

**9th meeting of the Working Group on EIA and SEA (Espoo Convention)**

**(Geneva, 24 – 26 August 2020)**

**Statement by the EU and its Member States**

**Agenda item 1: Adoption of the agenda**

The EU and its Member States would like to thank the Secretariat and the Chair of the 9th meeting of the Working Group on EIA and SEA for the preparatory work and organization, considering the conditions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

We understand that the organization of this meeting as a hybrid meeting allows delegations who wish to join remotely to do so, when this is necessary due to health and safety concerns in these challenging times.

Due to the existing situation, the EU and its Member States have been confronted with considerable challenges in coordinating and preparing their position. Against this background we would like to underline that the EU and its Member States will define their final position before the next Meeting of the Parties to the Espoo Convention and to the Protocol on SEA and that they reserve the right to react and comment on new developments that may arise during the hybrid meeting of the Working Group at a later stage.

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