



**MINUTES OF THE 57TH MEETING OF THE UBC EXECUTIVE BOARD
NAESTVED, DENMARK, 17 FEBRUARY 2010**

The 57th meeting of the Executive Board of the Union of the Baltic Cities was held on 17 February 2010 in Naestved, Denmark, upon the invitation of Mr Henning Jensen, Mayor of Naestved. The list of participants is attached to the minutes.

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

The meeting was opened by Per Bødker Andersen, 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 Naestved. The meeting adopted the agenda. The agenda is attached to the minutes.

2. Welcome by the Mayor of Naestved, presentation of Naestved.

Henning Jensen, Mayor of Naestved, welcomed all participants and wished them a fruitful meeting. The mayor made a presentation introducing his city.

Naestved is one of the oldest cities in Denmark and it is currently celebrating its 875th year anniversary. The city and its surrounding area spans 683 km² which makes the municipality the largest in region Zealand. The municipality has a population of just over 80,000 inhabitants.

Naestved's largest industry is Novenco, the company manufacturing heating, ventilation and refrigeration solutions for land and marine applications. The city is the retail centre of Southern Zealand.

Naestved has the largest high school in Denmark, Næstved Gymnasium & HF. The main tourist attractions are: BonBon Land - the amusement park, Herlufsholm Boarding School, Holmegaard Glass Factory, Gavnø Castle and Kähler Ceramics.

The municipality is enhancing its international engagement via national and international networks and is participating in EU experience exchange projects with a view to improving task performance.

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

Charlotta Svanberg, Deputy Mayor of Växjö and Soeren Revsbaek, City Councillor, Naestved, were elected to check the minutes together with the President.

4. Applications for membership from Östhammar and Söderhamn, Sweden, presentation of the cities.

Margareta Widén Berggren, Deputy Mayor of Östhammar, submitted the application of Östhammar to join the Union of the Baltic Cities. The application is attached. Ms Berggren, together with Stefan Edelsvärd, International Coordinator, provided general information about Östhammar.

Municipality of Östhammar is located 120 km north of Stockholm and 70 km from Uppsala, along the coastline and is a part of the coast region Roslagen. There are 21.500 inhabitants and during the summertime the city receives many tourists from Europe. The main attraction is an archipelago consisting of more than 1.000 islands.

The city has several international contacts in 14 countries eg. city of Poti in Georgia, Polyarnye Zori in northwest Russia, Reykjavik on Iceland, Durbuy in Vallonia, Belgium.

The nuclear power plant is located in Forsmark in Östhammar municipality. Swedish Nuclear Fuel and Waste Management has announced the proposal to locate the Swedish national nuclear waste final repository to Forsmark. The company Sandvik is also located in Östhammar municipality. Sandvik is the world's leading manufacturer of cutting tools for the metalworking industry.

Marie Nordmark, Director of Söderhamn Municipality submitted an application of Söderhamn to join the UBC, the application is attached. Ms Nordmark made a presentation about the city.

Söderhamn is a coastal community in southern Hälsingland, with a population of almost 26.000. Söderhamn is an old industrial district with small and medium-sized businesses now playing an increasingly important role. Business is mainly focused on manufacturing – rifles, saw and paper mills, power systems.

There are a lot of possibilities for taking active rest around the city. The sea and the archipelago is the place for recreation, boating and fishing. The popular tourist attraction is Oskarsborg, a tower built in 1895.

Decision:

The Board decided to accept Östhammar and Söderhamn as members of the Union of the Baltic Cities and wished both cities a successful cooperation with other UBC member cities.

5. Report from the X General Conference in Kristiansand, 24-25 September 2009.

President Andersen expressed his thanks to the city of Kristiansand for hosting the X General Conference and for professional organization. He stressed that new contacts were made at the meeting for example with the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative.

The President reminded, that at the conference the UBC commissions delivered reports of activities. He expressed his concern about the commission on health and social affairs. He underlined UBC is known for being a network of well organised local authorities with a big social responsibility. The President reminded the commission is looking for the new lead city and stressed that UBC should have active commission on health and social affairs. Mr Andersen noticed that some commissions are more active and some are less. He expressed an opinion that mergers of some commissions could be considered in order to strengthen their activities.

Paweł Żaboklicki, UBC Secretary General, informed that the UBC Secretariat prepared a post-conference report, printed in 1400 copies and sent out to member cities, numerous Baltic and European institutions and also outside Europe. The report includes all keynote speeches, UBC activity report, commissions' reports, workshop summaries, resolution and other documents adopted by the General Conference. The report cost was 2735 EUR. More copies of the report can be obtained from the UBC Secretariat.

6. EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, flagship projects.

In 2009 the European Union adopted the new strategy for the Baltic Sea region. Subsequently the European Commission adopted an action plan with flagship projects in order to implement the strategy.

At the General Conference in Kristiansand it was decided that member cities and commissions should send proposals which flagship projects they would like to join. The number of proposals were sent by cities and commissions to the secretariat, the list is attached to the minutes.

The President reminded, that we had received from DG Regio a list of flagship projects with contact persons from different countries (the latest list obtained from the EC on 15 February is attached to the minutes). The President said we should be very much aware, that some of the flagship projects will be the national flagship projects, some of them regional, but very few could be local projects within the EU scheme.

As to proposals sent by cities and commissions, President said we could consider them as our own flagship projects, but not all of them fit into the scheme of EU idea of flagship projects. Therefore we should work through the flagship projects suggested to us and consider, where do they fit into the EU scheme, he said.

Paweł Żaboklicki said, that the basic management of the priority areas and flagship projects is concentrated on the governmental or regional levels. There are 15 priority areas in the Action Plan and 81 flagship projects. Only one of those 15 priority areas is designated to the region, to Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and to the Northern Dimension. The remaining fourteen are coordinated by the governments. Concerning the 81 flagship projects, the member states will be responsible for most of the projects, intergovernmental organisations like Helcom – for 11 projects, regions for 3 projects and the EC for 3 projects. Management of the flagship projects is

top down oriented structure. Most probably the cities and commissions will not be able to coordinate projects, but they can be partners.

Gunars Ansins, Deputy Mayor, Liepaja said that he tried to find information about the timetable for implementation, but he didn't succeed.

Paweł Żaboklicki said, that in the EC communication concerning the action plan there is no timetable given. The action plan says: *When the preparation of the action plan is completed, these (flagships) should have a deadline for implementation and a responsible lead partner. Some flagship projects could be launched and implemented relatively rapidly and are labelled 'fast track'.*

Some of the flagship projects have already started. Every year a reporting conference on the projects' implementation status is to be held. In 2010 the reporting conference will be held in Tallinn on 13-15 October. At this conference the project leaders (generally states) will present reports on the flagship projects progress.

President Andersen added that in Committee of the Regions there were hopes, that during the Swedish EU presidency there would be made bigger steps forward in connection with the flagship projects and their implementation, but neither the European Commission nor the states succeeded. There should be made a new time schedule, perhaps also a revision of some of the ideas implemented in the pre Swedish and during Swedish period. It's the challenge for UBC to keep focus on the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea region, he said.

Paweł Żaboklicki stressed that financing may also be a problem due to the fact, that there are no extra financial resources for the flagships. European Commission recommends to finance the flagships within the existing funding programmes, like the Interreg IVB Baltic Sea Region, Interreg IVA Central Baltic, South Baltic etc. So far the new money has not been allocated for the strategy implementation. The advantage for the flagships is that the European authorities will treat the flagship projects as a priority in the applications to the Interreg programmes.

Marie Louise Ronnmark, 1st Vice-President of UBC, Mayor of Umea, said that she agrees with the idea to go through the proposals sent by the cities and commissions and select few projects in which UBC cities and commissions could be involved. She wondered if there would be any paper from the EC for discussions, because we could present our needs and ideas if we want changes.

The Board went through the proposals sent by the cities and commissions. President expressed an opinion the Board should select not more than 4-5 flagship projects.

Paweł Żaboklicki added, that apart from 15 priority areas mentioned in the Strategy Action Plan, there are also horizontal actions. One of them "Align available funding and policies to the priorities and actions of the EU Strategy for the BSR", was raised by the city of Halmstad.

The point of Halmstad is that if Halmstad as a medium city wants to cooperate with another city e.g. from Latvia or Finland, there is no relevant funding program for this kind of cooperation. Interreg IVB Baltic Sea Region is too big for the bilateral cooperation between two medium or small size cities, and Interreg IVA programs like Central or South Baltic are only the local ones. This means that Halmstad can cooperate with Naestved within Interreg Oresund program, but can't cooperate with Liepaja, Vaasa or Kardla or other cities. There is no program which could cover such bilateral cooperation in the whole region.

Christelle Bourquin, Soderhamn, said that she supports this point of view, but the European Commission can answer, that cities can choose different sectoral programs for financing such bilateral cooperation.

