

CPMR

BALTIC SEA COMMISSION

BOARD MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Riga, 7th April 1999, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Venue: The Union of Selfgovernment in Latvia, Maza Pils 1, LV-1050 Riga.
Telephone +371 7326634. Fax +371 7212241.

MINUTES

In attendance during the day:

President:

Hannu Tapiola, Regional Council of Kymenlaakso, Finland

Members:

Anders Gustâv, Stockholm County Council, Sweden; Vice President
Ms Ligita Začesta, Union of Local and Regional Governments of Latvia
Jørgen Kvist, Bornholm County, Denmark
Šarūnas Laužikas, Šilutė District Municipality, Lithuania

Deputy members:

Ilgonis Šteinbergs, Riga District Council, Latvia
Aleksandras Agafonovas, Klaipeda County, Lithuania

Invited speakers:

Tapani Kohonen, Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission, Finland
Bjarne Lindström, CPMR Scientific Council
Bo Löwendahl, Baltic Institute, Karlskrona, Sweden
Christer Stighäll, Norrtälje, Stockholm County, Sweden
Jaakko Mikkola, Regional Council of Kymenlaakso, Finland

Others:

Ms Annemarie Elverum, Århus County, Denmark
Jan Lundgren, Gotland Municipality, Sweden
Ms Dace Ozola, Union of Local and Regional Governments of Latvia
Ms Stephanie M. Kristensson, Uppsala County Council, Sweden
Juha Talvitie, Regional Council of Kymenlaakso, Finland
Ms Claudine Stanislas, CPMR secretariat, Rennes, France
Ms Silja Kasmann, CPMR secretariat, Rennes, France
François Desrentes, CPMR secretariat, Rennes, France
Ms Barbro Stådje, BSC Secretariat, Stockholm County Council, Sweden
Björn Kinberg, BSC Executive Secretary, Stockholm County Council, Sweden

I : Opening

Opening the meeting **President Hannu Tapiola** addressed a few words of welcome to the Members of the Executive Committee and other persons present. He thanked the Latvian hosts for organising the meeting. Board members **Ligita Začesta** and **Ilgonis Šteinbergs**, and officer **Dace Ozola** informed about the Riga Region, the tasks of the Union of Selfgovernment in Latvia, and of Latvian regional reform.

- The **Executive Secretary** reported how the meeting had been called. The procedure was approved with the suggestion to omit, for technical reasons, logotypes and pictures from e-mail messages.
- The Agenda of the day was approved.
- The minutes of the previous meeting in Brussels 18th of February 1999 were approved.

II : Internal issues

Vice President **Anders Gustâv**, who met the board members for the first time, informed about his involvement esp. in transportation issues, with the help and on behalf of CPMR in the Committee of the Regions (COR). He is the COR rapporteur in these matters, together with Sr **Valcarcel Siso**, president of the Murcia region.

The executive secretary informed about committee members' eligibility and disclosed a communication with Estonian partners indicating withdrawal from the board by Vice President **Hannes Danilov** and Mr **Tiit Laja**, both leaving their present regional posts. New nominations are expected from the Baltic states, to be brought before the General Assembly in September.

Mr **Sarunas Lauzikas** will represent the Baltic Sea Commission at the CLRAE Baltic Sea Conference at Kaunas 21-23 April, instead of Vice President Gustâv, who initially received the invitation but is prevented from taking part.

Board meetings during the remaining part of 1999: the next one in Stockholm on **17th June**, starting at 10 a.m. A social evening is foreseen for those arriving the day before. At the meeting representatives of Öland will give a report on the preparations for the General Assembly and a draft agenda will be discussed. – On **2-3rd September**, Öland, Sweden, in connection with the General Assembly. – On **11th November** at Mariehamn, Åland, Finland.

The executive secretary informed about the new membership of the Västerbotten region. A presentation will be made at the board meeting in Stockholm and the CPMR Political Bureau meeting at Telemark, Norway, on **21st June**. Informally, Västerbotten is already welcomed as a member.

Membership fees for the non-EU regions were discussed. Ms **Claudine Stanislas** explained

a pending proposal: half the amount before EU accession or until the economic level of the poorest EU member state was reached. Mr **Aleksandras Agafonovas** pointed out that one should take into consideration that the level of the peripheral maritime regions tended to be lower than the average of the nation and the fee thus too high. – It was suggested that the Baltic members propose an amendment to that effect for the Political Bureau at Telemark.

The German and Polish situation was considered. Mecklenburg-Vorpommern seems to be on its way into the organisation. They will be visited by CPMR/BSC in the summer. So will the maritime Polish regions. – CPMR President **Vannino Chiti** and President Tapiola have written letters to prepare Polish regions for acquisition efforts. Mr **Bjarne Lindström** opined that Polish regions tend to be continentally oriented rather than looking towards the Baltic Sea. Mr **Gustâv** pointed out the importance of having at least one Polish maritime member region in the organisation.

III : Activities within the CPMR

In the absence of Mr **Stig Östdahl** the Vaasa General Assembly was mentioned only briefly: A draft agenda has been presented to the Political Bureau. Political documents dealing with EU Enlargement, the Northern Dimension and the concept of Northern Peripherality will be prepared.

