



## **Minutes of the 59<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the UBC Executive Board**

**Tallinn, Estonia, 13-14 October 2010**

The 59<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Executive Board of the Union of the Baltic Cities was held on 13-14 October 2010 in Tallinn, Estonia, upon the invitation of Mr Edgar Savisaar, Mayor of Tallinn. The meeting was attended by the members of Executive Board, Board of Audit, representatives of the commissions, invited guests. The list of participants is attached to the minutes.

The meeting was held in connection with the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Forum on the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea region, Tallinn, 14-15 October 2010. The Board members participated also in the EU Forum.

### **Wednesday 13 October 2010**

#### **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 Tallinn. The meeting adopted the agenda, attached to the minutes.

#### **2. Welcome by the Chairman of Tallinn City Council, presentation of Tallinn.**

Toomas Vitsut, Chairman of the City Council of Tallinn, welcomed the participants. He reminded the City of Tallinn joined UBC in 1992. He said the cooperation was beneficial, as the city participated in activities of many commissions. Currently Tallinn is chairing the UBC Commission on Youth Issues. Knowing that the opinion of the youth is very important for UBC, Mr Vitsut guaranteed to do his best so the voice of the young people would be heard. Chairman of Tallinn City Council also reminded, that in 2006 the City of Tallinn initiated the European Green Capital campaign. UBC was among the first to support this initiative and promote the process. Mr Vitsut underlined the UBC member cities Tallinn and Turku would be the European Capitals of Culture in 2011, and two other members Umea and Riga would have this title in 2014. Mr Vitsut wished participants a fruitful meeting and expressed hope that together we can make the Baltic Sea region the smartest in Europe. Subsequently a film about the city of Tallinn was presented to the participants.

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

Jarkko Virtanen, UBC Vice-President, Deputy Mayor of Turku and Tonu Karu, Representative of Tallinn at the European Union, were elected to check the minutes together with the President.



#### **4. UBC Commissions' action plans and budgets for 2011.**

The following commissions provided action plans and budgets for 2011: Business Cooperation, Culture, Education, Energy, Environment, Gender Equality, Health and Social Affairs, Sport, Tourism, Transportation, Urban Planning, Youth Issues, Local Safety & Public Order WG. The action plans and budgets are attached to the minutes.

President Andersen concluded that the commissions applied in total for 144.000 EUR. He stressed that this money comes from membership fees and should be given for the work being done in the commissions. He said the commissions should be more concrete for what they use the money.

President suggested, that the Commission on Business Cooperation could receive 12.000 EUR, because this is a prioritised target for UBC in the future. First the commission should send more detailed action plan for 2011.

The President said the Commission on Information Society did not apply for any money, as it would be probably combined with the Commission on Business Cooperation, and that is also why the BizCom could receive extra 2.000 EUR.

Mr Andersen proposed to accept the application of the Commission on Energy.

The President suggested the Commissions on Culture, Education, Sport and Tourism should receive 10.000 instead of 12.000 because, in his opinion, there is no difference between their previous and new action plans, no new ideas requiring more money. Not giving the extra money could challenge those commissions for creating new ideas.

President supported the application of the Commissions on Environment and Gender Equality for 12.000 EUR. He stressed, that the Commission on Environment makes a good job, meaning that UBC has a clear voice in the European Community. Mr Andersen said that gender equality is of priority to UBC, so the commission should carry out its work and make further efforts.

The reactivated Commission on Health and Social Affairs applied for 10.000 EUR. President stressed that UBC wouldn't be a good organisation without the commission dealing with social issues. The City of Elbląg, leading now the commission, should get a chance to carry out the proposed action plan for 2011. Mr Andersen said that one city to lead this commission is not enough, a partner city is needed. He asked the cities to join forces. He expressed an opinion a Swedish city would be a good partner for the city of Elbląg. President said, that the Commission on Health and Social Affairs could establish a link to the Baltic office of WHO (WHO Collaborating Centre for Healthy Cities and Urban Health in the Baltic Region) which is situated in Turku.



Mr Andersen proposed to accept the application of the Commission on Urban Planning for 12.000 EUR, he appreciated the commission's efficient work.

The President proposed the Commission on Youth Issues could receive 12.000 EUR, as the youth issues are very important for UBC as well as for other organisations like Baltic Sea States Subregional Cooperation, Council of the Baltic Sea States, Committee of the Regions.

Commission on Transportation and Local Safety & Public Order Working Group applied for 10.000 and President Andersen suggested the Board to accept those applications.

President Andersen said the Executive Board would be able to assign more resources to the commissions, provided they propose good projects.

President reminded the discussion at the previous Executive Board meeting in Trelleborg, concerning the future structure of the commissions. He said that it could be dangerous to change the structure now, without careful consideration, because a lot of good work is being done in the commissions. The Executive Board could ask the commissions to look around what other commissions they could cooperate with, and where they could get more value for the same money.

