

MINUTES OF THE 78TH MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Kristiansand, Norway, 16 February 2017

1. Opening of the meeting by UBC President and adoption of the agenda. Election of two persons who, together with the President, will check the minutes.

The Executive Board meeting was opened by Per Bødker Andersen, President of the Union of the Baltic Cities. Mr Andersen expressed his gratitude to the hosts for inviting the UBC Executive Board to hold its 78th meeting in the City of Kristiansand. The Board adopted the agenda, attached to the minutes. Roland Methling, Mayor of Rostock and Jørgen Kristiansen, Deputy Mayor of Kristiansand were elected to check the minutes together with the President.

2. Welcome by the Deputy Mayor of Kristiansand, short presentation of the city.

Jørgen Kristiansen, Deputy Mayor of Kristiansand, warmly welcomed the participants and made presentation of the city.

Kristiansand is the fifth largest city in Norway, with a population of 90.000 inhabitants. 155 nationalities are represented in the city. The city was founded by King Christian IV in 1641. Centre of Kristiansand is known for its straight streets and is called "Kvadraturen". During the big city fire in 1892, 350 houses burnt down. The rebuilding was made in brick. Kristiansand is the administrative, business and cultural capital of Southern Norway. In the city there are 53.000 work places and the unemployment rate is 3,7%.

There are numerous enterprises in the city - process industry, offshore, food, IT and telephones, entrepreneurship etc. One of them is Glencore, the largest nickel refinery in the western world, producing 7 % of all nickel and 7 % of all cobalt in the world. Hennig-Olsen is a famous ice cream factory, covering 50% of this market in Norway.

Kristiansand is also an educational centre. The University of Agder is the largest educational institution in the region with more than 12,000 students and 1,180 employees. There are also several private educational institutions.

The Kristiansand Zoo and amusement park is the largest in Norway. It receives over 900,000 visitors every year. Kilden Performing Arts Centre is a theatre and concert hall, housing Agder Teater, Kristiansand Symphony Orchestra and Opera Sør. Outside the city there is the industry park Sørlandsparken, which has Sørlandssenteret, the largest mall in Norway.

3. Application for membership from Tauragė, Lithuania

Tauragė District Municipality applied for membership in UBC, application is attached to the minutes.

Tauragė, an industrial city in Lithuania, is the capital of Tauragė District Municipality. Tauragė is situated by the Jūra River, close to the border with the Kaliningrad Oblast and not far from the Baltic Sea coast. One of the main advantages of Tauragė is convenient geographical location for transit, good road infrastructure oriented towards the regions of Lithuania, Kaliningrad Oblast and Latvia via the Hanseatic corridor.

Tauragė has the largest industry section in the region, developed furniture production, car sales business, wide trading service network, evolving business support infrastructure. The other important sectors are agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishery.

The city is attractive for tourists. The most important sites are the Tauragė castle, Martynas Mažvydas evangelical church and the catholic church of St. Trinity. The castle nowadays houses the Historical Museum, and the Museum of Exile located in the former headquarters of the Soviet security forces. More information at www.taurage.lt

Decision:

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

4. Information from the Task Force on Strategy and General Conference 2017.

The Board in Rostock, March 2016, authorized the Presidium to create a Task Force to discuss the implementation of the UBC Strategy. Presidium created the Task Force. The Board in Kaunas, June 2016, authorized the Task Force to deal also with preparations to the XIV General Conference to be held in Växjö in 2017. The Task Force met in Växjö on 13-14 October 2016 and presented its first report at the 77th Board Meeting in Stockholm, 10 November 2016. The second meeting of the Task Force was held on the eve of the EBM in Kristiansand.

4.1 XIV UBC General Conference in Växjö, 24-27 October 2017.

Mikko Lohikoski, Chair of the Task Force, reminded that the proposed conference theme is “Leadership for the future. Global solutions for sustainable urban development in the Baltic Sea Region”. There had been a remarkable development of Europe but now we also face internal and external challenges, like questioning the democracy, security in Europe and relations. In these circumstances the cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region seems to be even more important now than previously. Local authorities are the nearest democratic structures to the people, so the cooperation is needed for the feeling of inclusive society, to create security for the citizens in the social field, employment, health and more. We are building the future, so also the voice of young people must be heard. Youth must be involved in the General Conference as fully fledged participant, not only a guest at plenary session.

