

**MINUTES FROM THE 4th MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE
UNION OF THE BALTIC CITIES
Gdańsk, 27 September 1992**

INTRODUCTION

The Fourth Meeting of the Executive Board of the Union of the Baltic Cities was held on 27 September, 1992 in the premises of the Secretariat of the Union of the Baltic Cities in Gdańsk, Poland.

The Meeting was attended by representatives of the Baltic Cities as well as invited persons.

The meeting was opened by Mr Anders Engström, the President of the Union; the welcome address was given by Mr Franciszek Jamroz, the Mayor of the City of Gdańsk.

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

The Meeting adopted the agenda.

2. Election of a person who, together with the president, will check the minutes.

Ms Hjördis Höglund from Sundsvall was elected to check the minutes.

3. Short report from the General Conference (economy, participants).

Mr Anders Engström presented the outcome from the General Conference which was attended by 150 delegates from 33 Member Cities as well as several international organizations and institutions. A number of experts, politicians and representatives of financial institutions gave their speeches on the cooperation in the Baltic Region. The Meeting discussed also the outcome from the commissions of the Union. The Conference was financed by the Union itself as well as external organizations.

4. Work of the Commissions.

Organization of the work of the Commissions (report from the Commissions, events related to the work of the Commissions).

Mr Carl Nielsen, Aarhus, suggested that projects should be discussed in working groups first of all; next, put up for discussion at the Executive Board Meeting.

Mr Mikko Jokinen, Turku, noticed that problems with common language and need for collecting information required from the seminars to concentrate on different problems, what could be a good example of practical cooperation.

According to Mr Michael Bouteiller, the task of a commission is to make concrete projects which could be later discussed by the Members of the Executive Board.

Moreover, Mr Michael Bouteiller appealed for strengthening the Union by improving the cooperation between the Cities, i.e. by making it known who is responsible in each city

(organizations, people) and for what (activities, projects) - what would be afterwards considered at a special conference within the Union of the Baltic Cities.

This proposal was motivated by the fact many countries and cities require more interest on the side of the Union.

Mr Andris Teikmanis, Riga, proposed a change in formula for the commissions, that is - as each City is interested in its own problems it should have a possibility of participation in the work of every single commission.

Mr Arnolds Ubelis, Riga, added that the commissions should provide with information all the Member Cities as well as ask the Executive Board for decisions.

Mr Dariusz Knowski, Gdańsk, noticed that not only the Member Cities should have a right for making decisions about the Baltic Region but other interested Cities as well.

Mr Anders Engström, Kalmar, underlined that 35 Cities is too many and therefore working groups of 5-6 cities should be created (regional cooperation). It might be expected that the commissions in their work shall take regard of issues of general character but also, of course, of projects specifically focused on certain cities where a particular interest is announced. The commissions may as well organize within their field of responsibility.

Their conferences shall be open for participation by all City Members and other cities.

Mr Vitaly Shipov, Kaliningrad, underlined the great interest of Russian Cities in participation in Union of the Baltic Cities as well as difficulties they encounter (eg. financial problems). Besides, Mr Shipov raised the problem of drawing up a budget for the next year.

Mr Engström once again admitted that work within Union of the Baltic Cities should be more efficient (according to the "Steps and Aims"), though it needs financial support from other institutions (eg. EC Commission).

The Board decided:

- to give expression to the members that different proposals to Union of the Baltic Cities initially shall be delivered to the Secretariat for consideration and judgement whether the proposal shall be sent further to some of the commissions - or be treated in another way,
 - to announce that the proposal set up by the commissions shall be treated by the Board, or in case of haste, by the President and Secretary.
- Concrete proposals from the Commissions,
- Transportation and Telecommunications - Mr Andrzej Januszajtis, Gdańsk.

The main aim of the Union of the Baltic Cities is to link all the Baltic Cities which is to be done most successfully by improving communication, that is: transport connections (esp. east-west), establishing PC Network between Baltic Cities and Information Bank. Therefore, Union of the Baltic Cities should turn to the Council of European Region for access to EC Data Bank.

Afterwards, Mr Januszajtis referring to the resolutions from the Conference in Kalmar, proposed organizing a conference (possibly in Gdańsk) on developing transport connections between BC, not earlier than autumn 1993. He evaluated the approximate cost of the project at 50,000 USD what would again require financial support from outside of the Union.

Mr Januszajtis also proposed opening a direct air connection between Gdańsk and Copenhagen.

Mr Bjorn Nilsson, Kalmar, representing Swedish firm "Relator" presented a proposal of creating a computer network within the Union of the Baltic Cities. Each city could have easy access to it (regardless the number of computers it possesses) on very good financial conditions. The monthly cost (including production and exploitation costs) for each City would be 200 USD for the first 3 years; then the costs would go down. Money for investment should be obtained from EC and Nordic Council. Secretariat agreed on taking care of informing all the Cities about the project.

