

MINUTES FROM THE 7th MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

OF THE UNION OF THE BALTIC CITIES

Turku, Finland, 4 September 1993

INTRODUCTION

The seventh meeting of the Executive Board of the Union of the Baltic Cities was held on 4 September 1993 in Turku, Finland.

The Meeting was attended by representatives of the Baltic Cities as well as invited persons.

The meeting was opened by Mr Anders Engström, the President of the Union; the welcome addresses were given by Mr Stig Blomqvist and Mr Mikko Jokinen, representatives of Turku authorities.

Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda.

The Meeting adopted the agenda.

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

Mrs Nijole Pozarskiene from Klaipėda and Mr Andris Teikmanis from Riga were elected to check the minutes.

Work of the Commissions.

Mr Carl Nielsen, representative of the Commission on Environment lead city Aarhus submitted the report from latest meeting of the Commission working group, Aarhus, 29 June 1993. The meeting was attended by Secretary Piotr Krzyżanowski, Mikko Jokinen from Turku, Carl Nielsen and Jorgen Ringgaard from Aarhus. Cooperation with HELCOM was the main issue discussed at the meeting. Mr Nielsen reminded that during Helcom PITF meeting in Hamburg, 26 May 1993, Mr Ringgaard submitted UBC offer to PITF, to take leading role in one of Baltic Programme elements: Institutional Strengthening and Human Resources Development. PITF welcome the Union's offer and invited UBC to submit more detailed work plan and budget estimate for planned activities at the next Helcom PITF meeting. The meeting in Aarhus decided that cooperation with Helcom has to be seen as part of Commission Action Plan 1993-95 to be presented during UBC General Conference in Kaliningrad. The Baltic Sustainable Cities Programme will be the overall headline for this Action Plan.

Mr Paweł Żaboklicki, Secretariat of the Union, on behalf of the Secretary, informed about meeting of UBC Commission on Transportation held in Gdańsk, 30 August 1993. The Meeting was attended by representatives of the lead cities Gdańsk and Kaliningrad and concerned elaboration of report on Commission activities during last two years as well as Action Plan for the future to be submitted during General Conference.

Report from the Commissions, projects related to the work of the Commissions:

"Fax and Memosystem" Project.

What is concerning the present situation of "Fax and Memosystem" Project it has been underlined that positive reaction from the governments of western countries on request regarding financing of Union's projects will speed up its implementation.

"Baltic Sustainable Cities Programme".

Mr Carl Nielsen informed that working group of Commission on Environment considers Baltic Sustainable Cities Programme as a framework of Commission's Action Plan for the years 1994-96 as well as background for cooperation with HELCOM regarding implementation of Baltic Programme component - Institutional Strengthening and Human Resources Development.

"Steps and Aims" Project.

Because of lack of necessary financial resources project realization has been postponed.

Concrete proposals from the Commissions.

Decision:

Participants agreed that some of the Working Commissions should intensify they work and meet more frequently. It was also underlined that commission lead cities should inform about their assembles in advance and invite all interested UBC members to participate in such meetings.

Information by the Secretary.

Union's Bulletin, next issue of the Newsletter.

Mr Paweł Żaboklicki, on behalf of the Secretary of the Union, presented preliminary version of the bulletin and informed the meeting that final issue will be printed before the Union General Conference in Kaliningrad. What is concerning the next issue of the Union Newsletter Mr Żaboklicki informed that it will be published apparently in November 1993 and will include information on Union activities in 1993 f.e. reports from General Conference, Art Festival in Kaliningrad, Women's Conference, Environmental Summercamp for Youth as well as information on initiatives carried out or planned by member cities.

Financial report.

Detailed report on Union spendings and financial situation was presented by Secretary during 5th Executive Board Meeting, earlier this year. Mr Żaboklicki informed that Secretariat received a document from Swedish accounting office KOMREV that reviewed UBC revenues and costs for financial year 1993 and recommended that financial position of 1992-12-31 is to be adopted. KOMREV suggested the following recommendations to improve the internal control:

- the Executive Board should assign someone to authorize all invoices and vouchers
- all invoices should be written in the Union official language - English

Decision:

The Board assigned the Secretary to authorize Union's invoices and vouchers and obliged all member cities to write all invoices in English, Union's official language.

