

**MINUTES FROM THE 49<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE UBC EXECUTIVE BOARD**  
**JEKABPILS, LATVIA, 15 JUNE 2007**

The 49<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Executive Board of the Union of the Baltic Cities was held on the 15<sup>th</sup> of June 2007 in the City of Jekabpils, Latvia, upon the invitation of Mr Leonids Salceвич, Mayor of Jekabpils.

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

The meeting was opened by Mr Per Bødker Andersen, President of the Union. Mr Andersen expressed his gratitude to the hosts of the meeting for inviting the UBC Executive Board to hold the meeting in Jekabpils. The meeting adopted the agenda attached to this report.

**2. Welcome by the Mayor of Jekabpils, presentation of Jekabpils.**

Mr Leonids Salceвич, Mayor of Jekabpils, welcomed all participants and wished them a fruitful meeting. The mayor made a presentation introducing his city. City of Jekabpils lies halfway between Riga and Daugavpils, on both banks of the river Daugava that are joined by a bridge. Jekabpils was established at the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century as a settlement of the Old Believers persecuted in Russia. Development of the city was facilitated by the barge route on the river. Jekabpils is a city with 123 protected history, culture, art and city building artefacts. In the city there are 6 general education schools, music school, art school, agriculture, business college, branches of 5 Latvia's higher education establishments. To improve the living conditions and business environment, the city attracts financing of the European Union structure funds. The volume of investments in water supply, wastewater collection and heat supply systems are LVL 3.5 million. The city has spent 1.6 million LVL for improvement of streets and sidewalks and 731,000 LVL for renovation of schools and sports facilities. The financially largest project implemented in Jekabpils was "Jekabpils timber industry business park". The total cost of the project was 6.06 million EUR. This project is a significant contribution to development of Jekabpils and Latvia's timber industry sector. More information at [www.jekabpils.lv](http://www.jekabpils.lv)

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

Mr Gunars Ansins, Deputy Mayor of Liepaja and Ms Anu Juurma, Adviser on Foreign issues, Pärnu, were elected to check the minutes together with the President.

**4. IX General Conference in Pärnu, 27-28 September 2007.**

**4.1 Keynote speakers.**

Mr Paweł Żaboklicki, UBC Secretary General, informed the Board about the following keynote speakers invited to the General Conference.

Mayor of Pärnu Mr Mart Viisitamm will make a welcome address.

President of UBC, Mayor of Kolding, Mr Per Bødker Andersen, will deliver an opening address.

The secretariat received an information that the President of Estonia, Mr Toomas Henrik Ilves would not be able to attend UBC General Conference due to other obligations. UBC has invited Mr Andrus Ansip, Prime Minister of Estonia, former Mayor of Tartu, to address the General Conference in Parnu. Mr Ansip has not confirmed his participation yet due to the session of the Estonian government to be held at the same time in Tallinn. One of the solutions could be the video broadcast.

Concerning Council of the Baltic Sea States, Mr Gunars Ansins informed that the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Latvia would be on the official trip during the General Conference. CBSS secretariat informed that UBC conference in Parnu will be attended by Ambassador Valdis Krastins, chairman of the CBSS Committee of Senior Officials.

Mr Per Boedker Andersen said that few days before he took part in the CBSS Ministerial session in Malmö and he was assured there that chairman of CBSS CSO would come to Parnu as the climate change is also a very important topic for the CBSS.

Mr Zaboklicki informed that the President of the Council of Europe's Congress of Local and Regional Authorities Halvdan Skard is willing to attend the UBC GC in Parnu, and would try to combine his trip with the Council of Europe conference to be held around the same time in St.Petersburg. Mr Soeren Revsbaek, Councillor, Naestved, informed about his conversation with Mr Skard at CLRAE Spring Session in Strasbourg and underlined that he was willing to take part in the UBC conference.

Mr Zaboklicki informed that Mr Maciej Lisicki, Deputy Mayor of Gdansk, would participate in the conference of Council of Europe in Tromso, Norway, on 3 July, so there would be another possibility to talk to Mr Skard about UBC General Conference.