Concerning the GC programme, Mr Lohikoski underlined that for politicians the most important issues must be concentrated in 24 hours, from Wednesday afternoon till Thursday afternoon. He also put stress on interaction during the conference. The participants must get a feeling that they found partners or good advice. There should be very few generalities, we must concentrate on concrete questions. New commissions should also take responsibility of organizing different sessions during the

conference. We should ask the commissions and the member cities on topics – key issues requiring leadership - which should be solved. The mayors should be given the possibility to present their experiences. The invited speakers should be innovative and charismatic.

The draft programme and proposed speakers are attached to the minutes.

John Lauritzen, Councillor, City of Naestved, added that the timetable of the conference should not be too tight. Participants should have an opportunity for networking and exchange of opinions between the sessions, during the breaks.

Piotr Grzelak, Deputy Mayor of Gdańsk, stressed that the political situation in Europe has recently changed. UBC needs to give a strong voice to the governments of our countries on the values that UBC cities share. The General Conference could adopt a resolution stressing our common values such as freedom, democracy, solidarity, tolerance etc.

As an example of strong cities voice Mr Grzelak reminded the resolution “Refugees - a challenge and a chance for the Cities of the Baltic Sea Region” adopted at the UBC conference in Rostock, 14-16 March 2016. He stressed we need continuation of such work.

Jaana Simula, Chair of Cultural Cities Commission, City of Pori, expressed an opinion that at the conference there should be also young speakers, under 30 years old.

Per Schöldberg, Deputy Mayor of Växjö, agreed that youth should be a substantial part of the General Conference. Also a statement – conclusion of the conference signed by all UBC mayors could be prepared.

Mikko Lohikoski agreed that there should be a statement prepared in advance. The discussion on values can be combined with the discussion on leadership and search for solutions.

Hanna Maidell, Chair of Working Group on Gender Equality, City of Helsinki, suggested to add also gender themes among others.

Risto Veivo, Chair of Sustainable Cities Commission, City of Turku, reminded that the host city of Växjö is the first city which declared the will to be the fossil fuel free city, so we should make use of it constructing the program. Mr Veivo offered to invite Anne Hidalgo, Mayor of Paris, Chair of CDP and/or Michael Bloomberg, former Mayor of New York, a first Special Envoy for Cities and Climate Change in the United Nations.

Decision:

The Board authorised the Task Force to continue its work on the preparations to the General Conference in Växjö.

4.2 UBC Strategy implementation. Proposal from the Board of Audit on inquiry to member cities on UBC priorities and activities.

UBC Board of Auditors had an opportunity to attend the UBC Board meeting in Stockholm November 10. One important issue on the agenda was how UBC could add more value in order to keep the member cities and also to attract new ones. How should the organization act to fulfil one of the key aims of the Union, to “Advocate for common interest of the local authorities in the region” as it is stated in the Statute of UBC. During the meeting the members of the Board argued that for example UBC must be relevant for all their members and be considered as a platform for leading politician in the member cities.

The Board of Auditors sees many benefits in cooperation between the Baltic cities. UBC have got the potential to play an important role in the development of local democracy, self-governance and to support their members in common challenges connected to ecological and social sustainability.

The Board of Auditors therefore proposed to carry out an inquiry among the member cities. The goal should be to collect information on how the member cities use the UBC today (the level of activity). But most important, what type of UBC actions generates - or could generate - most added value to the member cities. The proposal from the Board of Audit is attached.

Mikko Lohikoski reminded that the Task Force in its report also proposed that new survey of member cities priorities should be carried out, also taking into account the new Commission structure etc. The previous survey was carried out some years ago.

The Board agreed UBC should know the priorities of its member cities, to meet their needs. The Board thanked the Board of Audit for the idea and decided UBC should carry out a new survey.

