

**MINUTES FROM THE 11TH MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD
OF THE UNION OF THE BALTIC CITIES
Vilnius, Lithuania, 22-23 April 1995**

INTRODUCTION

The 11th meeting of the Executive Board of the Union of the Baltic Cities was held on 22-23 April 1995 in Vilnius, Lithuania.

The Meeting was attended by the members of the Executive Board of the Union, representatives of Union's Working Commissions as well as invited guests.

The meeting was opened by Mr Anders Engström, the President of the Union; the welcome words were given by Mr Romualdas Sikorskis, Deputy Mayor of Vilnius.

In the beginning of the session, Mr Andrzej Jankowski, Secretary of the City of Gdańsk, informed the Board Members about the accident that touched the city of Gdańsk on Monday 17th of April. As a result of gas explosion in 11-storeys building, 22 people lost their lives and 200 lost their flats.

The Board gave a minute of silence to the people who died in the accident and expressed its words of compassion to all victims of this tragedy.

Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda.

The Meeting adopted the agenda.

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

Mrs Hjördis Höglund from Sundsvall and Mr Andrzej Jankowski from Gdańsk were elected to check the minutes.

Work of the Commissions, projects related to the work of the Commissions.

Report from the Commission on Environment.

Mr Carl Nielsen, chairman of the Commission reported on latest Commission's activities and projects.

Project on Institutional Strengthening

Mr Nielsen reminded that in September 1994 an application for 1.284.000 DK was submitted to the Nordic Council of Ministers to cover project costs. In December 1994 the Nordic Council of Ministers announced that UBC was granted with 550.000 DK.

On 3 Feb. 1995 the Commission held its working meeting in Aarhus devoted to the project implementation. As the grant was considerably lesser the project had to be accordingly adjusted. It was agreed that activities (2 seminars, 2 courses) in 1995 shall focus on two areas:

" Solid waste management and recycling

" Physical planning and the environment

The meeting selected cities to be responsible for the activities as follows: Gdańsk, Riga, Sockholm and Turku as regards solid waste and Aalborg, Karlskrona, Klaipėda, Liepāja as regards physical planning.

Representatives of mentioned cities, met at the planning meeting in Vilnius on 20-21 April, selected 4 host cities and decided upon preliminary time schedule of the activities in 1995.

Baltic Municipal Environmental Audits

Mr Nielsen informed that application to EU LIFE Programme 1994 was rejected due to limited LIFE budget, enormous number of applications and lack of co-financing in UBC proposal. In March 1995 a revised application was submitted to LIFE 1995. Total project budget was reduced to 350.000 ECU and UBC must find co-financing partner f.ex. Environmental Protection Agency. The application proposes the pilot audit to be carried out in Tallinn in cooperation with Turku and Helsinki. Afterwards experts from other south-east member cities will be educated at the workshops how to perform environmental audits in their own cities.

The European Urban Charter

Mr Nielsen informed that in December 1994 The European Urban Charter was forwarded to UBC by Council of Europe's Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE). The Charter can be treated as a practical tool and urban management handbook for local authorities.

Decision:

The Board recommended The European Urban Charter to be used by UBC member cities as a guide and authorized UBC Secretariat in Gdańsk to request CLRAE to distribute the Charter to all UBC members.

"Visions and Strategies around the Baltic 2010"

Mr Nielsen informed that final report on "Visions and Strategies around the Baltic 2010" was approved at ministerial session in Tallinn, 7-8 December 1994 and was forwarded to UBC. The ministers stated that joint projects shall be promoted through bilateral and multilateral partnerships between Baltic countries and regions, in particular an exchange of experience in spatial planning and policies shall be intensified.

Decision:

The Board agreed that the report should play an inspiring role in the work of all UBC Commissions.

Report from the Commission on Social Affairs.

