

XVIII UBC General Conference, Słupsk/Dolina Charlotty, 4-7 November 2025

Opening Plenary Session, Krystyna Danilecka-Wojewódzka, Mayor of the City of Słupsk

Ladies and Gentlemen, Madam Member of the European Parliament, Mayors,

It is easier for me to pronounce the name of the UBC President than it is for him to pronounce mine, for one reason. For over 20 years, an outstanding player and coach of the first-league basketball team in Słupsk has been Mantas Česnauskis from Lithuania. The continuation of this story is very beautiful, because Mantas, when he was young, came to Słupsk, played for the “Czarni Słupsk” team, and fell in love with a girl from Słupsk. He has two children with her, he is a resident of Słupsk, and he has also received an honorary medal for his contributions to the city. This proves that between Lithuania and Poland, Finland, Sweden, and other Baltic countries, there are no distances and no real obstacles preventing us from being very close to one another.

Of course, I am very glad that we can be co-hosts of this extraordinary event. Extraordinary, because the most important thing in life is building good relations between people and between countries. This is exactly what the UBC does. The space that wonderfully connects us, almost like around a table, is the Baltic Sea. I invoked the symbolism of the table not without reason, because I believe that the most important things—from family meals to great political discussions—take place at the table. In my view, the Baltic Sea is such a table, uniting the countries that lie along it. These countries share a common goal: to act together and cooperate for harmony and for the better functioning of the world around us.

For me, that world is the city of Słupsk, which this year celebrates the 760th anniversary of being granted city rights. For many years it has been a Hanseatic city, always very beautiful and multicultural. It has been a Polish city, a German city, but also Jewish and Ukrainian. A city that, at different stages of its development, welcomed various people who knew how to coexist. For 80 years, Słupsk has been a Polish city, but one that remembers and respects its very complex history. At the same time, it is a city that knows—and its inhabitants know—that we must always move forward, because there is only one path.

Therefore, with great joy we will engage in every proposal of cooperation and collaboration, including our activity in the UBC. And welcoming you all very warmly, here on Słupsk region soil, 7 km from the city centre, in the beautiful and magical Charlotta Valley, I wish that our meetings will be a symbol of the closeness just mentioned and of building the future. Let us build a good world, always together, closely cooperating.