

MINUTES FROM THE 14TH MEETING
OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE UNION OF THE BALTIC CITIES
Kotka, Finland, 13 April 1996

INTRODUCTION

The 14th meeting of the Executive Board of the Union of the Baltic Cities was held on 13th of April 1996 in the City Hall of Kotka, Finland, upon the invitation of Mr Hannu Tapiola, Mayor of Kotka.

The meeting was attended by the members of the Executive Board of the Union, chairmen of Union's Working Commissions, representatives of applying cities and invited guests.

Opening of the meeting and adoption of the Agenda.

The meeting was opened by Mr Anders Engström, the President of the Union.

The welcome words were given by Mr Raimo Korhonen, Chairman of Kotka City Board.

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

Mrs Lillian Westerberg from Stockholm and Mr Mikko Jokinen from Turku were elected to check the minutes.

New UBC Member Cities.

Mr Paweł Żaboklicki, UBC Secretary General informed the Executive Board about new applications for Union Membership submitted by following cities: Göteborg (Sweden), Horsens (Denmark), Nacka (Sweden), Nyborg (Denmark), Nybro (Sweden), Umeå (Sweden), Växjö (Sweden).

The following representatives of applying cities made brief introduction of their towns:

Mr Endrick Schubert, Deputy Mayor of Göteborg

Mr Guldbrand Skjönberg, Head of Environmental and Planning Dept., Nacka

Mr Mikael Berglund, Chairman of Education Board, Umeå

Mr Skjönberg added that the formal decision on Nacka membership is to be taken by the City Board on the 13th of May.

Decision:

The Board decided to accept above mentioned cities as the Members of the Union of the Baltic Cities and wished them successful cooperation with remaining UBC members. The number of Union member cities reached the figure of 62.

Additionally, the following representatives of the guest cities informed about their interest in UBC work and expressed the intention to join the Union in the near future:

Ms Theodora Rissanen, City Planning Department, Lahti (Finland)

Mr Aulis Laaksonen, Deputy Mayor of Pori (Finland)

Mr Igor Vershinin, Committee of Economics, Pskov (Russia)

UBC Strategy of Work & report from the Presidium meeting in Gdańsk.

Mr Anders Engström reported from the meeting of the UBC Presidium in Gdańsk, held on 18 March 1996.

The following persons participated in the meeting:

Mr Anders Engström, President of the Union

Mr Michael Bouteiller, Vice-President of the Union

Mr Paweł Żaboklicki, Secretary General of the Union

Ms Sonja Hilavuo, Chairman of UBC Communication Task Force

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the UBC Strategy of Work 1996-1997 - Union's ground paper prepared by Ms Hilavuo.

Additionally, also the Chairmen of UBC working Commissions made their comments to the document.

Mr Engström stressed that adoption of mentioned strategic document is of high importance for the whole Union.

Decision:

The Board unanimously adopted the UBC Strategy of Work 1996-1997 and commissioned the Secretariat to distribute the document to all member cities.

UBC Project Manager.

Mr Anders Engström put forward a proposal to employ a UBC Project Manager. His responsibility would be elaborating and managing different UBC projects including submitting the applications for projects financing to various funds and programmes.

Mr Engström informed that salary of UBC Project Manager would be covered by SIDA (Swedish International Cooperation Development Agency). The city of Kalmar would provide the Project Manager with an office, telephone, fax etc. The President proposed that the UBC would cover the travel, hotel and conference costs of Project Manager during 1.5 year period in amount of approx. 20.000,- USD.

Mr Engström proposed the candidature of Mr Juhan Janusson to be the UBC Project Manager.

Decisions:

1/ The Board fully supported the President's proposal to employ UBC Project Manager for 1.5 year period and accepted Mr Juhan Janusson's candidature for this post.

2/ The Board decided to allocate 20.000,- USD to cover the costs of official travels for Project Manager during 1.5 year period.

3/ The Board authorized the President to sign an appropriate agreement with Mr Janusson for first 6-months period. The contract will be prolonged after 2-year and 1-year periods if the results of Mr Janusson's work are satisfactory.