Due to the unexpected lack of the delegation from Rostock, President Anders Engström shortly reported on the 2nd Workshop on employment Development held in Rostock, on 20-21 March 1995. 24 UBC member cities were represented, among them 10 cities from south-east part of Baltic Sea region. The workshop task was to promote transnational unemployment fighting projects, mainly directed to eastern UBC communities. It was stressed that UBC should enter close cooperation with the EU in realization of mentioned projects and should press EU to launch Baltic Sea Region development programme.

Decision:

The Board encouraged the Commission to continue its important work and authorized the President and Secretary to prepare a statement on UBC labour market policy for the next general conference.

Report from the Commission on Transportation.

Mr Paweł Żaboklicki presented report prepared by Prof. Maciej T. Krzyżanowski, Chairman of the Transport Commission. The report was concentrated on coming conference of the Commission to be organized jointly with the municipal authorities of Gdańsk on 27-28 April 1995. The conference under the heading: "The actual problems of the sea-land transportation systems of the Baltic Sea Regions".

The Conference will deal with such aspects as: development of the motorways and ferry connections, reorganization of public transportation systems in south-eastern Baltic cities and others.

Report from the Commission on Culture.

Mr Sławomir Szafrąński from Szczecin, Chairman of the Commission reported from the Working Session of the Commission, held in Szczecin on 16-18 January 1995. Representatives (ca. 60) of 27 UBC member cities had an opportunity to exchange information about various culture events taking place in different cities and discuss coordination of preparations to major upcoming events in particular: III International UBC Culture Festival - Szczecin'95, Cultural Capital of Europe - Copenhagen'96, Millennium of the city of Gdańsk 1997, 600th Anniversary of Kalmar Union 1997. Mr Szafrąński confirmed that III International UBC Culture Festival will have its opening at 11-13th August 1995.

Mr Olov Gibson from Visby reported on the progress of the Calendar of Festivals and Catalogue of Institutions in the UBC member cities being currently prepared by the city of Visby. Both guidebooks are almost finished and will be soon published and send out to all members. The information will be also available through Internet system.

Mrs Barbro Ejendal (Visby) put forward a proposal to organize next session of the Culture Commission in Visby on Gotland in November this year. The content, as it was suggested at the first session in Szczecin would be concentrated on themes: Freedom - Information - Libraries. Programme of the session as well as conditions of participation will be sent to all member cities this summer.

Decision:

The Board once again encouraged all member cities to take part in the III International UBC Culture Festival in Szczecin and welcome the proposal from the city of Visby to organize the next working session of the Commission in this city.

Report from the Commission on Telecommunication.

Mr Raimonds Pavulitis (Riga) submitted a report underlining that development of telecommunication network around the Baltic Sea is going very fast at the moment in particular as regards large companies, organizations and the municipalities. The Commission is planning to collect e-mail addresses from UBC member cities which have an access to Internet and find out obstacles that do not allow the remaining cities to start e-mail connection.

Mr Pertti Paltila, representative of Tampere, informed that the city of Tampere has established an Internet WWW home-page for Baltic Sea Cooperation and warmly encouraged member cities to use it for Union purposes (bif@tampere.tac.fi).

Proposal to create the UBC Commission on Sport.

Having in mind an Article 2 d) of UBC Statute stating that the Union shall: "Support any endeavor to enhance inter-human contacts, in particular, among the youth of the member cities, by organizing meetings, sport competitions, festivals and other events", Mr Zdzisław Urla, Deputy Mayor of Gdynia, on behalf of the cities of Gdynia and Karlskrona put forward a proposal to create UBC Commission on Sport. The city of Gdynia possess necessary experience in this field, as since 1993 Gdynia organizes an annual Twin Cities Sporting Competition for youth.

Decision:

The Board warmly accepted the proposal wishing the Commission successful and effective work. The cities of Gdynia and Karlskrona were nominated as the lead cities of the Commission. The Commission's office shall be located in Gdynia City Hall.

4. Next General Conference of the Union.

As it was decided at II UBC General Conference in Kaliningrad, 24-25 September 1993, the next UBC General Conference will be held this year in the city of Aarhus in Denmark.

Mr Olaf P. Christensen, Deputy Mayor of Aarhus confirmed the readiness of Aarhus Municipality to host UBC General Conference in 1995.