Mr Andersen said that the commissions could deliver their ideas before the end of the year. The Board might get different suggestions to analyse. For the time being UBC would keep the same number of the UBC commissions.

Marie-Louise Rönmark, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President of UBC, Mayor of Umeå, said that a lot of things are happening now concerning environment, infrastructure, urban planning, climate issues. We shouldn't have only a short-term vision in UBC, we need also a long term vision, she said. When EU is talking about the future of the Baltic Sea region, we should wonder, how to promote all those questions. Mrs Ronnmark suggested to put them on the agenda for long term vision, not only 2015, but even 2050. That would make UBC a bigger player, even on European level.

Bjorn Grönholm, Head of Commission on Environment Secretariat, Turku, said that during the 19 years of UBC existence, the system of commissions was successful. However, the new alternatives of work should be found out, perhaps we should not be so strict to the commissions. The Commission on Environment worked very closely with the Commission on Energy and had a good cooperation with Commissions on Transportation and Urban Planning. The first three commissions had a joint meeting in 2010 instead of having three separate meetings. It saved time and money. Such joint meetings are also planned in the future. The Environmental Bulletin is shared with the Commission on Energy. Mr Grönholm added, that looking at the problems like the climate change, there should be found ways of building clusters and we should sell the knowledge that we have not only in Baltic Sea region, but also Europe, Asia etc.



Charlotta Svanberg, Deputy Mayor of Växjö, asked if all UBC commissions were created at the beginning of UBC. President Andersen responded, that only some of them and the rest was created later, like the Commissions on Gender Equality or Youth Issues, which were previously networks.

Ms Svanberg said, that perhaps there is a need to create a new commission, to work with new subjects. That could be included to discussion about the future of the commissions.

Per Bødker Andersen said that the General Conference is the body which approves new commissions. He said that perhaps the Local Safety and Public Order working group has a chance to become a commission. It's also possible to create the new ones. Mr Andersen said, that for example all cities struggle with finances and there is no administrative commission in UBC. In such commission civil servants could share experiences, how to fix some matters easier or cheaper.

#### Decision:

The Board approved funding for the commissions in 2011 as proposed by the President.

### **5. XI General Conference in Liepāja 2011 – discussion on the theme. Re-activation of the GC task force.**

President Andersen proposed to re-activate the task force responsible for the preparation of the next General Conference to be held in Liepāja in 2011.

Concerning the theme of the General Conference the President suggested the Executive Board could ask the commissions for proposals. The commissions could send their ideas by 1 December. Then, at the next meeting in winter, the Board would decide topics to be discussed at the General Conference.

Mr Andersen also said, that at the Committee of Regions Open Days in Brussels he met a person from the Baltic Sea - Asia Agenda for Regions in a Globalising World project. That brought an idea to invite Chinese representatives to the General Conference and have discussion on what they expect from us, and what we need from them. With such program we could get more international interest to the General Conference and get new connections for the future cooperation.

Marie-Louise Rönmark supported that idea. She added that in Sweden they have made several agreements with Chinese, concerning e.g waste and water treatment.

Mikko Lohikoski, Director of International Affairs, city of Turku, said that asking the commissions for proposals of conference theme is a good idea as it may bring topics interesting for many cities. He also stressed that many UBC cities have close connections with China.



Mr Lohikoski also suggested the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea region as one of conference topics. He said in a year we would have more experiences in Strategy implementation. He said that we can use the General Conference as a framework to show the European Commission how much work is done in the UBC.

Jørgen Christiansen, Councillor of the city of Kristiansand said, that Business cooperation could be one of the topics of the General Conference as it is of a great importance. He suggested inviting Chambers of commerce from the Baltic Sea countries.

President Andersen said that cities are competing against each other because they want to attract good companies. Important thing is to remember, that we have to take care of the development of the whole region. It's the question of having the region interesting enough to attract people from outside. The southern part of Europe discussed that and they are trying to join forces around the Mediterranean.

Tonu Karu suggested to have the common Baltic identity as one of the topics. There have been a lot of discussions concerning joint media and information space. UBC has been doing a lot in this question via the Baltic Cities Bulletin. At the General Conference there could be a special workshop on Baltic common information space supported by joint media activities, to share experiences. If we play alone it doesn't create strength, voice and synergy, he said.

#### Decision:

The Board decided to re-activate the task force responsible for preparations to the General Conference. The Board asked the commissions to send their proposals on the theme of the General Conference by 1 December 2010. The Board will also work on the idea of inviting representatives of Asia to the General Conference.

#### **6. UBC Strategy 2010-2015 – information from the co-ordinator.**

The UBC Strategy 2010-2015 was adopted at the X UBC General Conference in Kristiansand. Mr Mikko Lohikoski, who was nominated a coordinator of the UBC Strategy at the previous Board meeting in Trelleborg, presented the proposals on Strategy implementation.

