

II. UBC Today

IV UBC GENERAL CONFERENCE

The IV General Conference of the Union of the Baltic Cities titled the "Baltic Sea Cooperation Forum" was held on 12-13 September 1997 in Gdańsk, Poland, at the invitation of the Mayor of Gdańsk. The Conference was an official part of Gdańsk 1000-Anniversary celebrations.

The Conference was attended by over 250 participants - representatives of 63 Member Cities, as well as invited guests from international organisations, ministries and other Baltic cities.

The Conference was opened by Mr Anders Engström, President of the Union of the Baltic Cities and the participants were warmly welcomed to Gdańsk by the Mayor of Gdańsk, Mr Tomasz Posadzki.

Keynote speeches and workshops

The first day of the Conference was devoted to the cooperation between Baltic Sea organisations and institutions.

The following keynote speakers representing governmental level as well as all major Baltic organisations introduced existing cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region on different levels.

During the panel discussion leaders of Baltic organisations and institutions discussed the ways to enhance the multilateral cooperation and presented their views on Baltic Sea Region development prospects in relation with the forthcoming European Union enlargement.

Following the proposal of UBC President Mr Anders Engström the major Baltic organisations agreed to hold annual meetings in order to work out joint projects and discuss Baltic strategic issues.

Panel discussion were followed by workshops: Agenda 21 - Local, Regional and Governmental cooperation, European Union in the Baltic Sea Region today and tomorrow - a challenge for Baltic Cities, Local self-government in the Baltic Sea Region - tendencies and obstacles, and



President Engström, Mayor Posadzki, Minister Rosati and Commissioner Wulf-Mathies on a lively press conference.

photo: Agnieszka Lendzion

Baltic Sea Actors - ways and tools for cooperation and coordination.

Report and Strategy

Mr Anders Engström submitted the Report on UBC activities within the period December '95 - September '97. The Conference adopted the Report. Subsequently Mr Engström presented the Strategy of UBC activities 1998-1999 and informed that the Executive Board recommended the General Conference to adopt the document. After discussion the Conference adopted the document. At the same time the Conference authorised the Executive Board to work out the Policy of the Union of the Baltic Cities, having as a basis the adopted Strategy.

Finances

Mr Paweł Ćaboklicki, the Secretary General of the Union, submitted the auditor's report on UBC accounts made by licensed auditing office, stating that all Union's financial transactions and

Guest speakers in Gdańsk

Mr Dariusz Rosati, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland

Mr Pierre Schori, Minister for International Development Co-operation of Sweden

Mrs Monika Wulf-Mathies, Commissioner for Regional Policies, European Commission

Mr Dan Nielsen, Chairman of the Committee of Senior Officials, Council of the Baltic Sea States

Mr Olof Salmén, President of the Nordic Council

Mr Knud Andersen, Speaker of the Baltic Sea States Subregional Cooperation

Mr Hannu Tapiola, President of the Baltic Sea Commission of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions of Europe.

Mr Wolf-Rüdiger Janzen, President of the Baltic Sea Chambers of Commerce Association

records within the period 1995-1996 have been handled properly. Furthermore, the Secretary presented the proposal for UBC budget for the financial period 1998-1999.

UBC incomes are based on membership annual fees depending on the size of member city. The Conference took note of the auditor's report and approved the level of membership fees and the budget for the financial period 1998-1999.

Mr Anders Engström submitted to the General Conference the amendments to UBC Statute proposed by the Executive Board. The Conference decided to accept the proposed amendments.

New Executive Board

The following cities were elected as members of UBC Executive Board for the next two-year period: **Aalborg**

(Denmark), **Bergen** (Norway), **Gdańsk** (Poland), **Kaliningrad** (Russia), **Klaipėda** (Lithuania), **Pärnu** (Estonia), **Rçekne** (Latvia), **Rostock** (Germany), **Stockholm** (Sweden), **Turku** (Finland).

Presidential Elections

The General Conference elected **Mr Anders Engström**, Mayor of Kalmar as President of the Union and **Mr Michael Bouteiller**, Mayor of Lübeck and **Mr Bart³omiej Sochański**, Mayor of Szczecin as Vice-Presidents of the Union for the next two-year period.

UBC Secretariat

Following the offer of the Mayor of Gdańsk the Conference decided to maintain the location of the UBC Secretariat in Gdańsk in the "Green Gate" for the next six-year period 1998-2003.

New Commission

Following the decision of the Executive Board, the General Conference decided to approve the creation of 8th UBC working Commission on Business Cooperation and encouraged all member cities to actively participate in the Commission work.

Next Conference

Following the proposal of the Mayor of Stockholm, Mr Mats Hulth, the General Conference decided to hold its 5th Meeting in the City of Stockholm, in the year 1999.

Closing the meeting, Mr Anders Engström, the President of the Union, expressed his warm thanks to all participants, speakers, guests and hosts in particular, for their outstanding contribution to the success of the IV UBC General Conference.