5. TF on Youth Employment and Well-Being: road map for 2017 and co-operation with the EUSBSR PA Education Flagships.

Matti Mäkelä, Chair of the Task Force on Youth Employment and Well-Being, City of Turku, recalled that a new agenda for the TF was set at UBC Board meeting in June 2016 in Kaunas, Lithuania. The agenda includes the following measures: cooperation inside the UBC, joint projects, follow-up survey, workshops and seminars.

UBC cities have developed new forms of co-operation with the Baltic Sea Flagship projects and also started to plan new projects together. Good examples are Mentoring and Support for the Refugee Youngsters projects, which include partners from Finland, Sweden, Poland and Latvia.

The Task Force is interested in cooperation within the EUSBSR PA Education flagship process called 'School to Work' (S2W). Its goals are parallel to the goals set in Kaunas.

The Flagship S2W is coordinated by SALAR (Swedish Association for Local Authorities and Regions), Stockholm. Inta Simanska from SALAR presented the process. She stressed that the mission of the flagship is to provide a platform for members that run measures to prevent early school leaving in the BSR and work to integrate NEETs (young people who are "Not in Education, Employment, or Training") into the labour market. There are already 56 members, most of which are public institutions.

S2W has two knowledge platforms: Knowledge Platform on NEETs that is coordinated by the Norden Association (Sweden) and Knowledge Platform on Early School Leaving, coordinated by City of Turku

Education Division. The City of Turku together with SALAR submitted a project proposal to European Social Fund to get funding for the cooperation and coordination of the Flagship and Knowledge Platform.

Matti Mäkelä informed that the knowledge platform's main idea is to support projects and other development work among the main target group youth at risk of dropping out from education and labour market. Measures are divided under two titles: Support and Development. Working methods include sharing good practices via website, use of social media (Facebook group for developers and innovators), benchmarking, shadowing, peer evaluation and peer development, analysis of the BSR situation and development trends, working groups (for example young immigrants, innovative learning environments, employment etc.).

More information about School to Work project is attached.

John Lauritzen said that in his city there is no system of contacting young people who stay at home and joining the process could bring some solutions.

Ann-Sofie Lagerkrantz, WGGE, City of Kalmar, wanted to know about gender mainstreaming in the project. Ms Simanska responded that the target group is gender balanced. They also try to popularize understanding what is the gender mainstreaming, e.g. when organizing the events they recommend to look who are the speakers.

Denis Mustonen, Head of Foreign Affairs, City of Lahti, asked about the financial conditions for joining the project. Ms Simanska responded that there was no membership fee.

Matti Mäkelä proposed that UBC decides to cooperate with the flagship and encourage its member cities to participate in the process. The Task Force would work together with the flagship. Another proposal to consider was the State of the Youth Guarantee in Baltic region as an idea for a workshop at the UBC General Conference in Växjö. Mr Mäkelä added that this cooperation could also support the work of the Task Force on Refugees and Youthful Cities Commission.

Hanna Maidell commented that this process is a good example of work linked to the Strategy and gender equality mainstreaming.

Decision:

The Board accepted the proposal of cooperation between the Task Force on Youth Employment and Well-Being and the Knowledge Platform on Early School Leaving. The Board also encouraged the cities to take part in the flagship process 'School to Work'.

6. EUSBSR Horizontal Action 'Capacity', activity report and discussion on how to engage cities, regions and other stakeholders in the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region.

Mikko Lohikoski informed that since summer 2016 the UBC was included as a co-coordinator of one of the EUSBSR horizontal actions - HA 'Capacity'. UBC coordinates it together with the Swedish Institute and the Baltic Sea NGO Network.

There are two tasks of this Horizontal Action. One of them is capacity building of people who work with the Strategy, helping them to acquire skills and knowledge how to work in the international cooperation. It's made through funding the leadership programs, mostly through the Swedish Institute. Many UBC representatives have already participated in such programs. The Swedish Institute is undergoing now reorganization, the Visby office is closing and moving to Stockholm, therefore during the first half of 2017 the Institute will be less involved.

