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UN Economic and Social  
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# International Union of Tenants

Association Internationale des Locataires

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**IUT Secretariat:**

President; Sven Bergenstråhle, Sweden, Vice President; Richard Hewgill, England,  
Vice president; Jan Laurier, the Netherlands, Secretary General; Magnus Hammar, As-  
sistant Secretary; Ylva Westander

## Minutes

### IUT Board Meeting, Vienna, Austria April 8-9, 2011

**Present**

Austria

Georg Niedermühlbichler, MVÖ

Nadja Shah, MVÖ

Czech Rep.

Anna Pachtová, SON

Denmark

Jørgen D. Jensen, LLO

Finland

Anne Viita, Vuokralaiset ry

France

Eddie Jacquemart, CNL

Germany

Heidrun Clausen, DMB

Lukas Siebenkotten, DMB

Netherlands

Ronald Paping, Woonbond

Norway

Lars Aasen, LBF

Sweden

Anders Konradsson, SUT

Switzerland

François Zutter, ASLOCA

Jakob Trümpy, MV

IUT Brussels

Barbara Steenbergen, Head of IUT liaison office to the EU

IUT Secretariat

Sven Bergenstråhle, President

Richard Hewgill, Vice President

Jan Laurier, Vice President

Magnus Hammar, Secretary General

Ylva Westander, Assistant Secretary

## **1. Opening of the meeting**

Sven Bergenstråhle, president of the IUT, opened the meeting and welcomed the board members.

## **2. Adoption of the agenda**

The draft agenda was adopted as written. Three additional items, IUT on Facebook, the French tenants' elections and the rent negotiations in Czech Republic, were discussed under item 15 of the agenda.

## **3. Follow up on the congress in Prague, 2010**

The IUT Board members unanimously expressed their gratitude to the Czech Union of Tenants, SON, for a well organised and successful 18<sup>th</sup> congress. Anna Pachtová handed over CD's from the congress with photos and presentations.

## **4. Minutes from previous board meeting, Prague, September 30, 2010**

The IUT EU strategy (item 10b. in the minutes of the board meeting) was to be discussed later. The IUT statement to the World Assembly of Inhabitants (item 11 in the minutes of the previous board meeting) which was to be sent to Dakar was never written and sent. Magnus Hammar apologised for this.

## **5. Financial result 2010**

Magnus Hammar presented the 2010 financial result. Some differences between the budget and the result are due to currency fluctuations between the Euro and the Swedish Krona. Payments are made in Euro, then exchanged (by the bank) to SEK, then back to Euro.

Further, the SUT regular contribution to the EU office, for rent and running costs (€ 13.000 in 2010), was not included in the Annual Report - Notes to the Annual Accounts (item X-tra contributions) due to previous agreements between the SUT and DMB. But from 2011 this contribution will be included

**The report was noted and approved.**

## **6. Budget 2011, Stockholm and Brussels**

Magnus Hammar presented the 2011 budget. The IUT Secretariat proposed two changes to the agreed budget from previous meeting in Prague 2010; an increase by € 2,500 for the Brussels office, which would then have a total budget of € 40,000. Also, the Secretariat asked for an increase of the budget for 'IUT Secretariat, by € 2.000, which would then have a total budget of € 3,000.

Anders Konradsson, SUT, pointed out that the difference between the budgeted € 40.000 for the Brussels office and the amount submitted through voluntary fees from the board members should not be paid by the SUT, but by the IUT.

**The board approved the budget and the correction made by Anders Konradsson.**

## **7. EU Advisory Working Group**

Sven Bergenstråhle proposed to the board

- a. that the EU advisory/strategy WG should consist of Barbara Steenberg (chair), René van Genu-  
gten and Jan Laurier. Jan Laurier will take a political view on issues, and send his views to board  
members for consideration. Other board members are welcome to participate.
- b. Barbara Steenberg will send out any IUT statements and other official IUT papers to board  
members for consideration and approval.

- c. Barbara will select EU issues that can be of particular importance to any IUT board member and communicate these issues with these members.

