

## **MINUTES FROM THE 46<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE UBC EXECUTIVE BOARD St. Petersburg/Kronshtadt, Russia, 9-10 June 2006**

The 46<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Executive Board of the Union of the Baltic Cities was held on 9-10 June 2006 in St. Petersburg-Kronstadt, Russia, upon the invitation of Mrs Valentina Matvenko, the Governor of St. Petersburg. The Board meeting was held at Smolny in St.Petersburg. The Board has also paid a visit to the member city of Kronshtadt. During the meeting the Presidium has also participated in the live radio broadcast at radio station “Echo Moskvyy in St.Petersburg”.

### **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 St.Petersburg. Mr Sergey Markov, Deputy Chairman of the Committee for External Relations of St.Petersburg heartily welcomed all participants on behalf of Mrs Valentina Matvenko, the Governor of St. Petersburg. The Board adopted the agenda of the meeting.

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

Mr Igor Lonsky, Deputy Chairman of the Committee for External Relations of St. Petersburg and Mr Maciej Lisicki, City Councillor of Gdansk, were elected to check the minutes together with the President.

### **3. Presentation of the City of St. Petersburg.**

Mr Igor Lonsky, Deputy Chairman of the Committee for External Relations of St. Petersburg made a presentation of the City of St. Petersburg. There was also presented a film introducing the development of the city.

The City of St. Petersburg is the second largest city in Russia, with the population of 4.6 million inhabitants. It is the capital of the Leningrad region and is situated in the delta of the Neva River. St.Petersburg was founded on 27 May 1703 by the Russian emperor Peter the Great. The city is a great tourist centre, famous for its monuments and architecture. Magnificent palace and park complexes like Peterhof or Tsarskoye Selo were built close to this former Russian capital. The city has numerous cultural institutions and research / development centres. There is an extensive international cooperation with other countries and organisations including large foreign investments to the economy of St. Petersburg. Some new key investment city projects are: the Orlovsky tunnel under the Neva River, the new passengers' sea terminal, investment in the Vassiljevski Island and more.

### **4. New EU Cohesion Policy - territorial cooperation.**

Mr Pawel Zaboklicki, Secretary General, reminded that at the UBC initiative, the major Baltic Sea organisations sent to the European Commission two joint statements on the objective 3 of the new Cohesion Policy 2007-2013 – the European Territorial Cooperation. The first statement emphasized 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.

In the reply the EC was insisting on this limit, as the Baltic Sea Region is not the only region in the European Union. The Commission advised UBC to use another strand – the transnational cooperation. In April 2006 the Baltic Sea organisations signed the 2<sup>nd</sup> joint statement on new cohesion policy 3<sup>rd</sup> objective, stressing that the thematic areas proposed in the transnational cooperation strand do not correspond with the tasks of local authorities.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> joint statement was sent out to the EU institutions and to the Baltic Sea states' governments. The UBC received a reply from the EC informing that President Barroso had received the statement with interest and had taken note of its contents. The statement and the reply from the EC are attached to the minutes.

Mr Zaboklicki informed that the efforts of UBC and other organisations had already brought fruits - a cross-border cooperation program for the southern Baltic will be established.

The approach of the European Commission concerning the 150 km has not changed but the solution is Bornholm which is located less than 150 kilometres from Sweden and Poland.

Apart from Bornholm the southern regions of Sweden and northern regions of Poland will participate in the program. Lithuania has not decided yet whether it will join the program. Germany was not interested to join the program. Probably Kaliningrad region will also be eligible to participate in the program (10% of the project budget).

## **5. Swedish priorities during its forthcoming chairmanship in the Council of the Baltic Sea States.**

Mr Kent Härstedt, Swedish Prime Minister's Emissary for Baltic Sea issues, informed he had just arrived from the 6th Baltic Sea States Summit, which was held in Reykjavik, on 8 June 2006. Mr Härstedt underlined that the meeting was successful and constructive. Sweden has taken notes of the governments' points who would like to see the concrete results. Mr Härstedt stressed the Swedish government would try to be braver in taking actions. In his opinion Council of the Baltic Sea States needs a new energy. The concrete steps should be taken up.