The second task is promotion of involvement in the Strategy. The HA wants to promote, assist and mobilize participation of cities and regions, business, universities and all non-governmental actors in the Baltic Sea Strategy. The more society is involved the better. It's planned to have one workshop during the UBC General Conference in Växjö devoted to this issue.

Mikko Lohikoski presented also further plans. At the next EUSBSR forum in Berlin, June 2017, there will be a meeting of stakeholders of the EUSBSR and actors of other EU macro-regional strategies from the Danube Region, Adriatic and Ionian Sea Region, Alpine Region. Each of the Strategies has its own way of engaging people. For example, in the Danube Region they organize every year so called Participation Day, linked to the Annual Forum. Civil society organizations and cities are meeting one day in advance to discuss their own down-to-earth issues.

There are discussions to bring such Participation Day also to the EUSBSR Strategy meetings. If this would be decided, the UBC would have to play an important role. It could be introduced at Tallinn Annual Forum in 2018. The agenda could be prepared by the UBC, the Swedish Institute and Norden Association. Some decisions could be made at the next leadership meeting in Stockholm, on 20.02.2017.

The Board encouraged the cities to participate in the Annual Forum to be held on 13-14 June 2017 in Berlin.

7. Interventions from the Commissions concerning UBC Strategy and activities. Executive Board discussion with leaders on questions important for the Commissions.

Hanna Maidell informed that the WGGE has been preparing a conference which will be held on 11 April in Gdańsk. It will be devoted to the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life, launched by the Council of European Municipalities and Regions in 2006. At the conference the cities will be encouraged to sign the Charter. By doing it, the city commits to promote gender equality and promises to have an action plan (in two years) how to promote gender equality in different fields. The WG expects 70 participants.

Małgorzata Tarasiewicz, WGGE, City of Gdańsk, added that the Deputy Mayor of Gdańsk and the Deputy Mayor of Helsinki will take part in the Conference. Ms Tarasiewicz asked the Board members to inform the WG about the Mayors who would be interested to participate in the conference. She also invited the Board members to Gdańsk.

Toril Hogstad, WGGE, City of Kristiansand, said that there were discussions about changing name of the WG, because working group is associated with a group which is temporary and just working for

itself. The WGGE wants to have impact on all cities and other commissions, so they don't want to be a commission. Ms Hogstad proposed the alternative name could be a resource group for example.

Hanna Maidell added that they are too small to be a commission, and they mainstream the work, support all the commissions. She thanked for the support of the Board and Secretariat.

Mikko Lohikoski said that the resource group is a horizontal action, and it should be involved in all activities. In the EU Strategy for BSR more issues should be taken up concerning the gender equality and other equalities.

John Lauritzen added that gender equality is not a priority in Denmark. However, the situation is improving, e.g. it has been decided that all women who go for the maternity leave will have a full income.

Wolfgang Schmidt, Chairman of the Smart and Prospering Cities Commission, City of Kiel, said that his commission is the only one with Gender Equality officer, Toril Hogstad who made them aware, that gender equality is a potential. Mr Schmidt said that the main target of the City of Kiel is competition in business, tourism and talents – how to attract young educated people to live and work in Kiel. There was a discussion with the Mayor of Kiel who asked for proofs that every organization Kiel is involved in, really fits to the three targets: sharing ideas with the others, increasing visibility on markets, influencing the EU institutions. Concerning UBC and its outcomes there was a critical discussion in Kiel, because the potential of our organization is seen, but it should also be proved.

Concerning the UBC Strategy Mr Schmidt advised to concentrate on 2-3 topics. As for co-sharing, he suggested more cooperation between the commissions themselves and the Executive Board. He informed about the joint meeting with the Planning Cities Commission in May in Rostock.

Mr Schmidt stressed the importance of communication within UBC - website, bulletin, facebook, twitter, etc. He said there is a need for more information about the commissions. Also higher UBC visibility in Brussels is needed. S&PCC is ready to work with others on how to get more visibility for the macroregional cooperation.

