

## **Statement by Lithuania**

### ***Statement regarding the financial support (Item 8)***

Lithuania wishes to express its support to the Secretariat statement and Chair's letter on the 7<sup>th</sup> of June about the increased financial pressures and lack of funds to effectively carry out the essential functions of the Convention, namely Compliance Committee duties, effective implementation of Rapid Response Mechanism and other related activities. First of all, we express our utmost gratitude and celebrate the efforts of the Secretariat, Compliance Committee members and the Special Rapporteur, who deal with high importance cases and sacrifice their time to manage all the additional duties and workload. Given the concerns expressed by the Secretariat and Chair, Lithuania has increased its overall contribution to the Aarhus Convention for the upcoming financial period, earmarking a part of the contribution specifically for the implementation of the rapid response mechanism.

Given today's geopolitical climate, it is imperative to strengthen international democracy and prove to our communities around the world that we are ready and able to protect democratic values and rights to information, valuable participation in decision-making and access to justice.

### ***Regarding the next Meeting of the Parties (Item 9)***

Lithuania wishes to express its initial interest to host the next sessions of the Meeting of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention and to the Protocol on PRTRs in 2025, in the Lithuanian capital of Vilnius. We have been in contact with the Secretariat regarding the related practical arrangements and are looking forward to follow up on further details regarding this matter.