Decision:

The Board decided that the approaching UBC General Conference will be held in Aarhus on 8-9 December 1995.

New UBC Member Cities.

Mr Paweł Żaboklicki, Executive Secretary of the Union informed the Executive Board about new applications for Union Membership as follows:

- Świnoujście (Poland) represented at the meeting by the Mayor - Mr Krzysztof Adranowski
- Tampere (Finland) represented at the meeting by Mr Pertti Paltila, International Relations Officer
- Kristianstad (Sweden)

Decision:

1. The Board decided to accept above mentioned cities as the Members of the Union of the Baltic Cities and wished them successful cooperation with remaining UBC members. The number of Union member cities reached the figure of 58.

2. The Board discussed the particular case of the city of Bremen, which has not paid Union's membership fee since UBC creation in 1991.

The Board authorized the President to contact the Mayor of Bremen to inform him that UBC Statute does not allow a membership status without paying yearly membership fee. In case if Bremen is not going to pay a membership fee, the city will be excluded from the Union.

Information from the Secretary.

The next issue of the Union's Newsletter.

Mr Żaboklicki presented the latest issue of the Union Newsletter No.7 consisting of three main thematic sections:

I. Work of the Union - provides information from the last Executive Board meeting, Commissions meetings and activities and other UBC projects.

II. Information from member cities - includes information about latest initiatives and project launched by the cities.

III. Views - review of other significant activities and facts concerning Baltic Sea Region.

6.2 Financial report from the year 1994.

Mr Żaboklicki presented the financial report of the Union for the year 1994.

The summary of the report:

Contribution from Member Cities: 1.435.539.300,- PLZ

Contribution from the city of Gdańsk: 740.000.000,- PLZ

(office rent, staff remuneration)

Expenditure: 1.017.562.250,- PLZ

(meetings, communication, publications, services, maintenance etc.)

Union's budget for 1995.

The budget proposal for 1995 is made on prerequisite that Union's incomes and expenditure will be comparable to the ones in 1994.

Expected income from membership fees totals 80.000,- USD, and shall cover the following expenses: meetings organization, travels, communication (phone, fax, mail), office maintenance, publications, services etc.

Decision:

1. The Board accepted the reports.

2. To strengthen the work of the Commissions the Board assigned in 1995 2.000,- USD to each Commission; the money can be used for the meetings, travels etc.

Election of UBC Secretary General.

Mr Anders Engström, the President of the Union has proposed a candidature of Mr Paweł Żaboklicki, Acting Secretary of the Union for the position of UBC Secretary General.

Decision:

The Board unanimously elected Mr Paweł Żaboklicki as a Secretary General of the Union of the Baltic Cities.

7. UBC strengthening and goals for the future.

Mr Anders Engström expressed the opinion that to strengthen UBC work it would be important to engage for definite period (e.g. 9 months) a Project Manager who would be responsible inter alia for:

- elaboration of various projects to be carried out within the Union
- investigation of existing European funds and programmes to find out sources of funding for proposed projects
- preparation of the applications to mentioned funds to obtain grants for projects implementation
- launching the projects i.e. project organization, administration, appointment of project leaders etc.

The Project Manager would work in close cooperation with UBC Secretariat in Gdańsk.

The President proposed that Project Manager would be financed from Swedish governmental sources if possible.

Mr Engström introduced Mr Juhan Janusson from Sweden as a candidate for Project Manager. Mr Janusson informed the Board about his professional background and submitted his preliminary proposals of projects which could be realized within the Union:

- investigation of needs, problems and expectations of the member cities,
- education of politicians, specialists and officials from member cities,
- investigation concerning possibilities to start a newspaper on Baltic City Affairs,
- establishment of UBC WWW-homepage on the INTERNET.

Decision:

The Board accepted the proposal and authorized the President to seek for financial sources for engagement of Project Manager.

The Board agreed that discussion on UBC goals shall continue and commissioned the President to appoint a working group consisting of Board members and representatives of working Commissions to work out a strategy of UBC development.