Kaspars Varpins, Chairman of the Safe Cities Commission, City of Liepāja, informed that SCC already had the joint meeting with the Commissions Cultural Cities and Sustainable Cities in June 2016. Together with Sustainable Cities Commission and the Council of the Baltic Sea States they prepare an application CRCC – Making communities resilient to climate change: cross-sectoral cooperation in capacity building. Mr Varpins underlined that working together with other organizations, making projects or ideas, is good for increasing visibility of UBC.

Ms Simula informed she was active in the EUSBSR Policy Area Culture, also in the Baltic Sea States Subregional Cooperation. She agreed this kind of activeness also promotes UBC.

Jarosław Józefczyk, Inclusive & Healthy Cities Commission, City of Gdynia, suggested to have a meeting of the commissions' leaders, maybe once in 2-3 years. Such meeting would be needed for harmonizing the calendars, ideas, moderation of the process.

Mr Józefczyk also said that some common format for presenting good practices would be needed, to be attractive and understandable for the receivers. It would strengthen UBC visibility and brand. Mr Józefczyk advised to have some golden book of commissions good practices.

Kaspars Varpins suggested to have the common meetings of the commissions' chairs during the Executive Board meetings or General Conferences, in order not to spend extra time. He also added that concerning visibility, the Safe Cities Commission received money from the UBC for making three short animation movies on safety issues. Mr Varpins showed the movies to the Board.

Jaana Simula, informed that last year the Cultural Cities Commission had two joint meetings, one with Sustainable Cities and Safe Cities at Dolina Charlotty and the second with Youthful Cities Commission in Elva.

Ms Simula added that culture is the most democratic tool in social inclusion, but some people from CCC want to concentrate only on culture. Some other commissions may have the same problem. Cooperation with other commissions is the one way of work. The previous meetings were joint with other commissions but the next one in Pori will be devoted only to culture - the Cultural Planning Days. Ms Simula added that the UBC Bulletin is the golden book of Baltic ideas. We only have to promote the Bulletin.

Per Bødker Andersen said that it was decided to decrease the number of the commissions and change their way of working because they should work horizontally and cooperate with each other. For example you can't make city planning without culture and social dimension. President stressed cooperation of the commissions is very important.

Mikko Lohikoski noted that the discussion between the commissions and the Board has started and it should be continued at the next Board meetings and General Conference. He encouraged the commissions to use the clock of activities on the website – timetable with planned activities, deadlines. That will make the cooperation easier.

Wolfgang Schmidt proposed two steps for the meeting of the commissions' leaders. The first step would be to inform about activities, topics, ideas, potential of the commissions. The second step would be to concentrate, together with the Board, on not more than three topics. This could make a beginning for common projects and meetings, a way to come to the solutions.

Risto Veivo, reminded that information about the present commissions' activities is included in the meeting documents. He said UBC should recognize its strong points to continue good work. The Strategy and the reform of the commissions were the steps forward in UBC. Mr Veivo said we should not communicate too many key messages at one time, but we cannot limit the cooperation between the cities and within the commissions to a few topics.

Per Bødker Andersen supported the idea that in the term between the General Conferences the commissions can work together on two – three topics, and have more their own topics.

Lena Modin, Chair of the Youthful Cities Commission, City of Gävle, admitted that the commission is not yet much cooperating with other commissions. The commission puts even more attention now on

including youth into its work and meetings. Ms Modin presented the statement made by the youth for the workshop “Nothing about us without us” at the EUSBSR 7th Annual Forum, 8-9 November 2016 in Stockholm. In this statement young people compactly present their expectations, paper is attached to the minutes.

Paulina Szewczyk, Planning Cities Commission, City of Gdynia, informed about activities and the latest meeting in Klaipėda. Ms Szewczyk invited member cities to host the seminars of the commission. During the seminar city’s urban planning challenges and problems are discussed and the solutions / designs are provided.

John Lauritzen pointed out that some harbors are closed down because of new manners of using harbor areas. The municipality wants to have profits, so how to assure that ordinary people have access to those areas. Paulina Szewczyk answered that the commission always tries to find such solutions that give part of the port back to the city, not close it only for developers.