## **8. IUT Tenants' Day theme, October 3, 2011**

Magnus Hammar gave a presentation on how young people live in Europe and the board discussed the Tenants' Day theme. Barbara Steenbergen presented the draft program for the day, including possible speakers. She is going to need more suggestions on possible speakers.

**The board agreed on the theme for the Tenants' Day; providing affordable rental homes for the young.**

## **9. Applications for IUT CEE projects 2011**

Magnus Hammar presented the submitted applications and the allotment proposed by the secretariat. The board has mandated the IUT Secretariat to make decisions on the applications. The Russian Tenants Association was granted € 6,000 and the Slovak organisation was granted € 2,000.

The secretariat also suggested that a new criterion, encouraging co-financing, should be introduced in the application process.

The board discussed whether the decision on funding should be delegated to the Secretariat, and the came to the conclusion that this delegation was necessary, because of late spring meetings of the IUT Board.

**The report was noted.**

## **10. Application for IUT membership from UNIAT, Italy**

Magnus Hammar presented an application for IUT from UNIAT, Italy.

**The board accepted the UNIAT as a category B member.**

## **11. EU themes 2011, priorities**

Barbara Steenbergen presents seven IUT EU priorities for 2011/2012.

- Energy efficiency in buildings
- Housing and state aid
- SGI and the EU single market
- Civil society stakeholder dialogue
- Housing as a fundamental right
- ERDF, social inclusion and urban cohesion
- VAT harmonisation and the rents

Barbara Steenbergen will need national expertise on all of these topics.

**All board members should nominate people as they can by May 1, 2011, especially on the VAT issue.**

**Regarding the SGI topic, a sector directive may worsen the situation and is hence no longer something that the IUT strives for.**

## **12. Updates on the Dutch and Swedish cases**

a. Jan Laurier, Chair of the Woonbond, gave an update on the Dutch situation. From now on, according to a national decision 90 percent of the available housing, **belonging to Dutch housing corporations**, has to be allocated to households with a total income below € 33.614 per year. The Woonbond is still struggling with a national lobbying campaign to adjust the income limit.

b. Anders Konradsson, SUT, gave an update on the Swedish situation. In 2010, after an agreement had been made between the SUT and Swedish public municipal housing companies, the European Property Foundation withdrew their complaint to the Commission. The agreement consisted of proposals for changes in the legislation on municipal housing companies and the rent act, all accepted by the government. The major change in the legislation for the municipal housing companies is that these companies, according to the new rules, are to be run more businesslike. There is an understanding in the real estate sector that this change in the rules merely is an adaptation to already existing conditions for public housing companies. The major change in the rent act is that the rents in the municipal housing companies no longer have a standardising role when rents in the private sector are negotiated.

### **13. Housing Rights Watch**

Richard Hewgill reported on the activities of the Housing Rights Watch network.

**The board decided to let Richard Hewgill be the link between the IUT and the HRW network. This means Richard will go to the HRW meetings (twice a year, on IUT's expense) and feed relevant information to the board or to national contact persons.**

### **14. On IUT tactics and strategy**

Sven Bergenstråhle presented a personal paper on IUT tactics and strategy.

The board discussed whether the strategy should focus on rental housing or affordable housing in general. The general view was that IUT's role was to promote and protect affordable rental housing in particular.

**The paper was noted.**

### **15. Other Reports**

#### **a. IUT on Facebook**

Nadja Shah has created a Facebook page for the IUT. She encouraged the board to visit the page and spread the information to the national organisations.

#### **b. The French tenants' elections**

The French tenants in social and public housing have voted for board members of the housing companies. In the elections, which were held in November 2010, CNL got 42 percent of the votes, giving the organisation 720 board members in the social and public housing companies.

#### **c. Rent negotiations in Czech Republic**

From 2011, rents in most cities of the Czech Republic should be set in negotiations between the landlords and SON. So far, Anna Pachtová describes the negotiations as successful.

### **16. Next board meeting**

The next board meeting will be held in Brussels on October 2 2011, 11 p.m. to 6 a.m.

## **17. Closure of board meeting**

Sven Bergenstråhle closed the board meeting.

Stockholm, April 2011

/Sven Bergenstråhle/  
/ President

/Ylva Westander/  
Assistant secretary

/Magnus Hammar  
Secretary General