

## CSO Statement

CSOs welcome the decision by the meeting of parties to open up the Convention and the Protocol for the countries outside of region.

We welcome the decision to prepare good practice recommendations for the application of Espoo procedures to the nuclear-energy related issues. Such guidelines should ensure that EIAs for nuclear projects cover all the possible and associated effects and issues, including severe accidents, management of radioactive waste and spent fuel, uranium mining, lifetime extensions and decommissioning of the units.

We also welcome the MoP's endorsement of the findings of the Compliance Committee, including those on Ukraine and Belarus.

The CSOs call the attention to the fact that whilst intervention of the MoP indeed initiates the improvement of the compliance in legal terms, it still seldom translates into the will by parties to suspend projects until a non-compliance with the Convention is remedied. As a current example the Astravec nuclear power plant in Belarus can be mentioned.

We urge the Parties to work on improvement of good practice on communication, cooperation and conflict resolution to ensure effective implementation of the Convention.

We note the very important role of the Implementation Committee especially in identifying and tackling problematic issues and for providing an opportunity for non-state parties, including NGOs, to bring issues of concern to the attention of the Convention. Endorsement of non-compliance findings provides an additional incentive and opportunity for the countries in non-compliance to foster the development and proper application of national environmental impact assessment procedures in line with Espoo Convention requirements.