



REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
SECRETARY-GENERAL

Courtesy translation

*Inquiry - Communication of the Office of the President of the Republic of Albania
to the Aarhus Convention's Compliance Committee*

Tirana, on May 5th, 2016

**Distinguished Chair, Professor Ebbesson,
Honorable members of the Aarhus Convention's Compliance Committee,**

The Office of the President of the Republic of Albania has followed with growing concern the developments related to a construction project under development as of February 8th, 2016 at the Tirana Lake Park in Albania.

The President of the Republic is informed that the Albanian NGO's community, political parties and environmental activists have initiated court proceedings including criminal charges and administrative lawsuits against this project, that in their opinion causes serious damage to the environment of Albania's capital city and is liable of massive violations of the Aarhus Convention to which Albania is a signatory. Further to personally meeting with civil society and environmental protection activists involved in protests against this project, and to visiting the construction site, the President of the Republic was informed on disturbing acts of violence and pressure against protesters and on disproportionate use of police force also noted by the reports of the Ombudsman of the Republic of Albania.

The President of the Republic of Albania is concerned by the possible political implications, misinterpretations and by the environmental and social ramifications of this situation threatening to seriously damage the fragile democratic fiber of the Albanian society. The President of the Republic is genuinely interested to enable for an independent international inquiry into this matter, as a means to provide for a more open, positive, evidence-based and inclusive discussion of its merits with all the parties involved.

To this end, the Compliance Committee of the Aarhus Convention is kindly asked to consider the possibility of providing direct field expertise to Albania through an independent expert who would meet all the parties involved in the present contest. The Office of the President of the Republic stands ready to cover the necessary travel, accommodation and *per diem* costs for a limited field mission, and to provide the necessary preliminary information for the desk review by the Compliance Committee that may inform its decision on whether such a field engagement is necessary.

With a view on the above-mentioned implications, please, we would like this communication to be processed confidentially by the Committee.

The Office of the President is highly interested in your suggestions on addressing this issue with the Committee in the best interest of Albania and in full compliance with the provisions of the Aarhus Convention, taking into due account the relevant case law and the particularities of the state party concerned.

Looking forward to an open, productive and effective exchange of ideas with the Committee on this important matter,

Yours sincerely,

**OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC
SECRETARY GENERAL**

FLORJAN NURI

**Mr. Jonas EBBESSON
Chair of the Compliance Committee 2014-2017
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