Hanna Maidell said that it’s hard to read reports from the commissions, because they are made in different forms. Per Bødker Andersen supported the idea of having one form for making action plans. The Board thanked the commissions for fruitful discussion and the work being done. Commissions’ written reports and action plans are attached to the minutes.

8. Financial statement 2016, budget 2017.

Secretary General presented the financial report for 2016. Paweł Żaboklicki informed the income was mostly generated by the membership fees and the assets saved in 2015. The main expenditure were: spendings of the commissions, services/maintenance, meetings including three Executive Board sessions in Rostock, Kaunas, Stockholm and the Conference on Impact of the European Refugees Crisis in the Cities of the BSR in Rostock, etc. Five annexes are attached to the report: membership fees, expenditure of UBC commissions, contributions to the secretariats, projects with external funding, cities’ contributions to the UBC events. The financial report is attached to the minutes.

Subsequently Secretary General presented the UBC budget proposal for 2017. He reminded that each UBC Commission was granted 10 000 EUR as a start-up money for 2017. When the above mentioned resources are used, the Commissions may apply to the Presidium for additional resources for relevant activities. The budget proposal is attached to the minutes.

Concerning the membership fees, the Board members expressed opinion that 30% discount for Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia should be further gradually reduced as the economies of mentioned countries are continually growing in the last years.

Per Schöldberg assured the Board that Växjö assigned a special budget to finance the UBC General Conference in October.

Decision:

The Board approved the financial report for 2016 and the budget for 2017.

9. Information from Communication Manager.

Irene Pendolin, UBC Communication Manager, informed about the activities planned for the spring 2017. Presentation is attached to the minutes.

The new UBC e-newsletter will be launched after the Executive Board Meeting in Kristiansand. UBC is also present on Twitter at the addresses: [#UBC_BSR](#) and [#UnionoftheBalticCities](#). Ms Pendolin invited the Board to follow UBC there. Ms Pendolin informed UBC will be also soon on LinkedIn, due to some technical problems. Concerning communication about the General Conference Ms Pendolin said it is important to inform not only the member cities but also the media.

Ms Pendolin informed the Communications Network was not very active lately, but there is a plan to have a network meeting, probably in June, on the on the occasion of the EUSBSR Strategy Forum in Berlin.

The next issue of the Baltic Cities Bulletin will be devoted to sustainability. This time it will be only in digital form online, to be more sustainable.

Per Bødker Andersen said that we have to revitalize the Communications Network, because the UBC activities need to be communicated in a good way.

10. Project "Between the Baltic and the Black Sea - cities as engines of interregional cooperation" - progress report on project development.

At the 77th UBC Executive Board meeting, Stockholm, 10 November 2016, Adam Balcer, Project manager in WiseEuropa Institute, on behalf of the City of Gdańsk, presented the proposal of cooperation between UBC and Eastern partnership / Black Sea Cities. The Board found the project interesting and recommended to individual member cities to participate in it but decided, that the UBC cannot as an organization participate in it. The Board stressed the importance to strengthen democratic processes, economy, environment etc. in the cities of Eastern Partnership / Black Sea countries for the benefit and stability of the Baltic Sea Region and Europe as a whole. Due to limited resources UBC cannot afford to support the project financially but is ready to assist in project promotion and dissemination.

Adam Balcer informed that in December 2016, a letter from Paweł Adamowicz, Mayor of Gdańsk, was sent out to the member cities encouraging them to participate in the project. Mr Balcer added that so far the initiative was supported by the following cities: Burgas, Varna, Gdańsk, Rostock, Riga, Umeå, Karlskrona, Batumi, Panevėžys, Odessa, Gdynia. Cities considering to join in: Warsaw, Kaunas, Viljandi, Elbląg, Sopot. There are also think tanks and scientific institutions supportive for the initiative: WiseEuropa, Warsaw; Promotion of Intercultural Cooperation, Odessa; Centre for Baltic and East European Studies (CBEES); Södertörn University, Stockholm; Centre for European Studies, Lund University; University of Greifswald.

