

Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation
in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters
Fifth session
Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers
Second Session

JOINT HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT

Maastricht, 2 July 2014

10:35 a.m.-1 p.m.

THEMATIC SESSION

Provisional Programme

v.2 July 2014

Chair: Ms Wilma Mansveld, Minister for the Environment, Netherlands
Chair: Mr Jit Peters, Chair of the Meeting of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention

The thematic session will consist of two panels, which will be organized following a “Davos style” of discussion where the moderator invites panellists to speak on the basis of few questions and then leads an interactive discussion. The panellists will be invited to make a short opening statement, after which the debate will be opened to the floor. During the debate, panellists will have the opportunity to react to statements of their fellow panellists and to respond to statements or questions from the floor. To allow for more time for discussion, the number of panellists and the time for their opening statements will be limited.

The panel will be moderated by former Minister for the Environment of the Netherlands and former UNEP Director Mr. Hans Alders.

The panel discussions will be broadcasted live from the website www.aarhusmaastricht.org. The public will also have opportunities to contribute to the discussion via twitter #AarhusMaastricht.

In the context of the Aarhus 2.0 era, a video contest is being organised, whereby students will have the opportunity to prepare short videos and publish them on youtube. The winning videos will be shown at the High-level panels.

Additional practical information regarding the High-level segment as well as all the meetings in Maastricht will be available through the following mobile app: m.twoppy.com/Aarhus.

10.35-11.35 Panel 1: Right to information and environmental democracy

Inter alia, the panel is expected to discuss what does the network society require from Aarhus Convention and address issues like access to information on the chain of decision making process; protection of whistle blowers and environmental activists; sharing of information on decisions that affect citizens' well-being; promotion of environmental democracy by taking into account public input to the decision-making process.

Invited speakers

- H.E. Mr Phil Hogan, Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government of Ireland
- Mr. Khachik Hakobyan, Deputy Minister of Nature Protection of the Republic of Armenia
- Ms. Esra Buttanni, Environmental Affairs Adviser, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
- Mr. Jeremy Wates, Secretary General of the European Environmental Bureau
- Ms. Gérardine Garçon, BASF-The Chemical Company

Statements from the floor and discussion (25 minutes)

11.35 – 11:50 Coffee break

11:50 – 13.00 **Panel 2: Right to information and social media**

The session is expected to address the role of social media in providing reliable (environmental) information and discuss inter alia means of public participation, data collection and use by the citizens.

Invited speakers

- Ms. Zaneta Mikosa, Deputy State Secretary, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development of Latvia
- Mr. Lazăr Chirică, Deputy Minister of Environment of the Republic of Moldova
- Ms. Marta Szigeti Bonifert, Executive Director, Regional Environmental Centre
- Mr. Jonathan Bradley, The Consultation Institute
- Ms. Maria Westerbos, NGO Plastic Soup Foundation
- Public: Through twitter/social media

Statements from the floor and discussion (20 minutes)

13.00 **Closing of the thematic session**
