

22nd meeting of the Working Group of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention

Statement

by Association Justice and Environment, z.s.

20 June 2018

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Ladies and Gentlemen, distinguished delegates.

The network I represent here is called Justice and Environment and it is a network of public interest environmental lawyers from Europe. We are legal practitioners who do legal research and litigate in our home countries.

We use the Aarhus Convention routinely, on a daily basis and we know very well what the Aarhus Convention means to us and to the entire legal profession. There are debates now over legal issues that would be inconceivable without the Aarhus Convention. We discuss legal problems that would not exist without the Convention's existence.

The Aarhus Convention contributed significantly to the development of environmental law, and beyond, to the development of law as such, not only in Europe but elsewhere as well. It inspired and in a sense, paved the way for the Escazu Convention.

The Aarhus Convention made significant changes in our environment, on the ground. We have to focus on these changes and because there are a lot of things happening here, we have to focus on Europe now. We cannot let the achievements of the Convention deteriorate, be it a threat coming from the Member States' level or a supranational level.

We have to find the way to keep our results while helping other regions of the world to experience the same as Europe did and to live their own journey.

Thank you.