Other matters.

Reports from conferences and meetings attended by Union's representatives.

II Conference on Baltic Subregional Cooperation, Lübeck-Travemünde, 17-19 October 1995.

President Engström submitted report from the Conference where he was one of the key-speakers and gave a presentation on City level cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region describing UBC activities.

ECO-BALTIC Conference, Lübeck, 8-10 March 1995.

Mr Paweł Żaboklicki reported from ECO-BALTIC Conference in Lübeck held under the heading: Partnerships for sustainable development in the Baltic Sea Region. The Conference was

organized by INEM - International Network for Environmental Management in cooperation with HELCOM, BCCA, UBC and other partners. UBC was responsible for

Sea area by offering an open forum to discuss the subject. One of the main conclusions was a joint view and clear understanding that there is a need to develop an effective and comprehensive Baltic Sea information system allowing easy access to different databases and information systems. The main Baltic organizations as CBSS, UBC, BCCA, BTC, Baltic Institutes and others should join their forces to create such a system.

8.2 Information from the President about oncoming conferences.

Mr Anders Engström informed the Board about major oncoming conferences during which he will represent the Union and submit presentations or statements:

" The Baltic Sea Conference 1995, Norrköping, Sweden, 18-20 May 1995

" 4th Ministerial Session of the Council of the Baltic Sea States, Gdańsk, Poland, 18-19 May 1995

" 4th Parliamentary Conference on cooperation within Baltic Sea area, Rønne, Denmark, 12-13 May 1995. Preparation and running the workshop. The workshop was chaired by Mr Mikko Jokinen, Vice-chairman of UBC Environmental Commission. First presentation titled: UBC and the municipal cooperation in the Baltic Sea region was given by UBC Secretary - Mr Paweł Żaboklicki.

CBSS Meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials, Elbląg, 15-16 March 1995.

Mr Paweł Żaboklicki informed the Board that he represented the Union at the CBSS meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials in Elbląg, where he was invited to report on realized and planned activities of the Union. The Council confirmed its constant support for the Union of the Baltic Cities.

OECD & WHO Conference "Our Cities - Our Future", Madrid, 22-25 March 1995.

Mr Mikko Jokinen submitted brief report from the conference where he represented the city of Turku. Mr Jokinen emphasized the main conclusion of the conference: "Future of the mankind is an urban future" - the cities will play a major role in world's development in the future. It was also stressed that the cities should give more attention to the implementation of directions comprised in Local Agenda 21.

Conference on cooperation in the southern part of Baltic Sea region, Malmö, 27 March 1995.

Mr Anders Engström informed that the conference was organized by the Association of South Swedish Cities and Counties (SYDSAM) to discuss perspectives of cooperation development within southern part of Baltic Sea area. Mr Engström submitted a presentation introducing UBC points of view in this question.

Workshop on Networks and Communication in the Baltic Sea Area, 27-28 March 1995.

Mr Pertti Palttila from Tampere submitted a report from the workshop. The event was organized by the Baltic Institutes of Finland and Sweden in cooperation with Council of the Baltic Sea States. More than 60 participants - experts in the field of telecommunication, data bases and data networks - took part in the workshop. The main goal of the workshop was to provide an overview of different needs, sources, solutions and undertakings regarding the information flow in the Baltic Sea region.
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Additionally, Mr Engström informed that due to his busy schedule, the Secretary will represent the Union at the 2nd Plenary Session of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe, Strasbourg, 30 May - 1st June 1995.

Project on Social Welfare.

Mr Bengt Enge from Kalmar reminded that in May 1994 the city of Kalmar arranged the seminar on social welfare directed to the representatives of UBC member cities from Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Russia. The purpose of the seminar was to give the participants an accurate picture of Swedish social security system. The seminar dealt with such subjects as insurance system, unemployment benefits, geriatric care and the social services.

As a follow up of the seminar city of Kalmar proposes a pilot project between sister cities Kalmar and Panevėžys to map out the social needs and problems that the Lithuanian city is facing. Eventually experts from both cities will draw up action programme to overcome investigated problems. The project will be carried out in 1995-1996 and will be divided into five phases.