Mr Balcer informed that project opening report is under preparation. Project coordinators intend to apply for financing to the Swedish Institute together with the Swedish partners and also to the EU

Program “Europe for Citizens”, in particular to the section “European remembrance”. Another program they plan to apply to is the EU CBC “Black Sea Basin Joint Operational Programme 2014-2020”. Adam Balcer stressed that as we live in a globalised world, so we need to broaden our horizons. There are many links between the Baltic Sea Region and the Black Sea Region.

Per Schöldberg reminded that at the previous Board meeting in October 2016 in Stockholm it was decided UBC could not join the project, but is ready to help by spreading information about the project.

Per Bødker Andersen responded that there was a request on proceedings on this matter. UBC as a network cooperates with other networks like CECICN. UBC doesn't have money to participate in this project. The progress of the project was reported to UBC, we can see that the project is ongoing. It shall be reported to the cities being active in that project in the future.

Roland Methling, Mayor of Rostock, said that this project at first impression is a bit outside UBC policy. But there are the values the UBC is standing for. UBC is a small part of cities worldwide, and we could build bridges between the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea. We have nearly the same conditions, e.g. the area of both seas is nearly the same. At the beginning of UBC the Baltic Sea was divided. Black Sea is divided today again, the divisions between the countries in the Black Sea are growing. Mr Methling added that it would be good to include also Turkish and Russian side, maybe as observer. All nations of the Black Sea should be included.

Piotr Grzelak added, that at least since 2011, he remembered discussions in the Executive Board about the new role of UBC, and these questions were set up mostly by the Scandinavian countries. Now we can have an answer. As it was stated earlier, there are no rich and poor countries in the Baltic Sea Region. There are some differences, but we have common values and common conditions in our cities. He said that it would be very fruitful for the UBC to get involved in such project and he supported this idea. He stressed that the experience of the UBC network is something more than experience of several cities connected by the Union.

Per Schöldberg said that it's good that UBC members engage themselves in other structures, but the general question is if UBC as the organization, should be part of the project, should UBC be involved in everything?

Mikko Lohikoski reminded that the BSR Strategy is now developing the cooperation with Danube Region Strategy which also involves Bulgaria, Romania from the Black Sea Region. In Berlin there will be a first coordination meeting under the auspices and support of the EU, with a strong structure, involving cities, societies, etc. Mr Lohikoski advised not to create many structures when there is a process which is actually delivering the same, including not only EU countries there, but also non-member states. It would be good to coordinate between the different initiatives and maybe come to Berlin for the meeting. He also reminded that UBC, being one of the coordinators of the HA Capacity, is already involved in the inter macro regional strategy dialogue.

Adam Balcer added that there is no danger of overlapping with some other initiatives, because the main goal is to establish the permanent platform which would gather experts, officials from local administration, business, journalists, civil societies from both regions and to present concrete report

with recommendations how to increase the cooperation, which fields are mutually beneficial for cooperation.

Per Bødker Andersen said it was decided in Stockholm not to get involved as organization, as there are no resources for it. He also said UBC has no counterpart organisation in the Black Sea region. He repeated UBC is ready to promote the project and its results as this is an interesting and useful initiative.

Per Schöldberg agreed and added that at the Board meetings he would warmly welcome this kind of information reports what is going on around and within UBC. There are probably other initiatives going on that the Board members don't know about and 10-15 minute information at the Board meeting would be good.

The Board took note of the information on project progress.

11. Next 79th UBC Executive Board meeting.

The 79th meeting of the UBC Executive Board will be held in Berlin on 15 June 2017, in conjunction with the 8th Annual Forum of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, Berlin, 13-14 June 2017.