President of the Committee of the Regions Mayor of Dunkerque Mr Michel Delebarre, accepted an invitation to attend the General Conference in Parnu.

Mr Zaboklicki informed that UBC had also invited Mr Stavros Dimas, EU Commissioner for Environment. The Cabinet of Mr Dimas has informed that it was too early to confirm his participation, but in case the Commissioner was not able to come, then a representative of either his Cabinet or the DG Environment would participate.

Mr Zaboklicki informed that the President of the Conference of Atlantic Arc Cities Mr Rodney Berman had accepted the invitation. However there will be a General Assembly of CAAC at the end of June in Chester where the new CAAC President might be elected. Mr Adolfas Antanas Balutis, Kaunas, who will represent UBC at this conference, will confirm our invitation to the new President.

Ms Laine Janes, Minister of Culture of Estonia, former UBC Vice-President, initially accepted the invitation, but it turned out she would have to participate in another meeting in Goteborg in the same time.

Mr Zaboklicki also informed that International Urban Development Association INTA expressed an interest to participate in the General Conference plenary session and in the workshop "Culture as driving force for municipal development". UBC warmly invited INTA to take part in the conference.

## **4.2 Workshops - status of preparations.**

### **W.1 Cities response to the climate change**

- What cities can do to stop climate change - reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, use of renewable energy, energy efficiency
- How cities should prepare themselves for climate change eg. problems resulting from the raise of sea level

*organisation – Commissions on Environment and Energy*

Mr Guldbrand Skjonberg, co-chairman of the Commission on Environment, Nacka, informed that they would focus on cities possibilities to counteract the climate change process. What have already been done in the cities. What do we know about the climate change. What can we do to reduce the effects. One of the areas to be discussed is the energy. The Commission on Energy will focus on energy savings and efficiency. Another area for discussion would be public transportation and city planning.

Mr Stefan Windh, co-chairman of the Commission on Energy, Oskarshamn, added, that they would focus on the practical solutions of reducing the emissions. The commission is in the possession of concrete plans of savings, which were successfully tested in twenty municipalities in Sweden. The commission would like to present this idea to all Baltic Sea countries.

Ms Marie-Louise Rönmark, UBC 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President, stressed that we have to spread the good examples among the cities in order to stimulate good changes. That is one of the aims of UBC.

President Andersen mentioned that the problem of the climate change is highly prioritised also by other Baltic Sea organisations like CBSS. He stressed it is a problem not only for organisations but for all inhabitants.

Mr Stefan Windh underlined that one of the tasks is to prove to the municipalities that reducing of the emissions would not hamper the economic development.

## **W.2 Culture as driving force for municipal development**

*organisation – Commission on Culture and City of Umeå*

Ms Tarja Hautamaeki, the chairperson of the Commission on Culture, Vaasa, informed that this workshop has been planned together with the City of Umeå. The workshop will focus on two issues – best practises and how these best practices influence the municipal development.

The following two speakers have been confirmed:

- Assistant professor Ms Niina Koivunen (University of Vaasa) will speak on creativity and innovation through arts management.
- Mr Arne Berggren (Umeå, Kulturverket-project) will make a presentation titled: Kids tell pros what to do...

The other speakers unconfirmed yet are: Mr Janis Dripe, Director of Architects Bureau of Riga City and the representative of INTA.

Vice-President Marie-Louise Rönmark will make an introduction to the workshop.

Ms Rönmark expressed an opinion that urban planning and culture & design have something in common – both require creativity and innovation. If city decision makers want to design a good life in the city, they should take on culture.

## **W.3 Involvement of youth in democracy and in the life of society**

*organisation – Commission on Youth Issues*

Mr Matthias Larsson from the Commission on Youth Issues, Kalmar, informed that Mr Janne Svärthagen would be the main speaker at the workshop. He is working at the University of Dalarna as project leader for developing the IT pedagogical work at the IKT (information and communication technology) centre. The workshop will be divided into two parts. In the first part there will be more information on how youth can communicate today and how decision makers and civil servants can use the technology to reach and contact youth in a more efficient way. The second part will involve more action, participants will have an opportunity to try the technology themselves.