Decision:

The Board gave its support to the project and encouraged the cities of Kalmar and Panevėžys to go on with project implementation.

II International UBC Women's Conference, Sundsvall, 6-8 October 1995 - status of preparation.

Mrs Hjördis Höglund from Sundsvall reminded that next UBC women's conference will be held in Sundsvall on 5-8 October 1995. The conference will be organized jointly by Union of the Baltic Cities and Women for Environment and Health network from Sundsvall. The theme of the Conference is "Women around the Baltic - our role in Agenda 21". 'Agenda 21' was adopted by United Nations Conference on Environment and development in Rio de Janeiro, as a guideline towards world's sustainable development. Mrs Höglund informed that conference programme and invitations will be sent out to all member cities in June.

Mrs Antonina Majdak from Kaliningrad put forward a proposal that cities of Sundsvall and Kaliningrad shall take a leading role in the Union as regards the women's questions.

Decision:

The Board accepted the proposal submitted by Kaliningrad and encouraged all member cities to send their representatives to the conference in Sundsvall.

Seminars on public transport in Lithuanian cities - report on present status.

Mr Juhan Janusson, project manager reminded that project is directed to 5 major cities of Lithuania. The aim of the project is to support public transportation reform processes in these cities and to establish longlasting links of cooperation between public transport companies in Swedish and Lithuanian cities. The costs of the project shall be covered by the Swedish Ministry of Transportation. Mr Janusson explained that due to unexpected problems the start of the project has been delayed - it will be launched in October 1995.

The European Urban Charter.

Please, refer to point 3.1 of the report.

VASAB 2010 - proposal of cooperation between UBC member cities in the field of spatial planning and cities development.

Mr Paweł Żaboklicki presented a proposal submitted to the Secretariat by the Regional Planning Bureau in Gdańsk. The proposal emphasizes the fact that the main focus of the VASAB 2010 strategy is on the urban network, especially strengthening the ring of Baltic cities.

According to the strategy, Baltic cities should more and more successfully compete with other European urban centres for scarce resources and development chances. A network of cities with good links to the hinterland should ensure spatial cohesion within Baltic Sea region providing high quality urban environment for their citizens. This can be achieved through intensified cooperation among cities in the field of spatial planning.

The proposal from the Regional Planning Bureau in Gdańsk is to initiate cooperation between the city representatives responsible for spatial planning and spatial development strategies. Such cooperation could provide a forum of information exchange as regards main dimensions of city development and gradually could become a vehicle of dissemination of new ideas and innovations in the field of strategic spatial planning.

Decision:

Last year the camp was organized in Kaliningrad in cooperation with Helcom. This year the camp will be held on 18-28 July 1995. The age of participants: 15-25. The camp will

The Board supported the proposal and requested the cities interested to cooperate on spatial planning field to contact as soon as possible the Secretariat in Gdańsk to establish practical frameworks for such cooperation.

Relations between local and central government.

Mr Algimantas Sejunas, Deputy Mayor of Šiauliai introduced the Board to the important problem of administration reform in south-east Baltic countries, in particular decentralization and division of responsibilities between central and local government. The problem is common for all former socialist countries: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Russia. Existing administration system is still highly centralized. Many decisions and tasks that should be undertaken at the local level are being decided at the central, governmental level. This situation is blocking the development of the cities, regions and consequently the countries.

Decision:

The Board emphasized the importance of governing decentralization in democratic and free market country, as an essential condition of country development. The Board assigned the President and the Secretary to prepare a resolution concerning described above problem for the next UBC General Conference.

Proposals from the city of Kaliningrad.

Mr Vitaliy Shipov, Mayor of Kaliningrad informed the Board about two projects to be organized in Kaliningrad directed to the young people from Baltic cities:

" International Environmental Camp

I take place in the village Otradnoye (sea-coast) in Zelenogradsk district.

