

**25th Meeting of the Working Group to the Aarhus Convention
(Virtual, 7-8 June 2021)
Agenda item 9 (i): Declaration**

Norway

Thank you Chair

Norway would like to thank the Bureau and the Secretariat for the draft declaration.

We support the draft as originally proposed, with the exception of paragraph 14.

Paragraph 14: The paragraph welcomes the ongoing negotiations on an international legally binding instrument on transnational corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights. Norway is firmly committed to implementing and promoting the Business and Human Rights agenda worldwide. We support and is making good use of contributions, initiatives and resources related to Business and Human Rights in different forums. We do however not support or participate actively in the negotiations for a legally binding instrument. In our opinion both the process adopted by the intergovernmental working group and the draft text suffer from serious flaws. We could accept referring to the negotiations in a more neutral way, for instance by substituting "*welcome*" by "*take note of*".

We have the following comments to the amendments proposed by EU and its Member States and ECO Forum:

Paragraph 5: We could support the addition proposed by ECO Forum provided it is rephrased in line with previous amendments of proposals to refer to recommendations from the Compliance Committee, to read as follows:

*"~~All~~ The rights under the Convention apply must be equally guaranteed under the digital and non-digital formats, **taking note of the recommendations as recommended** by the Compliance Committee."*

We could also support the amendments proposed by the WHO, provided that the references to health are changed so as to refer to environment related health implications in line with the scope of the Aarhus Convention. This could for instance be done by rephrasing the last part of the addition at the end of the paragraph to read as follows:

"to recover towards a more sustainable ~~and healthier~~ society and thorough information has to be provided to the public on the implications on environment and **the environment related implications** on health of such decisions."

Paragraph 6: Norway could support the amendments proposed by the WHO provided that the references to health are changed so as to refer to environment related health implications in line with the scope of the Aarhus Convention. This could be done by inserinting "*related*" before "health" in the first proposed mentioning and before "*impacts on health*" in the second proposed mentioning of health.

Paragraph 20: We do not support the amendment proposed by the WHO. It is not linked to environmental related impacts on public health in accordance with the scope of the Aarhus Convention. We also find it difficult to rephrase the proposal in a way that could clarify this link in a meaningful way.

Thank you Chair