Next Meeting of the Executive Board.

Decision:

According to the invitation of Ms Kersti Kont acting on behalf of Mr Jaak Tamm, Mayor of the City of Tallinn, the next Meeting of the Executive Board was preliminarily scheduled on November 1993 or beginning of 1994 and will be held in the city of Tallinn, Estonia.

Second General Conference, Kaliningrad 24-25 September 1993.

Preparation status to the Conference.

Mr Vitaly Shipov, Mayor of the City of Kaliningrad confirmed that II General Conference of the Union will be held in the town of Svetlogorsk, located at the sea-coast 50 km north of Kaliningrad. Preliminary reservations for all participants have been made in the hotel "Yantarni Bereg". Mr Shipov informed that all preparations are proceeding in accordance with scheduled scheme and Kaliningrad will be fully prepared to carry out the meeting.

Other issues related to the Conference.

Mr Shipov answered individual questions regarding technical and organizational arrangements for example affirmed that organizers will provide necessary transport means from and to the airport etc.

Other matters.

Report on Baltic Sea Conference.

Mr Mikko Jokinen reported that Local Authorities Baltic Sea Conference was held in Helsinki on 1-3 September 1993. The conference was organized by the Association of Finnish Local Authorities. Approximately 300 representatives of 16 Baltic and other European countries attended the conference, f.e. mayors of the cities, experts, scientists, representatives of local and regional authorities, national and international organizations etc. The main themes of the conference were:

- * the principles of local self-government and its significance as a basis for economy and the well-being of citizens;
- * the responsibility of local government in achieving the objectives of ecologically sustainable development;
- * the management of municipalities and the financing of environmental protection and infrastructure;
- * local government collaboration and its promotion in the Baltic region.

Union was represented at the Conference by the President Mr Anders Engström. In his address, entitled "City Level Cooperation and Sustainable Development" Mr Engström presented Union's initiatives in this field.

Report on 1st International Art Festival of the UBC

Mr Vitaly Shipov Mayor of Kaliningrad presented a report from I International Art Festival of the Union held in Kaliningrad, 5-8 June 1993. Individuals as well as professional and amateur groups not only from 23 Baltic Cities, but also from Moscow, Paris, Kiev, Baku, Minsk took part in the Festival programme. Approximately two thousand guests came. The city hosted music events and meetings throughout the 4 days. The artistic programme was divided into following themes: The Holiday of Ecology, The Folk-Lore Holiday, The Children Holiday and The Sea Holiday. Mr Shipov expressed his thanks to all cities for active participation and warmly invited all members to take part in next year festival to be held also in Kaliningrad 10-12 June 1993.

Project of UBC International Art Festival Lottery.

Mr Shipov presented a proposal from Kaliningrad of organizing the UBC International Art Festival Lottery. The aim of the project is to advertise the II International Art Festival of the Union, attract attention of foreign enterprises to sponsor the festival, collect the money for festival organization.

Decision:

The Board found this initiatives as very interesting for the future. At present possibility organization of International Lottery is very restricted due to national law regulations. Having in mind above, the Board supported organization of the lottery in the country hosting the festival, f.e. during forthcoming General Conference of the Union.

Women of the Baltic Sea Region - next steps.

Ms Hjördis Höglund reminded that 13-15 May in Kaliningrad, under auspices of the cities of Sundsvall and Kaliningrad, the Conference titled "The Women and Work" took place. Thirty-five women from fourteen Cities of seven UBC countries and two participants from the United Kingdom took part in the Conference. Delegates exchanged opinions and experiences on the most urgent problems existing in all UBC countries i.e. situation on the labour market, growing unemployment, wage discrimination etc.

The conference resolution reads as follows: "The Conference promotes the work of the UBC and testifies to equal participation of women together with men in future co-operation between our Cities". In order to increase women's influence within UBC projects, a proposal of creation a Women's Committee of the Union was put forward. Ms Höglund submitted above proposal to the Executive Board.