Mr Härstedt introduced the main priorities of the Swedish CBSS Presidency July 2006 – July 2007.

On the top of the agenda there is a question of energy. Mr Härstedt stressed we all need energy solutions, modern technologies to save the energy, new renewable resources. We need internationally agreed rules, like the Kyoto framework. So there is a great need for the energy cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region. Much attention is paid to the mutual relations between Russia and EU in the energy sector. It brings great challenges.

Another priority is the environment. Mr Härstedt said the state of the Baltic Sea is worse than it had been previously expected. The environmental issues start to affect the average people living at the coast of the Baltic Sea. The situation is worrying. He stressed we must join forces to restore the Baltic ecosystem.

Civil security is also among the priorities of the Swedish Presidency. Mr Härstedt emphasized that much work had already been done; there is e.g. a good progress in combating the organised crime. Still one of the biggest problems is the trafficking of human beings. The objective of the Swedish Presidency in the area of civil security is to promote democracy, human rights, social security, stability, security and prosperity in the BSR.

Another important question is the trade and investment. The objective is to promote trade and investment in the Baltic Sea region by removing barriers and by fostering contacts between businesses in the region. Mr Härstedt said the BSR is one of the most dynamic regions in Europe and has a great potential to become in 20 years time a frontrunner in the world economy, if we join forces.

Moreover, Mr Kent Härstedt stressed there is a great need to focus more on the local and regional cooperation. He informed about the international conference “Prosperity and sustainability: local cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region”, which would be held in Visby in August 2006. Over 250 mayors and representatives of regional authorities were invited to take part in the conference. This initiative shall give a further input to the CBSS from the local and regional decision makers. Mr Härstedt underlined the good cooperation with the UBC Secretariat as regards preparations to the conference.

Mr Härstedt informed that a few month earlier he travelled around the Baltic Sea and had a number of meetings. In his opinion we are on the eve of taking a new step in the BSR cooperation. Some goals that were set up 10 years ago had already been achieved, others are taken up now. He concluded “we succeeded in many ways and failed in others, there are still many issues to deal with”.

## **6. UBC Maritime Logistics Policy Paper.**

Mr Mikko Lohikoski, Turku, reminded that the UBC Logistics Task Force was established by the Executive Board, under the chairmanship of Mr Christian Ramberg, the Director of the Port of Turku. An extensive consultation process was conducted with experts from different cities to put up the policy for UBC on maritime logistics. Not every UBC member is located at the seaside, but all cities are dependent on maritime logistics. As a result, the Maritime Logistics Policy Paper had been prepared (attached). As decided by the Board meeting in Kaunas in February 2006, the paper has gone through the consultation process with the UBC member cities. Mr Lohikoski stressed that this paper would be a very useful position paper from UBC side towards European Commission and other organisations.

Additionally, Mr Lohikoski informed that on 7 June 2006 the European Commission published the Green Paper “Towards a future Maritime Policy for the Union: A European vision for the oceans and seas”. The Green Paper was prepared by seven Commissioners from seven different areas – industry and enterprises, transport, environment, regional policy, fisheries and maritime affairs, research and energy. A major public consultation exercise had also been launched, based on the Green Paper, which will be closed at the end of June 2007. Mr Lohikoski stressed, that it would be of a great importance for UBC to formulate our own position. The city of Turku would host on 19-21 July 2006 the first consultation meeting on the EU maritime policy under the Finnish presidency. The Commissioner Joe Borg, who is chairing the group of 7 Commissioners, will take part in this meeting, and perhaps also the President of the European Commission, Mr Jose Manuel Barroso.

Mr Per Boedker Andersen stressed, that it was very important that UBC had its own policy paper on maritime logistics. He said our organisation should inform other city organisations about the policy, namely the Conference of Atlantic Arc Cities, Forum of Adriatic and Ionian Cities and Towns, the Black Sea Club.

