

**Seventeenth meeting of the Working Group of the Parties to the Aarhus
Convention, 26 - 28 February 2014**

**Statement by the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine on the agenda item 4
(b): 4. Procedures and mechanisms: Capacity-building and awareness-raising (delivered
by Iryna Iarema, Senior Project Assistant)**

26 February 2014

Mister Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to speak. Ladies and gentlemen, in my intervention I would like to inform you on activities with regard to the Aarhus Convention that the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe is planning to support in Ukraine. The OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine is currently developing a Project upon request from the Ministry of Environment and State Environmental Academy. The Project aims at enhancing opportunities for public access to environmental information in line with the Aarhus Convention. The Project will focus on delivering the following results:

- Raising awareness on key standards of access to environmental information among Ukrainian media, politicians and environmental activists. This will be done through specialised training for journalists and public servants on Aarhus Convention requirements.
- Strengthening the capacity of the Aarhus Centre in Kyiv and regional environmental departments to provide information on environmental issues. This will be done both through technical assistance, such as providing some office equipment, and through capacity building, including developing a web-site, developing publications, updating handbooks, etc.
- We also understand how important it is to familiarize school students with Aarhus Convention principles. So the third planned result deals with raising the awareness of school children on their environmental rights stemming from the Aarhus Convention.
- Strengthening capacities of judges to handle cases related to the Aarhus Convention implementation is another objective.
- And last but not least – improving co-operation of the Ukrainian Aarhus Centre with its counterparts in in the OSCE region.

Dear colleagues, the mentioned Project is planned to be extra-budgetary. This means that we are looking for funding. It is going to be a three-year project with a total budget of around 250,000 Euros. The Project document is under completion now and as soon as it is finalized it will be available at OSCE delegates' dashboard, and I will be also happy to provide everybody interested with the proposal via e-mail. Everybody who has watched the news on the situation in Ukraine realizes that Ukraine is going through a major transition now, with a lot of interest in reform and moving Ukraine closer to international standards and commitments, and some of these commitments relate to the Aarhus Convention. This is a good time to help Ukraine to reenergize its' efforts towards meeting Aarhus Convention commitments.

Dear colleagues, I would like you to consider the possibility of financing the project or communicating this information to respective agencies in your countries. We also will be grateful for your valuable experience in implementing and promoting the Aarhus Convention in your countries, to be shared at this and other events. And let me finally also mention how much we value the different tools that the Secretariat is providing for implementation of the Convention and, we also count on your support in the future.

Thank you very much for your attention and should you have any questions I remain at your disposal.