Resolution:

After the discussion the Board decided to support the creation of women's working group within the UBC, in general aimed at improving the work of the Union.

Project from Kalmar concerning transfer of knowledge of Swedish social insurance system.

Referring the background of project Mr Sture Nachtweij indicated that process of economical transition in former centrally planned economies: Russia, the three Baltic Republics - Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and in Poland inflicts different strains on the societies of these countries. A new "safety net" for individuals created with the consent of the new economic system should be formulated in these countries and be made available for everyone. In order to implement the new mechanism of social insurance system in above countries, the public insurance agency in Kalmar addresses its proposal. They would like to invite two (2) persons from each country (UBC's member cities) to make study visits during the course of a week's stay to the public insurance agency and to the employment exchange office in Kalmar. The Swedish Association of Public Insurance Agencies will cover the travel expenses. The personal expenditures for living and accommodation during staying in Kalmar will be paid by the Agency from this city. Participants will be hosted by the employees of the Agency. A sound knowledge of English is required. The course will be held in English. The study visit will be arranged in spring 1994.

Decision:

The Board considered this project as very valuable and authorized two member cities: Gdańsk and Rostock to appoint contact persons from Social Departments, who will stay in touch with the city of Kalmar in question of seminar organization.

Initiatives from the city of Riga.

Mr Andris Teikmanis, Mayor of Riga informed Board members about wealthy culture life in the city of Riga. There is 55 folklore dance groups, 72 amateur choirs, 7 brass-bands, 14 folk music ensembles, 26 folk art artisan's groups representing different genres of folk art. There are regularly festivals of the folk art in Riga. Every three years the Baltic States Folk-lore Festival "BALTIKA" takes place; every five years- Universal Latvian Song and Dance Festival, Folk-lore Dance Festival "SUDMALINAS", Children's Folk-lore Festival "PULKA EJMU, PULKA TEKU".

Taking into account the number of different folk art genres, obtained experience, Mr Teikmanis on behalf of the City of Riga proposed to create the Folk Art Center of the Union of the Baltic Cities in Riga, as a special place for cultural exchange and environment for ethnographical and cultural exchange of Baltic nations.

As a first step of this project Mr Teikmanis proposed to organize the Traditional Cultural week of Nordic Countries in Riga in autumn, 1994 with participation of cities of the Union of the Baltic Cities. Many creative groups which represent traditional art are invited to participate (dance, song, folk instruments, folk craft etc.). In the frame of this week the Scientific-practical conference concerning inheritance of current folk-lore will be held. Specialists and research workers of folk-lore are invited to participate.

Resolution:

Executive Board found the Riga's proposal as very interesting and decided to support this initiative. Meeting commissioned the Secretariat to inform all member cities about Riga's proposal.

Union's cooperation with other international organizations.

Visit of Mr Ferdinando Albanese from Council of Europe

Mr Żaboklicki informed the meeting participants, that on 24-26 June 1993, the Council of Europe Seminar on Environmental Law: East and West was held in the Secretariat premises. The meeting was attended by experts from several European countries. The Secretary of the Union Mr Krzyżanowski discussed possibilities of future cooperation between the Union and Council of Europe with Mr Ferdinando Albanese, Director of Environmental and Local Authorities, Council of Europe, Secretariat General.

Visit of Mrs Hiroko Yamane from European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

On 24 August 1993 Union Secretary Mr Piotr Krzyżanowski met Ms Hiroko Yamane, Political Counsellor of European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Possibilities of trainings on public utilities reform for local government administration, to be organized jointly by Union and EBRD have been discussed.

Administration money contribution for the Union - present status.

President of the Union Mr Engström reminded that Swedish state offered to support Union's budget if other Scandinavian countries proceed in analogical way. Applications concerning above have been sent to the Foreign Affairs of mentioned countries. So far Danish Ministry responded to the application and offered to support with money specific projects of the Union.

Decision:

The Board authorized President of the Union to continue the efforts concerning this issue.

New UBC Member Cities.

