

Intermediary sessions of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context and of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment

5 – 7 February 2019, Geneva, Switzerland

High-level segment

7 February 2019

Intervention by Mr. Eugen URICEC, Secretary of State, Ministry of Environment of ROMANIA

Chair,

Ministers,

Heads of delegations,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of Romania on the occasion of this intermediary sessions of the Meeting of the Parties to the Espoo Convention and to the SEA Protocol. These sessions are not part of the regular schedule of the Meeting of the Parties. We agreed to convene them in Minsk because we believed that the draft decisions proposed then could be greatly improved in order to reach consensus.

Consensus is important for our Convention and Protocol. The two treaties have become an integral part of our relations and I could say they have also contributed to the creation or the strengthening of real friendships. We cherish these friendships, and for this reason, we actively try to achieve consensus.

The Convention and the Protocol are living instruments, and during the sessions of the Meeting of the Parties we regularly agree on the interpretation of their provisions that reflects our understanding of environmental impact assessment in a transboundary context. However, I need to underline the fact that we cannot, as Meeting of the Parties, contradict or go beyond the provisions of the Convention or the Protocol.

In 2017, during its last session, the MOP decided that more time was needed to prepare decisions that would fully reflect the views of the Parties. Moreover, it decided to turn to the Parties in the delicate matter of the lifetime extension of nuclear power plants. And currently, Parties are actively developing a guidance based on the decisions MOP adopted.

We are very grateful for the impressive work done by the Implementation Committee, the Secretariat and the Bureau since 2017. The results of their work have provided us with an excellent basis for discussions.

The success of transboundary environmental impact assessment is contingent upon a thorough domestic environmental impact assessment. From a Romanian internal practice, I can confirm that there is always room for improvement. Better communication with the developer of the proposed activity and his EIA consultants greatly contributes to procedural efficiency, while also enhancing the quality of the documentation. These conclusions mirror the findings of the Implementation Committee.

Recently, with the help of the Espoo Convention Secretariat, Romania has started work under the important Multilateral Agreement Among the Countries of South-Eastern Europe for implementation of the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context signed in Bucharest in 2011. We are grateful to the Espoo Convention Secretariat for their support. The Multilateral Agreement, whose major objectives are to increase the cooperation in the South East European region and to ensure ecologically sound and sustainable development in the region, remains an essential tool for responding to the needs of our region.

I will end my intervention here, confident that we are all working for the benefit of the Convention and finally for that of the environment, and thanking all people who have made this conference possible, particularly the Secretariat, the Bureau and the Implementation Committee, but most of all, the delegations of all Parties present.

Thank you,