

THE SALUTARY ADDRESS OF THE HEAD OF THE KALININGRAD ADMINISTRATION TO THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE 11th GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE UBC

Ladies and gentlemen! I'm glad to greet you on behalf of our city. I hope that the trip to our land was easy and you have good apartments here. So I hope that you'll have good impressions about these days. Any problem if occurred could be solved by our coordinator (Mr. A.Zuev)

The administration of our city attach great importance to the fact that the II conference of the UBC take place in Kaliningrad land and we are very gratitude to you for your trust and that despite of all difficulties in political situations of our country all of you have come to the conference.

It is pleasant that the Union of the Baltic Cities become stronger after the I Conference where the union was established. Now we see our Union is strong and I believe that the new one will be another step in the UBC activity.

Some words about political situation in Russia. Last weeks the tensions between two parts of the political power were increasing. It was the reason for the crisis of the political situation in the center and in province. Boris Eltsin have signed the decree "About the constitutional reforms in the Russian Federation". After that the parliament of Russia was dismissed and new elections to the parliament were announced. As an answer to the step the deputies announced about the dismissing of the president and assign at this post Vice-President (A.Rutskoy). Armed supporters of the parliament keep under control "The white house" . Despite this fact our president and his government keep the situation in the country under control. I believe that no radical changes in center would happen. Nevertheless the tenacious confrontation between two parts of the power would stop the process of the reforms. I hope that tie conflict would be solved without bloodshed, because the 2-nd civil war will be a catastrophe for Russia. So the main goal of the president is not to allow the civil war in our country.

The city administration can assure participants of the conference, that the municipal authority and the Council work in coordination, the excitements and disorders in the city and area is not present, in than you could yesterday and today be convinced .I believe that the situation in Moscow to be settled quiet. Using an opportunity, I want to transmit the greetings on behalf of The Union of Russian cities possessing status of the observer in the Union of European municipalities. To a regret the president of the Union of the Russian cities Mr.Kirpichnikov could not personally arrive on our Conference and has transmitted to me authorities to present Russian cities on the conference.

A few words about the aims and the role of this Union. It was established to mobilize all potential of Russia to defence Russia's interests in the top of the power. Under protection of the union some laws concern the municipal economy were adopted by the government.

The executive board of the union organized seminars that had the aim to improve the qualification of the municipal administrative workers. It also has the newspaper.

The union aspires to cooperation with the other organization of such kind.

Therefore we highly appreciate the decision of the Union of Baltic cities that ensures opportunity of interaction of the Baltic coast cities and as we think that not less interesting there are interaction of our young and vigorous organizations.

I wish that the work of the 11 conference of the UBC will be successful and fruitful.

THE OPENING SPEECH BY MR ANDERS ENGSTROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNION OF THE BALTIC CITIES

Dear Colleagues,
ladies and gentlemen

First of all I would like to thank the city of Kaliningrad for its warm welcome greetings and for taking upon themselves to act as hosts for the second General Conference of the Union of the Baltic Cities.

It is almost on the very day two years ago that the UBC was founded in Gdansk, 1991. A lot has happened in Europe and in our region, the Baltic region, since then. The same goes for the UBC, I might add; the work has really got started. But for a recently founded international organisation two years is a short period. One could characterise the UBC as a two-year-old child. We have recently learnt how to walk, but we still stumble sometimes and don't really know where we are heading. But at the same time we are an organisation characterised by a strong willpower, creativity and a long list of ideas.

Europe may be recognized to-day as the continent of paradoxes. In the western part considerable integrational work is taking place where the states are getting nearer one another and more and more decisions are taken by "over stately" organizations. In the central and eastern parts old states are making themselves free of central governing forced upon them by political, military and economical motives. But in a democratic Europe people can never be forced to enter alliances just as little as to be stopped from getting free from alliances to which they don't want to belong. A developed and free Europe must always be built on the strong foundation of democracy. The political, economical and cultural co-operation in Europe must, to stay permanent, develop furthermore by public support where the single individuals see the advantages of this co-operation.

The conditions of an all inclusive European co-operation are to-day totally different from what they were a few years ago. The cold war between east and west is over and the political, military and economical walls have fallen. Former dictatorships have changed into democracies. A reconstruction of the

economically weak states have just started. But the European co-operation, in order to get strong, must comprise all people and this demands great solidarity and great contributions to create economical equality and equal conditions before the future. It will take time, but if there is a will we shall succeed. A firmer European co-operation must obviously not mean that the states' and regions' cultural distinctive characters will be wiped out. On the contrary the manifoldness can enrich the co-operation lead to new and interesting developmental models.

The European Common Market mean that certain decisions will move from the national state to "over stately" organisations. But in parallel with this centralisation we can also see a process of decentralisation which means that regions and cities receive a more and increasing influence of the society. This process must, by all means, be supported. The Maastricht treaty's fundamental idea - all decisions must be made as close to the individual as possible -ought to be an important fundamental rule within the continued co-operation of Europe. Let me quote Gro Harlem Brundtland, Norway's social democratic prime minister: "The national state is too small to solve the big problems of mankind, and too big to solve the small problems of individuals."

