

Twenty-eighth meeting of the Working Group of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention (Geneva, 2 - 4 July 2024)

Statements by North Macedonia

Regarding agenda item 4 (d) GMO's:

Distinguished Chair, esteemed delegates, and members of the Working Group,

I am honored to have the opportunity to address you today on behalf of North Macedonia regarding our progress in ratifying the GMO amendment to the Aarhus Convention.

At the outset, I must convey that, regrettably, we have not made tangible progress since our last meeting. This delay is not reflective of our commitment but rather indicative of the complexities involved in our legislative and regulatory processes. I want to assure you that this matter remains a high priority for the government of North Macedonia.

Our country recognizes the critical importance of the Aarhus Convention and its amendments in promoting environmental democracy and ensuring public access to information, public participation in decision-making, and access to justice in environmental matters. The GMO amendment, in particular, holds significant value for us as it aligns with our broader environmental policies and sustainable development goals.

Despite the lack of visible progress, substantial preparatory work is ongoing behind the scenes. We are diligently working on aligning our national legislation with the provisions of the GMO amendment. This involves thorough consultations with various stakeholders, including governmental agencies, civil society organizations, and the scientific community. These consultations are crucial to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive approach to ratification.

We are pleased to inform the Working Group that we have set a clear timeline for the ratification process. It is planned to be ratified by the end of 2025. This timeline reflects our commitment to a careful and thorough review process, which we believe is essential for the successful implementation of the amendment.

In conclusion, I want to reiterate North Macedonia's steadfast commitment to the principles of the Aarhus Convention and its amendments. While we have faced some delays, our dedication to ratifying the GMO amendment remains unwavering. We appreciate the patience and understanding of the Working Group as we navigate this complex process.

Thank you for your attention.