

**Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Access to Information,
Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in
Environmental Matters
Fourth session
Chisinau, 29 June - 1 July 2011
General Segment**

Welcoming remarks

**by H.E. Mr. Iurie LEANCĂ, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and European
Integration of the Republic of Moldova, delivered at the Official Opening Ceremony of the IV
Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on access to information, public participation in decision
making and access to justice in environmental matters
(Aarhus Convention)**

June 29, 2011, Palace of the Republic, Grand Hall, 10.00

Ladies and gentlemen,
Distinguished guests,

Allow me to extend to you, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Moldova, a warm welcome to Chisinau on the occasion of the 4th Meeting of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention.

For my country, the first to ratify this Convention in April of 1999 and to host the First Meeting of Signatories, it is a privilege to hold this meeting in Moldova when we celebrate the 10th anniversary of the entry into force of this Convention.

During these past 10 years, the Republic of Moldova has taken concrete steps towards practical implementation of the provisions of the Convention, by adoption in 2000 of the Law on access to information, in 2008 – of the Law on transparency in the decision making process, and most recently, in 2011 – of the National Plan to Implement the Aarhus Convention, that covers the period of 2011-2015.

The legislative and normative actions were accompanied by practical implementation measures. These refer to the establishment and launch of the activity of the National Council for Participation under the auspices of the Government of Moldova, which includes representatives of the civil society groups from the environment field. At the level of Parliament, the relevant commissions employ consultancy services of civil society experts.

To this end, I would like to mention also the implementation of e-government in Moldova. Having as a general objective the strengthening of democracy in Moldova, this process also aims at supporting the Government in promoting the use of information and communication technologies in governmental processes and services. This, on its part, will facilitate the access to public information resources and will improve the quality of public services.

In its Activity Program “European Integration: Freedom, Democracy, Welfare” for 2011-2014, the Government of the Republic of Moldova intends to develop the national e-government platform and national electronic system by introducing electronic services. In addition, the Government is working on increasing the access of citizen to the electronic public services. The Government contributes to providing on-line services to the entire population, including for the elderly and people with disabilities. The Government also plans to implement on-line public procurements.

In august 2010, the Government of the Republic of Moldova has created the E-Government Center. The goal of this institution is to provide non-stop access to public services and information as well as to make the decision-making process more transparent. The Center is responsible for drafting and implementing the e-governance agenda, which is aimed at promoting the sustainable development of our country.

By providing a broad use of information and communication technologies, the Center will promote the reform of the public sector; will increase the efficiency and transparency of state authorities, and extend the access to e-services. As a result, the administrative procedures will be simplified, while the bureaucracy, corruption and the costs related to the maintenance of the public administration will decrease.

I would also like to highlight the importance of the Convention on the regional and global scale, as well as its direct contribution to creating a more favorable environment for human activities in the broader context of sustainable development.

Many activities still remain to be implemented, both in my country but also in the region. I am confident that this Meeting of Parties will also bring its positive contribution to the continuous promotion of democratic values and environmental protection by ensuring access to information, justice and public participation in the environment-related decision-making process.

In conclusion, I wish you all a productive meeting and a pleasant stay in the Republic of Moldova.

Thank you.