Mr Lohikoski reminded the topic of the Strategy: Cities for a Sustainable and Prosperous Baltic Sea Region. He stressed that this is the essence, two key directions of the UBC work. Prosperous means economic and business dimension, and sustainable means, that our work should be done in a human, environmentally sustainable way.

Mr Lohikoski stressed UBC must continue to be a platform and meeting place for exchange of ideas, contacts and experiences between the member cities and other partners. There are over 100 cities to exchange experiences, it means experts in different fields. We have to intensify our efforts to make more systematic exchange of ideas.



Mr Lohikoski reminded main aims of the UBC Strategy. UBC should be a source of inspiration, increased dialogue, networking and benchmarking. Not only internally, but also to the outside world, the European Union, Asia, other networks and organisations. UBC should be a framework for members to formulate joint positions on key issues.

The Union should facilitate, carry out and disseminate cooperation projects and other activities interesting for members. The key criteria for UBC is that activities must be of interest of the member cities, they must serve them.

It's also important to have a strong voice on regional and European affairs affecting our members, promoting them in policy making and implementation. Our organisation should remain a respected and recognised partner in the BSR cooperation, promoting the interests of the cities and our region as a whole together with other organisations and authorities.

Mr Lohikoski added, that UBC had much to learn from others, but also a lot to present to others, like the formula of regional cooperation between the cities. He said that two years earlier he talked to Chinese city representatives, who were very curious to know, how cities can cooperate on voluntary basis. We have to see the value of our work.

Mikko Lohikoski reminded key tasks for UBC development 2010 – 2015.

UBC shall be a key partner in promoting the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. UBC fulfils this task by organising this Executive Board meeting in connection with the First Annual Forum on the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region taking place in Tallinn at the same time. This way we ensured strong participation of local authorities in the discussion on the Baltic Sea Region Strategy. The UBC President Per Bødker Andersen would speak at the Plenary Session of the Forum, which means that UBC is recognised as an important partner by DG Regio and authorities in Brussels. Our voice is heard. It is an opportunity for us to influence things in the new governance.

UBC shall serve the interests of the member cities. One of the UBC tasks was to activate the policy makers level in the Baltic Sea region cooperation. Mr Lohikoski said that at the meeting of the Baltic Sea States Subregional Cooperation Annual Conference, which was held at the same time in Tallinn, there were mostly civil servants, and not so many political decision makers. UBC could create political / urban forum for the cities political decision makers. He expressed hope there would be cities interested to host such forum in 2011.

Mr Lohikoski said there was a need to have a communication and marketing strategy. There is the UBC bulletin, the website and more could be done. UBC could collect more systematically the benefits achieved to sell them to the outside world. UBC could be prominently placed on websites of the member cities. There are lot of possibilities of promotion. Mr Lohikoski proposed to set a working group consisting of marketing professionals from member cities to work with this issue.



The question of sponsorship should be further developed. The companies are important factor in development. We should establish rules, on what conditions UBC can accept sponsors' money or participation of companies in UBC.

UBC has limited resources. We should use them in the most effective way to achieve goals. The question is how to encourage people to work together more effectively, e.g in UBC commissions. The principle adopted in Kristiansand is very important. In order to energize the commissions' work and to optimise the use of resources, the Executive Board should formulate common criteria for evaluation of commissions' work. It will help to check, which commissions are more, and which ones are less effective. The amount of financial support should be based on this evaluation. The effective work should be supported. Issues which are important in this subject: number of cities participating in the work of commissions, amount of annual contribution from member cities (as it is a sign of their commitment), also amount of outside project funding (symbol of trust by the others).

One of UBC's assets is having huge reservoir of knowledge and expertise in member cities. UBC should support systematic way of exchange between our cities, a kind of exchange system. City of Jyväskylä informed that they had a small scale system functioning. They have e.g. funds in their budget for exchange of civil servants between the twin cities. Mr Lohikoski suggested Jyväskylä could make a proposal of recommendation to other members to use such system.

Mr Lohikoski said the work within the Executive Board and perhaps the Presidium should be developed. There should be more proposals sent to the Board before the meeting so the Board could prepare what to discuss.

Concerning lobbying capacity, many UBC cities have their representations in Brussels. Mr Lohikoski proposed to have a meeting with them, discuss how to bring UBC issues to the European Commission, and to coordinate our activities. Mr Lohikoski said in his opinion there was no need to create any new, separate bodies for UBC in Brussels. He proposed the President could convene Brussels representatives of UBC members and establish a kind of small working / steering group as has been discussed earlier.

Mikko Lohikoski reminded, that at the previous Board meeting in Trelleborg it was discussed UBC could strengthen cooperation with Baltic Metropolises Network. Mr Lohikoski informed that UBC President would meet with representatives of BaltMet on the next day. UBC could also cooperate closer with the Baltic Sea States Subregional Cooperation on implementation of the EU Strategy for BSR. Those organisations could also join forces towards Brussels. We need to identify most important partner organisations for us. Another key partner could be Baltic Development Forum in business matters. UBC could sign agreements with key partner organisations. We have to think, how to combine forces, what we can do together, and what separately. We should work in a more structured way. Basically we and the other Baltic



organisations have the same interest to develop this region and to sell it to the outside world as a prosperous, unique region.