12. Any other business.

12.1 UBC's cooperation with CDP.

CDP, the global climate change disclosure non-profit, and UBC, have agreed on a two-year memorandum of understanding to involve more cities in the development and reporting of target-oriented climate actions. UBC and CDP aim to increase the number of BSR cities using systematic reporting of their climate change related actions. Currently, over 500 cities, 100 states and regions, and more than 5800 companies use CDP's system to report, share and take action on climate change every year. The proposed co-operation UBC CDP would produce a state of the art report on strategic Climate work and Leadership in BSR cities, completed for the XIV UBC General Conference 2017. The Memorandum of Understanding was signed by the UBC President at the 77th Executive Board meeting in Stockholm on 10.11.2016.

Risto Veivo said that through the cooperation with CDP, the UBC gets an access to a very good analytical tool, user friendly and applicable for the use of city leaders and managers. Mr Veivo expressed an opinion it is very important for UBC to use these data and analyses for making a high, world class report on the strategic climate work in BSR cities and to have this report for the next UBC General Conference in Växjö.

Mr Veivo repeated an offer to arrange one or two high level speakers from CDP side at the General Conference namely Anne Hidalgo, Mayor of Paris, Chair of CDP and/or Michael Bloomberg, former Mayor of New York, a first Special Envoy for Cities and Climate Change in the United Nations.

The other, indirect benefit for UBC is that the CDP will also spread information about the work of UBC and its member cities.

Mr Veivo said that the discussion with CDP started at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris, 2015. Mr Veivo advised the Board to visit the CDP headquarter in Berlin during the next Executive Board meeting.

The Board took note of the report and invited the member cities to join the cooperation. Presentation is attached to the minutes.

12.2 Baltic Sea Future congress, Stockholm, 6-7.3.2017

President Andersen informed Baltic Sea Future congress will be held on 6-7 March in Stockholm. UBC is a co-partner. Baltic Sea Future will address environmental challenges in the Baltic Sea Region, focusing on the key role of municipalities.

12.3 Shore Power and the Cruise Industry.

Jørgen Kristiansen presented Port of Kristiansand initiative aimed at reducing cruise ships emissions in European ports.

Making shore power available for cruise ships will result in significant reductions in emissions. However, there are some major challenges to overcome before shore power will be a mainstream technology in the cruise industry. First and foremost the challenges are related to a lack of international standards and regulations. Small ports such as the Port of Kristiansand have minimal influence on the cruise industry, so common set of framework and regulations directed towards the industry is required.

The overarching goal is to reduce emissions from the cruise industry, and to force the industry to make the necessary investments and adjustments to allow their ships to connect to shore power at any port call in Northern Europe.

More information is attached.

Risto Veivo, chairman of the Sustainable Cities Commission, reminded that some years ago the Commission had a cooperation project with ports and port cities, and they can be involved again in this cooperation.

Mikko Lohikoski added that in relation with the Strategy Forum in Berlin he talked to the German Foreign Office about involvement in organization of the workshop on sustainable Blue Growth and we could present our initiative there.

Piotr Grzelak invited the Board to the Energy Summit to be held in Gdańsk in April and said that UBC could inform there about this initiative.

Per Bødker Andersen added that we need to inform broadly about this initiative using the channels we have - website, social media etc.

Decision

The Board underlined the importance of green energy and reduced emissions within the cruise industry. The Board recommended the development of international regulations and framework concerning the implementation of shore power to cruise ships within the Baltic Sea, English Channel, North Sea and the Norwegian Sea.

12.4 National Energy Summit in Gdańsk

Piotr Grzelak informed the Board about the 5th edition of the National Energy Summit to be held on 25-26 April 2017 at the European Solidarity Centre in Gdańsk, in cooperation with the city of Gdańsk and Pomeranian Region. The leading theme of this edition is "Energy for Economy - Economy for Energy Sector".

The intention of summit organizers is to gather the representatives of key institutions responsible for energy and economic security, politicians, economists and representatives of business and science. UBC Member Cities are warmly invited to take part in the Oxford-style debate: "BSR cooperation in the energy sector".

Per Bødker Andersen
Chairperson

Paweł Żaboklicki
Secretary

Roland Methling
Adjuster

Jørgen Kristiansen
Adjuster

The meeting documents are available at: <http://ubc.net/document-categories/executive-board-meeting-documents/78th-executive-board-meeting-kristiansand-15>