

REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON TELECOMUNICATIONS.

Reports and comments

Reports were submitted by Mr. Laucis on the situation of telecommunications in Riga/Latvia, Mr. Lasota on Gdańsk, Mr. Eriksson on the Baltic ring, especially Estonia and Latvia, and Mr. Malmborg on the general roles of cities and telecommunications. Comments were made by Mr. Brzozowski on the present state of the Polish PTT and Mr. Glockner on the situation on Greifswald.

The discussion led to the following conclusions:

To be able to reach the overall goals of the Union of the Baltic Cities - the communications network must be improved essentially. Well functioning telecommunications network is a must if contacts between cities and its firms are to be possible.

In the discussion two layers of network have been separated. The first layer is the international network and the second is the local network. Although there are by far more problems connected with the development of the local networks, not only financial, we have concentrated our suggestions on the international network.

There are two reasons for this. First, we think that this would be in accordance with the primary aim of the Union, to make business contacts possible between our regions. Second, we are aware that this can be done in a near future.

Goals for the international network

An international network should be established in the Baltic region with high access for business and trade.

Technical and other considerations

The Union should study the deregulation processes in the area and work for new and quick solutions like V-sat, private networks etc.

The technical solutions would be taken in two steps:

1. Temporarily expand the existing solutions like the NMT and establish links between towns, communications nodes etc.
2. Work for long-term technical solutions over and around the Baltic Sea like submarine cables, micro-wave links, satellite communications etc.

Common standards based on international and European regulations are of great importance for the above and should be highlighted in the activities of the Working Group.

Aims of the Union

The Union can help to reach the goals in the following ways:

1. Make pressure on the governments in the region to adapt common standards on their networks (mobile and others) and to make modifications of existing plans.
2. Make a survey to give a full description of the present situation.
3. Encourage exchange of experiences and services among the Member Cities.

4. Set up a program for education in this field, both for technicians and users.
5. Contact international financing organisations like the Nordic Investment Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, World Bank, etc.

Goal for the local networks

Good local networks are in the long run essential for the households to be able to take part in the development of contacts in the region.

Aims of the Union

Give a full description of the present state and highlight the needs to develop the local networks for the governments of the regions as well as international organisations.

Suggestions

We suggest that the Union of the Baltic cities sets up a Working Group on Communications (or Information Technology). This Working Group should analyze the present situation and make suggestions for development. This should be presented in a report for the next Conference. The Working Group should also present suggestions concerning an educational program, a program for exchange of experiences and services, and an exchange program for the Universities of the Region.

ANNEX 7

REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON THE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION

The working group dealing with the problem of environment protection consisted of 22 participants from the following towns: Gdańsk, Kaliningrad, Rostock, Elbląg, Helsingborg, Aarhus, Turku, Gdynia, Sopot, Kołobrzeg, Ventspils, Norrköping, Stockholm and Klaipėda.

After introduction reports introduced by Mr. Carl Nielsen from Aarhus and Mr. Hannu Tapani Klami from Turku and Mr. Jorgen Ringgaard from Aarhus. After discussion, the following agreements were accepted:

1. It was agreed that municipalities should work out strategies in the context of sustainable development for the environmental protection to limit the impact of urban life on environment.
2. The necessity of exchange of experience among municipalities has been underlined.

3. The Union of Baltic cities shall be an organisational framework for establishment of problem orientated co-operation between smaller groups of cities.
4. The Secretariat of the Union shall ask the Member cities to indicate already existing areas of co-operation.
5. The Secretariat of the Union shall ask the Member cities to indicate a few priority items where they want co-operation to solve actual problems. At the same time each city should be asked to indicate a few priority fields in which they possess special expertise.

The Secretariat shall then distribute the list of indications to all member cities. The list will be updated at least one time every year.

6. The Baltic Cities should take active part in the Health Cities Projects.
7. The cities of the Union will cooperate with other international bodies active in the field of environmental protection and among them with International Council of the Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI).