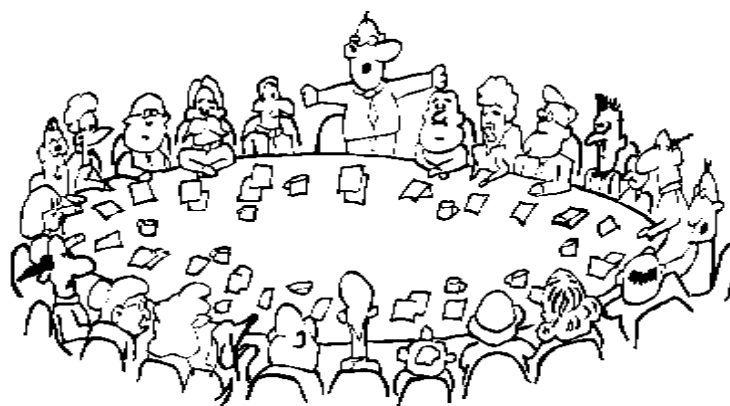
UBC PRESIDENTIAL VISIT TO BRUSSELS

The UBC President Mr Anders Engström and Vice-President Mr Bart³omiej Sochański were the heads of a small delegation visiting the EU Commission on October 14 - 15, 1997. The other persons were the UBCEU Project Leader Mr Dominik Górski, and the UBC Project Manager Mr Juhan Janusson.

The main purpose of the visit was to market the UBCEU project, which aims at preparing the UBC member cities for the enlargement of the EU and at marketing the UBC in general.

The program of the visit was made up by the Copenhagen Office and the South Sweden Office. Their officers, Mr Peter Rosenberg and Ms Åse Svensson made a great job to prepare and carry out the visits.

The UBC delegation met Mr Rudolf Niessler of DG XVI. His section is responsible for developing the programs of DGXVI and other cooperating DG's. As he also participated at the UBC General Conference, he is a friend of the UBC inside the Commission. During the meeting, we discussed among others the



UBC's role and the UBC as project implementor.

The delegation also met with Ms Nathalie Vershelde, who is an expert on EU Programs and Program Development, especially the Baltic Sea Region programs. The delegation received from her interesting insights about the processes within the Commission and what is to be expected in a near future.

Ms Ylva Tiveus-Kronlund from the DG X is responsible for some EU information policies to various organisations. She told the delegation that it is difficult to find funding for the UBCEU project for the amounts needed,

but as the project is very interesting also for the EU, she would investigate the matter further.

In the evening there was a reception at the Hanse-Office in Brussels. About 30 persons from various European Institutions, like the European Parliament, and also from various UBC member city offices in Brussels attended the reception.

The next day, the UBC Project Manager paid visits to representatives in Brussels. The offices of Stockholm, South-Sweden, Schlesvig-Holstein, North Sweden, East and South Finland and the Estonian Delegation to the EU were visited.

The custom of having representative

offices in Brussels is a fast developing phenomenon. We were informed that there exists 155 various offices, representing regional and local authorities. It is in a high degree also a north-European custom, since there are very few such offices from the south of Europe. The possibility for the UBC to utilise member city resources in Brussels is a great opportunity.

The main lesson from the Brussels visit is that the UBC needs an EU policy in order to communicate efficiently with the Commission. The number of various interest groups is so great that a strategy is needed. A vague concept will only disappear among all competitors out of the attention of the Commission.

THE NUMBER OF UBC MEMBER CITIES IS 79 !

UBC warmly welcomes the new member cities:

Cesis (Latvia)

Elva, Keila, Kärđla, Narva and Viljandi (Estonia)

Norrtälje, Nyköping and Uppsala (Sweden)

FOCUS ON PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

The UBC Task Force for PR and Communication meeting under the theme "Project Management and Commu-nication" attracted over 30 participants from 25 member cities to Kalmar on October 4-7, 1997. Jointly to this seminar there took also place a smaller UBC Internet training course for the member cities interested in developing their own home pages.

UBC Project CV at your service

A number of topics and initiatives were introduced and discussed in the Task Force meeting. One of the most fruitful sessions was the exchange of practical project experiences among the participants. The Task Force has now prepared a book listing some major international projects in the member cities to be used as a reference for further contacts and cooperation. This booklet will be mailed to all TF members and other cities can order it from the Task Force Office in Tampere.

BSA as a tool for communication

The UBC is one of the founding fathers of the Baltic Sea Alliance, - a www-platform for practical project management. This was introduced also in the meeting and it received quite an enthusiastic response. All UBC member



Task Force members updating the Baltic Sea Alliance data system in Kalmar.

cities are from now on encouraged to report their activities to this site (www.balticsea.net) and to use it as a tool in their daily work. Also an exclusive e-mail list for Task Force members was put up in Kalmar.

Many activities on their way

Additionally there were many other innovative ideas presented by the participants and e.g. the following (to mention only few) were put into action: The Task Force agreed on an internal publicity campaign in the member cities as well as on a primary school driven PR

-project for the whole UBC. The UBC Who is Who Directory is being launched at the beginning of the year and the used equipment marketplace from the UBC Environmental Bulletin will be expanded also to this main Bulletin. The very much requested Task Force project management and EU training sessions will continue also in the future.

And, yes, faithful to the Task Force tradition, the city of Kalmar hosted a great adventure programme including glass blowing, UBC petanq tournament and a medieval dinner in the Castle. Be sure to be in the next meeting in Szczecin in 1998.