Reports from the working Commissions.

The following representatives of the Union's working Commissions submitted reports on Commissions' activities since last Executive Board Meeting in Aarhus, 7-8 December 1995:

- Ms Sonja Hilavuo, the Commission on Communication, Tampere
- Mr Sławomir Szafranski, the Commission on Culture, Szczecin
- Mr Mikko Jokinen, the Commission on Environment, Turku
- Mr Ulrich Bauermeister, the Commission on Social Affairs, Rostock
- Mr Zdzisław Urla, the Commission on Sport, Gdynia
- Mr Leif Nilsson, the Commission on Tourism, Kalmar
- Mr Andrzej Jankowski, the Commission on Transportation, Gdańsk

Additionally, Mr Ulrich Bauermeister informed that the new person has been employed in the UBC Office on Social Affairs in Rostock - Ms Petra Hamann.

Mr Jankowski informed that Mr Włodzimierz Machczyński was officially appointed by the Mayor of Gdańsk, as Gdańsk's representative to the Commission on Transportation.

Decision:

The Board took note of submitted reports.

Report from the Communication Task Force.

Ms Sonja Hilavou from Tampere, Chairman of UBC Communication Task Force, reported on latest Task Force activities and informed about the Baltic Sea Directory project. Ms Hilavou invited the representatives of all Member Cities to take part in the 1st Workshop of the Communication Task Force to be held in Tampere on 31 May - 1 June 1996.

Opening of the Secretariat of UBC Commission on Environment.

Mr Mikko Jokinen, co-Chairman of UBC Commission on Environment informed the Board, that the city of Turku decided to allocate certain resources to open the Commission's Secretariat in Turku and employ the UBC Environmental Coordinator. Mr Jokinen introduced Mr Esko Sorakunnas who is employed as a coordinator. His task will be to manage UBC environmental projects, promote cooperation between the member cities on the field of environment, produce UBC Environmental Newsletter etc.

Decision:

The Board expressed its appreciation to the decision of the city of Turku to open the Commission's Secretariat and employ UBC Environmental Coordinator, wishing him a successful work.

Information from the Secretary.

Financial report for 1995.

Mr Żaboklicki presented the financial report of the Union for the year 1995.

The summary of the report:

Contribution from Member Cities: 200.471,38 PLN

Contribution from the city of Gdańsk: 82.500,00 PLN

(office rent, staff remuneration)

Expenditure: 173.016,40 PLN

Decision:

The Board adopted the report emphasizing a substantial contribution from the city of Gdańsk to the UBC budget. The Board described the financial position of the Union as satisfactory.

Report from the III General Conference in Aarhus.

The Secretary presented the Report from the III UBC General Conference, held in Aarhus on 8-9 December 1995, compiled by the Secretariat. The report contains all decisions, speeches, presentations, documents etc. taken or submitted during the conference.

Decision:

The Board adopted the Report and authorized the Secretariat to distribute it to all member cities.

UBC Newsletter.

Mr Paweł Żaboklicki, presented the latest issue of the Union's Newsletter No.9. The Newsletter contains three main chapters:

I. Work of the Union - provides the information about the last General Conference and the Executive Board meeting in Aarhus, reports on major UBC projects, seminars and events.

II. Information from member cities - includes information about various initiatives, projects and events carried out by the member cities.

III. Views - review of various significant Baltic and European affairs.

Decision:

The Board encouraged the contact persons in the cities to spread the Newsletter among all city departments as well as different institutions like universities, ports, libraries, chambers of commerce etc.

Other matters.

Reports from conferences attended by Union's representatives.

- 7th Hansa Business Days, Tampere, 27-28 March 1996.

Mr Anders Engström informed that the event was organized by the Baltic Sea Chamber of Commerce Association and the Baltic Institute in Tampere. Over 400 businessmen representing 175 companies, mainly from Baltic countries, took part in the event. Mr Engström announced that next year the Hansa Business Days will be organized in the city of Kalmar and warmly invited all member cities to take part in the expo.

- Seminar on Cross-Border Cooperation, Karlskrona, 27-28 March 1996.

