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ECONOMIC COMMISSION
FOR EUROPE

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Ref: ACCC/C/2014/111

19 May 2016

Mr. Joseph van der Stegen
Attaché of Public Service of Wallonia
Department of European Policies and International Agreements
Belgium

Dear Mr. van der Stegen,

Re: Communication to the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee concerning compliance by Belgium in connection with costs for access to justice (ACCC/C/2014/111)

We are writing to inform you that the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee will hold a hearing to discuss the substance of communication ACCC/C/2014/111 at its fifty-third meeting to be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on 21 - 24 June 2016.

The hearing of the above communication is scheduled for **Thursday, 23 June 2016**, starting at 10:30 am and concluding by 4.30 pm. French language interpretation will be provided.

In accordance with chapter IX of the annex to decision I/7 of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention, both parties are entitled to participate in the hearing on the subject matter of the communication, though not in the preparation or adoption of any findings, measures or recommendations of the Committee.

According to the Committee's normal practice, the hearing of 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 hearing in open session will take the following form:

- introduction by the Chair;
- opening of the hearing by the curator for the case (10-15 minutes);
- concise presentations by the communicant and by the Party concerned, including possible joint proposals (10-15 minutes each);
- questions from Committee members, responses from the Party concerned and the communicant (30 minutes);
- comments from other observers at the invitation of the Chair (10 minutes);
- final comments by the communicant (5-10 minutes);
- final comments by the Party concerned (5-10 minutes).

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

I would be grateful if you would confirm by **next Friday, 27 May 2016**, that the Government of Belgium will participate in the hearing. Thereafter, 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 (aarhus.compliance@unece.org), by **7 June 2016**.

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 further 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.

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

Yours sincerely,



Fiona Marshall
Secretary to the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee

- Cc: Permanent Mission of Belgium to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva
Mr. Alain Lebrun, on behalf of the communicants of communication ACCC/C/2014/111, "Ardennes liégeoises" and "Terre wallonne"
- Enc: Registration form for the fifty-third meeting of the Compliance Committee