Mr Robert Lach, Gdańsk, Poland, gave a practical solution to the offer, namely, making an agreement between Relator, BBL and Gdańsk specialists who would decide on the ways of realization the project and contacting external authorities. Technical matters were to be discussed at the Conference in Prague, in October, 1992.

Additionally, Mr President stressed the goal of the project, i.e. using telecommunications for easy contacts between Baltic Cities first of all; having an access to European Data Bank, better contacts between Baltic businessmen in the end.

The board decided:

to start the project according to the proposal of Mr Bjørn Nilsson and Robert Lach. At first an application for funds to bring about this project shall be submitted to EC, UN and CEMR.

- Environmental Protection - Mr Carl Nielsen, Aarhus

Mr Carl Nielsen, Aarhus, presented the project of the Baltic Sustainable Cities Programme according to which five cities, members of the Union of the Baltic Cities, will be chosen to have the Nordic counterparts providing assistance and expertise concerning planning capacities as well as preparation and implementation of specific projects.

The Meeting decided to authorize Mr President and Secretary of the Union to contact the lead Cities and propose suitable candidates for the five cities, their Chairman and the Vice-Chairman.

- "Steps and Aims", Mr Michael Bouteiller, Lübeck

Mr Bouteiller elaborated on the Lübeck's proposals considering the following: finances (need for sponsorship from other European organizations); labour market (preventing the increase of the number of unemployed esp. in Russia and Germany); establishing new social Hanza (dealing with social matters - social welfare and insurance); and cultural issues (organization of sport and cultural events).

The board decided:

to apply to EC for economical means to carry out the project "Steps and Aims".

5. Information by the Secretariat.

Booklet, Newsletter, Jantar.

Mr President put forward a proposal of printing a booklet (form to be decided) containing complete information about Union of the Baltic Cities itself, aims of its working commissions and ways of their realization. The booklet would also provide with detailed information on actual business addresses of all the Member Cities.

The Board Members agreed the booklet would be useful not only for the Member Cities but it would help in popularizing the idea and aims of Union of the Baltic Cities in other European countries.

Another proposition was made by Mr Engström - it concerned making a video on the Union of the Baltic Cities.

Mr Piotr Krzyżanowski after discussing the "Newsletter" no. 2 requested the Executive Board Members to urge Cities in their countries for supplying more information about activity in given Cities to include them in the "Views" chapter of the next edition. Moreover, it was said that a timetable of different conferences should be inserted in the "Newsletter" as well.

Mr Vjatcheslav Nallivayko, Kaliningrad, informed the Board about the new Kaliningrad newspaper "Jantar" that is going to be published in 4 languages: English, German, Polish and Russian. The newspaper will be dealing with the issues in the economic zone of the District of Kaliningrad.

The board decided:

- to set up and produce the (previously decided) pamphlet on Union of the Baltic Cities in accordance with today's Information by the Secretary;
- to postpone the production of a Union of the Baltic Cities video;
- Union of the Baltic Cities as an organization can not undertake any part-owner-responsibility of the news magazine "Jantar" or any other public media being issued by organizations in any individual city. Of course, Union of the Baltic Cities may provide information on the activities of the Union.

6. Financial report.

Financial condition of the Union of the Baltic Cities is satisfactory. So far not much of the Union's money was spent eg. on Newsletter, and the total amount of spent money is slightly more than a half. Still there are some cities which should pay their membership fee. All those cities have received letters as well as invoices in this question.

7. Next meeting of the Executive Board.

According to the invitation of Ms Nijole Pozarskiene, on behalf of the Klaipėda City authorities, the next Meeting of the Executive Board was scheduled on mid-February, 1993 to take place in Klaipėda.

8. Next General Conference, elections.

Accordingly, the next General Conference is going to be, held in September 1993, in Kaliningrad, Russia. The elections to the Union of the Baltic Cities are planned to take place during the Conference.

9. Other matters.

Women's Organization, Ms Nadiezda Lazarijeva, Kaliningrad.

Ms Nadiezda Lazarijeva, Kaliningrad, presented a proposal of organizing an Annual International Conference entitled "Women of the Baltic Sea". The conferences would aim at better contacts between women in the Baltic Region as well as exchanging experiences in the sphere of work, family, maternity etc. issues.

Ms Lazarijeva therefore suggested organizing the first conference of the series in Kaliningrad in January/February, 1993, titled "Active Woman". The goal of the meeting would be establishing contacts between women from different countries interested in finding common understanding, exchanging ideas on how to solve various problems and other matters. Proposed subjects would be as follows: women in business -success and failure; family - men and children; keeping fit; sport; food; fashion - organizing a fashion show, for instance.

