

**MINISTRY  
OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND  
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS**

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United Nations  
Economic Commission for Europe  
To the Director of the Environment Division,  
Mr Marco Keiner

cc:

*Compliance Committee to the Convention on  
Access to Information, Public Participation in  
Decision-making and Access to Justice in  
Environmental Matters*

*Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of  
Belarus*

Dear Mr Keiner,

We hereby express our gratitude for many years of effective, fruitful co-operation between the Republic of Belarus and the Compliance Committee to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters ('the Committee') and for providing an opportunity to discuss the results our country has achieved in its aim of implementing Decision VI/8c. The work accomplished by the Committee in preparing its Second Progress Review of the implementation of Decision VI/8c on compliance by Belarus with its obligations under the Convention and the resulting conclusions and recommendations have been welcomed from our side, as they will assist us in fulfilling the obligations undertaken by the Republic of Belarus.

First, we have the honour to inform you that the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Belarus ('the Ministry') is making significant efforts to implement Decision VI/8c.

Ever since we presented Belarus's Second Progress Report at the end of September 2019, we have continued our detailed study of the situation through high-level consultations and discussions, resulting in concrete decisions on driving forward the implementation of Decision VI/8c.

At present, under the 2020 Plan for Preparation of Draft Laws and Regulations, which was approved on 16 December 2019 by Order of the Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Protection, Andrei Khudyk, legislation is being actively drafted to introduce amendments to Law No. 1982-XII of the Republic of Belarus of 26 November 1992 on Environmental Protection and to the Regulations on the Procedure for Organizing and Conducting Public Discussions of Drafts of Environmentally Significant Decisions, of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Reports, of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Reports, of the Record of Environmentally Significant Decisions Taken, which were approved by Resolution No. 458 of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus of 14 June 2016 ('Resolution No. 458').

The Ministry has recently put forward a proposal to Government for the inclusion of an Amending Resolution in the Government's 2020 Plan of Legislative Activity: to be drawn up in August 2020, this would improve the procedure for organizing and conducting public discussions of documents on environmental matters – in other words, fine-tuning Resolution No. 458.

Following Government approval of the Ministry's proposal, wide-ranging discussion of this amendment to Resolution No. 458 will be organized for April/May 2020, and a study will be made of its practical application; the Ministry will be responsible for preparing and drafting the amendment, according to the National Rules of Legislative Procedure.

In addition, the Ministry has initiated proposals to improve national legislation in the aim of implementing Decision VI/8c, as a result of which – with the support of the European Union and the United Nations Development Programme in Belarus, and with the involvement of expert legal specialists – Draft Recommendations on Implementation in the Law and Administrative Practice of the Republic of Belarus of Measures to Ensure the Implementation of Decision VI/8c of the Meeting of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention have been prepared: these are entitled 'Compliance by Belarus with its obligations under the Convention (paragraphs 2(b)-(k) and 3): proposals for legislative improvement'.

A Draft Plan of measures for implementing Decision VI/8c in 2020 has been prepared by the Ministry, with the participation of the Belarusian Aarhus Centre. The Draft Plan contains measures in three main areas of activity: improving the regulatory

framework; developing training programmes and conducting educational activities; measures aimed at preventing violations of the provisions of the Aarhus Convention.

The documents listed above have been sent out for consultation, with comments invited from the public, including the communicant in ACCC/C/2014/102. The Ministry is currently conducting an analysis of suggestions submitted by interested parties.

The Ministry has also continued to engage in interdepartmental co-operation in order to implement appropriate educational and information programmes on human rights issues relevant to article 3, paragraph 8, of the Aarhus Convention. In the academic year 2020-2021, advanced training programmes for students of educational institutions run by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Belarus will introduce provision for studying the obligations undertaken by the Republic of Belarus as a Party to the Aarhus Convention (letter from the Ministry of Internal Affairs of 20 March 2020, Ref. No. 6/5/8984). In addition, in April/May 2020, the libraries of educational institutions run by the Ministry of Internal Affairs will be equipped with information materials on these themes, produced with the support of the European Union and the United Nations Development Programme in Belarus.

Therefore it has to be said that our progress in implementing Decision VI/8c is currently moving ahead at a considerably faster pace than was reflected in the Second Review. In this connection, we would like to ask the Committee to take into account our interim supplementary report.

We would also be grateful for any reactions to the Draft Recommendations on Implementation in the Law and Administrative Practice of the Republic of Belarus of Measures to Ensure the Implementation of Decision VI/8c.

We once again affirm our commitment to the Aarhus Convention and our intention to continue working tirelessly to improve implementation of its provisions going forward.

Yours sincerely,

First Deputy Minister  
National Co-ordinator     *[signed]*

B.K. Pirshtuk