

Minutes
Euroregion Baltic Council Meeting
Malbork, 24 February 2003

Council Members:

Normunds Niedols, President
Roberts Bērziņš, Liepāja Region Council, Latvia
Annelise Molin, Bornholm, Denmark
Knud Andersen, Bornholm, Denmark
Šarūnas Reikalas, Klaipėda Municipality, Lithuania
Irena Šatkauskienė, Palanga town Municipality, Lithuania
Janina Lukauskienė, Neringa Town Municipality, Lithuania
Zbigniew Karpowicz, Vice President of Olsztyn Municipality, Poland
Henryk Słonina, President of Elbląg Municipality, Poland
Jadwiga Semmerling, Młynary Town Municipality, Poland
Tadeusz Lubaszewski, Ostróda Town Municipality, Poland
Alexander Kuznetsov, Mayor of Baltiysk, Kaliningrad Oblast, Russia
Vladimir Balagin, Kaliningrad Regional Council, Russia
Victor Romanovsky, Head of Department, Kaliningrad Regional Administration, Russia
Viktor Koshelev, Deputy Head of Baltiysk Municipal District, Russia
Ulf Andersson, Kronoberg County Council, Sweden
Ragnar Lindberg, Kronoberg County Council, Sweden
Gert Wollinger, County of Kalmar, Sweden
Ethel Duvskog, Blekinge Regional Council, Sweden

National Secretariats:

Gunta Strēle, ERB official secretariat
Gunta Cepleviča, ERB national secretariat, Latvia
Niels Chresten Andersen, ERB national secretariat, Bornholm
Karen Lynn Jacobsen, ERB national secretariat, Bornholm
Roma Stubriene, ERB national secretariat, Lithuania
Vytautas Rinkevičius, ERB national secretariat, Lithuania
Zdzisław Olszewski, ERB national secretariat, Poland
Malgorzata Samusjew, ERB national secretariat, Poland
Adrianna Gniado, ERB national secretariat, Poland
Elena Butorova, ERB national secretariat, Russia
Evgeniya Cherniavskaya, ERB national secretariat, Russia
Andrey Moshkov, ERB national secretariat, Russia
Amalij Samerhanova, ERB national secretariat, Russia
Alexander Mokshin, ERB national secretariat, Russia
PG Lindencrona, ERB national secretariat, Southeast Sweden

Other guests:

Marianne Eckerbom, chairman ERB Environmental working group

Sabine Kloss – Tullius, EU Delegation, Task Manager
Sonata Dumbliauskiene, Kalipeda County, Lithuania
Vytautas Kriščiūnas, Klaipeda County, Lithuania
Kestutis Oginskas, Klaipeda County, Lithuania
Mindaugas Griškevičius, Klaipeda County Governors Administration,
Lithuania
Grzegorz Grzelak, First President of ERB, Poland
Witold Gintowt-Dziewaltowski, First President of Association of
Communes of Euroregion Baltic of RP, Poland
Andrey Janicki-Rola, former Consul of RP in Kaliningrad, Poland
Katarzyna Cymbarewicz, Phare CBC IA, Poland
Artur N. Kuzniecowa, Embassy of RF in Warsaw, Poland
Juri Rożkow- Jurjewskij, Embassy of RF in Warsaw, Poland
Stanislaw Kozłowski, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Poland
Zbigniew Kruzynski, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Poland
Juri Hleblikov, MoFA of Russia Representation in Kaliningrad, Russia
Svetlana Stegnienko, Chairman of Baltijsk branch of “Youth Unity”
(NGO), Russia
Lars- Owe Persson, Consul General of Sweden
Rolf A. Karlson, Seagull project manager
Eric Ciardi, Seagull project
Håkan Brynielsson, Regional Council of Calmar County, Sweden
Daniel Sköld, Blekinge Region, Sweden
Magdalena Kurczewska-Svensson, Karlskrona, Sweden

Mr. Niedols, Chairman of the meeting welcomed everybody for the meeting of the ERB Council in Malbork and underlined that it marks the fifth anniversary of the establishment of the ERB. In the speech he stressed an importance of the co-operation among the Euroregion countries that is the right way to achieve common development goals.

Mrs. Gunta Strele informed about the agenda for the Council meeting.
Everybody agreed to the proposed agenda.

§ 1 Approval of previous Council minutes.

Mr. Niedols asked for comments to the minutes of the previous Council meeting.
Decision: To approve the minutes of the previous Council meeting.

§ 2 Appointment of person to co-sign minutes of the current Council meeting

Decision: Mrs. Annelise Molin is appointed to co-sign the minutes of the meeting.

§ 3 Information on organisational changes

Mrs. Gunta Strele informed the Council that the function of the Latvian ERB national secretariat is transferred to the Baltic Sea Coast Development Agency (to be reorganised as the Kurzeme Planning Region Development Agency) from December 2002 (Letter of Mr. Zigo Rutkovskis, Director of the Baltic Sea Coast Development Agency).

Decision: To take note of the information.

§ 4 Final Report and recommendations from “ Good Governance”

Mr. Lars Öhman introduced the activities performed under the ‘Good Governance’ project that aims at sharing the Swedish administrative experience and promote co-operation among the municipalities. The target group of the project was active local and regional politicians. During the previous year 15 seminars were taking place in Latvia, Lithuania, Russia and Sweden involving 120 participants. National ERB secretariats were taking active part in the project activities.

The following conclusions were made after the project implementation:

- ✓ The ERB secretariats should be strengthened to support politicians;
- ✓ Co-operation mechanisms should be developed;
- ✓ Focused leadership;
- ✓ EU membership could develop extended decentralisation.