Mr Maciej Lisicki informed that he had participated in the co-ordination meeting of the Baltic Sea organisations on the occasion of the General Assembly of CPMR Baltic Sea Commission, Karlskrona, 31 May 2006. It was agreed that major Baltic Sea organisations should prepare common statements on EU policies, starting with the Green Paper on the Maritime Policy. It would make our voice stronger towards European Commission. Additionally, Mr Lisicki raised the question how to make sure that contact persons forward the key UBC documents and policy papers to the relevant bodies and departments in each member city.

Mr Per Boedker Andersen stated that we should send the document to the other bodies like European Commission, Committee of the Regions and other organisations.

#### Decision:

The Board decided to adopt the UBC Maritime Logistics Policy Paper and commissioned the UBC Secretariat to send it out to the other European organisations and institutions. The Board authorised the Task Force to start the work on UBC contribution to the Green Paper on EU Maritime Policy on the basis of the UBC Policy on Maritime Logistics.

### **7. New UBC Commission on Energy under formation.**

Mr Pawel Zaboklicki recalled that the proposal to create the Commission on Energy was raised by the city of Oskarshamn at the UBC General Conference in Turku. During the last UBC Executive Board meeting in Kaunas, representatives of Oskarshamn presented the scope of activities for the new commission. The main objectives would be i.e. renewable energy, safety of supplies, possibilities of increasing the efficiency, exchanging best practices, knowledge, education, information.

The City of Oskarshamn prepared the progress report on latest activities (attached). After the Board meeting in Kaunas, Oskarshamn created a competence board - an expert group which will support the commission with expertise. In March 2006 Oskarshamn representatives met with the Commission on Environment in Turku, in order to learn the experiences from this active UBC Commission and to avoid duplication of work in the matters connected with energy. Oskarshamn delegates also visited the cities of Parnu and Luebeck which support the creation of the Commission on Energy. As a part of the preparation process of the creation of the new commission, an international symposium Energy Forum will be held in Oskarshamn in November 2006. All UBC member cities will be invited to the conference.

The proposed scope of activities of the new commission is to be consulted by Oskarshamn with all member cities. A website of the new Commission is already under construction and can be found at the address: [www.ubcenergy.org](http://www.ubcenergy.org). The latest issue of the Baltic Cities Bulletin was devoted to the energy matters and the city of Oskarshamn prepared the opening story. Mr Zaboklicki also added that the City of Oskarshamn would like the Commission on Energy to be established at the winter 2007 Board meeting, if the proposal is accepted by the UBC authorities.

Mr Per Boedker Andersen informed that he received the question from the City of Oskarshamn, if they could cooperate with other organisations for example with Energy Cities, in order not to double the same work done in different organisations. Mr Andersen stressed that it's very important to have our own Commission on Energy, but it was a good idea to find strong partners, because it would make our common voice louder in the European context.

## **8. Meeting of the UBC Presidium concerning UBC representation in Brussels, Kolding, 17 May 2006.**

President Per Boedker Andersen reminded that at the Executive Board meetings in Chojnice and Kaunas the Board discussed how to strengthen UBC position in Brussels in order to have a greater impact on EU decision-making processes. He stressed there is a need of coordinating our member cities' representations in Brussels which could speak on behalf of the UBC. Many UBC member cities have their representations in Brussels and we should utilise this potential.

The city of Stockholm within the Stockholm Region Office offered to function as UBC antenna in Brussels. Mr Andersen informed that on 17 May 2006 the UBC Presidium met in Kolding with the representatives of Stockholm Region Office (SRO) who maintained the proposal. Unfortunately Stockholm representatives did not manage to attend the meeting in St.Petersburg due to flight cancellation.

Mr Mikko Lohikoski stressed there was a clear need to strengthen our lobbying activity in Brussels to get the voice of Baltic cities better heard. Therefore, the offer of SRO to act as a host of UBC antenna in Brussels was very welcome. But we need to also involve other member cities which have representations in Brussels, in order to create a consultation mechanism. We need a Steering Group consisting of several cities, which would guide the work of UBC antenna at Stockholm Region Office. UBC secretariat should also be included in the Steering Group. Moreover, Mr Lohikoski informed that along with the Presidium meeting, also the working group on UBC further development met in Kolding on 16 May. Mr Lohikoski suggested discussing this issue at the next Board meeting in Gdynia.