ANNEX 8

REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON TRANSPORT AND MARITIME INDUSTRIES.

The participants of the above meeting have presented two groups of issues:

A. The conclusions that are to be addressed to the Ministers of Transportation of the Baltic States, particularly to those participating in the Conference of Ministers of Transportation to take place in Poland at the beginning of March next year at the invitation of Polish and Swedish governments:

1. It sounds reasonable to hold talks on developing basic transport infrastructure to better interlink transportise the port towns of the Baltic States. Such steps when taken in the Region would give a boost to international tourism, trade services and industrial production.
2. Highways running along the Baltic Sea coasts should be expanded and interlocked to make comfortable travelling around the Baltic Sea possible.

It seems highly desirable, as a part of that scheme, to reopen to international traffic the road from Kaliningrad across the Polish border near Braniewo to Elbląg in Poland, and further to Berlin in Germany to the West and to Tallinn in Estonia to the Northeast. The road has been closed at the Polish-Russian border since the end of World War II in 1945. Studies are now being made by the Polish, Swedish and Russian authorities regarding the possibility of rehabilitation of these roads.

Border crossings should also be facilitated by responsible authorities in easing the existing trade restrictions.

3. The railway lines along the Baltic Sea coasts should be interlocked to each other at the border points to make the railway travels around the Baltic Sea possible. Again, the Russian Authorities should reopen the railway from Kaliningrad in Russia to Elbląg in Poland (closed since 1945).
4. The airlines and airports in the Region should be developed to the degree facilitating flights from one country to another around the Baltic Sea, including the post-military airfield in Eastern Baltic Coast Region.
5. It seems desirable to develop cabotage lines, including their transborder parts to facilitate voyages around the Baltic Sea coast.

The Russian Authorities should reopen the fairway closed in 1945 in the Vistula River Bay, leading from Elbląg in Poland to the open Baltic Sea off the town of Baltijsk in Russia, and further to Kaliningrad.

6. Poland faces the task of building a basic infrastructure to the Gdańsk Port Central Ro-Ro Terminal of the Trans-European North-South Motorway upon the Southern bank of Martwa Wisła at Gdańsk-Wiślinka. If completed by the Polish side, the Terminal will then be further developed by other countries to realise their own project connected with the Gdańsk Trans-European North-South Motorway Terminal. It has to be emphasised here that TEM has the advantage of crossing the existing Berlin-Kaliningrad Motorway in Tczew, Poland.
7. It is desirable to undertake joint efforts of Poland, Germany and Nordic countries for the development of the North-South water road and rail transportation system along the Odra River line.
8. The joint efforts should be undertaken to promote and support existing shipping lines across the Baltic and facilitate the opening of new ferry connections within the Region, especially with the newly independent Baltic States.

B. The conclusions that are to be presented to the Baltic Sea local self-governments:

1. The particular self-governments should reserve some port areas necessary to secure the development of yachting and sailing, both domestic and international, tourism and recreation, especially in Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Russia.

The idea of establishing Baltic Tourism Commission within the Union of the Baltic Cities has been put forward and the issue of improving the regulations concerning sport sailing and sport flying was raised. Close co-operation should be established with the existing Baltic Tourism Conference. It is also recommended that Tourism Information Centre should be opened in the respective cities. The creation of a travel and trade manual containing computerized information on travel services is suggested.

2. The local self-governments of the port towns should create favourable conditions to expand port industries while duly protecting the local natural environment. This issue concerns Poland in particular, as well as Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Russia. All questions related to ownership regarding the ports should be solved as soon as possible to facilitate and speed up capital investments, both private and public.

In Poland and in some other Baltic countries the problem of municipal ownership of port land is still an important issue.

3. The authorities of Nordic and German port towns and the business organizations of these countries are welcome to participate in building and strengthening economic links between the port towns of the Region and in creating the infrastructure for transportation, trade and tourism in Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Russia.
4. The authorities of the port towns in Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Russia will open the port areas for the public, except zones for hazardous cargo handling.

