

## **Item 7: Lithuanian statement regarding MOP 2025 (Thursday)**

*Thank you Chair, for the floor,*

*We wish to address our position regarding the organization of the Eighth Session of the Meeting of the Parties (MOP) to the Aarhus Convention in 2025.*

*At the 27th Working Group of the Parties (WGP) in 2023, Lithuania expressed its ambition to host the Eighth MOP to the Aarhus Convention and the Fifth MOP of the Protocol on PRTRS, along with a Joint High-Level Segment, in the autumn of 2025. This intent arises amidst the ongoing war in Ukraine and the need for regional stability. By providing a platform for dialogue and action, Lithuania aims to strengthen the position of environmental defenders working under challenging conditions, aligning with our broader goals of promoting peace, security, and environmental sustainability in the region. Hosting the MOP in the current geopolitical landscape would signal Lithuania's commitment to regional stability and solidarity with Ukraine.*

*Currently, we are awaiting funding approval as we are in the midst of budget deliberations with the Ministry of Finance for the upcoming year. A more definitive decision regarding our hosting capability should be made by the end of August or early September and will be communicated to the Secretariat accordingly. We have discussed the situation with the Secretariat and have reached a mutual understanding, and we certainly recognize that the Secretariat requires a final decision from us by September.*

*At this point, we can assure you that our Ministry supports the organization of the MOP in Lithuania, and we are hopeful that we will secure the necessary budget for this purpose.*

*Furthermore, we have identified potential locations in Vilnius to host the MOP and related events. However, we made the decision with the Secretariat not to present any logistical details until we have a final decision.*

*To reiterate, we are enthusiastic about hosting the MOP in 2025 and will communicate all relevant details to the Secretariat and member countries as soon as possible.*