

**MINUTES FROM THE 43<sup>RD</sup> MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE  
BOARD OF THE UNION OF THE BALTIC CITIES  
Chojnice, Poland, 11 June 2005**

The 43<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Executive Board of the Union of the Baltic Cities was held on the 11<sup>th</sup> of June 2005 in the City of Chojnice, Poland, upon the invitation of Mr Arseniusz Finster, Mayor of Chojnice. The list of meeting participants is included as an annex to this report.

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

The meeting was opened by Mr Per Boedker Andersen, the President of the Union. Mr Andersen expressed his gratitude to the hosts of the meeting for inviting the UBC Executive Board to hold the meeting in Chojnice.

The meeting adopted the agenda attached as an annex to this report.

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

Ms Sirkka Kotola from Kotka and Mr Edward Pietrzyk from Chojnice were elected to check the minutes.

**3. Presentation of the City of Chojnice.**

Mr Arseniusz Finster, Mayor of the City of Chojnice, made a presentation introducing his city. Chojnice is situated in the south-west part of the Pomerania region and has over 40.000 inhabitants. Two districts - Chojnice and Człuchow - create the southern pole of the Pomeranian region's development. Both towns have established two parts of Pomeranian Special Economic Zone. The Chojnice rural commune, which surrounds the town, is an excellent tourist area due to its valuable natural environment, beautiful lakes and forests. Since the fall of the communist system in 1989 a number of positive changes took place in the city: renovation of the town centre, investments in infrastructure, new housing areas, business development, new education opportunities etc. The new investments supported by the EU funds are planned in the nearest future, for example the yacht port and promenade at the picturesque Charzykowy lake. The Board wished the city of Chojnice all success in further development.

**4. VIII General Conference in Turku, 29 September – 2 October 2005.**

**4.1-4.3 Invitations, organisational matters, keynote speakers, workshops.**

Secretary General Pawel Zaboklicki informed that some one thousand addresses to Baltic and European organisations and institutions have been forwarded from the secretariat to Turku. Mr Mikko Lohikoski, Turku, informed that preliminary conference invitation have been sent out to the member cities, mentioned institutions and to the keynote speakers. Mr Lohikoski informed that conference programme, re-drafted in the light of Board discussion in Lulea, and the practical arrangements are available on the website [www.turku.fi/ubc](http://www.turku.fi/ubc) as well as the registration form.

As regards the keynote speakers Mr Lohikoski informed that following persons have been approached and invited.

Mr Matti Vanhanen, Prime Minister of Finland, was invited to deliver a major statement on the political development in the Baltic Sea Region.

Mr Andrus Ansip, Prime Minister of Estonia, the former Mayor of Tartu, who for a long time has been successfully working on the city level.

A senior business representative is to speak about the economic prospects in the region. An idea was to have a German speaker. The name is open, but the organisers have spoken to the German Ambassador to Finland Mr Schumann, who is very active in Baltic matters. Mr Schumann is in a process of contacting a very senior executives in Germany.

Mr Lohikoski added that the cultural speaker depends whether Mr Ansip comes or not. The organisers have in mind also the very well known writer Jaan Kross from Estonia.

On the next day, in the plenary session there is the EU budget framework and its implications, an issue very important for UBC. A Polish Commissioner Danuta Huebner was invited, but unfortunately she is not in a position to come. We should all jointly push forward to have either a representative from the Cabinet of Mrs Huebner or a senior representative of the European Commission.

Cities and competitiveness. An invitation was sent to Carl Cederschiold, a former Mayor of Stockholm to speak about competitiveness and economic development - a very important issue for the cities.

Cities and good neighbourhood policies. An invitation was sent to the Governor of St. Petersburg Ms Matvienko.

Transport networks. A senior European Commission representative has been invited as a speaker.

As regards the Mediterranean view, Mr Joan Clos i Matheu, the Mayor of Barcelona, has been invited.

Concerning the governance issue, the concrete speaker has not been invited yet. (The Mayor of Stockholm Ms Annika Billstrom has been invited after the Board meeting at the proposal of the Swedish Board member).

As regards the parallel forums, Mr Christian Ramberg, chair of UBC logistic task force, is preparing the meeting on the Motorways of the Seas and the logistic issues. Mr Ramberg plans to have a “conference in a conference”, up to hundred people from different cities, from companies, shipping lines, agencies and so on. The report from the latest meeting of the TF is attached to the minutes.