Mr Pawel Zaboklicki asked if the commission plans interaction between the participants of General Conference and Youth Conference to be held at the same time in Parnu. Mr Larsson

informed that participants of youth conference would take part in the GC workshop concerning the involvement of youth.

#### **4.3 Auditor's report.**

The auditor's report for 2005 and 2006 has been sent out to all member cities.

#### **4.4 Board of Audit report.**

The Board of Audit report for 2005 and 2006 is under preparation.

#### **4.5 Absolving the Presidium, the Board and the Secretary General.**

It is up to the Board of Audit to propose to the General Conference to acknowledge the fulfilment of duties by the Presidium, the Board and the Secretary General in 2005 and 2006.

#### **4.6 Membership Fees 2008-2009.**

Secretary General Paweł Żaboklicki informed that in May the UBC Board of Audit visited UBC secretariat in order to make an audit for 2005 and 2006. Having in mind significant surplus in the UBC budget, the Board of Audit suggested not to raise the fees for the "eastern" cities (new EU and Russia) in the next two year period. Small cities may have problems with paying the higher fee.

President Andersen recalled Board's recommendation adopted two years ago that the fees for "eastern" cities should be raised 5% annually. Currently the "eastern" cities have 50% discount in the membership fee.

#### Decision:

The Board decided to recommend to the General Conference to raise the membership fee for "eastern" cities with 5% in 2008 and 5% in 2009 and to maintain the fee for "western" cities on unchanged level. The proposal of membership fees for 2008 and 2009 is attached.

#### **4.7 Executive Board in the next period.**

The Board members from respective countries have been asked to provide the Secretariat with the names of the cities–candidates to the Executive Board for the next period.

#### **4.8 President and Vice-Presidents in the next period.**

There are the following candidates to the Presidium for the next period:

Mr Per Bødker Andersen, Mayor of Kolding – candidate for President

Ms Marie-Louise Rönnmark, Mayor of Umeå – candidate for 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President

Ms Urve Tiidus, Mayor of Kuressaare - candidate for Vice-President

Representative of Turku - candidate for Vice-President

#### **4.9 Board of Audit in the next period.**

Mr Pawel Zaboklicki informed that the present members of the Board of Audit have been asked to inform the Secretariat whether they are interested to continue their tasks in the next period.

#### **4.10 Auditor in the next period.**

Mr Zaboklicki reminded that the licensed auditing company Bilans from Gdansk has been appointed as UBC auditor in the previous years. The auditor's report for 2005 and 2006 has been sent out to all member cities. The Board recommended the General Conference to appoint the auditing company Bilans for the UBC auditor in the next period.

#### **4.11 Secretariat in the next period.**

President Andersen informed the Board that he received a letter from the Mayor of Gdansk, Mr Pawel Adamowicz. In the letter the City of Gdansk offers to maintain the UBC Secretariat for another period. The letter is attached to the minutes.

The Board expressed thanks to the City of Gdansk for maintaining the UBC Secretariat and recommended the General Conference to accept Gdansk's proposal to host the secretariat.

#### **4.12 Conference resolution on climate change.**

President Andersen informed about the draft resolution on climate change prepared by the coordinators of workshop one i.e. commission on environment and commission on energy. The draft resolution is attached to the minutes.

The Board expressed an opinion that analogous draft resolutions shall be prepared by the coordinators of two other workshops – commission on culture with Umeå and commission on youth issues.

#### **4.13 Venue of the IX UBC General Conference in autumn 2009.**

President Andersen reminded that at the 48<sup>th</sup> UBC Executive Board meeting in Gavle, 9 March 2007, UBC had received an invitation from the Mayor of Kristiansand to hold the X General Conference in 2009 in Kristiansand. Norway has never hosted the UBC General Conference.

