



INTRODUCTION

The VII General Conference of the Union of the Baltic Cities was held on 17-18 October 2003 in Klaipėda, Lithuania, at the invitation of the Mayor of Klaipėda.

The theme of the first day of the Conference was "The Baltic Sea Wave - Business Development in the New Europe". The second day was devoted to internal UBC matters such as reports, elections, finances etc.

The Conference was attended by 250 participants, including representatives of 72 Member Cities, as well as invited guests from governments and international organisations.

FRIDAY, 17 OCTOBER 2003

WELCOME ADDRESSES

Mr Rimantas Taraskevicius, Mayor of the City of Klaipėda, warmly welcomed all participants at the VII UBC General Conference in Klaipėda.

Mr Rolandas Paksas, President of the Republic of Lithuania welcomed the participants and wished them a successful conference.

EUROPE PRIZE CEREMONY

The City of Klaipėda received the Council of Europe 'Europe Prize 2003'. The introductory addresses were given by:

Mr Stanisław Szwabski, Chairman of Gdynia City Council, winner of Europe Prize'2002

Mr Tadeusz Wrona, Mayor of Częstochowa, Chairman of the Association of Towns Awarded the Europe Prize

Ms Johanna Schicker, Chairperson of Europe Prize Sub-Committee, Council of Europe

The Prize was handed over by Mr Stanisław Szwabski, Chairman of Gdynia City Council, to Mr Rimantas Taraskevicius, Mayor of Klaipėda.

On behalf of all member cities, President Per Bødker Andersen warmly congratulated the City of Klaipėda on the occasion of granting the Europe Prize 2003.



OPENING ADDRESSES

Mr Per Bødker Andersen, President of the Union of the Baltic Cities, opened the VII UBC General Conference.

Mr Tiit Naber, Chairman of the Committee of Senior Officials, Council of the Baltic Sea States, submitted address on behalf of the CBSS.

KEYNOTE SPEECHES

The following keynote speakers submitted presentations related to the Conference main theme "The Baltic Sea Wave - Business Development in the New Europe":

Mr Roger Kaliff, Vice-President of the Committee of the Regions

Mr Hans Karlsson, MEP, Sweden, Member of the Committee on Industry, External Trade, Research and Energy

Mr Emmanuel Berck, European Commission, Enterprise Directorate General, "EU business support programmes"

Ms Birute Vesaite, MP, Head of the Commission for Entrepreneurship and Employment in Lithuanian Parliament, Observer in the European Parliament

Mr Tapio Kuula, President, Power and Heat Sector, Fortum Corporation

Mr Piotr Chełkowski, Business Unit General Manager, NCC / Hydrobudowa

CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

The following workshops were held concurrently during the first day of the conference:

I. Best Practices on City role in Business Development in the new Europe.

II. Public Private Partnership (PPP) at the local level.



SATURDAY, 18 OCTOBER 2003

COMMISSIONS /NETWORKS MEETINGS

The UBC Commissions and Networks held working meetings in order to discuss reports from the last period and action plans for the next two-year period.

OPENING OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The General Assembly was opened by Mr Per Bødker Andersen, President of the Union.

REPORTS FROM THE COMMISSIONS AND NETWORKS

The following representatives of the Commissions and Networks submitted reports and action plans to the assembly:

Mr Vygintas Grinis, Kaunas, Commission on Business Cooperation

Mr Sławomir Szafrąński, Szczecin, Commission on Culture

Ms Ivo Eesmaa, Kärdla, Commission on Education

Mr Guldbrand Skjönberg, Nacka, Commission on Environment

Ms Karin Wohlgemuth, Rostock, Commission on Health & Social Affairs

Mr Esa Kokkonen, Tampere, Commission on Information Society

Ms Ewa Depka, Gdynia, Commission on Sport

Mr Kyrre Dahl, Kalmar, Commission on Tourism

Ms Lisa Sundell, Goteborg, Commission on Transportation

Mr Jussi Kautto, Helsinki, Commission on Urban Planning

Ms Ulla Lundqvist, Turku, Women's Network

Mr Juhan Janusson, EU-Coordination Network

Ms Charlotte Gustafsson, Kalmar, Task Force on Youth



The Conference took note of the reports. Following the proposal of the Task Force on Youth, the General Conference decided to establish the UBC Network on Youth Issues.

REPORT ON UBC ACTIVITIES

Mr Per Bødker Andersen, President of the Union, submitted the Report on UBC Activities during the period October 2001 - October 2003. The General Conference approved the Report on UBC Activities October 2001 - October 2003.

AUDITOR'S REPORT FOR 2001-2002

Mr Paweł Żaboklicki, UBC Secretary General, presented the auditor's report on UBC accounts for 2001-2002, prepared by the licensed auditing company BILANS from Gdańsk, stating that the Union financial transactions and records within the mentioned period have been handled properly. The Conference took note of the report.