Mr Bjarne Ugland, Kristiansand, supported the idea of creating the UBC representation office in Brussels but he stressed that we have to make sure, that this office would be representing UBC, and not only Stockholm. It must be specified how this UBC office should cooperate with other UBC member cities representations already existing in Brussels.

Mr Per Boedker Andersen informed that UBC had been offered an equipped office space at the Stockholm Region Office for 1780 EUR per month. The staff already working in SRO would additionally work for UBC. Mr Andersen underlined that we should have a detailed agreement concerning the responsibilities and activities of the UBC antenna. SRO was asked to provide a draft agreement before the Board meeting in St.Petersburg but the paper was not received by 8 June.

Mr Gunars Ansins, Liepaja, said that the period of discussions about the UBC antenna in Brussels had already been too long and we need specified information about the functions of the office. Mr Lohikoski recalled that the possible functions of the office were presented by SRO at one of the previous meetings in Chojnice; he agreed that concrete responsibilities should be listed in the agreement with SRO.

Ms Laine Janes, UBC Vice-President, stressed that there was a need of a special person at SRO working for UBC. The person should be responsible for all contacts with UBC and for the lobbying in Brussels. She informed that the City of Tallinn had also its own representation in Brussels. Also the Association of Estonian Cities decided to establish a representation office in Brussels.

Mr Pawel Zaboklicki added that UBC representation in Brussels should also constantly monitor these EU policies which have an impact on local authorities e.g. policies concerning transport,

environment, energy, social issues, regional development etc. The representation office should propose the drafts of UBC position papers concerning relevant EU policies. Mr Zaboklicki proposed that all member cities which don't have their representations in Brussels could always use UBC office space when visiting Brussels.

Ms Marie-Louise Ronnmark, UBC Vice-President, proposed that the cities, which do not have their representations in Brussels, should have a possibility to find at the UBC office the relevant documents issued by the European Commission. The UBC office should serve as kind of library for the member cities.

Mr Mikko Lohikoski suggested holding a meeting in Brussels with the UBC member cities and relevant regions' representations in Brussels to discuss how the UBC antenna should function. UBC then could divide which representations would follow a certain kind of activity. Mr Soeren Revsbaek, Naestved, suggested that we should not spread the functions in too many offices.

Ms Laine Janes agreed that the cities which had their representations in Brussels could provide their suggestions on how the UBC antenna should function.

Mr Toivo Riimaa informed that there were over 280 different representations in Brussels. In his opinion the UBC antenna should concentrate on influencing the EU policies.

Mr Per Boedker Andersen underlined that in the SRO different persons would work for UBC matters, there would not be a one person fully employed for UBC. But there is a need to have one key person to contact.

#### Decision:

The Board authorised the Presidium to make the final agreement with the Stockholm Region Office concerning the UBC antenna in Brussels.

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

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

- 63rd Plenary Session of the Committee of the Regions, Brussels, 15-16 February 2006 (Per Boedker Andersen, President of UBC)
- Meeting of the national associations of local authorities of Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 23-24 February 2006, (Mikko Lohikoski, Director, Communication and External Affairs, City of Turku)
- Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe Spring Session, Brussels, 15-17 March 2006, (Maciej Lisicki, Councillor, City of Gdansk)
- International Conference on Interregional Co-operation in the Black Sea Basin, Constant, Romania, 30 March (Pawel Zaboklicki, UBC Secretary General, Vytautas Juodagalvis, Councillor, City of Kaunas).
- 5th Forum of the World Alliance of Cities Against Poverty's (WACAP), Valencia, 29-31 March 2006 (Karin Wohlgemuth, City of Rostock).
- 64th Plenary Session of the Committee of the Regions, Brussels 26-27 April 2006 (Per Boedker Andersen, President of UBC)
- Conference Urban Futures 2.0, Stockholm, 3-4 May 2006 (Lillian Westerberg, Ass. Director, Stockholm Region Office)