The Board welcomed Kristiansand's invitation and decided to recommend the General Conference in Parnu to hold the X General Conference in 2009 in the city of Kristiansand.

#### **4.14 Best Environmental Practice in Baltic Cities Award 2007.**

Mr Bjorn Gronholm, Head of Secretariat of the UBC Commission on Environment, Turku, proposed to hold the granting ceremony of Best Environmental Practice in Baltic Cities Award during the official conference dinner on 27 September. The Board accepted the proposal.

#### **4.15 Practical information.**

Ms Anu Juurma, Parnu, confirmed that the organisers would provide transportation from the Tallinn and Riga airports to the city of Parnu.

Ms Tarja Hautamaeki informed that the Commission on Culture plans to elect its new Board in conjunction with the General Conference in Parnu.

Mr Stefan Windh informed that the Commission on Energy would also have a meeting in connection with the GC in Parnu.

#### **5. UBC contribution to the Green Paper on European Maritime Policy - final paper.**

At the 46<sup>th</sup> UBC Board meeting in St.Petersburg the Board authorised the city of Turku to start the work on the UBC contribution to the Green Paper on EU Maritime Policy. Mr Lohikoski recalled that the city of Turku organised in summer 2006 the first Baltic Sea consultation conference on the Green Paper with the commissioner Joe Borg. Later on Mr Aleksi Randell, UBC Vice President, made a speech on behalf of UBC at the conference on European Maritime Policy, Kiel, September 2006. At the beginning of June 2007, on the occasion of Turku days in St. Petersburg, there was a seminar about the maritime policy. It was the first consultation between the European Commission and Russia authorities on maritime policy. Mr Lohikoski stressed it was important that Russia participates in consultations of this policy as it is one of the BSR countries.

The UBC position paper on EU Maritime Policy was introduced at the previous Board meeting in Gavle in March 2007. In April 2007 the Secretary General has sent the UBC contribution to the Commissioner for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs Joe Borg and to the European Commission Maritime Policy Task Force. Mr Lohikoski informed that UBC should come back to this item when the EC has prepared the White Paper on EU Maritime Policy. The UBC contribution to the Green Paper on EU Maritime Policy is attached to the minutes.

#### **6. UBC further development – questionnaire sent out to the member cities.**

At the previous meetings the Board stressed UBC shall constantly discuss how to improve its operations in order to serve better the citizens of our cities. At the Executive Board meeting in Luleå, March 2005, the Board authorised the President to create a working group on UBC further development. The President appointed the working group with Mr Mikko Lohikoski, Turku, as chair. Mr Lohikoski informed that in the end of May a questionnaire on UBC further development was sent out to all UBC members. So far 35 cities responded and 25 more were in the process of completing the questionnaire. Mr Lohikoski informed that the working group would proceed with the conclusions as soon as the answers have been received.

## **7. Latest conferences attended by UBC representatives.**

President Andersen informed that below UBC representatives represented UBC at the following international conferences:

- 5th European Conference on Sustainable Cities & Towns, Sevilla, Spain - 23 March 2007 (Per Boedker Andersen, President of UBC)
- Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, Spring Session, Strasbourg, 27-28 March 2007 (Soeren Revsbaek, Councillor, Naestved)
- Conference of the Atlantic Arc Cities Executive Bureau meeting, Lisbon, 13 April 2007 (Pawel Zaboklicki, UBC Secretary General; Bjorn Gronholm, Head of the EnvCom Secretariat)
- Bi-annual meeting of the Baltic Sea Organisations, Bornholm, 16 April (Maciej Lisicki, Vice-Mayor of Gdansk)
- 14th Plenary session of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, 30 May - 1 June 2007, Strasbourg (Mart Viisitamm, Mayor of Parnu)
- 70th Plenary Session of the Committee of the Regions, Brussels, 6-7 June 2007 (Per Boedker Andersen, President of UBC)
- 14th CBSS Ministerial Session, Malmö, 13 June 2007, (Per Boedker Andersen, President of UBC)

The written information from above conferences is attached to the minutes.