Mr Lohikoski said UBC had great achievements but they were not widely known. UBC should be more visible. Nowadays the public profile, publicity turns a lot into money and influence. If you are visible and recognised, you can get funding, Lohikoski said.

Mr Lohikoski said it was important to review regularly, what was achieved, what is missed and how to proceed. Concerning implementation of UBC Strategy Mr Lohikoski said there was a lot to do, some things are in process. He expressed hope the Presidium would accept the outlines and further work could be carried out.

President Andersen thanked for information on the status of the work.

Marie-Louise Ronnmark stressed that UBC was networking for 19 years. This means that for one question there could be ten different answers and ways how to get through it. That's why the strategy should be a long term one. Moving on with networking through over 100 cities means, that the evaluation should be bottom up, not from the Executive Board. Some of the questions should be discussed by the Board. Concerning the Strategy, it's necessary to move on together with Brussels, eg. concerning the TEN status. Unfortunately we are not doing it yet. If the Strategy is to e.g. link together eastern, western, northern and southern countries by transport, we have to act together.

President Andersen reminded that what we are doing is not only for one or few cities, but for the whole Baltic Sea region. Sometimes member cities have conflicting interests. Some good solutions for the whole region could be not supported by smaller entities, but we have to think in the wider perspective.

President stressed that it was very important to keep UBC as a bottom-up organisation. In other organisations there are usually big secretariats with a very little involvement of the members, except for giving the money. UBC acts in a different way. We ask our members for the membership fees and for getting involved in the activities. Then the results are delivered for free to other cities or organisations, e.g. in the Baltic Cities Bulletin, through the website, etc. Mr Andersen stressed that the more a city contributes to the UBC, the more value it gets for the membership fee. Of course we could also create special task forces doing more to influence the European Union or the United Nations.

Anders Franzen, Development Manager, City of Växjö, said that we have a lot of good intentions for the UBC Strategy, but more can be done till the next General Conference. He stressed that we need to implement strategy action plan. Perhaps the commissions could deal with some issues.



President Andersen said, that UBC could have a smaller number of the commissions, but in his opinion it may cause, that smaller cities might be cut off from the work. Small cities do not have specialists in all fields. Now everyone can contribute in the commissions. If a city doesn't have specialist in the local authority, it can have an opinion of the specialist from the commissions for free. And such city can contribute to the activity in another commission. If we change the present concept of the commissions, the smaller cities may have problems to contribute to the work. It's a delicate discussion, he said.

Mikko Lohikoski said, that being effective and influential might mean losing involvement of some members, but it doesn't have to be so. We can not accept as a starting point, that they are opposite to each other. We have to be more effective but also keep the involvement. In the UBC Strategy the key criteria is how UBC can serve better the member cities. It can be done. It's similar as in case of the local authorities. There is always a danger, that when local authorities merge into bigger and more effective entities, the people in the periphery areas feel that they are losing influence. But if more effective centralisation is made, other structures and mechanisms of influence have to be created to ensure that the voice of those people is heard. It is possible to do both.

President Andersen responded that he agrees with Mr Lohikoski, at the same stressing that UBC is an organisation for everybody. We can urge the members to do their best, but if some smaller cities do not have experts on everything, they can't contribute on the same level as others. But they should not feel less worthy, because they are equal to us. There must be a room in UBC for big capitals as well as for small cities. UBC is trying to make the life good for everyone. We have a citizen, not a city, in our focus.

Anders Franzen reminded that according to the Strategy we shall make inter alia data collection, surveys, exchange program for cities, a common communication strategy, identify key partner organisations and networks etc. There are a lot of actions to be taken. He expressed concern whether we have resources to implement all these tasks.

Mikko Lohikoski called not to give up and not to find excuses. He said the Strategy implementation should be seen as a process. We should see what we can do, how to prepare for the next meeting of the Executive Board. There are still a lot of possibilities, he said.

The Board decided to take note of the discussion and to adopt the report and proposals of Mr Lohikoski on the implementation of the Strategy.

## **7. EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea region. UBC participation in the 1st Annual Forum. Actual information on flagship projects chosen by UBC.**

President Per Bødker Andersen reminded on the next day there would be held the first Annual Forum of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea region in Tallinn. Participants of the UBC Executive Board meeting took part in the Forum. President Andersen was asked to be a



speaker at the plenary discussion, and Mikko Jokinen, co-chairman of the Commission on Environment, Turku, would be a speaker in the workshop. President underlined that such invitations mean that UBC is recognised as an important and equal partner in the Baltic Sea Strategy. He said that we have great expectations towards this first Annual Forum. The other actors from the Baltic Sea region like CPMR BSC, BSSSC, BDF, B7, Euroregion Baltic etc would also take part in the forum.

