



Ref: ECE/ENV/2022/141


21 October 2022

Re: Withdrawal by Belarus from the Aarhus Convention

Dear Mr. Pirshuk,

I write at the request of Ms. Áine Ryall, Chair of the Compliance Committee under the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention), to enclose a letter for your attention.

Should you have any questions with regard to the enclosed, please do not hesitate to contact the secretariat.

Yours sincerely,


Marco Keiner
Director
Environment Division

Mr. Baliaslau Pirshuk
First Deputy Minister
Ministry Natural Resources and Environmental Protection
Republic of Belarus

cc: Permanent Mission of the Republic of Belarus to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva

Enc: Letter to the Republic of Belarus from Ms. Áine Ryall, Chair of the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee



Convention on Access to Information,
Public Participation in Decision-making and
Access to Justice in Environmental Matters
(Aarhus Convention)

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
Palais des Nations, 8-14 avenue de la Paix
CH - 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
Email: Aarhus-EnvDefenders@un.org

Áine Ryall
Chair of the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee

21 October 2022

Dear Mr. Pirshuk,

Re: Withdrawal by Belarus from the Aarhus Convention

On behalf of the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee, I write to convey the Committee's great regret that, following the deposit of its instrument of withdrawal with the treaty depositary on 26 July 2022, Belarus will cease to be a Party to the Aarhus Convention as of next Monday, 24 October 2022.

The Committee sincerely hopes that Belarus' withdrawal will not result in a decrease in the rights of the public in Belarus to have access to information, to participate in decision-making and to have access to justice in environmental matters. Nor that it will mark a step back in the protection of persons seeking to exercise these rights.

In this regard, the Compliance Committee takes note of the commitment Belarus has publicly expressed on several occasions to uphold the provisions of the Aarhus Convention notwithstanding its withdrawal.

I conclude by expressing the Committee's strong wish that Belarus may in the future decide to re-join the Convention. The Committee stands ready to provide any assistance Belarus may request to support its further implementation of the Convention at that time.

Yours sincerely,

Áine Ryall

Mr. Baliaslau Pirshuk
First Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection
Republic of Belarus

Cc: Permanent mission of the Republic of Belarus
to the UN Office and other international organizations in Geneva