President Andersen said that UBC could present the Halmstad point of view to the EC and suggest to widen the possibilities of cooperation in the next programming period 2014-2020.

Christelle Bourquin suggested that in the next programming period Interreg IV B could be split into two levels. One could be for the big projects, but there also could be a sub-program for the bilateral cooperation.

Gunars Ansins expressed an opinion it is not a good idea to try to change the rules of the Interreg IVB. In his opinion hundreds of small projects would weaken the programme and the selection process would be long and time consuming.

President Andersen pointed out an opinion from the Commission on Gender Equality which says: 'Due to the lack of gender issues, trafficking issues and enhancing the importance of gender aspects in the strategy it is difficult to take part in a flagship project at this stage. There are no projects dealing with these issues. However, the commission started discussing and planning for a Baltic flagship project concerning human trafficking for the next flagship projects.'

Vice-President Ronnmark expressed hope that gender issues will be reflected in the next round of EU flagship projects.

Markku Andersson, Mayor of Jyvaskyla, supported an idea to select and concentrate on only few flagship projects.

The Board decided to select four flagship projects and partners representing UBC as follows:

5.1 "Anticipate regional and local impacts of climate change through research" - Umea

8.1 "Promote young entrepreneurs" – Commission on Education and Paide

8.4 "Make the Baltic Sea an Eco-efficient region" – Commission on Environment

11.1 "Complete the agreed priority transport infrastructures" - Liepaja

President Andersen suggested to ask professor Esko Antola who is an expert on Baltic Sea Strategy to look through the selected proposals and recommend how UBC should submit its access to the projects. The Board accepted the suggestion. Other cities and commissions should inform the secretariat as soon as possible if they also want to joint selected above projects.

7. Financial report for 2009.

Secretary General Paweł Żaboklicki presented the UBC financial report for 2009. The report was sent out to all member cities on 4 February 2010. The report is presented in EUR and in PLN.

The income was mostly generated by the membership fees. Main expenditure are: the costs of the commissions, X General Conference in Kristiansand and the Board meetings, services/maintenance, publications, communication. The detailed information is available in the attachment.

The financial report has 5 annexes: membership fees, expenditure of UBC commissions, contributions to the secretariats, projects with external funding, member cities contributions to the UBC events.

Few cities have not yet paid the membership fee for 2009 namely: Baltijsk, Kronshtad, Lomonosov, Marijampole, Peterhof, Rezekne, Sestroretsk. The Board urged mentioned cities to pay the due fees as soon as possible.

President Andersen noticed that some commissions crossed the limit for secretariat and travels set by the Board in the budget for 2009. The limit was 3300 EUR for secretariat and travels and 6700 EUR for activities. President stressed the commissions can not interpret the budget rules in different ways.

The Board instructed the commissions to follow strictly the budget rules. In case some commissions are of the opinion that limit for secretariat and travels is too small they should contact the President. In 2010 the limit for secretariat and travel is 3500 EUR, for activities 6500 EUR.

8. UBC budget for 2010.

Secretary General Paweł Żaboklicki presented the budget for 2010. The main income will come from the membership fees and the amount transferred from 2009. Main expenditure planned in 2010: commissions activities, services/maintenance, meetings, publications, communication. The budget is attached to the minutes.

The President informed there is a budget reserve but he stressed it should be maintained in case some extra expenditure occur.

Decision:

The Board adopted the budget for 2010.

9. Proposal from Eixo Atlantico to create a Conference of European Cross-border and Interregional Cities Networks

President Andersen informed, that UBC received invitation from the organisation Eixo Atlantico (www.eixoatlantico.com) to participate in the creation of a new international network Conference of European Cross-border and Interregional Cities Networks. The proposal is attached to the minutes. Eixo Atlantico is an association of cities from Galicia (Spain) and North Portugal.

The main objective of the Conference is to establish a direct line with the European Union, which is very important especially now when the negotiations concerning the future of the regional policy and the aim of European funds after 2013 are being carried out. The promotion of space for discussion on interregional and cross-border cooperation, the role of the cross-border and peripheral organisations in the European cohesion policies, development of strategies which stimulate cross-border and interregional cooperation at the European level, are among other important aims of creating the Conference.