Paweł Żaboklicki, UBC Secretary General, informed about the status of the EU Strategy flagship projects selected by the Executive Board at the meeting in Naestved, February 2010.

5.1 “Anticipate regional and local impacts of climate change through research”  
The flagship is coordinated by Danish Energy Agency. The Board decided that the City of Umeå would represent UBC in this project.

Within the flagship 5.1, the strategic project Baltic Sea Region Climate Change Adaptation Strategy BALTADAPT is to be carried out. The project is coordinated by the Danish Meteorological Institute. The project application was submitted under the 3rd call of the Baltic Sea Region Program; the project was granted with 2.123.820,00 EUR. The kick-off meeting is planned to be held in Copenhagen.

8.1 “Promote young entrepreneurs” is coordinated by the Danish Ministry of Education. UBC Commission on Education represents UBC in the project.

The kick-off meeting was held in Copenhagen on 20 May 2010. UBC was represented by Anneli Veevo, Head of Secretariat Commission on Education and Wolfgang Schmidt, Chairman of the Commission on Business Cooperation. Next meeting will be held in January 2011 in Copenhagen. UBC cities will be invited.

8.4 “Make the Baltic Sea an Eco-efficient region”, EcoRegion Baltic Sea

Baltic Sea Programme project EcoRegion is coordinated by the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature, Conservation and Nuclear Safety and Swedish Environmental Protection Agency. The Board asked the Commission on Environment to represent UBC in the project.

Mr Żaboklicki informed this year already two EcoRegion conferences have been held. The first one was held on 1-3 June 2010 in Naestved. UBC was represented by Soeren Revsbaek, city of Naestved. The second Eco-Region conference took place in Tallinn on 28-30 September 2010. The Commission on Environment and the City of Växjö took part in the conference on behalf of UBC.

11.1 “Complete the agreed priority transport infrastructures”, coordinated by the Lithuanian Ministry for Transport and Communications. The Executive Board appointed the city of Liepaja to represent UBC in this flagship.



Mr Zaboklicki informed the Transport Annual Progress Conference would be held on 7 December 2010 in Vilnius. UBC member cities will be invited.

Björn Grönholm reminded the Commission on Environment also takes part in the flagship 5.3 “Create a network of sustainable cities and villages”. The project is coordinated by the Ministry of Environment of Sweden. The Board decided UBC would be involved also in the flagship project 5.3.

Mr Grönholm also said two UBC commissions are interested in the priority area 1 “To reduce nutrient inputs to the sea to acceptable levels”, flagship 1.2 “Cleaner wastewater”. Commission on Environment is a lead partner in PURE project, and Commission on Energy is involved in ITEST project. EnvCom is discussing with DG Regio the flagship status for PURE project.

Mr Grönholm added that under priority area 4 “To become a model region for clean shipping” there are two projects with flagship status: INNOSHIP - where EnvCom is a partner and "Clean Baltic Sea Shipping" where EnvCom is following policy related issues. In those two projects institutions from 15 UBC cities are participating like ports, universities, etc. Mr Grönholm suggested to put those projects also on the list, even if they were not primarily decided by the Board.

President Andersen concluded that some of the other projects we did not prioritise earlier came in, and we are contributing now, so they could be mentioned as UBC contribution to the flagship projects.

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

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

- 85th Plenary Session of the Committee of the Regions, Brussels, 9-10 June 2010 (Per Bødker Andersen, President of UBC, Deputy Mayor of Kolding)
- CECICN meeting with the European Commission, DG Regional policy representatives 16. June 2010 (Krista Taipale, Turku-Southwest Finland European Office, Ola Nord, City of Malmö EU-office)
- “Greening our blue border” 2010 Annual meeting & conference of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 16-18 June 2010 (Jarkko Virtanen, Vice-President of UBC, Deputy Mayor of Turku)
- Conference of Euroregion Baltic Stakeholders, Elbląg, 17-18 June 2010 (Paweł Żaboklicki, UBC Secretary General)



- Seminar "Network of harbour cities: Sceneries, strategies and ideas for the re-planning of the Italia France Maritime Operational Programme, Florence, Italy, 22 June 2010 (Wolfgang Schmidt, Chairman Commission on Business Cooperation, Kiel)
- The 19th Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference, Mariehamn, 29-31 August 2010 (Vilnis Vitkovskis, Head of Development Department, Liepaja)
- International conference "Seaports management models in Poland and Europe", Gdańsk, 13-14 September 2010 (Paweł Żaboklicki, UBC Secretary General)
- Baltic Sea region flagship project 8.4 "Make the Baltic Sea an Eco-efficient region" Eco-Region conference, Tallinn, 28-30 September 2010 (Maria Persdotter, City of Växjö, Sakari Saarinen, Project Coordinator, Commission on Environment)
- 86th Plenary Session of the Committee of the Regions, Brussels, 4-6 October 2010 (Per Bødker Andersen, President of UBC, Deputy Mayor of Kolding)
- 18th BSSSC Annual Conference, Tallinn, 13 October 2010 (Per Bødker Andersen, President of UBC, Paweł Żaboklicki, UBC Secretary General)
- First Annual Forum on the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, Tallinn, 14-15 October 2010 (to be attended by the UBC Executive Board)