Additionally, in connection with the GC, there will be a coordination meeting of the Baltic Sea organisations, and the CBSS Senior Officials meeting.

Mr Lohikoski mentioned that there was a note from the working group from Ina Sidlauskiene that Lithuanian cities proposed to invite the leaders of the Associations of Local Authorities in the Baltic Sea countries. Mr Zaboklicki informed that the national associations of local authorities have been on the GC invitation list.

Mr Lohikoski added that cities will have exhibition possibilities at the GC – information is on the conference website. He also added that the translation to Finnish and Russian will be arranged in order to attract more city politicians who do not speak English.

President Andersen expressed an opinion that non-member cities should also be invited to the general conference. Mr Zaboklicki informed that non-member cities were also invited to the conference.

#### **4.4 Elections. Candidates to the Presidium.**

The following candidates to the Presidium have been submitted:

Mr Per Boedker Andersen, Mayor of Kolding – candidate for President  
Ms Marie-Louise Rönmark, Mayor of Umea – candidate for Vice-President  
Mr Mikko Pukkinen, forthcoming Mayor of Turku - candidate for Vice-President

The candidature for the remaining Vice-President has not been submitted yet. Mr Pawel Zaboklicki informed that on the request of the President he has contacted all “eastern” cities with women mayors asking whether they would be interested to candidate for UBC Vice-President. Mr Zaboklicki informed that due to various reasons none of the “eastern” lady mayors was able to candidate.

#### Decision:

The Board decided to recommend the General Conference the above mentioned candidates to the Presidium. The meeting authorised the Board members from Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia to check whether women vice-mayors in their countries would be interested to candidate for the UBC Vice-President and to inform the President. The Board authorised the President to make recommendation for the position of remaining Vice-President.

#### **4.5 Membership Fees 2006-2007.**

SG Pawel Zaboklicki provided the Board members with the proposal of membership fees for 2006 and 2007 (attached). According to the discussions held at the GC in Klaipeda two years ago, the fees for “eastern” cities are to be raised 5% annually, so the discount for eastern” cities will be 55% in 2006 and 50% in 2007. In 2005 the discount is 60%.

#### Decision:

The Board decided to recommend the General Conference the attached proposal for the membership fees in 2006-2007.

#### **4.6 Venue of the GC in 2007.**

President Andersen reminded that already last year the Board endorsed the Mayor of Parnu proposal to hold the General Conference in 2007 in Parnu, Estonia. Estonia has not hosted the UBC General Conference so far. The Board maintained its support to Parnu’s proposal.

**4.7** Mr Risto Veivo, Head of EnvCom Secretariat in Turku sent paper (attached) informing that New Hansa of Sustainable Ports project agreed on new voluntary policy document for Baltic port cities, ports and shipping companies. The name of the document is Baltic Memorandum of Understanding on Sustainable Port and Maritime Policy. The Board recommended the General Conference to endorse the Memorandum.

**5. Maritime borders in the Baltic Sea Region (150 km).** Statement of Baltic Sea organisations on new cohesion policy (territorial cooperation). President’s letter to the Prime Ministers. Follow-up process.

President Andersen reminded that at the UBC initiative, the major Baltic Sea organisations namely B7, BSSSC, CPMR-BSC and UBC decided to send to the European Commission the joint statement on the objective 3 of the reformed cohesion policy from 2007 – European Territorial Cooperation. The statement emphasizes the fact that the cross-border cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region may be severely harmed if the limit of 150 km for maritime border is introduced.

The aforementioned Baltic Sea organisations consider that the maximum distance of 150 km of maritime border - to be eligible to obtain funding for cross-border projects – is counter-productive to the idea of strengthening the territorial cooperation and therefore we object to it.

The EC replied - in the letter from the Director in DG General Regional Policy Mr Ronald Hall – that the Commission intends to introduce 150 km threshold for the cross-border strand and that multilateral maritime cooperation would make more sense under the transnational strand.

Following the decision of the Board in Lulea (March 2005) the President sent a letter with the statement to the prime ministers of 10 Baltic Sea countries (draft attached). In Lulea the Board members were obliged to make sure that the proper attention will be given to the letter in their countries.

The Board members informed they contacted respective PM's cabinets and ministries and urged them to take up this issue during negotiations on new cohesion policy 2007-2013.

Mr Maciej Lisicki added that during the April session of the Committee of the Regions he spoke with the Commissioner on Regional Policy Ms Danuta Huebner about the 150 km limit for maritime border. Mr Lisicki informed the Board that Ms Huebner supported UBC statement and promised to take up this issue in the European Commission.

