

Kolding, 10 March 2012

**Dear members of CECICN, dear friends!**

I am writing to you as the new President of our Conference of European Cross-Border and Interregional City Networks – CECICN. On 8 March 2012 the representatives of the Conference of Atlantic Arc Cities, the Mision Opérationelle Transfrontalière, the Red Ibérica de Entidades Transfronterizas, the Forum of Adriatic and Ionian Cities, the Medcities and the Union of the Baltic Cities have elected me unanimously as new President of CECICN.

My thanks goes to Founding President, Xosé Antonio Sanchez Bugallo, to Vice-President Philippe Duron, to Secretary-General Xoam Mao and to Director-General Jean Perony. Together with all the representatives of our member cities and regions, you have established the CECICN as a heard voice in Europe.

Alone we would have needed for the job at least one life. Together we made it in just two years.

The objective of CECICN is to boost territorial cooperation among border cities in Europe and to reinforce the message concerning the importance of territorial cooperation. We gather six cooperating networks and represent more than 500 cities in border regions and 37% of the European population.

I am coming from Denmark, a small but proud and friendly country in northern Europe. We always had and still have borders - both natural and artificial as the sea and land borders. What we never had and never will have were borders in our minds and hearts. For me it was always a matter of fact that we can achieve everything, if we are willing and able to cooperate with people from other parts of Europe. As President of the Union of the Baltic Cities, the leading city network in Northern Europe, representing over 100 cities of the 10 countries of the Baltic Sea Region I had the chance to learn how much one can achieve through cooperation. As member of the Committee of the Regions, I had to learn how persistent one has to be to achieve results in Brussels.

In the CECICN we are working to foster sustainable, smart and safe cities and regions in a network of experts in our 500 member cities. The main goal is to bring expertise, inspiration and share of experiences to our members. Therefore, it is of major importance to reinforce what the benefits of cooperation are, what opportunities it represents and how, through cooperation, Europe can overcome the challenges it faces in the near future. Cooperation is the key to achieve Europe2020 goals.

Dear friends, I am writing you on my 66 birthday, a day with lots of gifts and good wishes. I want to thank you all for the greatest birthday present I ever got: the opportunity to work for the CECICN and for our common future in a strong Europe.

Yours sincerely



Per Bødker Andersen  
President CECICN