Mr. Lars Öhman informed that the Final report of the project is available on the home page www.eurobalt.org. There were no questions or comments.

Decision: To take the information for further consideration.

§ 5 Report from Seagull project

5.1. Platform for new projects

Mr. Rolf A. Karlson told that the Ronneby Resolution that was discussed in the Board meeting this morning is directed to the Board for action to initiate appropriate activities, serves as a platform for development of new project proposals. The Ronneby resolution will be prepared till the next Executive Board meeting and presented.

Mr. Rolf A. Karlson mentioned about the Interreg IIIA programme under which more financial resources for projects will become available and urged the ERB bodies to follow the developments in order not to miss the deadlines for the next programming period.

Mr. P. G. Lindencrona told that the Baltic Gateway project is approved for financing from the Interreg III B programme. It involves 27 partners from 7 countries. The main aim of it is to investigate the East- West transport corridor. The project will be started in March 2003, now the organisation of the Secretariat takes place.

There were no questions or comments.

Decision: To take the information for further consideration.

5.2. Seagull activity plan for next period

Mr. Rolf A. Karlson reminded that the Seagull project was developed to in order to concretize the ERB cooperation and to support regional development, water management, innovative environment development, rural development and information activities. Much information about the project is available on the home page www.eurobalt.org.

The project has started in the end of August 2002; this week the first progress report is prepared, will be discussed tomorrow in the Steering Committee of the project. During the period mainly start-up actions were performed, the biggest event within the framework of the project was Ronneby conference, the project working groups were established and have had their first meetings. Also special studies were launched: the studies on democracy and equal opportunities, regional development plans, statistical data and GIS (Geographical Information System). Up till now the project is on the time schedule.

For the next period the project activities of the milestones 2 and 3 will be followed.

Mr. Rolf A. Karlson also noted that the shortage of resources allows less active participation of the Latvian, Lithuanian and Russian partners in the project activities and expressed the hope that some assistance to these partners could be received from Phare and Tacis programmes or the Nordic Council of Ministers.

There were no questions or comments.

Decision: To take note of the information.

§ 6 Reports from ERB Environmental working group – Green school project

Mrs. Marianne Eckerbom informed about the activities of the ERB Environmental working group during the previous period: the programme was drafted on further activities of the working group, the priority for water mainly will be covered under the Seagull project. The 'Green School' project is under the implementation. The Environmental working group meeting was planned for the following day.

The Project Coordinator informed about the 'Green School' project activities and success of the project in involvement of the schools, the network developed.

Decision:

1. To support the 'Green School' project.
2. The Project Coordinator should prepare more precise information on the needs for further implementation of the 'green school' project.

§ 7 Resolution on Maritime Safety

Mr. P. G. Lindencrona introduced the prepared Resolution on the Maritime Safety.

Decision:

1. To accept the Maritime Safety Resolution.
2. The National Secretariats should send out the Resolution to the parties concerned.

§ 8 AEBR membership

Mr. Niels Chresten Andersen informed on the current situation concerning AEBR membership and reminded that this question was discussed already for long time.

The discussion started on the strong and weak points for different associations, the aims of the ERB for taking part in each of them.

The proposal was put forward to organise the next ERB Board meeting in Brussels and to use this possibility to meet some of the associations and to discuss the membership question with representatives of the Committee of Regions.

Decision:

To further investigate the question on and to report at the next ERB Council meeting on the findings and results.

§ 9 Annual Report from the presidency

Mrs. Gunta Strēle presented the printed Annual Report for the year 2002 in English. The report provides with the aims and structure of the ERB organisation, gives the contact information, as well as describes the Seagull and Good Governance projects. It has a special chapter on the page 7 that emphasises the 5th anniversary of the Euroregion Baltic.

The text of the 2002 Annual Report is available also on the web site.

Each Secretariat is going to receive a number of printed copies. The Russian translation of the report will be available later on.

Mr. Normunds Niedols gave a short speech underlining the importance of creation and development of open-minded cooperation spirit between all parties involved in ERB. He mentioned new projects that are recently approved and started or are underway and wished good success in their further implementation.

At the end of the speech Mr. Niedols presented awards for special input into the development of organisation.

In an honour of the 5th anniversary all the Delegations has announced speeches and presented awards.

Decision: To take note of the information.

§ 10 Change of Presidency

Mrs. Annelise Molin told that the Danish side, Bornholm takes over the ERB presidency from the Latvian side and stressed that the outcome will be dependent from everybody's input. She said that the main objectives of the Danish presidency

are set and so they would like to assure good prepared meetings and assure that the participants could prepare before coming to the meetings so the basic information on issues should be sent. She also stressed importance of co-financing for the Seagull project to be delivered in time allowing involvement of the experts. In order to strengthen the ERB internally, more partners in each region should be involved and information should be sent out for economic and social partners. Mrs. Molin announced that she would take an initiative to visit each of the partner regions and inform the Council on the findings of the visits.

Mrs. Molin informed that the Activity plan for the next year will be available on the home page www.eurobalt.org. It will be coordinated with the activities of the Seagull project. The following ERB meetings are planned:

- ✓ Board meeting - 26 May 2003 in Brussels or in Bornholm,
- ✓ Council meeting – 29 August 2003,
- ✓ Board meeting – 31 October 2003,
- ✓ Board meeting – 23 January 2004,
- ✓ Council meeting – 27 February 2004.

Decision: To take the information for further consideration.

§ 11 Other matters

No other matters were discussed.

Mr. Normunds Niedols,
President of ERB

Mrs. Annelise Molin,
Member of the ERB Council
Mayor of Bornholm

Gunta Ceplevica
ERB Secretariat