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

## **9. Any other business.**

Mikko Lohikoski informed about informal roundtable on the Baltic Sea cooperation organised by the city of Turku on 23-24 September 2010. The meeting was attended by the delegation of DG Regio led by Dirk Ahner, the Director General and the delegation of St. Petersburg city government, chamber of commerce and industry, universities, and more. DG Regio encouraged the city of Turku and the Region of Southwest Finland to use their good working relations with the City of St. Petersburg and Leningrad Region to try to involve Russian partners more deeply in the Baltic Sea Region Strategy. The Russian Federation as not a member of the European Union is not obliged to implement the EU BSR Strategy. However, most of the issues are common so cooperation with Russia is necessary. Without such cooperation the strategy goals cannot be fulfilled. The region and the city of St. Petersburg are interested to discuss the Baltic Sea issues. UBC can support and facilitate such discussions. Mr Lohikoski informed the process would be continued and city of Turku would consult UBC in this subject.

Marketta Makinen, Director of the International Relations, City of Jyväskylä, invited participants of the Board meeting and the UBC member cities to the Baltic Sea Region Programme conference "The power of the Baltic Sea macro-region" to be held in Jyväskylä



on 30 November - 1 December 2010. The conference will gather policy makers and representatives of national, regional and local authorities from all those countries bordering the Baltic Sea and beyond. More information at:

[http://eu.baltic.net/Invitation\\_to\\_programme\\_conference\\_2010.13484.html](http://eu.baltic.net/Invitation_to_programme_conference_2010.13484.html)

President Per Bødker Andersen informed that UBC received proposal of cooperation from the organisation called the European Union of Exiles and Expelled People. The aim of EUEEP is protection of rights and the protection of the interests of European refugees and expelled people, erroneous victims of nationalism and ethnic cleansing.

President Andersen noted the proposal is very general and suggested the secretariat could reply and ask for concrete proposals of cooperation. Afterwards the Board could consider the proposals. The Board agreed with the proposed procedure.

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

The Board received an invitation from Mr Jyrki Myllyvirta, Mayor of Lahti, Finland, to hold the meeting in Lahti on 11 March 2011. The Board accepted the invitation and decided to hold the 60<sup>th</sup> meeting in Lahti on 11 March 2011.

## **Thursday 14 October 2010 (Open session)**

### **1. Presentation of the City of Arendal, Norway**

Svein Tveitdal, Environmental Ambassador of the city of Arendal, made a presentation titled Towards a Climate Neutral Arendal.

The city of Arendal has 42.000 inhabitants. The city is located in the south of Norway, 65 km from Kristiansand. Since 20 years Arendal hosts the United Nations Environmental Program office. In 2007 the mayor of Arendal discussed with the special advisor of UN Secretary General the possibility of the city to become climate neutral. Subsequently the city council made a decision to join the UN Climate Neutral Network.

Mr Tveitdal explained climate neutrality according to international rules and regulations decided by the UN. The first step is to measure your carbon footprint, which should be done according the green house gas protocol. The city must come up with the plan to reduce these measures. Then the city has to buy offset for the rest which it cannot reduce, buying from the U.N. Clean Development Mechanism or EU quotas. After evaluation there is a need to repeat the process. After that the city can be called climate neutral, according to the UN regulations.

The UN has Climate Neutral Network for countries, cities, business, that are climate neutral according to UN standards. There are now almost 1.000 members in this network worldwide.



The next UN Climate Change Conference COP 16 will be held on 29 November-10 December 2010 in Cancun, Mexico.

Mr Tveitdal informed about Arendal endeavours aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions eg oil boilers, hybrid buses etc. He added the city developed the climate partner network with counties Vest-Agder, Aust-Agder, cities Kristiansand, Grimstad and 20 business companies in the region. There are totally 15.000 employees in these companies and administrations, the budget is ca. 2 billion EUR. All members work on reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Mr Tveitdal expressed hope some of the UBC member cities had similar interests.

Mr Tveitdal informed the city of Arendal had links of cooperation with the city of Växjö. A mayor and the delegation of Arendal is coming on study tour to Växjö on 1-2 November. Mr Tveitdal stressed Växjö has made profit in the investments in the environmental sector.

President Andersen said that Arendal would be very welcome in the UBC. He stressed the city had great ambitions and was dedicated to combating the climate change. President was of the opinion the structure of UBC with commissions working on special tasks would suit the city of Arendal. He invited Arendal to work in different UBC commissions. He said Arendal could also benefit from the commissions' work without any consulting fee.

