commission. UBC Commissions work in specific concrete fields such as environment, business, IT, culture, tourism, sport etc. The Board stressed that the Commission on Youth would be too narrow, as youth should be involved in all mentioned above fields. Thus the formula of Network fits better in this case, just like in case of Women’s involvement.

The Board decided to ask the City of Kalmar whether it would be willing to coordinate the UBC Youth Network.

6. Question from the Commission on Tourism.

The Commission on Tourism, Kalmar, put forward a question why UBC Presidium has not granted the resources for the Commission secretariat in 2003. In 2003 the Commission on Tourism has received 5000 EUR for the activities. President Andersen informed due to tight budget situation in 2003, the contributions to the commission secretariats are not possible this year. Mr Zaboklicki reminded that if the General Conference in Klaipeda accepts the raise of the membership fees, since next year the Commissions shall receive 7500 EUR annually.

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

President Andersen informed that since the last Board meeting, UBC was represented at the following conferences and meetings:

- Seminar on BSR policy, Vaasa, 1 April 2003 (J.Janusson)
- Council of the Baltic Sea States CSO meeting, Imatra-Svetogorsk, 6-7 April 2003 (J.Janusson)
- Regeneration of Historical Urban Cores, Valetta, 13-15 April (P.Zaboklicki/J.Tamkivi/I.Marana)
- III Baltic Sea NGO Forum, Turku, 8-10 May 2003 (A.Lahoniitty/P.B.Andersen/M.Lohikoski)
- CPMR Baltic Sea Commission General Assembly, Umeå, 26-27 May 2003 (M.L.Ronnmark)
- CBSS WG on Democratic Institutions Seminar on Local Democracy, Toila, 2-3 June (T.Riimaa)
- European Commission "Green Week" Conference, Brussels, 2-5 June 2003 (P.B.Andersen)
- Council of the Baltic Sea States 12th Ministerial Session, Pori, 10-11 June 2003 (A.Laaksonen)
- Nordic Council of Ministers "CBC after EU enlargement" Tartu, 16-18 June (H.Astok)
- General Assembly of Atlantic Arc Cities, Sevilla, 4-5 July 2003 (M.Lisicki)

Mr Lohikoski informed the Board about the III Baltic Sea NGO Forum in Turku.

Mr Zaboklicki informed the Board about the conference Regeneration of Historical Urban Cores in Valetta, where the organisers INTA sponsored the participation of 7 UBC representatives from 7 eastern member cities.

Mr Gundars Bojars proposed to include the information about conferences attended by UBC representatives, on the UBC homepage.

8. Latest issue of the Baltic Cities Bulletin.

Mr Zaboklicki presented the latest issue of the UBC Baltic Cities Bulletin, published in connection with the *European Year of People with Disabilities*, announced by the Council of European Union. The bulletin includes articles sent by member cities, presenting the situation of disabled people and their role in the society.

The bulletin also provides information on latest UBC meetings and activities as well as news from the member cities. The bulletin is printed in 5500 copies and it is sent out to all member cities as well as to numerous Baltic and European institutions and organisations including the EU.

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

9. Questions raised at the meeting.

UBC Agenda 21 Program 2004-2009.

Mr Risto Veivo informed the Board that the implementation of the UBC Agenda 21 Program 2000-2003 has been highly successful. Altogether 11 projects have been implemented, three new started in 2003, contacts and policy cooperation with the EC as well as BSR policy bodies has taken remarkable steps forward. 95% of UBC member cities now work on their own local Agenda 21 and the UBC is the most important source of information and models to its members on sustainable development work. The total implemented budget to date exceeds 2 Meur.

The Commission on Environment decided to start preparations for a new program for 2004-2009. The approach of local sustainability work is currently shifting from local Agenda 21

programs into concrete actions. Much emphasis is being put to economic aspects; production and consumption is becoming one key theme.

Decision:

The Board delegated the Commission on Environment and its secretariat to carry on the preparations and prepare a proposal to the General Conference.

10. Next meeting of the Executive Board.

President Andersen informed that the next meeting of the Executive Board will be held on the eve of the General Conference in Klaipeda ie. on 16 October 2003.

11. Closing of the Meeting.

President Per Boedker Andersen expressed his thanks to all participants for the fruitful meeting and to the City of Rostock for its warm hospitality and closed the 37th Meeting of the Executive Board of the Union of the Baltic Cities.

Mr Per Boedker Andersen
Chairman

Mr Pawel Zaboklicki
Secretary

Mr Arno Poeker
Adjuster

Mr Aulis Laaksonen
Adjuster