

MINUTES FROM THE 32nd MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD Błąd! Nie zdefiniowano zakładki.

BOARD OF THE UNION OF THE BALTIC CITIES

Rostock, Germany, 11 October 2001

INTRODUCTION

The 32nd meeting of the Executive Board of the Union of the Baltic Cities was held on the eve of the VI UBC General Conference 11th of October 2001, in the City of Rostock, Germany, upon the invitation of Mr Arno Poker, Mayor of Rostock.

The meeting was attended by the Members of the Executive Board, the observers and the delegation from the Lake Victoria Region Local Authorities Cooperation (LVRLAC). The list of participants is attached to this report.

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

The 32nd meeting of the UBC Executive Board was opened by Mr Anders Engstrom, the President of the Union. Mr Engstrom greeted all participants and informed that the meeting will be devoted mostly to the VI General Conference in Rostock.

Mr Arno Poker, Mayor of Rostock, welcomed all delegates and wished them the fruitful discussions and a pleasant stay in Rostock.

Mr Engstrom asked the Board whether Mr Valentin Schevtschenko, Mayor of Peterhof and Mr Boris Isaev, Baltic Centre of Regional Studies, St.Petersburg can participate in the meeting. The Board agreed.

Mr Mikko Lohikoski, Turku, informed that unfortunately Mr Armas Lahoniitty, UBC Vice-President, was not able to come to Rostock due to stress of work.

Mr Pawel Zaboklicki, Secretary General, introduced the Baltic Cities Bulletin titled "Social Justice in the Baltic Sea Region" and the UBC 10th Anniversary Brochure prepared for the VI General Conference.

The meeting adopted the agenda which is attached to this report.

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

Mr Arno Poker, Rostock and Mr Kaj Kjaer, Aalborg were elected to check the minutes together with the President.

3. VI General Conference in Rostock.

3.1 Practical information.

Ms Petra Hamann, Rostock, presented the final programme of the General Conference and informed the Board about the practical matters related to the event. She said that unfortunately Mr Eiki Nestor, Social Minister of Estonia, cancelled his participation just before the conference. The other keynote speakers are expected to come. Ms Hamann informed that all participants shall receive main conference documents such as programme, social charter, resolution, list of participants, as well as invitations to the Mayor's Reception and the 10th Anniversary Party.

3.2 Agenda for the General Assembly.

The Board went through the agenda for the General Assembly to be held on Saturday 13 October 2001.

1. Meetings of the UBC Commissions and Networks.

All Commissions and Networks will have their meetings on Saturday morning in order to discuss their Action Plans for the next two years.

2. Opening of the General Assembly.

3. Approval of the Report on UBC Activities Oct'1999 – Sept'2001.

The report was delivered to all member cities before the General Conference. President Engstrom will only highlight the most important facts from the report.

4. Taking note of Auditor's Report 1999-2000.

The auditor's report was sent out to all member cities before the General Conference. The Conference shall take note of the report.

5. Board of Audit Report.

President Engstrom informed that the Presidium has not received so far the report from the Board of Audit.

6. Absolving the Presidium, the Board and the Secretary General of their responsibility for the previous two year period.

7. Approval of the budget and decision on membership fees in the next two year period.

Mr Pawel Zaboklicki presented the proposals of the UBC budget and membership fees for 2002-2003. The proposed membership fees are maintained on unchanged level. The Board proposed to the General Conference to approve proposed budget and membership fees.

Mr Kaj Kjaer, Aalborg, asked why the fees for western member cities are more than twice higher than the fees for eastern members. Mr Zaboklicki answered that the GDP in western Baltic Sea states is several times higher than in the eastern states.

President Engstrom expressed an opinion that UBC should look for sponsors and could use for example, the UBC Baltic Cities Bulletin for this purpose.

8. Approval of UBC auditor for 2001-2002.

The Board proposed to the General Conference to appoint the current UBC auditor ie. the licensed auditing company BILANS from Gdansk.

9. Reports from the Commissions & Networks.

President Engstrom informed that due to tight conference programme, the Commissions and Networks will have only two minutes to report from their morning meetings. After the report the chairman/coordinator of the Commission will have an opportunity to answer questions from the audience.

10. Amendment in the UBC Statute.

The Board confirmed its proposal from the last Board meeting in Malbork to make amendment in the Statute concerning the number of Vice-Presidents – three instead of two.

11. Approval of the UBC Strategy.

The Board proposed to the General Conference to re-approve the UBC Strategy adopted at the V General Conference in Stockholm in 1999.

12. Adoption of UBC Agenda 21 Action Program 2002-2003.

President Engstrom put forward a question why the Agenda 21 action program shall be adopted by the General Conference, why not by the Board. Mr Risto Veivo, Turku, answered that the action program adopted by the General Conference will have higher importance. This fact may help the Commission on Environment to obtain external funding for the projects included in the program. The Board supported the idea that the program should be adopted by the General Conference.

