

Comments by the European ECO Forum on EU statement concerning information by the Chair of the Compliance Committee (agenda item.13)

We are concerned about possible confusion as to the term “hearings” in the context of the Compliance Committee work during the discussions at the current meeting of the Working Group of the parties.

“Hearings” may be held by the Compliance Committee under paragraph 24 of the Annex to the Decision I/7. We fully respect the Compliance Committee’s discretion to hold a hearing in the sense of the paragraph 24 of the Annex to the Decision I/7.

At the same time, various stakeholders often refer to the discussions on the substance of the communications as “hearings” as well.

We note that it has been a usual practice by the Compliance Committee in previous intersessional periods to invite communicants and parties to the discussion on the substance of the communications under Section IX of the Annex to the Decision I/7. In this sense, we insist that communicants and the parties are entitled to participate in the discussions with the respect to a communication, as provided by paragraph 32 of the Annex to the Decision I/7 and the Compliance Committee has no discretion to restrict the entitlement of the members of the public or the parties concerned to participate in the discussion of the communication in accordance with para 32, unless both parties agree to forgo such participation. If this is the position of the EU, we support it.

We also stress the utmost importance of such discussions in the past.