



NATIONS UNIES
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ОБЪЕДИНЕННЫЕ НАЦИИ
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6 November 2009

Ms. Galina VOLCHUGA
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection
10, Kollektornaya St.
BY-220048 MINSK
Belarus
Fax: +375-17-200 55 83

Dear Ms. Volchuga,

Re: Communication to the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee concerning compliance by Belarus with provisions of the Convention in connection with a hydro power plant project on the Neman River (Ref. ACCC/C/2009/37)

With reference to our letter of 1 May 2009 concerning the above communication, we would like to inform you that at its twenty-fifth meeting (22-25 September 2009), the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee decided that the substance of communication ACCC/C/2009/37 would be considered at the Committee's twenty-sixth meeting, to be held on 15-18 December 2009 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva.

The discussion is currently scheduled to take place on Thursday 17 December 2009. It will start at 11 am and is expected to conclude no later than 5.30 pm.

In accordance with chapter IX of the annex to decision I/7 of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention, both you and the communicant are entitled to participate in the discussion on the subject matter of the communication, though not in the preparation or adoption of any findings, measures or recommendations of the Committee. Please note that the communicant will be represented in the discussion by a representative of the European ECO Forum.

According to the Committee's normal practice, the discussion on the communication, which will be held in open session, will be interspersed with at least one closed session in which the Committee will begin the process of preparing draft findings. It is envisaged that the first part of the discussion in open session will take the following form:

- introduction by the Chair;
- opening of the discussion by the curator for the case;
- presentations by a representative of the communicant and by the Party concerned, including possible joint proposals;

- questions from Committee members, responses from the Party concerned and the representative of the communicant;
- comments from other observers at the invitation of the Chair;
- final comments by the representative of the communicant;
- final comments by the Party concerned.

During the second part of the discussion (i.e. following the closed session), the Committee may pose additional questions to you or the representative of the communicant, or invite reactions to any tentative conclusions it has reached. Further details concerning the timetable for the discussions during the day will be provided nearer the time.

Should you or any other representative of your Government wish to attend the meeting, the attached registration form should be completed for each participant and sent to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, attention of Ms. Maricar de la Cruz (fax: +41 22 917 0634), by 1 December 2009.

We have requested the UN Conference Services to provide interpretation from English into Russian and vice versa during the discussion. Please indicate whether the provision of such interpretation is necessary for your participation so that we may either confirm or cancel the request (when no interpretation is provided, the Committee's discussions are held in English only).

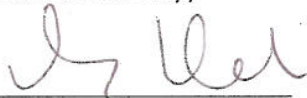
The Committee has indicated that the meeting should not be used as an occasion to introduce substantial amounts of information that could or should have been provided to it at an earlier stage, unless this is unavoidable (e.g. because it concerns very recent developments). Should you wish to present any substantial written material related to the matter, you should take into account that where such information is received less than two weeks before the scheduled meeting, it is doubtful whether the Committee would be able to take it into consideration when it is discussing the matter, even where the information is provided in English.

We take this opportunity to remind you that pursuant to paragraph 23 of the annex to decision I/7, the deadline for your Government to respond to the communication, which was forwarded to you on 1 May 2009, was 1 October 2009. We would be very grateful if you could provide your response as soon as possible but in any case no later than 10 November 2009, so that it can be circulated to the Committee and forwarded to the communicant in due time before the Committee's twenty-sixth meeting. In providing your response, please note that you should explicitly comment on the allegations in the communication as well as addressing the specific questions posed by the Committee as set out in our letter of 1 May 2009.

Please do not hesitate to contact the secretariat if you require any further information concerning the meeting.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



Jeremy Wates
Secretary

Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters

Encs. Registration form for the 26th meeting of the Compliance Committee