Mr Żaboklicki informed the Executive Board about new applications for Union Membership as follows:

- Łeba (Poland)
- Västerås (Sweden)

Decision:

The Board decided to accept mentioned above cities as a Members of the Union of the Baltic Cities.

Tourism Education Projects from Kalmar.

Mr Sture Nachtweij submitted two proposals from the city of Kalmar concerning education in tourism.

Course on Travel and Tourism Management.

Mr Nachtweij informed that Kalmar University College in cooperation with the Nordic Council of Ministers offers three correspondence courses in a distance learning programme.

The following courses are available in Spring 1994.

- Business Development
- Financial Control
- Hospitality Marketing

The cost for each course is estimated on approx. 500 USD. Some scholarships will be available for students from the Baltic States.

Educational Course in Tourism

The course will be organized by Högalids People's University from Kalmar. Duration of course will be 100 lessons regarding the following subjects: tourism, service, economy, marketing, information, knowledge in making pamphlets, tour planning, tourists requirements and demands.

Preliminary time of holding the course is scheduled on Spring 1994.

Decision:

The Board authorized the President and the Secretary to apply to BITS for necessary subsidies to carry out the course.

Environmental Fair 1994 in Sundsvall.

Ms Hjördis Höglund on behalf of the city of Sundsvall invited all Member Cities to take part in the Environment Fair to be held in Sundsvall 19-22 May 1994. In combination with seminars, an eco-clothes fashion show and environmentally engaged top class entertainers, the organizers want to present the work of environment organizations, environment technology and environment products, the way to the sustainable society. The Environment Fair begins on Thursday 19th of May with two days exclusively for trade visitors, and on Saturday 21st and Sunday 22nd the fair is open to the general public.

Decision:

The Board decided to distribute information about the Fair among the member cities and encourage them to take part in the event.

Nordic Forum 1994.

Representative of the City of Turku informed the Board Meeting about organization of the Nordic Forum 1994 "Women's Life and Work - Joy and Freedom", Turku, 1-6 August 1994 - the largest project ever organized by the Nordic Council of Ministers. The series of events to be held in Turku, are expected to attract more than 10 000 participants. The organizers hope that the Forum will give a boost of inspiration to the people involved in men and women equality.

matters. The Council also wishes to encourage future-oriented activities and the introduction of new, fresh viewpoints. One of the key objectives is to get new groups involved. The Forum 1994 will constitute a preparatory phase for the UN Women's Conference to be held in Beijing 1995. Two Conferences will be held during the Forum:

- 2-3 August, Nordic Conference on the Status of Women

- 4-5 August, Nordic Conference on Equality

The Forum will also consist of many cultural events, exhibitions, events for the whole family, sports and outdoor activities, seminars, workshops etc. The organizers intend to invite approx. 100 persons from each Baltic country.

Resolution:

The Board decided to propagate the information about Forum among member cities and wished good luck to Forum organizers.

Study Circles Project, present status.

Mr Anders Engström informed the participants about present status of preparatory work concerning the training for the leaders of study circles that is to be organized in the city of Kalmar. Mr Engström underlined that Swedish Ministry of Planning considers to support Union initiatives through combining these courses with the project Baltic Vision and Strategies 2010. It would be treated as Swedish state input to the resolution called Agenda 21 adopted during high level conference in Rio de Janeiro.

Union's souvenirs.

President of the Union proposed the idea that Union should purchase some small standard souvenirs like f.e.: badges, pennons, ashtrays etc. Such gifts could be handed over to Union's significant guests on the occasion of conferences, meeting etc.

Decision:

Executive Board accepted in general the President's proposal. Concrete decisions in this question will depend on Union financial situation at the end of the year.

The Chairman of the Meeting, Mr Anders Engström, expressed his thanks to the City of turku for the hosting of the delegation and closed the seventh Meeting of Executive Board of the Union of the Baltic Cities.

Mr Anders Engström
Chairman

Ms Nijole Pozarskiene
Adjuster

Mr Piotr Krzyżanowski
Secretary

Mr Andris Teikmanis
Adjuster