- Roundtable on the role of transnational networks in the European Union, Forli, 15 May (Christopher Odmann, Councillor, City of Stockholm, Anna Dargiewicz, UBC Secretariat)
- “Baltic Sea INTERREG III B project conference - setting regions in motion”, Malmö, 16-17 May 2006 (Adolfas Antanas Balutis, Deputy Mayor of Kaunas)
- “Baltic Europe – region with the future”, Gdynia, 18 May 2006 (Anna Sosnicka, UBC Secretariat)
- Annual Meeting of Baltic Sea Forum “Pro-Baltica”, Gdansk, 19 May 2006 (Pawel Zaboklicki, UBC Secretary General)
- 13th Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe Plenary Session, Strasburg, 31 May-1 June 2006 (Bjarne Ugland, Deputy Mayor of Kristiansand)
- 11th General Assembly of CPMR Baltic Sea Commission "How to improve sustainable accessibility in the Baltic Sea Region?", Karlskrona, 1-2 June 2006 (Maciej Lisicki, Councillor, City of Gdansk)
- EC Conference: "Regions and Cities: Partners for Growth and Jobs", 1-2 June 2006, Barcelona (Soeren Revsbaek, Deputy Mayor of Naestved)
- General Assembly of the International Black Sea Club, 2-3 June 2006, Odessa (Vytautas Juodagalvis, Councillor, City of Kaunas)
- International Workshop: Adriatic and Mediterranean – boundary of Europe, Ancona, 7 June 2006 (Agnieszka Pomaska, Councillor, City of Gdansk)

The Board took note of the information. The written information is attached to the minutes.

#### **10. Information about latest meetings of the Commissions.**

Mr Pawel Zaboklicki informed about the working meetings of the Commissions which were held in the first half of 2006:

- Meeting of the UBC Commission on Education, 27 January 2006, Tallinn
- Meeting of the UBC Commission on Information Society, 30 March -1 April 2006, Tartu
- Seminar of the UBC Commission on Urban Planning, 27-29 April 2006, Riga
- Meeting of the UBC Commission on Sport, 4-6 May 2006, Gdynia
- Meeting of the UBC Commission on Environment, 4-6 May 2006, Luebeck
- Meeting of the UBC Commission on Tourism, 5 May 2006, Koszalin
- Meetings of the UBC Commission on Youth Issues, 21-22 February 2006, Kalmar, 12-13 May 2006, Tallinn
- Meeting of the UBC Commission on Business Cooperation, 15-16 June 2006, Turku

Mr Zaboklicki informed that some other Commissions would hold their annual meetings in the second half of the year. Mr Per Boedker Andersen reminded that at the next Executive Board meeting in Gdynia in October, the Commissions would present the annual activity reports, and there would be a possibility to ask questions directly to the leaders of the Commissions.

The Board took note of the meetings of the Commissions and encouraged them to participate in Gdynia meeting. The written report of the meetings of the Commissions is attached to the minutes.

#### **11. Festival of Baltic Cities in St.Petersburg.**

Mr Sergey Shub, General Director of the Theatre-Festival “Baltic House” informed that in June 2006 in St.Petersburg the 1<sup>st</sup> Festival of the Baltic Cities would take place. It could be held on a regular basis. The aims of the project are: strengthening of humanitarian ties,

development of common cultural space of the countries of the Baltic region, stimulation of integration processes at an inter-regional level, support and development of creative initiatives. The participants would be the Baltic cities which are historically developed cultural and educational centres. One day of festival will be devoted to art of each city. The festival of the Baltic cities will show achievements in various spheres of modern European culture. Each city-participant will present that area of art which is for its priority, most highly developed. The general program of Festival 2006 will include street (Alexandrovsky Park and territory of the Peter and Paul Fortress) and internal programs (theatre-festival "Baltic House" and theatre "Music Hall"). Spectators will see performances of the musical and drama collectives, entertaining folklore representations, performances of the street theatres working on an open-air, animated installations, presentations of an applied art and national creativity of cities-participants of festival, an exhibition of works of the best modern painters, graphic, theatrical and photo artists. Mr Shub added that in the future the festival could take place also in other Baltic cities.

The Board took note of the information. The written information about the festival is attached to the minutes.

