

## WGP Statement on item 3(a) access to justice at the Working Group of the Parties

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Honourable Chair, honourable delegates,

We are glad to have the possibility to address all of you in this virtual manner today. We would like to express our thanks to the secretariat for the organisation of this meeting.

We would like to say a few words on the issue of access to justice in relation to the European Union. As all of you will know, this topic of particular importance for the Convention, not only because it directly affects 28 Parties to this Convention but also because of the intense discussion this topic has attracted at the last Meeting of the Parties.

We welcome that the Party concerned has now acknowledged the need to amend its legislation to bring it in line with the Convention and has published a roadmap to that effect.

At the same time, the devil will now be in the details. It will be of utmost importance that the Party concerned takes this opportunity to address all the aspects of its legislation that are currently not in compliance with the Convention. The mentioned Roadmap raises some concerns that the current plan is in fact not address all aspects. However, we of course do not want to prejudge the result before any decisions have been made.

Rather, we want to urge all Parties to this Convention that are involved in some capacity in this process to take this process seriously and to diligently. We cannot afford to miss this opportunity, for the sake of the environment and the public that depend on access to justice rights, but also for the sake of the continued success of this Convention.

This case goes to the heart of what this meeting today is all about: The cooperation of States across the UNECE region to safeguard and further the right to a healthy environment in a spirit of collaboration and consensus. We call on all Parties to uphold that spirit going forward.

Thank you for your attention.

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ClientEarth is a non-profit environmental law organisation based in London, Brussels and Warsaw. We are activist lawyers working at the interface of law, science and policy. Using the power of the law, we develop legal strategies and tools to address major environmental issues.

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