Mr Paweł Żaboklicki informed the Board that the Seminar on Cross-Border Cooperation was organized by the Baltic Institute in Karlskrona under auspices of Council of the Baltic Sea States. The seminar was attended by over 150 delegates representing bordering regions of all Baltic countries. Participants exchanged opinions and views on Baltic cross-border cooperation pointing out the existing problems. The Secretary submitted presentation on Baltic cross-border cooperation at the city level, introducing UBC activities. Representatives of the EU Commission announced that since the second half of 1996, it would be allowed to combine PHARE and TACIS funds for cross-border initiatives.

Information about forthcoming conferences.

- Baltic Sea States Summit, Visby, 3-4 May 1996.

President Engström informed that Prime Minister of Sweden invited the heads of Baltic Sea countries and the EU Commission President Mr Jacques Santer, with aim to give new political force to cooperation in the Baltic region. President Santer is expected to announce the frames of the EU Baltic Sea Initiative. Mr Engström informed that he is going to be present in Visby during the summit to lobby the UBC.

- CPMR Seminar for the Baltic Sea Regions, Kotka, 7 May 1996.

Mr Raimo Korhonen gave brief information on Seminar for the Baltic Sea Regions to be organized by the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions of Europe and Regional Council of Kymenlaakso in Kotka.

- WACLA/HABITAT II Conference, Istanbul, 30-31 May 1996.

The Secretary Paweł Żaboklicki, informed that the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements HABITAT II which is to be held in Istanbul will address the persisting world's problems of housing, settlement and urbanization. During HABITAT Conference, the meeting of World Assembly of Cities and Local Authorities (WACLA) will be held.

Decision:

The Board authorized Mr Mikko Jokinen, co-Chairman of UBC Commission on Environment to represent the Union at mentioned conferences.

- Kiel Week Conference, Kiel, 23-25 June 1996.

Mr Anders Engström informed that this year the conference will be organized by the Schleswig-Holstein Institute for Peace Research (SHIP). The theme of the conference will be: Local Authorities as Transnational Actors and their Significance for Peace, Environment and Development. The organizers invited the President and the Commission on Environment to make contributions to the conference.

Decision:

The Board decided that a member of the Presidium and representative of the Commission would take part in the conference.

- 5th Ministerial Session of CBSS, Kalmar, 2-3 July 1996.

President Engström informed that the nearest meeting of Foreign Ministers assembled in Council of the Baltic Sea States will be held on Kalmar Castle. The Ministers will try to put into practice the decisions which are to be made by the Prime Ministers at the Baltic Sea States Summit in Visby. Following the example of previous CBSS sessions Mr Engström will be invited and speak at the conference.

- 3rd Plenary Session of CLRAE, Strasbourg, 2-4 July 1996.

Mr Jaak Tamm, Vice-President of the UBC briefly informed about the programme of the 3rd Plenary Session of Council of Europe's Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE). Mr Tamm will represent the Union at the session.

1000th Anniversary of Gdańsk "997-1997" - status of preparations.

Mr Andrzej Jankowski, Secretary of the City of Gdańsk, introduced the participants with the programme of events to be organized in Gdańsk on the occasion of Gdańsk Millennium in 1997. Mr Jankowski underlined the following events:

- Pomeranian Exhibition, June, 18-21
- Goldwasser Festival, July, 5-6
- European St. Dominic's Fair, August, 2-16
- Sail Gdańsk'97 Yacht Meeting, August, 21-25
- IV General Conference, September, 12-13

UBC Member Cities & the EU - project status.

Project on Public Transportation Reform - present status.

Mr Juhan Janusson, UBC Project Manager informed the Board about current status of two UBC projects of which he is a Project Leader. Mr Janusson emphasized that applications for grants to cover the costs of both projects have been submitted to the ECOS-OUVERTURE Programme on the 1st of April 1996.

III UBC Women's Conference, Karlskrona, 7-10 May 1996 - status of preparations.