Other partners in the new network:

MOT - Mission Operationelle Transfrontaliere, with President Michel Delebarre, former President of the Committee of the Regions www.espaces-transfrontaliers.org

RIET – Red Iberica de Entidades Transfronterizas www.rietiberica.eu/riet

CAAC – Conference of Atlantic Arc Cities www.atlanticcities.eu

Forum of Adriatic and Ionian Cities www.faic1999.net

Medcities www.medcities.org

President Andersen said the idea to create such cooperation platform is very interesting and suggested that UBC should participate, provided that there is no membership fee.

Decision:

The Board accepted the proposal and decided to start cooperation with the Conference of European Cross-border and Interregional Cities Networks, but without financial commitments.

10. Proposal from the Commission on Business to establish/strengthen cooperation with: Union pour la Méditerranée, BaltMet, BPO, Medcities, BCCA, AER, CIPRA.

UBC has cooperation links or information exchange with the following organisations: Ars Baltica, Baltic 21, Baltic 7 Baltic Islands Network, Baltic Development Forum, Baltic Institute of Finland, Baltic Region Healthy Cities Office, Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference (BSPC), Baltic Sea Forum, Baltic Sea States Subregional Cooperation (BSSSC), Council of Baltic Sea States (CBSS), Centrum Balticum, Clean Baltic Sea, Baltic Metropolises (BaltMet), Baltic Ports Organisation (BPO), Baltic Sea Chamber of Commerce Association (BCCA), Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE), Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions of Europe (CPMR), Committee of the Regions, Helsinki Commission, Nordic Council of Ministers, Nordic Council, Social Hansa, Arco Latino, Association of Estonian Cities, Conference of

Atlantic Arc Cities, Eurocities, Forum of Adriatic and Ionian, Cities and Towns, Region Cote d'Azur, Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative, The International Network for Urban Development (INTA), Lake Victoria Region Local Authorities Cooperation.

Commission on Business Cooperation submitted a proposal (attached) to establish / strengthen cooperation with: Union pour la Méditerranée, BaltMet, BPO, Medcities, BCCA, Assembly of European Regions (AER), Commission Internationale pour la Protection des Alpes (CIPRA).

President Andersen said, that the official contacts with international organisations can be established by the UBC authorities. It's also a role of the UBC authorities to find possible ways of cooperation with those organisations.

President suggested that the commission can deepen cooperation with the Baltic organisations like Baltic Development Forum, Baltic Ports Organisation, Baltic Sea Chamber of Commerce Association etc. He also stressed that the activities of the commission should be carried out within the same rules as for other commissions. President said that the commissions are allowed to contact other organisations but may not make any financial commitments on behalf of UBC without consulting UBC authorities. The Board shared the President's point of view in question.

11. Latest conferences attended by UBC representatives.

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

- 81st Plenary session of the Committee of the Regions, Brussels, 5 October 2009, Per Boedker Andersen, President of UBC
- "Strategic Forum of Euroregions: Territorial co-operation beyond 2013" organized by the Eixo Atlântico, Brussels, 6 October 2009, Soeren Revsbaek, City of Naestved
- Open Days Seminar – "How the regions could strengthen the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, Brussels, 7 October 2009 Krista Taipale-Salminen, Turku-Southwest Finland European Office
- BDF Summit 2009, Stockholm, 5-6 October 2009, Mikko Lohikoski, City of Turku
- 17th BSSSC Annual Conference in Ringsted 13-15 October 2009, Soeren Revsbaek, City of Naestved
- 17th Plenary Session of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, 13-15 October 2009, Strasbourg, Per Boedker Andersen, Mikko Lohikoski
- 7th Conference of BSR Ministers Responsible for Spatial Planning and Development, Vilnius 16 October 2009, Ramunas Vyzintas, City of Panevezys
- Forum of Adriatic and Ionian Cities, 11th Plenary Session in Ancona, 30-31 October, Urve Tiidus, Vice-President of UBC, Kuressaare
- Committee of the Regions seminar on "Northern Dimension sub-state cooperation with a particular emphasis on the Baltic Sea Region", Helsingborg, 26 November 2009, Anders Franzen, City of Vaxjo
- B7 Annual Conference, Borgholm, 1st December 2009, Stefan Windh, Chairman of UBC Commission on Energy, Oskarshamn

- Ars Baltica conference – cultural policies for the Baltic Sea Region, Gdańsk, 26 November 2009, Paweł Żaboklicki, UBC Secretary General
- “Mobilising citizens: regions and cities working together for climate protection” – special event at the Copenhagen Climate Conference, 16 December 2009, Per Boedker Andersen, President of UBC
- 83rd Plenary session of the Committee of the Regions, Brussels, 9-11 February 2010, Per Boedker Andersen, President of UBC

The Board took note of the information. Reports from the conferences are attached to the minutes.

