



**Economic and Social
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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON
ACCESS TO INFORMATION, PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
IN DECISION-MAKING AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE
IN ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

REPORT OF THE THIRD MEETING OF THE PARTIES

Addendum

DECISION III/5

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

adopted at the third meeting of the Parties
held from 11 to 13 June 2008 in Riga

The Meeting of the Parties,

Recalling decisions I/8 and II/10 on reporting requirements,

Recalling also the mandate of the Compliance Committee set out in paragraph 13 (c) of the annex to decision I/7 on review of compliance,

Having considered the reports submitted by Parties and the synthesis report prepared by the secretariat pursuant to paragraphs 1 and 4 of decision 1/8 (ECE/MP.PP/2008/IR series and ECE/MP.PP/2008/4),

Having also considered the report of the Compliance Committee and its addenda (ECE/MP.PP/2008/5 and Adds.1–10),

GE.08-26195

1. *Notes with appreciation* the implementation reports submitted by more than three quarters of the Parties to the Convention pursuant to paragraphs 1 and 2 of decision I/8;
2. *Welcomes* the synthesis report prepared by the secretariat pursuant to paragraph 5 of decision I/8;
3. *Also welcomes* the reports submitted by non-governmental organizations pursuant to paragraph 7 of decision I/8;
4. *Considers* that these reports together provide an impressive body of information on the status of implementation of the Convention, as well as the significant trends, challenges and solutions, which will help to guide future activities;

Timely submission of reports

5. *Notes with concern* that many Parties that submitted reports did not do so within the deadline indicated in decision II/10;
6. *Encourages* Parties to start the preparation of national implementation reports in future reporting cycles sufficiently in advance of, and at the latest five months before, the deadline for submission of the reports to the secretariat set out in decision II/10, with a view to providing for meaningful public consultation at the national level while adhering to the deadline for the submission of the reports;

Failure to submit reports

7. *Notes with regret* that Croatia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Portugal, Romania and Spain, all of which were Parties at the time of the deadline for submission of the implementation reports, failed to submit reports;
8. *Calls upon* each of those Parties to submit its national implementation report to the secretariat by 15 September 2008, for subsequent consideration, inter alia, by the Compliance Committee;

Public consultation

9. *Welcomes* the fact that most Parties prepared their reports through a process that involved consultations with various governmental agencies as well as civil society;
10. *Encourages* Parties to ensure transparency throughout the process of preparation and submission of the reports;

Length of reports and comparability of information

11. *Notes with concern* that some of the reports have significantly exceeded the suggested word limit and that this had a negative effect on the time and costs related to their editing,

translation and reproduction as well as on the comparability of the information between the reports;

12. *Requests* Parties, in the next reporting cycle, to prepare their reports within a length limit of 13,000 words, including the section headings drawn from the reporting format, and to allocate a proportionate level of detail to each item of the reporting format;

Reporting format

13. *Considers* that the reporting procedure as set out in decisions I/8 and II/10 should in principle continue to apply for the next reporting cycle;

14. *Notes* however that the reporting format set out in decision I/8 needs to be expanded to cover the implementation of the amendment to the Convention adopted in 2005;

15. *Mandates* the Working Group of the Parties to revise the reporting format to accommodate information on the implementation of the amendment to the Convention in time for the additional information to be incorporated in the implementation reports prepared for the fourth meeting of the Parties;

16. *Requests* each Party to include information on the implementation of the amendment, according to the revised reporting format, in all implementation reports prepared following the entry into force of the amendment for that Party;

17. *Invites* Parties for which the amendment has not entered into force to provide information related to their legislation and practices in the field to which the amendment relates;

18. *Resolves* to review at its fourth meeting the revision to the reporting format introduced by the Working Group of the Parties pursuant to paragraph 15 above, with a view to its formal endorsement;

19. *Requests* Parties, having in mind the shared commitment to promoting and applying the Almaty Guidelines on Promoting the Application of the Principles of the Aarhus Convention in International Forums, to give special attention in their implementation reports to reporting on measures taken to implement article 3, paragraph 7;

20. *Notes* that the current process whereby the reports are circulated by the secretariat as official documents in the three official languages of the Convention pursuant to paragraph 8 (a) of decision I/8 puts significant strain on the staff resources of the secretariat and requires the allocation of additional resources from the Convention's trust fund, and that if the current approach is to be maintained, yet further resources may need to be allocated for it;

21. *Mandates* the Working Group to review the matter in the context of a general review of the reporting requirements;

Guidance on reporting requirements

22. *Welcomes* the guidance on reporting requirements prepared by the Compliance Committee (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2007/L.4), and the fact that many Parties applied the guidance in preparing their national implementation reports in the second reporting cycle;

23. *Invites* Parties, in subsequent reporting cycles, to follow the methodology for the preparation and submission of the national implementation reports set out in the guidance, including in connection with the timeline for the preparation of the reports at the national level and through indicating new information within the consolidated text;

24. *Notes with appreciation* that more information on the practical implementation of some of the Convention's provisions has been provided by the Parties in this reporting cycle, inter alia, through addressing selected issues from the list contained in the annex to the guidance, but also notes that further efforts in this direction are needed and encourages Parties to continue including such information in subsequent reports;

25. *Requests* the Compliance Committee to keep the guidance under review, as appropriate, with a view to assisting Parties with the preparation of their reports, with the involvement of the public, in the next reporting cycle;

26. *Also requests* the secretariat to organize a training session for the national focal points and other concerned stakeholders, preferably back-to-back with a meeting of the Working Group of the Parties one year in advance of the fourth meeting of the Parties, to provide more detailed guidance on the preparation of the national implementation reports;

27. *Further requests* the secretariat to circulate to all Parties and relevant stakeholders a formal reminder of the reporting requirements, including guidance on the preparation of the reports, at least one year in advance of the next meeting of the Parties.
