

**Communication to the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee
ACCC/C/2013/98 (Lithuania)**

June 25th, 2015

UPDATES ON THE LITPOL LINK PROJECT STATUS

Dear Sir/Madam,

We would like to bring to the attention of the Compliance Committee two recent facts about the current status LitPol Link project.

1. On the 1st of April there was an accident on an OHL construction site situated outside the UNESCO protected Lake Žuvintas birds reserve. Upon assembly of the cables, an OHL pylon collapsed killing a worker. Shortly after this accident, the authorities declared all the construction works are stopped and an investigation is started on verifying if the construction and its technical supervision have been conducted in agreement with the stringent requirements. In some media comments, however, interviewed technical experts doubted the chosen OHL construction technology.

The accident site is shown in the pictures below:



2. In early May, the family of the killed worker published video/photo materials¹ he had collected before the deadly accident, showing that there had been other dangerous technical failures before and that the construction company apparently tried to hide these. The owner of the LitPol Link project AB LITGRID claimed it had not been aware of these failures and accused the construction company.

In our opinion, the above accidents once again confirm the non-transparent attitude of the authorities who obviously were aiming at accomplishing the project at any price. We would like to point out that these recent accidents correlate with the previously reported cases (see our updates from February 25, 2015) of illegal demolition of the protected landscape area, another indicative of the inadequate control and inappropriate supervision of the project by the authorities. Notably, neither our NGO nor the local people have been informed by the developer or by the construction company about the accidents and the safety situation in the vicinity of the OHL construction sites (especially in the context that the farmers need to take care of their fields, children are going to the schools, etc.). Moreover, despite the safety situation is worrying and the outcomes of the technical investigations have not been published yet, the authorities keep on publically announcing² the project is being carried out according to the plan and the OHL will be commissioned by the end of the year.

Sincerely,

Dr. Ramūnas Valiokas, representative of the Assotiation Rudamina Community

¹ Some of the evidences have been shown on the Lrytas TV clip, accessible here:
<http://tv.lrytas.lt/?id=14304208381429596843>

² For example, a published interview with the Lithuanian ambassador in Poland from June 16.