12. Baltic Cities Bulletin ‘Beyond the crisis – cities ideas for recovery’.

Paweł Żaboklicki informed about the latest issue of the Baltic Cities Bulletin with the main theme “Beyond the crisis – cities’ ideas for recovery”. In the articles the cities present their ways of overcoming the economic crisis e.g. by attracting new companies, creating new jobs, stimulating economy. In the bulletin there is also information about the latest UBC activities, meetings (including the X General Conference in Kristiansand) and events, as well as the news from member cities. The bulletin was published in 5.900 copies. Its cost was about 2.818 EUR. The bulletin was sent out to 270 Baltic cities and to ca. 900 Baltic and European institutions.

13. Any other business.

13.1 Local safety and public order, initiative from Gdańsk.

Secretary General Paweł Żaboklicki informed, that UBC received a proposal from the Municipal Guard of Gdańsk to start cooperation between cities in the field of public order and local safety. Gdańsk sent out a questionnaire to all member cities asking about competences of local police and municipal guard, 34 cities responded. The results of the survey showed the competences are similar: participation in crisis management (flood, tornado), traffic problems, parking places, graffiti, alcohol, pets etc. The working group on local safety and public order will have its first meeting in Gdańsk, on 25-27 March 2010.

Decision:

The Board praised the city of Gdansk for starting this important initiative and encouraged the member cities to participate in the work of new task force.

13.2 The “Sound of the Sea” festival, proposal from Słupsk.

Paweł Żaboklicki informed the City of Słupsk asked UBC to take the honorary patronage over the International Festival “The Sound of the Sea”. Application from Słupsk is attached.

The idea of the festival is to present variety of sea sounds from different seas all over the world. The jury consisting of musicians, sailors, travellers and travel agencies will choose the world’s

most beautiful sea sound 2010. The first edition of the festival was held in 2009. The jury has awarded the city of A Coruna (Spain) with the first place.

Decision:

The Board decided to give the UBC honorary patronage to the festival and encouraged UBC member cities to take part in the competition.

13.3

Anders Franzen, Vaxjo, proposed to invite 2-3 commissions to the Board meetings so they can inform the Board about their activities.

Paweł Żaboklicki reminded that at the last General Conference, the Board of Audit gave recommendation to split the commissions annual reports into 2-3 Board meetings in order to give them more time for reporting.

As only four months passed since the General Conference in Kristiansand the Board decided to invite first four commissions to the next Board meeting in June.

Anders Franzen put forward some issues related with the UBC Strategy 2010-2015 eg. political urban forum, surveys to the member cities how to develop the organisation, criteria of the evaluation of the commissions, expert exchanges in member cities, partners in the BSR, communication and marketing strategy.

The idea of the political forum came out last year from the city of Turku. As Turku was not present at the Board meeting in Naestved the Board decided to postpone discussion on that item to the next meeting.

The strategy mentions inter alia the measurement of participation of member cities in the commissions, projects and other activities in 2010. The secretariat will carry out survey on that.

President Andersen said that he mentioned earlier about the need for the discussion on the number of the commissions. If the Board decides to propose to change the structure it should be done before the next General Conference, he said.

He also said that at the Board meetings the commissions could inform the Board if they see any possibility of cooperation or merging with other commissions.

13.4 UBC Cities Events Calendar 2010.

Paweł Żaboklicki presented the second edition of the UBC Events Calendar. The first 2009 edition was well received by the member cities. The publication contains the information on business, cultural, sporting, recreational activities and exhibitions to be organized in the UBC

member cities in 2010. It was printed in 5.000 copies and the cost was 4263 EUR. The publication was sent out to 270 Baltic cities and to ca. 900 institutions and organisations.

14. Next meeting of the Executive Board.

Ulf Bingsgård, Mayor of Trelleborg, Sweden, warmly invited the Board to Trelleborg on 4-5 June 2010. The Board decided to hold the 58th meeting in Trelleborg on 4-5 June 2010.

15. Closing of the Meeting.

President Per Bødker Andersen expressed his thanks to all participants for the fruitful meeting and to the City of Naestved for its warm hospitality and closed the 57th Meeting of the Executive Board of the Union of the Baltic Cities.

Per Bødker Andersen
Chairman

Paweł Żaboklicki
Secretary

Charlotta Svanberg
Adjuster

Soeren Revsbaek
Adjuster