BOARD OF AUDIT REPORT

Mr Bartłmiej Sochański, Szczecin, presented the report of the Board of Audit. The General Conference took note of the report.

ABSOLVING THE PRESIDIUM AND THE SECRETARY

The Board of Audit proposed to the General Conference to absolve the Presidium and the Secretary General of their responsibility for the year 2001 and 2002.

The General Conference absolved the Presidium and the Secretary General of their responsibility for the year 2001 and 2002.

AMENDMENT IN THE UBC STATUTE

Mr Paweł Żaboklicki informed the General Conference that the Executive Board proposed to make an amendment in the UBC Statute saying that the Executive Board approves the budget of the Union, instead of the General Conference. The General Conference decided to make the proposed amendment in the Statute.

BUDGET AND MEMBERSHIP FEES 2004-2005

Secretary General Paweł Żaboklicki presented the Executive Board's proposal of the UBC budget and new membership fees for 2004 and 2005.



The General Conference approved the budget and membership fees for the financial period 2004-2005.

APPROVAL OF UBC AUDITOR FOR 2003-2004

President Per Bødker Andersen informed the Conference that the Executive Board proposes the licensed auditing company BILANS from Gdańsk as UBC auditor for 2003-2004.

The General Conference approved BILANS as UBC auditor for 2003-2004.

ELECTION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

The following cities were elected as members of UBC Executive Board in the next two-year period:

Næstved (Denmark), Võru (Estonia), Kotka (Finland), Lübeck (Germany), Liepāja (Latvia), Kaunas (Lithuania), Kristiansand (Norway), Gdańsk (Poland), Kronshtadt (Russia), Stockholm (Sweden).

ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENTS

The General Conference elected for a two-year period:

Mr Per Bødker Andersen, Mayor of Kolding, as President of the Union

Mr Armas Lahoniitty, Mayor of Turku, as first Vice-President of the Union

Mr Arno Pöker, Mayor of Rostock, as Vice-President of the Union

Mr Gundars Bojars, Mayor of Riga, as Vice-President of the Union

ELECTION OF THE BOARD OF AUDIT

President Per Bødker Andersen presented the candidates to the Board of Audit:

Mr Bartłomiej Sochański, City of Szczecin

Ms Silvia Löbner, City of Wismar

Mr Alfredas Lankauskas, City of Šiauliai



The General Conference re-elected above persons to the UBC Board of Audit for a two-year period.

LOCATION OF UBC SECRETARIAT 2004-2007

Following the proposal of the Mayor of the City of Gdańsk, Mr Paweł Adamowicz, the General Conference decided to maintain the UBC Secretariat in the City of Gdańsk, for the next four-year period.

NEW UBC STRATEGY

President Per Bødker Andersen reminded the participants that the draft of the new UBC Strategy was sent out to all member cities before the General Conference. The amendments were proposed by the Commission on Transportation, Women's Network and Network on Youth Issues. The General Conference accepted the amendments and decided to adopt the new UBC Strategy.

UBC AGENDA 21 ACTION PROGRAM 2004-2009

President Per Bødker Andersen reminded the participants that the draft of UBC Agenda 21 Action Program 2004-2009 was sent out to all member cities before the General Conference. Amendment was proposed by the Women's Network.

The General Conference accepted the amendment and decided to adopt the UBC Agenda 21 Action Program 2004-2009.

CONFERENCE RESOLUTION

President Per Bødker Andersen presented the proposal of the conference Resolution on EU Constitutional Treaty. Draft of the Resolution was sent out to all member cities before the conference. The General Conference unanimously adopted the Resolution.

BEST ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTISE IN BALTIC CITIES AWARD

The UBC Best Environmental Practise in Baltic Cities Award 2003 was granted to the City of Cēsis, Latvia, for an innovative way of involving citizens and other stakeholders in the planning process and practical work for improving the bio-diversity and the green areas in the city. The Award granting festive ceremony took place on 17 October during the reception given by the Mayor of Klaipėda. The winner received the grant of 5.000 EUR donated by Per Aarsleff A/S, Aarhus, Denmark.

VENUE OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE IN 2005



Following the proposal of the Mayor of Turku, UBC First Vice-President Mr Armas Lahoniitty, the General Conference decided to hold its 8th Meeting in the City of Turku in the year 2005. President Per Bødker Andersen handed over the UBC flag to Mr Armas Lahoniitty, wishing Turku a successful conference in 2005.

CLOSING OF THE CONFERENCE

Mr Per Bødker Andersen, the President of the Union, expressed his warm thanks to the City of Klaipėda, delegates from member cities, speakers, guests and the UBC Secretariat for their outstanding contribution to the success of the VII UBC General Conference.