Concerning the 5<sup>th</sup> European Conference on Sustainable Cities & Towns in Sevilla, the President informed that UBC was very active at this event. At the conference Per Boedker Andersen submitted a presentation on behalf of Regions and Cities of Europe. In Sevilla UBC also arranged a Baltic Sea region forum hosted by President Andersen. Commission on Environment was one of the 14 organisations responsible for conference planning and preparation. Mr Bjorn Gronholm added there was a strong representation of about 180 people from different cities from the Baltic Sea region.

Mr Pawel Zaboklicki informed that at the Conference of the Atlantic Arc Cities Executive Bureau meeting he made a general presentation on UBC aims & activities and invited CAAC President to speak at the General Conference in Parnu. At the same meeting Mr Bjorn Gronholm presented UBC actions in the field of environment and Agenda 21.

Mr Maciej Lisicki mentioned that at the meeting on Bornholm on 16 April, the group of Baltic Sea organisations discussed how to work together. He informed that every time during such meetings of BSR organisations, new people who take part often rise the same question how shall we cooperate. On Bornholm Mr Lisicki indicated that our organisations work in different areas and on different levels. He stressed we should rather not invent artificial goals for cooperation, but we can cooperate in the areas of common interests like for example the Maritime Policy. In such situations we can prepare common statements in order to make our voice stronger in



Brussels. UBC offered to host the next meeting of Baltic Sea organisations in connection with the General Conference in Parnu.

Mr Pawel Zaboklicki presented information and photos about the info stand introducing UBC, which was displayed during the Forum for regional and local authorities' media "Communicating Europe: Going Local" organised alongside the Plenary Session of the Committee of the Regions on 5 June 2007 in Brussels. The UBC stand raised a great interest among the COR members.

Referring to the CBSS ministerial session in Malmö, President Andersen emphasized that one of the main points discussed was how to communicate with the citizens on the important policies and processes concerning the BSR.

Mr Stefan Windh agreed that this issue was very important because the authorities on the state level shall realise that they are not able to implement policies without involving the local authorities. He expressed an opinion that UBC as a network of local authorities should enhance its position as the collaboration unit for policies. Mr Windh proposed that UBC should write a letter to CBSS stressing that our organisation is well prepared for implementation of policies developed at the state level.

Ms Marie-Louise Ronnmark added that she expressed a similar opinion in her speech delivered during the Structured Dialog meeting with Commissioner Margot Wallstrom on 15 June 2006.

The Board authorised Mr Windh to prepare a draft letter to the Council of the Baltic Sea States on the above issue.

President Andersen presented the report from the 4<sup>th</sup> Structured Dialogue Hearing with EC President Jose Barroso held in December 2006 in Brussels. The President reminded that Vice-President Marie-Louise Ronnmark delivered a speech at this meeting on behalf of the UBC.

## **8. Baltic Cities Bulletin – Culture as driving force for municipal development.**

Secretary General Pawel Zaboklicki introduced the latest issue of the Baltic Cities Bulletin which was devoted to the theme: *Culture as driving force for municipal development*. The opening story was written by Ms Marie-Louise Ronnmark, Mayor of Umea and 1<sup>st</sup> vice-President of UBC. City of Umea together with the Commission on Culture will be responsible for the workshop under this theme at the UBC General Conference in Parnu. 29 UBC member cities sent articles describing the influence of culture on the city's growth. The main conclusion was that investing in culture is a great tool for the city development. As usual the BCB included the UBC Today section which provided the information on latest UBC meetings and activities i.e. invitation to UBC General Conference in Parnu. The bulletin was printed in 5800 copies and

sent out to over 200 Baltic cities and to some 1000 Baltic and European institutions. The bulletin costed 11.834 PLN which was approximately 3.119 EUR.

