

From: Robert.KONRAD
To: Aarhus Compliance
Cc: Pat Swords, DELEGATION-GENEVA-UN, Helen McCarthy, Angelika Wiedner
Date: 30/11/2015 14:10
Subject: ACCC/C/2013/96 (European Union)
Sent by: <Affef.GARBAA@ec.europa.eu>

Dear Ms Marshall,

Please find enclosed the EU observations to the Information Request by the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee (ACCC) in Case ACCC/C/2013/96.

As to the hearing on this case, we would respectfully ask the ACCC to allow the EU to participate via audio- or video-conference.

As the EU and its Member States have indicated in their contribution regarding the implementation of the future work programme for the Aarhus Convention at the 19. Working Group of the Parties (WGP) in Geneva in June 2015, *"we would like to underline that there may be further opportunities for use of electronic tools such as phone and video conferences in respect of the compliance mechanism"*.

Indeed, the ACCC has already made good use of audio-conference facilities regarding an EU case, ACCC/C/2010/54. This precedent showed that the technical facilities are there and working and can be successfully used to discuss compliance issues.

As indicated also at the last WGP, our request aims to seek a balance between budgetary constraints and the need to fully assist the ACCC, while ensuring the defence of the EU with all appropriate expertise. Indeed, in this particular case, an audio- or videoconference would allow all the officials concerned by this case - as it touches on a broad range of issues, e.g. including enquiries by the European Ombudsman - to participate in the hearing.

We would thus respectfully ask the ACCC to allow the EU, in the interest of its best possible defence, to participate in this hearing via electronic means and to let us know by 7 December for any arrangements.

Best regards,

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Head of Unit



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