The executive secretary informed about the present state of collaboration with and within the CPMR intercommissions and thematic groups:

America latina: The democratisation of South America has given the co-operation between the European Union and the continent new impetus, signified by a Summit with heads of state and government that will take place in Rio de Janeiro in June. The aim of the CPMR America latina intercommission group is to contribute to this process by efforts to promote decentralised intercontinental collaboration, to define areas of prospective co-operation, and to work for the removal of trade, institutional and other barriers. A draft treaty to this effect between CPMR and CODESUL-CRECENEA (South Brazil/North Argentine regions) will be initialled in Spain in April and signed by Governors/Presidents of the concerting regions at a meeting in Brazil in May. – Stockholm, promoting itself as a gateway region, is the only Baltic Sea Commission member involved in this group, although the commission, of course, strongly supports its general aims and objectives.

Medbalt: The Youth Forum project should start in collaboration with the Stockholm region, which will invite some youths and politicians to the Youth Forum next year. The Medbalt issue is a special point of order on the agenda of the Intermediterranean Commission's General Assembly in Livorno 6-7 May.

ESDP group: The position paper promised by Mr **Olav Jern** will be ready for the meeting in Stockholm 17 June. The **PLANET** project, a practical facet of ESDP, is in full swing. Mr **Bo Löwendahl**, one of the speakers invited to Riga, gave a lecture to the PLANET participants at a seminar in Gotland in March.

Fishing group: Dr **Rolf Gydemo**, of Gotland, has been suggested as member of this group. Dr Gydemo has excellent academic merits and practical experience within this field

Scientific council: As foretold by the executive secretary at the board meeting in Brussels 18 February, members of the Scientific council from the Baltic Sea Area at the council's meeting in Porto 19-20 March brought up the question of how to make the Council and its findings even more useful to member regions. Their suggestions met a generally positive response. One of the speakers invited to Riga, Dr **Bjarne Lindström**, Mariehamn, Finland, is chosen to represent the Baltic Sea Commission in the Scientific council; he gave a report of the Porto meeting.

Dr Lindström saw himself as a bridge between the Baltic Sea Commission and the Scientific council. What do you want from us? What parts of the BSC strategy document should be prioritised? How do we communicate regularly? – The matter will be discussed by the board in Stockholm and Dr Lindström will make a presentation with suggestions at the General Assembly in Öland. – Mr Guståv, on the question of priorities, stressed the task of “*supporting regional participation*”, pointing out that national governments and central players have been too dominant in establishing the overall co-operation framework, while local and regional entities have been left little influence on the policies in this field.

In this context, the executive secretary informed briefly about the tightening links between CPMR and AER (Assembly of European Regions). He mentioned the AER Summer School, which will be held in Porec, Croatia, this summer and in Vilnius, Lithuania, next year, as an example of a small, practical project that might benefit from the academic expertise of the Scientific council.

Coastal zones intercom group: The group is now starting work, with Stockholm county as lead partner. Politically responsible is Mayor **Christer Candal**, Norrtälje, Sweden. Expert is **Christer Stighäll**, Director of Forum Balticum. Mr Stighäll was present and outlined the structure of the future work. Dr **François Desrentes** of the CPMR Head office and responsible for the co-ordination of the group, gave a timetable for the immediate task of evaluating the EU Coastal zone management pilot projects:

- In April: distribution of material
- one month for comments and draft CPMR position
- 21 June: before the Political Bureau at Telemark
- July, August: General consultation and Group meeting
- 22-23 September: General Assembly in Vaasa

Mr **Tapani Kohonen**, Executive Secretary of the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (the Helsinki Commission, “HELCOM”) presented HELCOM and its activities. He suggested a “partnership” with the Baltic Sea Commission, inviting the commission to rally as an “associated organisation”. – A matter for the board meeting in Stockholm.

Mr **Bo Löwendahl**, Director of Interreg II C Common Secretariat, Branch Office, Karlskrona, Sweden, informed about Interreg and VASAB – Visions And Strategies Around the Baltic sea. The Baltic Sea Commission was handed two very valuable, concrete offers to consider: taking part in the Programming work; taking part in the consultation process. As an extra bonus, Mr Löwendahl offered two representatives of Baltic states free access (all costs paid) to the seminar in **Gdansk 6-7th May**: “Baltic Sea Region Green Spots”. The aim of this seminar is to establish a working dialogue between spatial planning and environment protection in sensitive and

environmentally valuable areas in the Baltic Sea Region. – Aforementioned suggestions, too, will be further considered at the Stockholm meeting.

Mr **Jaakko Mikkola**, Planning manager, Karhula, Finland, presented a proposal for a possible Interreg project, *Radiomedical Telemedicine in Seafaring*. The idea has been elaborated by a working group of the Kymenlaakso Polytechnic School, Finland. A full project description could be ready at the beginning of 2000. - The result of a preliminary search for partners and experts is to be deliberated in Stockholm.

IV : General information about CPMR and Member Regions actions

Ms Claudine Stanislas informed under this heading. – Information of the rejection on the side of the Committee of the Regions of the idea of granting EU accession candidates observatory status with the COR. Discussion followed, and Mr Gustâv, being member of the COR, could explain the reasoning behind COR:s position. – The CPMR Activity report is annexed to these Minutes. The CPMR Newsletter is to be found under the internet address www.crpm.org.

IV: Miscellaneous

V : Conclusions

The President put a few concluding questions to the Executive Committee to consider: What do the region members expect of the Baltic Sea Commission? What do you want to do? Shall we arrange special meetings or seminars? – The President once again thanked the Union of Selfgovernment of Latvia for making the meeting possible in their premises, for giving an interesting insight into its work and for hosting a delicious luncheon, and he wished everyone welcome to the next Executive Committee meeting in Stockholm on the 17th of June.

Keeping the minutes:

Barbro Städje/