The Board concluded that the lobbying on this issue must be continued, although it seems that the EC intends to introduce mentioned above threshold. See also point 7 of the minutes which refers to the transnational cooperation strand.

#### **6. Letter from the President on UBC further development – follow-up.**

The President reminded that at the last Executive Board meeting in Lulea, the Board authorised him to create a working group on UBC future development. The President appointed a WG consisting of: Mikko Lohikoski (Turku, chair), Lillian Westerberg (Stockholm), Ingemann Olsen (Kolding), Ina Sidlauskiene (Klaipeda), Pawel Zaboklicki (UBC SG). Mikko Lohikoski presented the results of the work of the working group and its recommendations.

The WG concluded that at the General Conference it is important to make the participants more active. Workshops can stimulate the discussion and active participation. As the GCs are biannual, Mr Lohikoski suggested that UBC could arrange the thematic conferences in the years where there is no GC, if there is such interest among the cities.

During the Executive Board meetings the host city could arrange a mini-seminar on the issues being of particular interest for the host city.

The work of Presidium should be more systemised, so far the Presidium meets irregularly.

The working practices of the Commissions should be developed. For example the Com. on Urban Planning has developed a good working model where the commission members do

practical work for the seminar host city. This model could be introduced in other Commissions. The present system of the Commissions should be evaluated and restructuring might be done if necessary.

The Commissions should submit their work plans to the Executive Board for review before the UBC financial contributions are paid. This also ensures that the Commissions work in the same direction as the overall UBC policy.

The WG suggests that UBC should appoint one of the senior UBC officials as the policy officer. The person should be monitoring the European policies important for the UBC and should work under President in close cooperation with the secretariat.

UBC should implement the cooperation agreement with Eurocities. Further, we should define our role vis-a-vis Baltic Metropolises and other regional structures in our region and in Europe.

UBC might work out a system for exchange of civil servants, their regular professional meetings etc and link it to the work of the Commissions. UBC could develop some special forums or initiatives, where local politicians from different cities are meeting and exchange experiences.

It is important to ensure a more effective presence in Brussels utilising the existing representations of UBC cities there. Mrs Lillian Westerberg proposed that Stockholm Office in Brussels could officially represent UBC in Brussels if delegated. Mrs Westerberg made a presentation on potential actions to be performed by the UBC representation in Brussels. The presentation is attached to the minutes.

Information from the working group was followed by the discussion.

President Andersen summarised that we have two strands – one is the line towards Brussels and our face to the other world and the other one is to keep the organisation tightly together. We could say – an inside work and outside work. Mr Andersen concluded that inside work is very much being considered in the WG work. The President expressed opinion that we should maybe have thematic discussions at the Board meetings and we could pass the outcomes to the outside world, a sort of policy making forum.

The President appreciated an offer from Stockholm to arrange the UBC representation in Brussels. He said that UBC lobbying can be much stronger if we have appointed representation in Brussels.

Mr Maciej Lisicki expressed his comments to Mr Lohikoski's statement. He expressed an opinion that it's very difficult to organise the annual mayors meetings, because all our mayors and civil servants have hands full of work, and to add some new extra meeting is always a problem, as there is so many regular conferences in the BSR that it is impossible to find enough time for everything.

Mr Lisicki proposed to organise thematic meetings on certain topics once a year or maybe even more frequently if necessary. He said for instance it may be very useful and interesting for many cities to organise topic meeting on crisis situations. For example last year there was a big ammunition explosion in Kolding. It would be very profitable to come to Kolding for a symposium about critical situation in the centre of the city in connection with the explosion. In Gdansk there was an enormous flood with victims - we could discuss also this case - how the

city managed to solve this problem and what went wrong. The other cities could obtain precious know-how which might be useful in the future.

As regards the structure of the commissions Mr Lisicki said that the system is clear and logical but sometimes there is a lack of capable human resources in the commissions. He stressed that if the commission staff is clever then also the work is done in a good way.

Mr Bjarne Ugland, Kristiansand, said that UBC must be useful and living organisation for the member cities. As to the EU representation, he said that many cities already have EU representations in Brussels. If we also establish an own office, we have to coordinate its actions with other offices, so there will be no conflict of interests. Mr Ugland said that we should think about what are our visions for this organisation for the next 10–15 years. He proposed the new Executive Board could hold a small seminar on this issue, in connection with the Board meeting.