Mikko Jokinen said that he was very impressed by the presentation, because Arendal was doing a great job in the Eastern Norwegian cities. He asked how relatively small city could make such good contacts with the United Nations.

Mr Tveitdal answered the reason was the UN Office which was opened in Arendal in 1989. He said there was always a good communication between the city and the UN centre. Now the city started to develop its own network eg. with UN Habitat. Mr Tveitdal concluded it would be good to share this network with other cities.

## **2. Activity report of the Commission on Sport, Gdynia**

Ms Beata Łęgowska, Chairperson of the Commission on Sport, Gdynia, introduced the commission's activity report October 2009 – September 2010 and the Action Plan for 2011.

In 2008 the UBC Commission on Sport launched the campaign entitled "Always Active" whose objective was to prevent physical mobility restrictions originating from advanced age as well as to counteract consequent social exclusion. The campaign was concluded in 2009 with the grant session "Active and Fit". On 22-24 April 2010, in cooperation with the city of Tallinn, Commission on Sport held its annual meeting 2010 with motto "Sport is cool!". The commission launched the campaign with the same name to promote sport among young people. This year the commission also made a project grant session titled "Always Active". The full reports are attached to the minutes.

Mikko Jokinen commented, that it was a crucial thing for the commission, that it had cooperation with also other organisations. One of the mentioned was WHO Collaborating



Centre for Healthy Cities and Urban Health in the Baltic Region from Turku. Mr Jokinen noticed that the goals of the commission and the Healthy Cities office are the same – sport as a way to improve the quality of living. He stressed that working together with the partners outside UBC is very important. Mikko Jokinen added it would be also good for the Commission on Sport to establish closer links with the reactivated Commission on Health and Social Affairs, because they both should tackle similar issues. He said we could achieve our results only by pulling our resources and efforts together. Mr Jokinen added there were UBC member cities which had the same goals as SportCom. The crucial question is how the commission can reach those cities.

Stefan Windh, Chairman of the UBC Commission on Energy informed, that the City Council of Oskarsham on its recent meeting decided to make an investment in the playground for elderly. In the park there is a lot of tools for making gymnastics. It looks like an outer gym. When people get older, they do sports or recreational things in a different way than young people do. Mr Windh said that he would send some pictures and sketches to the Commission on Sport, to show how the playground for senior citizens looks like.

Beata Łęgowska thanked for the proposal. She informed the commission closely cooperates with the senior active club, led by the city of Gdynia, and they need some fresh ideas.

President Andersen thanked for the work done by the commission. He noticed there were quite many member cities in Sport commission, but mostly from the East. He encouraged Western cities to be active in the commission.

### **3. Activity report of the Commission on Tourism, Koszalin**

Mr Ryszard Zdrojewski, Chairman of the Commission on Tourism (CoT), Koszalin, introduced the Activity Report October 2009 –September 2010 and the Action Plan for 2011.

The commission had its working meeting in Rakvere, on 20-23 May 2010. CoT is a partner in the Baltic Sea Programme project AGORA 2.0. The kick-off meeting of this project was held on 11-13 February 2010 in Greifswald. The partners working meetings took place in 2010 in Rostock, Koszalin and Minsk. The Commission on Tourism was also elaborating the 3rd edition of the catalogue: “Baltic Sea Region – perfect tourism zone”. The new edition of “Baltic Notes” is to be released under the CoT auspices. The full reports are attached to the minutes.

Mikko Jokinen asked how many cities is active in the commission.

Ryszard Zdrojewski responded that the number differs from one meeting to another, people change and attend meetings in a rotation. The contact list consists of about 55 cities, which makes about 70 persons.

President Andersen noticed the small number of Western cities. He suggested to contact Danish and Swedish cities.



Ryszard Zdrojewski responded that this was also the reason to organize the next meeting of the commission in Greifswald. It will be easier for partners from Denmark, Germany and Sweden to attend the meeting.

#### **4. Activity report of the Commission on Transportation, Gdynia**

Ms Monika Pawlińska, Secretariat of the Commission on Transportation, Gdynia, introduced the Activity Report October 2009 –September 2010 and the Action Plan for 2011.

The Commissions on Transportation prepared a joint seminar together with the Commissions on Energy and Environment, which was held in Gdynia on 18-19 March 2010. In 2009 at the initiative of the commission the UBC signed the European Road Safety Charter. The commission carried out Road Safety Campaign for UBC members including: course for children, competition, brochure and the seminar “What can we do to increase the road safety among children and young people?” to be held on 21-22 October 2010 in Gdynia. The full reports are attached to the minutes.

#### **5. Activity report of the Commission on Youth Issues, Tallinn**

Mr Robert Lang, Commission on Youth Issues, Tallinn, introduced the Activity Report October 2009 –September 2010 and the Action Plan for 2011.