" Scout Camps

Several camps were organized in Kaliningrad last year. In 1995 the first scout camp will be organized in Bagrationovsk district in July and will be held in three 10-days shifts.

More detailed information can be obtained from the city of Kaliningrad.

Possibilities of UBC involvement in business related activities - example from Pärnu.

Mr Żaboklicki informed that Secretariat received a letter from the city of Pärnu expressing an interest to develop cooperation with other cities, as regards sanatoriums. The letter describes a wide range of services being provided by well-known sanatoriums in Pärnu, including prices for different kind of treatment.

Decision:

The Board found the proposal from Pärnu as interesting and important. At the same time the Board reminded that according to UBC Statute - the Union is not able to serve as business promotion agency for different enterprises (f.ex. sanatoriums) from Baltic cities. Having in mind above the cities are asked not to give the prices in proposals to be distributed by the Secretariat. The Board authorized the Secretariat to spread revised information from Pärnu to the member cities.

I International UBC Economic Exhibition "InterBaltic'95" in Gdynia - status of preparation.

Mr Janusz Daszkiewicz, Vice-President of WTC Gdynia - Expo informed the Board about the present status of preparations to the event. Mr Daszkiewicz reminded that in accordance with the proposal from one of Exhibition co-organizers, the Baltic Sea Chambers of Commerce Association (BCCA) from Kiel, the final date of the Exhibition has been fixed on 7-9 September 1995. InterBaltic'95 will be held parallely with two other fair-type events - InvestBaltic (Investment Forum) and EcoBaltic (Ecology Forum). Mr Daszkiewicz added that the Polish Minister of Transport and Economy has taken the honorary patronage over the event.

Decision:

The Board took note of the report and once again warmly encouraged all member cities to take active part in the Exhibition and to promote the event among companies from their cities and regions.

Project on business contacts promotion between 5 Baltic cities.

Mr Mikko Jokinen from Turku informed that University of Turku has carried out a pilot project called "Baltic Cities Business Network". The aim of the project was to make an update review on current market/business situation in five selected UBC member cities. As the main outcome of the project - a special report concerning each city was published and distributed among companies from mentioned cities. The reports include an updated review on the present situation and contact addresses in the cities with a special emphasis on economy and business opportunities. The project has met with the great interest among the companies and subsequently new commercial contacts have been established.

Seminar on Baltic Cities Family Policy.

Mr Paweł Żaboklicki informed the Board about the initiative of Gdańsk Regional Information and Support Centre for NGOs to initiate a new field of cooperation among UBC member cities -Family Policy in the Commune (city). As a first step the Centre proposes to organize a seminar on mention subject, open to all member cities. The seminar would be organized in the end of June in association with Casubian folk festival taking place on Hel Peninsula.

Decision:

The Board gave its support to the proposal and authorized the Secretary to take further contacts in question with project initiators.

Realization of the transit road Berlin-St.Petersburg and its economic importance.

Mr Paweł Żaboklicki informed that city of Rēzekne has forwarded to the Board a proposal to discuss the importance of the realization of transit road Berlin-St.Petersburg in aspect of the development of trade and tourism between south-east Baltic cities.

Decision:

The Board authorized the Commission on Transportation to prepare a statement concerning above question.

Next Meeting of the Executive Board.

Mr Zdzisław Urla, Deputy Mayor of Gdynia repeated an invitation from the city of Gdynia to organize the next meeting of UBC Executive Board in Gdynia, in association with the International Economic Exhibition of the Baltic Sea Region InterBaltic'95, 7-9 September 1995.

Decision:

The Board accepted a proposal from Gdynia and decided to hold its next meeting in the city of Gdynia.

Closing of the Meeting.

The Chairman of the Meeting, Mr Anders Engström expressed his thanks to the City of Vilnius for hosting the delegation and closed the XI Meeting of the Executive Board of the Union of the Baltic Cities.

Mr Anders Engström

Mrs Hjördis Höglund

Chairman

Adjuster

Mr Paweł Żaboklicki

Mr Andrzej Jankowski

Secretary

General Adjuster