

**Working Group of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention (WGP 28)**  
**(Geneva 2-4. July 2024)**

**Agenda Item 2: Ukraine**

**Norway**

Thank you Chair,

I would first like to take this opportunity to thank the Secretariat for preparing this meeting and the interpreters for their service, since this is my first intervention on behalf of Norway.

I would like to thank Ukraine for its statement and to join colleagues who have expressed support to Ukraine and the Ukrainian people.

Norway condemns Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in the strongest possible terms. The Russia's aggression is a clear violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

We also condemn Belarus for enabling and assisting the Russia's aggression.

We continue to be deeply concerned about the harm caused by Russia's irresponsible attacks on civilians as well as civilian infrastructure.

For more than two years, Russia's unprovoked, unjustifiable, and illegal full-scale invasion has inflicted incalculable devastation on Ukraine, including potentially irreversible consequences for Ukraine's environmental landscape.

Russia's attack on its neighbour Ukraine has devastating effects also on the ability of environmental human rights defenders to act as agents of change and exercise their rights in accordance with the Aarhus Convention without the risk of being penalised, persecuted or harassed in any way.

The people of Ukraine are thus paying a high price, in economic terms as well as in environmental terms, as highlighted in Ukraine's intervention, and most of all in human suffering and loss.

Norway stands in solidarity with the people of Ukraine, and we continue to provide Ukraine with unprecedented levels of support, helping to uphold its right to self-defence in the face of Russia's aggression.

Our support is about freedom and democracy, but also about defending the principles on which Europe's freedom and peace are based. It is about respect for international law. This includes the Aarhus Convention and the rights it provides to have access environmental information, to participate in decision making and to have access to justice in environmental matters. It is also about respect for internationally recognized borders

A threat to these principles is a threat to us all.

Thank you Chair