Mr Veivo reminded that the action program have been sent to all cities before the General Conference. In the meantime one more proposal was forwarded by the city of Sundsvall concerning the promotion of health. The Board accepted Sundsvall proposal. The Board

recommended the General Conference to adopt the UBC Agenda 21 Action Program 2002-2003.

13. Election of the Executive Board.

President Engstrom informed that some countries have not yet informed about their proposals of cities to the new Executive Board. The Board authorised the President to collect all proposals on the next day.

14. Election of the President and Vice-Presidents.

The Board confirmed its proposal from the last meeting in Malbork as regards the candidates to the new UBC Presidium:

Mr Per Bodker Andersen, Mayor of Kolding, for the President

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

Ms Liisa Pakosta, Vice-Mayor of Tallinn, for the Vice-President

Mr Arno Poker, Mayor of Rostock, for the Vice-President

15. Election of the Board of Audit.

The Board proposed Mr Bartlomiej Sochanski, Szczecin and Ms Silvia Lobner, Wismar, to be re-elected as members of the Board of Audit. The Board asked Mr Alfredas Lankauskas, Siauliai, whether he would be ready to be the third candidate to the Board of Audit. Mr Lankauskas informed that he would answer this question on the next day.

16. Adoption of the UBC Social Charter.

Ms Petra Hamann reminded that after the Board meeting in Malbork the draft of the Social Charter was sent for comments to all member cities. Only few comments have been received. The final draft was sent to the cities before the General Conference.

Mr Alfredas Lankauskas, Siauliai, proposed to add that the General Conference recommends each member city to ratify the Social Charter.

Mr Arno Poker reminded that in Malbork the Board discussed broadly this question and agreed that the Charter shall be treated by the member cities as a guideline and it is up to each city to follow the UBC Social Charter. He also said that now, the day before the Conference, it is difficult to make amendments in the document.

President Engstrom said that we can not write that the cities adopted the Charter – we should write that the UBC General Conference adopted the Charter. The Board agreed to make this amendment.

Mr Engstrom also informed that there is a proposal to add one sentence in point 3 of the Charter emphasising that youth should have influence on decision making processes. The Board agreed to include this proposal.

The Board authorised the Social Charter working group to insert the above amendments.

In the morning of Saturday 13 October 2001 the Board held an extra meeting to discuss the proposals to the Social Charter submitted by the General Conference participants on 12 October 2001. As the result of this meeting the final draft of the Social Charter was proposed by the Board to the General Conference.

17. Adoption of the Conference Resolution.

Mr Juhan Janusson, UBC EU-Coordinator, reminded that after the Board meeting in Malbork the draft of the Conference Resolution was sent for comments and proposals to all member cities. Only few comments have been received.

Mr Mikko Lohikoski said that in his opinion and in the opinion of Vice-President Lahoniitty some improvements are necessary in the text of the Resolution.

The Board authorised the resolution working group together with Mr Lohikoski to insert Turku proposals in the Resolution and forward the final version of the document to the President, on the next day.

18. Venue of General Conference in 2003.

President Engstrom reminded that in 1999, following the proposal from Mr Eugenijus Gentvilas, UBC Board recommended to hold the UBC General Conference in 2003 in the city of Klaipeda. At the last Executive Board meeting in Malbork, the City of Turku expressed an interest to host the General Conference in 2003, in case Klaipeda is not interested.

President Engstrom informed that the Mayor of the City of Klaipeda Mr Rimantas Taraskevicius, sent a letter to him confirming that the City of Klaipeda is very interested to host the VII UBC General Conference in 2003.

Decision:

The Board proposed to the General Conference, the City of Klaipeda, as the venue of the VII UBC General Conference in 2003.

3.3 Environmental Award 2001.

Mr Risto Veivo informed that the Commission on Environment received 17 applications for the second edition of the UBC Environmental Award. This time the requirement was that the

projects should combine environmental and social goals. Mr Veivo stressed that the evaluation committee had a difficult task as all projects were very interesting. He said that the results will be announced on the next day during the reception to be given by the Mayor of Rostock. The winning city shall receive a financial prize from the sponsor arranged by Mr Carl Nielsen, co-chairman of the Commission on Environment.