Mrs Birgitta Törnqvist, a Project Leader from Karlskrona informed the Board that the III UBC Women's Conference entitled: "The daily life of women in the Baltic countries" will be held in Karlskrona on 7-10 May 1996, in association with large "Women Can" Exhibition in Karlskrona. Mrs Törnqvist added that invitations have been sent out to all member cities as well as to the participants of two previous UBC women's conferences in Kaliningrad and Sundsvall.

Proposal from Kaunas.

Mr Vidmantas Adomonis, Chairman of the Committee of Environment and Health in Kaunas, having in mind the immense problems with energetics in Baltic countries, put forward a proposal to create UBC Commission or Task Force on Energetics (under the Commission on Environment). The objective of this new UBC structure would be the promotion of energy saving measures in the cities.

Mr Matti Kohva, Head of EU Office, Helsinki mentioned that there already exists a special Task Force responsible for energy questions in the Baltic Sea Region.

Mr Adomonis proposed that the next meeting of the UBC Commission on Environment could be held in Kaunas, so mentioned proposal might be further discussed also at this forum.

Decision:

The Board authorized Mr Adomonis and Mr Kohva together with the Commission on Environment to work out a proposal of UBC structure responsible for energy questions and make a relevant proposal at the next Board meeting.

EU Demonstration Programme for Coastal Management.

Mr Anders Engström informed that following his proposal the European Commission decided to include the UBC and Helcom into its Demonstration Programme for Coastal Management. Mr Engström added that the representatives of all interested parties (EC, UBC, Helcom) shall meet in the near future to discuss the framework of possible cooperation in question. The President stressed that in case of UBC involvement in the programme it could be one of the biggest challenges UBC ever experienced.

Decision:

The Board authorized the President to go on with all necessary arrangements.

VASAB 2010 - proposal of cooperation.

Mr Risto Kärkkäinen from the Ministry of Environment of Finland, introduced the Board with the background and goals of the inter-governmental programme in the field of spatial planning - Vision and Strategies around the Baltic 2010.

Mr Kärkkäinen stressed that the involvement of the Baltic cities, in particular the city planners, in VASAB 2010 is of high importance for the whole programme as the cities are key elements in the process of Baltic regional planning.

Decision:

The Board welcomed the proposal of VASAB 2010 and authorized the Presidium to prepare, together with VASAB, more detailed proposal of cooperation in question.

Next Meeting of the Executive Board.

Mr Väino Linde, Mayor of the City of Pärnu (Estonia) proposed to host the next meeting of the Executive Board. Mrs Lillian Westerberg from Stockholm added that Stockholm is willing to host the following Board meeting.

Decision:

The Board accepted the proposal of the city of Pärnu and decided to hold its next meeting in September/October 1996 in Pärnu. The Secretariat was authorized to agree with the hosts upon the date of the meeting. Following the proposal of Mrs Westerberg, the Board decided to hold the following meeting in Stockholm in the beginning of 1997.

Additionally the following questions have been taken up:

* Mr Anders Engström reminded that at the 12th Board Meeting in Gdynia it was agreed that UBC should organize a special meeting to discuss how UBC member cities together with business organizations could support and strengthen business contacts between Baltic countries. The Board encouraged the cities interested to organize such a meeting in autumn this year to contact the Secretariat.

* Mr Vladimir Tchourov from St.Petersburg informed the Board about major international events to be held in St.Petersburg i.e. Baltic Theatre Festival (April), Baltic Sea and European Security Conference (April), Month of European Culture (May), Cutty Sark Tall Ships' Race (July), Festival "Window on Netherlands" (September).

* Mr Matti Kohva from Helsinki informed about the Conference on Maritime Industries and the Baltic Sea Region, to be organized by the European Commission and the city of Helsinki, on 10 September 1996. Mr Kohva added that the invitations will be distributed from Helsinki in May/June 1996.

* Mr Audun Oiestad from Bergen, informed the Board that the 16th International New-Hansa Days will be organized in the city of Bergen on 9-12 May 1996.

Closing of the Meeting.

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

Mr Anders Engström

Mrs Lillian Westerberg

Chairman

Adjuster

Mr Paweł Żaboklicki

Mr Mikko Jokinen

Secretary

Adjuster