## **12. Baltic Cities Bulletin *Energy in the Baltic Sea Region*.**

Secretary General Pawel Zaboklicki introduced the latest issue of the Baltic Cities Bulletin, which was devoted to the theme: Energy in the Baltic Sea Region. In the articles the cities raised the following issues: renewable energy resources, problems with supply security, environment-friendly production, how to utilise the governmental and EU regulations for the benefit of the cities and consumers etc. The opening story was written by Mr Stefan Windh, Chairman of the International Committee of Oskarshamn. City of Oskarshamn is leading the work aiming at the creation of the new UBC commission on energy.

As usual the BCB included the UBC Today section which presented the information on latest UBC meetings and activities i.e. the report from the Executive Board meeting in Kaunas. The bulletin was printed in 5500 copies and sent out to over 200 Baltic cities and to some 1000 Baltic and European institutions. The Board stressed that the Baltic Cities Bulletin is an important tool promoting UBC and should be spread to all relevant institutions and organisations.

## **13. Any other business.**

Ms Laine Janes informed that on 15 May 2006 the representatives of 16 European cities gathered in Tallinn on the invitation of the City of Tallinn to discuss the initiative to establish the title of the European Green Capital. Mentioned cities signed a joint memorandum to the European authorities with a proposal to establish such a title, which would be similar to the title of the European Capital of Culture. This prestigious nomination would recognize the activities of cities in improving their living environment as a whole. So far 39 major European cities have joined the initiative. The memorandum on the European Green Capital title is attached to the minutes. The Board decided that UBC shall support the initiative.

Ms Anu Juurma, Parnu, informed that the City of Parnu which would host the next General Conference in 2007, proposed to hold the conference on 27-30 September 2007. The Board confirmed that the General Conference should be held in autumn 2007. The Board decided to create a Task Force responsible for the preparation of the Conference programme. According to the decision of the President, the Task Force consists of: Anu Juurma - Parnu, Karin



Wohlgemuth - Rostock, Mikko Lohikoski - Turku, Jan Björinge - Umea, Pawel Zaboklicki – UBC Secretariat.

Mr Bjarne Ugland asked when the working group on UBC further development would present the written suggestions to the Board. Mr Mikko Lohikoski, chair of the WG, informed that the written suggestions would be submitted at the next Board meeting in Gdynia.

During the Board meeting in St.Petersburg participants received three attached documents: report from the meeting of five German cities held in May; a proposal of German cities to make an amendment in the UBC Statute; a proposal from Europaisches Integrationszentrum Rostock e.V. on the UBC EU-coordinators Network. Ms Karin Wohlgemuth, Rostock, informed that unfortunately it was not possible to deliver those documents to the Board before the meeting and asked the Board to treat these items at the next meeting. Ms Wohlgemuth also informed that the town of Buetzow (8 thousands inhabitants) decided to leave UBC on 1 January 2007 due to difficult budget situation in the city; letter from Buetzow is attached.

Mr Per Boedker Andersen informed that the City of Klaipeda applied for the financial support in amount of 1000 EUR for the International Sports Aerobics Competition to be held in November 2006 in Klaipeda. The Board decided to donate the International Sports Aerobics Competition in Klaipeda with 1000 EUR. For this purpose in the budget for 2006, the Board decided to move 1000 EUR from the budget reserve to the line miscellaneous.

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

President Andersen presented an invitation from the Mayor of the City of Gdynia Mr Wojciech Szczurek to hold the next Executive Board meeting in Gdynia, Poland, on 19-20 October 2006. The invitation is attached to the minutes.

#### Decision:

The Board decided to hold its 47<sup>th</sup> meeting in Gdynia on 19-20 October 2006. Part of the meeting including commissions' annual reports will be open to all member cities.

#### **15. Closing of the Meeting.**

President Per Boedker Andersen expressed his thanks to all participants for the successful meeting and to the City of St. Petersburg for its warm hospitality and closed the 46<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Executive Board of the Union of the Baltic Cities.

Mr Per Bødker Andersen  
Chairman

Mr Pawel Zaboklicki  
Secretary

Mr Igor Lonsky  
Adjuster

Mr Maciej Lisicki  
Adjuster