4. UBC-LVRLAC cooperation – update.

President Engstrom introduced four representatives of the Lake Victoria Region Local Authorities Cooperation, who came to Rostock to attend the VI UBC General Conference, namely:

Mr Stephen Kabuye, LVRLAC President, Entebbe, Uganda

Dr Julius Ayo-Odongo, LVRLAC Secretary General, Entebbe, Uganda

Mr Theonest Kishenyi, LVRLAC Treasurer, Bukoba, Tanzania

Mr Joseph Simba Opepo, Vice-Mayor, Kisumu, Kenya

Mr Engstrom reminded that the project is funded by the Swedish International Cooperation Development Agency (SIDA) and the project budget in 2001 is 1.300.000 SEK. In November Mr Anders Engstrom and Mr Juhan Janusson will go to Africa to discuss the further steps of the project.

Mr Stephen Kabuye, expressed his gratitude to the Union of the Baltic Cities for launching the cooperation project with LVRLAC and for inviting LVRLAC executives to the VI UBC General Conference in Rostock. He said that LVRLAC as a young organisation is learning on UBC mistakes and achievements.

Mr Tonu Karu, Tallinn, put forward the proposal that UBC member cities could help LVRLAC cities by sending them the equipment or other items needed. For example UBC cities could donate used but functioning equipment, when they replace it with the new one. The Board considered Mr Karu's proposal as interesting.

5. Reports from the conferences attended by Union representatives.

The following delegates reported from the conferences where they represented the Union of the Baltic Cities:

- Conference of Atlantic Arc Cities, Porto, 5-6 July 2001 (Anders Engstrom)
- Stockholm Water Symposium, Stockholm, 13-14 August 2001 (Juhan Janusson)
- Conference of Baltic Spatial Planning Ministers, Wismar, 20-21 September 2001 (A.Engstrom on behalf of L.Malmborg)
- Eurocities seminar "Urban dimension of European governance", Brussels, 20 September (Juhan Janusson)

- SALA Conference on International Cooperation on Local and Regional Level, Ale, 27-28 September 2001 (Anders Engstrom)
- Baltic Ports Organisation General Assembly, Copenhagen, 4 October 2001 (Juhan Janusson)

The Board took note of the reports.

6. Information on Fund for Subregional Development in the Baltic Sea States.

President Engstrom informed that it is a proposal of the Danish government to establish a Fund for Subregional Development in the BSR. The fund could be used by the regions, cities and NGO's for small projects and pre-feasibility studies. Mr Engstrom informed that Germany, Finland and Sweden are hesitating whether to support the Danish proposal and assign resources for the fund. Mr Engstrom stressed that it is necessary to lobby the initiative, so he does as regards the Swedish government. The city of Turku has lobbied the creation of the fund in the Finnish government. The next day Mr Engstrom and Mr Poker shall meet the Deputy Prime Minister of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern to lobby the German government. The information about the fund initiative is attached to the minutes.

7. Questions raised at the meeting.

President Engstrom informed the Board that in the beginning of the meeting he received a letter from St. Petersburg suggesting to create the UBC Commission on Information Society led by St.Petersburg. Mr Engstrom reminded that the Board discussed this question at the meeting in Cesis in March this year. The meeting in Cesis asked St.Petersburg to organise a conference to discuss the ways of UBC involvement in the IT sector. The President proposed that the letter from St.Petersburg would be delivered to all members of the Board and would be treated at the next Board meeting. The Board agreed with President's proposal.

President Engstrom put forward a question to St.Petersburg why three satellite cities of St.Petersburg namely Lomonosov, Peterhof and Sestroretsk have not paid the UBC membership fee in 2001. Ms Elena Ivanova, St.Petersburg, informed the Board that the payments have been done last week and she has the confirmations of bank transfers. On behalf of the mentioned cities Ms Ivanova apologised for the late payments of the fee.

Mr Mikko Lohikoski informed that in case the UBC General Conference in 2003 would be held in Turku, the Council of Europe's Congress of Local & Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE) would most probably organise in Turku the conference on cooperation in the BSR, in association with the UBC event. Turku has already carried out the preliminary discussions with CLRAE about that. Now it is not certain as the next UBC General Conference will be most probably held in Klaipeda.

Mr Lohikoski said that as Klaipeda was proposed as the host of the General Conference in 2003, Turku would be interested to host the General Conference in 2005. He raised the

question whether the General Conference should decide only about the location of the next General Conference, or also about the location of the following one. The second case would require a change in the UBC Statute.

8. Next Meeting of the Executive Board.

Decision:

The Board authorised the President and the Secretary General to decide about the time and the venue of the next meeting of the Executive Board.

9. Closing of the Meeting.

Mr Anders Engstrom expressed his thanks to all participants for the fruitful meeting and closed the 32nd Meeting of the Executive Board of the Union of the Baltic Cities.

Mr Engstrom wished all delegates a successful VI General Conference.

Mr Anders Engstrom
Chairman

Mr Pawel Zaboklicki
Secretary

Mr Arno Poker
Adjuster

Mr Kaj Kjaer
Adjuster