#### **9. Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007-2013 (Interreg IV B).**

Ms Anna Sosnicka, UBC Secretariat, presented the new EU Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007–2013 (former Interreg III B). The presentation about the Programme can be downloaded from the programme website at <http://eu.baltic.net/> This new Programme is a mainstream Structural Funds programme for the Baltic Sea Region, built on two preceding Community Initiative Programmes, Baltic Sea Interreg IIB and IIIB. It addresses only issues which call for intervention at the transnational level. The eligible area of the program: EU Member States Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden (whole country), Germany (parts of the country), Norway (whole country), Russia (parts of the country), Belarus (whole country). Partners from other EU and non-EU areas may join individual projects and benefit from the programme funds, under certain conditions. The budget of the Programme is composed of European Regional Development Fund (208 MEUR), a new component: European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (22 MEUR), Norwegian national funding (6 MEUR) and respective obligatory own co-funding. There are four priorities of the program – fostering of innovations across BSR, improving external and internal accessibility of the BSRE, management of the Baltic Sea as a common resource and promoting of attractive and competitive cities and regions. The programme has been submitted to the European Commission. The first call for project proposals is expected during winter 2007-2008.

Mr Bjorn Gronholm informed that he took part in the conference devoted to the programme, which was held in May in Hamburg. It was stressed there that the Baltic Sea region is a specific region and one of the specific elements is the infrastructure. UBC was mentioned as one of the very strong BSR organisations.

President Andersen pointed out that there is a growing interest in cooperating with Belarus. He reminded UBC decided to grant two Belarusian cities with the observer status. The President said that also at the latest CBSS Ministerial Session in Malmo the need for stronger cooperation with Belarus was expressed.

#### **10. Any other business.**

Mr Maciej Lisicki, Deputy Mayor of Gdansk, informed that Poland, together with Ukraine, was selected to host the European Football Championships EURO 2012. City of Gdansk was selected as one of Polish cities which would be hosting the games. Gdansk will build a modern stadium the Baltic Arena for 44 thousands spectators. Mr Lisicki invited the member cities to come to Gdansk for this event.

Mr Mikko Lohikoski informed the Board about the initiative of the Mayor of Helsinki and the Mayor of Turku to start actions aimed at improving the quality of water in the Baltic Sea. Both cities encourage other actors to join this initiative. More information will be provided later on.

Mr Lohikoski also informed about the planned meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs from the Baltic Sea states and Nordic countries to be held in Turku on 16-17 August. The special guest will be Ms Condoleezza Rice, the Secretary of State of USA. Mr Lohikoski stressed that at this meeting the city of Turku would try to promote the local and regional level of governance and show the ministers how important is the work on the local level.

Mr Gunars Ansins requested the Brussels Antenna to prepare for the next Board meeting the annual activity report in order to evaluate in what ways the cities are using this office and how it promotes UBC.

Mr Guldbrand Skjoberg reminded that the Commission on Environment makes environmental surveys. So far four surveys have been made – in 1999, 2001, 2004 and 2006. Some 70-100 cities were reporting. The surveys asked inter alia for CO<sub>2</sub> emissions – how much cities emitted in the past and how much nowadays. Such surveys allow to compare environmental situation in different cities, how they work and what results they get. The surveys are the ground for benchmarking in the future. The next report will be ready for the General Conference. President Andersen added that we should be preparing for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Summit in Copenhagen which will take place in 2009.

Mr Bjorn Gronholm reminded that at the Board meeting in Gdynia in October 2006, the Board accepted the project Integrated Urban-Rural Management System as a UBC strategic project for the new Baltic Sea Region Programme. Mr Gronholm encouraged UBC cities to participate in this project.

## **11. Next meeting of the Executive Board**

President Andersen informed that the next meeting of the Executive Board would be held on the eve of the General Conference in Parnu i.e. on 26 September 2007.

## **12. Closing of the Meeting.**

President Per Bødker Andersen expressed his thanks to all participants for the fruitful meeting and to the City of Jekabpils for its warm hospitality and closed the 49<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Executive Board of the Union of the Baltic Cities.

Mr Per Boedker Andersen  
Chairman

Mr Pawel Zaboklicki  
Secretary

Mr Gunars Ansins  
Adjuster

Ms Anu Juurma  
Adjuster