The commission is currently chaired by the city of Tallinn, Vice-chair belongs to Liepāja. The commission had a working meeting in Liepāja on 10-12 June 2010. YouthCom developed and carried out an online questionnaire for UBC cities to find out if cities had a youth policy/strategy and what were the main focuses and issues. The cooperation with Yc3 - Youth Cross-Border Cooperation and Communication was started at the meeting in July 2010 in Karlskrona. The commission’s website was renovated in May 2010. The full reports are attached to the minutes.

Mikko Lohikoski agreed with Mr Lang’s opinion, that there is no issue, which is not linked to the youth. Therefore, he said, it is very important for the commission to work like a network, with cross-sectoral approach. This commission and the Commission on Gender Equality in they nature are more like networks than commissions, they should not be isolated from other factors.

President Andersen reminded that youth and gender equality issues were originally handled in UBC by networks. Networks were transformed to the commissions on the request of its members.

Mr Lohikoski suggested, that next year when the city of Tallinn will be the European Capital of Culture, the city could convene the youth councils from the UBC member cities to discuss issues like youth and culture, creative youth, etc.



Mikko Lohikoski also informed, that there was a proposal to create a youth centre for the Baltic Sea Region, it's one of the topics in the EU Strategy for BSR. One of the greatest innovative thinking in creating the unity of Europe was establishing the European Youth Centres in Strasbourg in 1970's and later in Budapest. There, the NGOs and the future leaders from Europe came together for capacity building courses, etc. It created a community of people. If we could create similar centre for the Baltic Sea region, it would be extremely important for our feeling of togetherness in the future, said Lohikoski. Robert Lang thanked for those suggestions and promised to talk about it with the chairperson of the Commission.

Mr Lang said that YouthCom would like to continue as a commission. He invited the Board and other commissions consult various issues with the Commission on Youth Issues to get the youth innovative perspective.

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Björn Grönholm informed on 16 November there would be a video conference of the commissions on Environment, Energy and Transportation. Participants would test the possibilities of the program Acrobat Connect Pro. Mr Grönholm invited all to participate in the test.

Mr Grönholm also informed about the "Solutions local, together" conference which would be held on 31 January - 2 February 2011 in Turku, Finland. It will focus on practical sustainable solutions. The conference is to be attended by participants from local, regional and national levels as well as experts and entrepreneurs. The conference will have simultaneous interpretation into English, Swedish and Finnish. More info at [www.solutions2011.fi](http://www.solutions2011.fi)

## **6. European Capital of Culture 2011 - Tallinn & Turku**

Maris Hellrand from the Foundation Tallinn 2011 informed about the city preparations to become the European Capital of Culture 2011. The Foundation Tallinn 2011 was established in 2007 with aim to prepare the program of activities for 2011. The foundation called an open competition for everyone to propose events for 2011. 900 ideas were received and 251 events were chosen. Ms Hellrand said something would be happening every single day. The main topic is the relationship of Tallinn with the seashore. During the soviet times, the centre of Tallinn was cut off from the seashore, which was a military and industrial area at that time. Now the city wants to change it therefore many events connected to the European Capital of Culture will be placed along the seashore. Among the numerous musical, theatre, art, film, literature, sport events and attractions there will be Theatre NO99 - theatre made of straw, Song of Freedom concert, Estonian Youth Song and Dance Celebrations, and more. The first opening event will take place at the beginning of December this year. More information at [www.tallinn2011.ee](http://www.tallinn2011.ee)



President Andersen commented it was a good idea, that the city of Tallinn makes the events primarily for its inhabitants, not for the world outside. It's a good way of showing cultural life of Estonia, he said.

Mika Akkanen, Manager of International Affairs, informed that the Turku 2011 Foundation was responsible for the implementation of Turku European Capital of Culture 2011. Mr Akkanen stressed this event was a great opportunity to promote the Baltic Sea region as a whole, because for the first time the European Capitals of Culture are so close geographically and culturally. Beside the rich cultural program, the city of Turku has long term goals. From this event Turku wants to make a tool for internal development of business, creative industries, wellbeing of people. The city hopes to create a new mood for the future.

Mr Akkanen said the city leaders of Turku and Tallinn would meet several times next year, in order to exchange ideas how to use the European Capital of Culture as a tool for future development. There will be also some common initiatives in both cities like Mobile Animation, Dancing Tower, Performance 2011. More information at [www.turku2011.fi](http://www.turku2011.fi)

The Board wished Tallinn and Turku successful celebrations in 2011.

## **7. Closing of the Meeting.**

President Per Bødker Andersen expressed his thanks to all participants for the fruitful meeting and to the City of Tallinn for its warm hospitality and closed the 59<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Executive Board of the Union of the Baltic Cities.

Mr Per Bødker Andersen  
Chairman

Mr Paweł Żaboklicki  
Secretary

Mr Jarkko Virtanen  
Adjuster

Mr Tonu Karu  
Adjuster