Vice-President Arno Poeker expressed an opinion that the Board should have more influence on the commissions work. He said the new Board should be more interested in the work of the commissions and should set priorities for the commissions. He stressed the commissions must be independent but should follow the general policy of the organisation. He reminded that UBC practical work is based on the commissions activities.

Mr Poeker also said that if UBC is to be needed in 15 years we must act more politically. He said that Stockholm EU office and other city offices in Brussels could be very helpful in this respect. He encouraged the Stockholm EU office to appoint a concrete person to be responsible for UBC matters in Brussels which would raise the UBC profile in Brussels. Such person should report regularly to the Board and should be in close contact with the UBC secretariat. Mr Poeker also supported the WG proposal to appoint one of the senior UBC officials as the UBC policy officer who should cooperate with UBC secretariat and with UBC representative in Brussels.

Mr Gunars Ansins, Liepaja, expressed an opinion that there is no much coordination between the commissions. He said that regular commissions reports to the Board seems not to be enough. He stressed that more coordination between the UBC commissions is needed. Also the commissions should be more active in UBC policy making, i.e. in the policy areas which are of interest for UBC.

President Andersen put an example of the Commission on Environment which on one hand is carrying a number of practical activities and on the other hand is also active in European policy making. Mr Andersen said that it is now the time to put up some, normal standards for Commissions to fulfil, and if they do not fulfil them than we must have the discussion if we are going to pay the commissions not fulfilling that political aim of the UBC cities.

Mikko Lohikoski stressed that if we are not able to develop the commissions we are actually not utilising the possibility which are there for outside funding. He said he is fully convinced that the Environment commission which has collected 10 million Eur, is not the only field where the money is available, there are other fields like social etc but it requires certain skills, certain capacity within the Commission to apply for this money. With the 7.500 Eur which commissions get from UBC they can not do very much, but there is a potential in the outside world, the world is richer than ever. Perhaps other commissions need some expert advice from the Urban Planning commission and Environmental commission how to apply for external funding. But before that the commissions must define their work plan, because without the proper work plan, nobody is going to give funds.

President Andersen agreed that it would be a good idea to arrange a mini workshop with EnvCom and UrbanCom to share the know-how with other commissions.

The Board thanked the working group for the work done so far and authorised the WG to continue its important tasks.

#### **7. Working meeting of Baltic Sea organisations, Malmoe, 25 May 2005.**

Mr Maciej Lisicki informed that meeting was attended by major Baltic organisations namely CPMR, BSSSC, UBC, B7, BDF. The meeting discussed issues of common interest inter alia the future EU Cohesion Policy. Mr Lisicki informed the meeting in Malmoe about the EC response to the joint statement of four Baltic organisations adding that UBC proposes to prepare a joint reaction to the EC reply. BSSSC informed that they prepared its own position on the Cohesion Policy and proposed the others to support this position.

After discussion the Board concluded that the best solution would be if one joint paper would be produced instead of two similar papers drafted separately by BSSSC and UBC. In the document it should be stressed that proposed areas for cooperation within the transnational strand have very little to do with the tasks of the local authorities. The proposed topics lie within the competence of state and regional authorities. It is necessary to complement these areas otherwise the cities will not be able to cooperate in the fields they are responsible for and interested in.

The Board authorised the Secretary General to pass this proposal to BSSSC.

#### **8. Latest conferences attended by UBC representatives.**

President Andersen informed that below UBC representatives represented UBC at the following international conferences:

- Congress of Local & Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (CLRAE) Spring Session, Strasbourg, 17-18 March 2005 (Adolfas Balutis, UBC Board Member)
- Committee of the Regions Plenary Session, 13-14 April 2005 (Per Boedker Andersen, UBC President / Maciej Lisicki, UBC Board Member)
- Baltic 21 SOG meeting, Sopot, 9-10 May 2005 (Pawel Zaboklicki, UBC Secretary General)
- Baltic NGO Forum in Gdynia, 12-13 May 2005 (Pawel Zaboklicki, UBC Secretary General)
- European Summit of Regions & Cities, Wroclaw, 19-20 May 2005 (Henning Jensen, Mayor of Naestved)
- 10th General Assembly of CPMR Baltic Sea Commission, Naantali, 27-28 May 2005 (Mikko Lohikoski, Turku, Adviser to 1st Vice-President)
- Congress of Local & Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe 12th Plenary Session, Strasbourg, 1-2 June 2005 (Innar Maesalu, UBC Board Member)
- VIII General Conference of Baltic Ports Organisation, Copenhagen, 8-9 June 2005 (Christian Ramberg, Chair of UBC Logistics Task Force)
- 13th Ministerial Session of Council of the Baltic Sea States, Szczecin, 10 June 2005 (Arno Poeker, UBC Vice-President)

Written information about mentioned above conferences is attached to the minutes. The Board took note of the information. Mr Arno Poeker added that the day before the CBSS Session he participated in the opening of Metropolis exhibition co-organised by the UBC Commission on Culture. Mr Poeker was one of the persons who officially opened the exhibition.