The regions, which will play an even bigger part, assume, often as opposed to the national state, natural needs for co-operation. The regions have no firm boundaries and vary depending on purpose and points of issues. In certain questions we co-operate in small regions, for instance in neighbouring cities to solve the planning of schools. Whereas in other questions the region may get more important and crossing the border line for instance to plan big transportation routes. Thus, the regions are based more upon common interests than on the need for common bureaucracy. An amount of larger regions are now evolving in Europe where the co-operation is getting much more intense.

In the northern part of Europe the Nordic countries have, since a long time ago, been composed of an important and natural region. The co-operation has been founded on historical and cultural traditions but also on political and economical motives. After the fa!i of the Soviet Union and the reunion of Germany, this region is not as obvious. More people now see the Baltic sea region as a natural co-operative region in the new Europe. The historical and cultural connections, which for some time were cut off, can now be brought together again. The economical motives for a deepened co-operation will also appear mu:h clearer. Only the fact that we geographically live so far away from the industrially and economically strong centre of Europe, the so called boomerang or banana, means that we, with common efforts, must create a strong region in the north. The Baltic Sea region can only be strong if all pans of the region are strong. It is equal to the chain that never ii stronger than the weakest link.

A hasty conclusion would be to continue, one-sidedly, the Nordic co-operation because the economical problems in the southern and eastern regions of the Baltic Sea region are big right now

This is, on a long view, a faulty conclusion. The Nordic countries, in a future Europe, need a much greater close market for its trade. The Nordic countries need to support the democratic development in the east. A failure in this development can mean new political security threats to northern Europe. Maybe, and that is what some national economists say, the new states in the east will be Europe's future states. Western Europe is right now in an economical downhill slope. We have created an industry adjusted to fit old-fashioned patterns, while the new eastern states now stand in front of a reconstruction adjusted to the future. A well developed co-operation within the Baltic Sea region to-day, with an increased support from the West, can in the future lead to continued co-operation with the support from the East. My conclusion is that the Baltic Sea region can be a strong growing region in the future Europe if we swiftly right now make a firm common strategy and widen the co-operation within a number of areas both on central, regional and local level.

The new Europe must also be the democratic Europe. The issue of democracy must be the object of deeper discussions within the European Common Market. Partly within the EC:s currently deciding organisation, but also how we, in the future, can guarantee not only the regions but also cities and municipalities a real influence. In a European democracy the local level always constitutes the basis of democracy. In the towns the representatives of the citizens, the politicians, are elected by the people. It is also on the local level that the dialogue can take place between the people and its chosen leaders. This is where the human needs and views are to be formed into political visions which later lead to important political standpoints on a national and European level. We must guard and increase the local democracy. The municipal self government and also the municipal right of taxation ought to be self evident in a modern democracy.

Since the UBC was founded our work meanwhile has been formed by trying to create a stable future development - economically, socially, culturally and ecologically - for the citizens. This year's conference has the ecological issues as its main theme. Nevertheless, we must be aware that the environmental issues cannot be seen in isolation. How we succeed in these matters will highly influence our future economic and social welfare.

During all the history of mankind our forefathers have succeeded to live in harmony with nature. But all of a sudden during a short space in time - just like a few seconds in a year, man has come out of step with nature. Lack of knowledge and hopes of short term economical profit have led to an enormous waste with nature's resources and destruction of land, air and water. This means both our closest surroundings in the cities as well as our common resources like for instance the Baltic Sea. As late as 1950 the Baltic Sea was a comparatively clean inner sea. Today it may be the world's most environmentally polluted inner sea. Just to restore it to the same level that we had in 1950, when it comes to nitrogen, phosphorus and organic chlorinated compounds will demand enormous contributions, maybe 50 billion USD.

We, the participants of the RELCOM "High Level Conference on Resource Mobilisation" in Gdansk last March, can state that the economical resources at our disposal for the Baltic Sea at the moment not by far correspond with our needs in this matter. At the conference it was pointed out, therefore, that we must mobilize immediately the collected resources that we have on inter state, stately, regional and local level. This entails both knowledge and economical means. Obviously we must also make use of these resources where they are most efficient. In Gdansk the UBC therefore suggested that the knowledge and experiences which exist within the cities must be used in a systematic way by twin city arrangements. This means first of all transter of knowledge, but it can also mean simpler feasibility studies. The suggestion was met by much positive response and the UBC will by November concretize and calculate the costs of this project. We will account for this suggestion later during this conference.

I would now like to put forward another suggestion for making the work of a cleaner Baltic Sea more efficient. I hope that the resolution, which has been placed in the conference hall, will be approved of unanimously by the Assembly tomorrow. Among other issues, it deals with the question of the reduction of nitrogen and is politically a rather sensitive matter, but according to my own conception, important to act upon as quickly as possible on a stately level. I suggest that the resolution, if it is approved, will be sent to all governments around the Baltic Sea, the Council of Baltic Sea States, the Nordic Council and the Helsinki Commission. You have the possibility during the day to read the suggestion through and I will return with more information tomorrow.

Dear colleagues¹

I am now getting into "deep water". I am no expert on environmental issues, but we will later today be able to listen to those who possess the knowledge of these matters a lot better. It makes me happy to know, that we have chosen to make the environmental issues the main theme of this conference.

This is our common Baltic Sea! We have collectively caused these problems! We have a common responsibility! We are, commonly, going to work with the solutions

Welcome to the Second Conference of the Union of the Baltic Cities! I, herewith, announce the conference opened¹