

**Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context Ninth Session Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment  
Fifth Session**

**STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS AND HIGH-LEVEL REPRESENTATIVES**

**Geneva, 12–15 December  
Tentative timing: Thursday, 14 December, 5.30–6 p.m.**

**National Statement on behalf of Mr. Hakob SIMIDYAN, Minister of Environment of the Republic of Armenia**

Distinguished Chair, dear participants,

It is my great pleasure to address this Meeting of the Parties to the Espoo Convention on behalf of the Minister of Environment of the Republic of Armenia.

We would like to express our gratitude to the UNECE and Espoo Convention Secretariat for bringing us together to share our views.

Recently several important reforms were carried out in this sphere by the Armenian Government, one of which is the adoption of the new law on EIA, which entered into force on June 9. The process of drafting of the law was carried out with the participation of a wide range of stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector, coupled with many public discussions.

Based on the law during the upcoming two years nine secondary supportive legislative acts are going to be adopted.

Besides, budget allocations have been increased by the Government to improve the quality of impact assessment and expertise process according to the requirements set by the new law.

We would like to thank the UNECE and the Secretariat of the Convention for supporting the organization of training workshops on Strategic Environmental Assessment in the framework of the EU-funded EU4Environment program in Yerevan.

Madam Chair, we believe that the environment does not recognize borders and its protection requires transboundary approach. In this regard we want to stress that Armenia has always acted in a cooperative manner, providing all the necessary information and will continue to do so.

We also note that any attempt of abuse or weaponization of the Convention for advancing politically motivated goals not related to the transboundary environmental protection is not compatible with the purpose of the Convention and is not conducive to the climate of cooperation that the Convention seeks to foster.

In this regard, we would like to particularly emphasize the importance of compliance to the obligations under Article 15 of the Convention that requires Parties to "seek a solution" of any dispute under the Convention only "by negotiation or by any other method of dispute settlement acceptable to the parties to the dispute". This Article embodies the fundamental principle under international law requiring States to settle their disputes by peaceful means. Parties should also engage in good faith with any dispute resolution and should not bypass the mechanisms provided by the Convention. In particular, any use of force to settle disputes by a Party is clearly unacceptable and should not take place in any circumstances.

To conclude, we would like to reiterate our readiness for continued cooperation within the framework of the Espoo Convention.