#### **9. Information about latest & forthcoming meetings of the Commissions & Networks.**

The Board took note of the listed below meetings of the UBC Commissions and Networks. The written information about the meetings is attached to the minutes.

- Meeting of the Board of the UBC Commission on Culture, 14-16 April, Visby
- 10th Jubilee Annual Meeting of the Commission on Sport, "Healthy Lifestyle through Sport", 14-16 April, Klaipeda
- Meeting of the UBC Commission on Urban Planning in the framework of the ABC project, 20-24 April, Gdynia
- Meeting of the UBC Commission on Business Cooperation, 15-17 May, Tallinn
- UBC Women's Network Seminar on "Women and Men sharing decision-making in Municipalities", 26 August, Narva
- Meeting of the UBC Commission on Environment, 20-22 June, Sopot
- Meeting of the UBC Commission on Tourism, 9-11 September, Jurmala
- Session of the UBC Commission on Culture, October, St. Petersburg
- Meeting of the UBC Commission on Education, 9 September, Norrtälje
- Baltic Sea Youth Conference, 13-16 October, Vilnius
- Meeting of the UBC Commission on Urban Planning in the framework of the ABC project; 6-9 October, Malmö
- Meeting of the UBC Commission on Transportation, 20-21 October, Gdynia

#### **10. Baltic Cities Bulletin on Logistic Corridors in the BSR.**

Secretary General Pawel Zaboklicki informed that an opening story to the BCB on Logistic Corridors in the BSR was written by Mr Christian Ramberg, Director of Port of Turku, chair of UBC logistics task force. Transport and logistic issues will be one of the key items of the forthcoming UBC General Conference to be held in Turku. This bulletin shows numerous projects aiming at improvement of intermodal transport network in the Baltic Sea area. The bulletin brings also information on latest UBC meetings and activities, news from the member cities and more. The bulletin was printed in 5600 copies and sent out to over 200 Baltic cities and to some 1000 European institutions.

#### **11. Any other business.**

President Andersen informed that 4 German cities asked for voting cards during the General Conference. President reminded that a year ago the Board supported this solution on the request of German cities so there is no need to raise it once again. The German cities also suggested that absent cities should be allowed to have a postal vote. The Board concluded that all member cities should take part in the General Conference which is the highest UBC authority and stressed that postal vote is not a good solution.

Mr Innar Maesalu, Voru, informed that Voru would like to host the Board meeting in summer 2006. Mr Pawel Zaboklicki informed that Gdynia would like to host the Board meeting in autumn 2006.

Mr Mikko Lohikoski informed that the EU is now drafting a policy paper on the European Maritime Policy which combines the sea transport, infrastructure, environment, tourism, fishery,



ship building etc. The EC plans to publish the Green Book on that issue in the beginning of next year. Mr Lohikoski stressed that UBC should formulate its own position concerning the European Maritime Policy as this issue is of crucial importance to all of us. He informed that the process has been initiated by the Commission President Mr Barroso and that Mr Joe Borg, Malta Fisheries Commissioner is very active in preparation of this policy so there is a very strong Mediterranean and southern accent. We must see that our Baltic interests are preserved and promoted in the new policy.

The Board agreed that UBC must follow closely the process of preparation of the European Maritime Policy. The Board authorised Mr Lohikoski and the Task Force on Logistics to draft UBC priorities concerning the maritime policy.

#### **12. Next meeting of the Executive Board.**

President Andersen informed that the next meeting of the Executive Board will be held in Turku in connection with the General Conference.

#### **13. Closing of the Meeting.**

President Per Boedker Andersen expressed his thanks to all participants for the fruitful meeting and to the City of Chojnice for its warm hospitality and closed the 43<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Executive Board of the Union of the Baltic Cities.

Mr Per Boedker Andersen  
Chairman

Mr Pawel Zaboklicki  
Secretary

Ms Sirkka Kotola  
Adjuster

Mr Edward Pietrzyk  
Adjuster