The conference would take three days (two days of work and one of active rest).

The participants of the conference could stay either at the hotel or at families'.

All the costs, except meals, would be covered by the participants themselves. Hence, a conference fee would be required.

Ms Höglund of Sundsvall informed that she had had a discussion with BBL in Lübeck concerning the "Women's Conference" in Kaliningrad.

The board decided:

Ms Lazarijeva and Ms Höglund together with BBL should plan the Women's Conference in Kaliningrad. The conference shall be financed by the participants themselves.

Yearly Arts Festival.

Mr Vjatcheslav Nalivayko, Kaliningrad, presented already discussed initiative of organizing an Annual International Art Festival of the Union of the Baltic Cities, similar to the one held in August this year. Each year the festival could take place in a different City of the Union.

The Festival would cover various spheres of art such as eg. music, theatre, cinema, dance, folklore art and TV. The programme of the Festival would be based on the propositions from the participating Cities that could include concerts, performances, exhibitions and sport competitions.

The City of Kaliningrad declared taking responsibility for organizing some of the festival ceremonies like opening, closing, festival fair etc. It would also organize transport, accommodation, tourist service and meals.

The Festival could provide with opportunity for developing active cooperation and cultural exchange between the Baltic Cities.

Resolution:

The Board found the proposition very interesting, however, as the enterprise seemed expensive (participants would have to pay all the costs themselves), decided to inform and ask for opinion the Member Cities about the project, first.

Riga's proposals.

Mr Andris Teikmanis, Riga, informed about establishing an Art Centre in Riga which could gather specialists dealing with culture matters. It would be a training and education centre enabling its members to gain more experience in the field of culture.

The proposal was accepted by the Board and left for decision concerning joining of other Member Cities.

The City of Riga also proposed organizing a Riga Concert Ship that would tour between the Baltic countries presenting various Art Exhibitions.

Another proposition concerned photography, i.e. organizing Photo Clubs in different Baltic Cities in order to compete between the Cities what would mean better cultural exchange in the Baltic Region.

Following the last summer project of organizing a Summer Camp for Youth, Riga is thinking about preparing next one in the coming year.

Resolutions on the Riga's proposals will be made during the 5th executive Board Meeting in Klaipėda.

"Community of Doctors", Mr Michael Bouteiller, Lübeck.

Mr Michael Bouteiller presented a concept of establishing a new community of doctors and representatives of medical spheres. Doctors from Estonia, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland could meet at a conference to discuss medical problems of their countries; conclusions from the conference would be later included in a paper.

The Meeting would be sponsored by private companies.

The Board assigned the City of Lübeck to prepare for the Conference.

Report from Island of Mon Conference.

The Conference of the Baltic Environmental Network was held on the Island of Mon, Denmark, upon the invitation of the Storstrøms Amt Authorities. The participants in the Conference have adopted the Declaration on Baltic Environmental Network expressing their will of strengthening their actions to reduce the load of pollutants to the Baltic Sea. Furthermore they stated the cooperation between regions and cities is essential for solving existing and new environmental problems. Finally, the participants in the Conference asked all regions, cities and organizations around the Baltic Sea to join them in their efforts to hurry up and to coordinate the activities necessary to improve the environmental situation in the Baltic Sea Region.

Baltic Chambers of Commerce Association (BCCA).

BCCA, founded in June 1992, consists of 23 Chambers of Commerce from 10 countries lying around the Baltic Sea. It aims at developing sustainable competitiveness between the economies in the Baltic Region. BCCA will also work on smoothing the obstacles arising from different economic structures in the Baltic Area.

BCCA declared its eagerness for cooperation with the Union of the Baltic Cities because only joint effort can help to bring forward the idea of organic economics, political and social relations around the greater Baltic Region and a counterbalance to the strong Southern Europe.

BCCA is busy working on the programme for the next 12 months, among them - organizing "Europartenariat Baltic Sea Region".

Appeal on cross-border formalities.

The participants in the Meeting decided that the Union should issue an official appeal to the governments of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Russian Federation concerning the problem of cross-border formalities at border check points between those countries. In this appeal the Union of the Baltic Cities would ask those governments to find possibilities of speeding up the normalization of cross-border formalities between mentioned countries for the benefit of the developing economies and promotion of cultural contacts between populations living in those countries.

The Chairman of the Meeting, Mr Anders Engström, expressed his thanks to the City of Gdańsk for the hosting of the delegation and closed the fourth meeting of the Union of the Baltic Cities.

Mr Anders Engström
Chairman

Ms Hjördis Höglund
Adjuster

Piotr Krzyzanowski
Secretary