

1st Executive Board meeting, Lubeck, 6-7 December 1991

REPORT FROM THE 1st MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE UNION OF THE BALTIC CITIES

LÜBECK, 6-7 December 1991

INTRODUCTION

The First Meeting of the Executive Board of the Union of the Baltic Cities was held on 6-7 December 1991, in the premises of the City Hall in Lübeck on the invitation of the host city. The meeting was attended by representatives from the Baltic cities as well as invited persons.

The meeting was opened by the President of the Union, Mr. Anders Engström.

Agenda Item 1.

Elections of a member who together with the President will check the minutes.

The meeting adopted the agenda.

Mr. Michael Bouteiller was elected to check the minutes together with the President.

Agenda Item 2 .

Nomination of the Secretary.

After introduction by the President and discussion, Mr. Piotr Krzyżanowski was elected as the Secretary of the Union for the two years period.

Agenda Item 3 .

Reflections on the Conference in Gdańsk

Mr. Anders Engström expressed once again his satisfaction and thanks for excellent organizational work by the City of Gdańsk and warm atmosphere which prevailed during the September Conference.

Mr. Michael Bouteiller raised the question of the membership in the Union and the status of those cities which have not signed the Declaration. After discussion, the meeting decided to send a letter with invitation by the President to those cities asking them to declare their member status.

Mr. Franciszek Jamroz informed the meeting about his visit to France and deep interest expressed by representatives of authorities he met, about idea and future plans of the Union.

Agenda Item 4.

Economical and practical questions (reports).

Mr. Lars Malborg introduced the scheme of the future activity by the Union explaining proposed items and their time table. After consideration, the Meeting decided to come back to this item of agenda later on.

Mr. Piotr Krzyżanowski informed the Meeting about the Public Hearing that was held in Kaliningrad on 4th of December 1991 and was arranged within the "Baltic Programme" established by the High Level Task Force. The meeting concerning the program on improvement of the environment was attended by the representatives of the local authority, and also by representatives of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the Nordic Investment Bank.

Mr. Ingo Kuhlbrodt underlined the importance of strengthening the cooperation between the Union and the EC in the scope of the market and development policy, social dialogue, assistance for the small and medium size enterprises. The Meeting found this proposal as a very valuable and decided to come later to this matters.

Mr. Vjacheslav Nalivaiko informed the Meeting that Kaliningrad as a member of the Union of the Russian Cities had informed that Union about establishing the Union of the Baltic Cities, this information was found with interest. It was proposed to come back to this item later when there will be concrete ideas for cooperation.

Mr. Amans Obelis informed the Meeting about programs on the development of the telecommunication systems implemented by the newly established Joint Venture by Latvia and the Nordic Countries.

Mr. Anders Engström informed the Meeting about the planned activity by the President and the Secretary in sending letters reminding the Cities about: fees, contact persons, addresses. There will also be undertaken investigations on making contacts between the Cities by the Secretary who in a letter will ask the Cities to inform the Union about the mentioned above. After discussion the Meeting decided that the Cities would be asked about their activities within three scopes; communication, culture and environmental protection or other projects they would like to inform the Union about.

Mr. Michael Bouteiller raised the question concerning the interest of the cities which were present at the Conference and did not signed the Declaration and proposed to contact those cities in order to comment on the situation. After the discussion in which Ms. Hjärdís Höglund, Mr Franciszek Jamroz and Mr. Anders Engström, took part it was decided to send a letter to those cities which did not signed the Declaration to ask them to do that.

Mr. Piotr Krzyżanowski was asked to inform about the status on preparation of the booklet of the Union. He informed about the prices for coloured version and two colour version. Mr. Vjacheslav Nalivaiko proposed that this booklet could be printed in Kaliningrad easily. The meeting decided to follow this proposal if practical possibility arised.

Next it was decided that the Secretary of the Union will ask cities about information which should be used in the Newsletter of the Union which will be printed as soon as possible.

Mr. Lars Malmberg presented draft concept on future budget, fees explaining to the Meeting interpretation of items included. The proposal as well as concept on future activity of the Union is included in Annex 3 to this Report. Mr. Michael Bouteiller pointed out the equality in contribution to the Unions budget and that from the other side money for projects should be arranged from other sources than fees. After the discussion the Meeting decided still have a fee of 2000 USD and that is up to the President to take decision which individual cities might have a fee less than this.

What is concerning the practical activity of the Secretariat it was decided that the President and the Secretary are authorized to sign the financial documents of the Union. The Swedish Union of the Local Authority will be responsible for revision before the next Conference.

Agenda Item 5

Time and program for the next annual Conference in Kalmar.

Mr. Lars Malmberg introduced the proposals concerning the next conference in Kalmar. Mr. Anders Engström informed about the invitation the Union has got to the Conference by the Ministers of Transports of the Baltic States. There was proposed the following agenda of the conference in Kalmar:

22.05 - Arrival. First meeting with discussions on the aims of the Union and its commissions;

23.05 - Communication, general aspects: social and cultural questions;

24.05 - General Conference.

Agenda Item 6

The work of the Commissions.

It was reminded that the following cities took the leading role in the following areas: Transportation - Gdańsk, Kaliningrad; Social aspects, Culture - Lübeck, Rostock; Environmental protection - Aarhus, Turku, Telecommunication - Kalmar, Riga.

The Secretary will send them a letter asking for information about their plans and current situation. It was suggested to ask them to have a meeting before the next board meeting in order to be ready to distribute well in advance results for the board consideration.

After discussion it was decided that the next General Conference is to be held in Kalmar on 22-24 May 1992. The scope of the conference should cover the environmental protection together with the proposed subjects.

Meeting decided to let new cities enter the commissions after the general conference.

Agenda Item 7

Future work of the Union - no comments.

Agenda Item 8

Other questions.

Mr. Michael Bouteiller presented the idea concerning the activity towards challenging rapid changes in Europe with regard to social and culture questions and labour market. The Meeting was of the opinion that this matters should be included in future activity.

Mr. Robert Lach informed about recently established in Poland the Union of Rural Districts and Coastal Cities which now is working out its status and will join the Union with some proposals concerning future cooperation. He also mentioned about Eurocities network and possibility for the future cooperation.

Mr. Andrzej Zbierski underlined the importance of the contribution by the intellectual groups of the society to the creation of the European culture and social wealth. He informed that in the Central and East European Countries, recently, the number of students of the higher schools had decreased dramatically, in case of Poland it is down to 8%. He pointed out that bearing in mind the traditional role played by cities, especially coastal cities, in creating the cultural shape of the region it should be included in future programme of the Union.

Mr. Vjacheslav Nalivaiko informed the Meeting about recent initiative called Baltic University to which scientists and academic lecturers should contribute teaching students about broad programs. He promised to come back to this matter later on.

Mrs. Hjördis Höglund informed the Meeting about the Healthy Cities project and asked if there was an interest in the Union to take part in arrangements in this field.

Mr. Anders Engström took up a project launched by "the North European Club" and the confederation of the Norden Associations to start a project where young people would meet to discuss and work with environmental questions in a summer camp. The Meeting decided that the project is interesting and the Cities promised to take up the idea.

Mr. Amans Obelis was asked to investigate the possibility to arrange the next board meeting, eventually to be held in Riga.