



**LIETUVOS RESPUBLIKOS APLINKOS MINISTERIJA**  
**THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA**

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Mr. Felix Zaharia  
Chair of Implementation Committee  
Convention on Environmental Impact  
Assessment in a Transboundary Context

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Ms. Tea Aulavuo, Secretary  
Convention on Environmental Impact  
Assessment in a Transboundary Context  
Environment Division  
Office S.319, Palais des Nations, CH - 1211  
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**REPORT ON STEPS TAKEN BY LITHUANIA IN REGARD TO THE  
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS SET OUT IN DECISION VI/2 OF  
THE SIXTH MEETING OF PARTIES OF THE ESPOO CONVENTION**

Dear Mr. Zaharia and Ms. Aulavuo,

Following the request, set out in Decision VI/2 on the Review of compliance with the Espoo Convention adopted by the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on its sixth session on 2–5 June 2014, we would like to present Lithuanian yearly report on the implementation of the recommendations further to a submission by Lithuania regarding Belarus NPP project.

In 2015, Lithuania continued its efforts and initiatives towards effective implementation of the above-mentioned recommendations. A detailed yearly report is enclosed to this letter.

Lithuanian authorities have thoroughly analysed the information regarding the key questions provided with the letter of Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of Belarus of 18 November 2014 No. 13-11/2616/1 and came to a conclusion that Belarus sent a summary of old documentation and no new data was provided. Lithuanian authorities concluded that the information did not provide answers to the key questions raised by Lithuanian experts and the public. Detailed comments, argumentation and explanations were provided with the letter of the Ministry of Environment of Lithuania (hereinafter – Lithuanian MoE) of 30 October 2015 No. (10-3)-D8-8056.

Lithuanian authorities continued bilateral discussions with Belarus regarding the requirements to procedures and substance of the EIA process and documentation set in the Espoo Convention. Lithuania maintained its position that it is of utmost importance to follow the sequence of steps of the EIA procedure in line with the Convention: (1) submission of answers to the key questions raised by Lithuania; (2) supplement of the EIA report with the substantial information; (3) co-arrangement of public hearings to Lithuanian public in the territory of Lithuania; (3) organization of bilateral consultations; (4) adoption of the final decision; (5) carrying out of post-project analysis.



Lithuania further requested Belarus to organize the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) Site and External Events Design (SEED) review mission for an independent and non-partisan evaluation of alternative construction sites and site selection criteria as well as the quality of the studies for the NPP. Up until now, Belarus has not provided dates or schedules when the SEED mission would take place, nonetheless the construction works on site are progressing rapidly.

For the purpose to enhance cooperation in the framework of the Espoo Convention through a joint body, Lithuanian MoE in its letter of 4 May 2015 No. (10-3)-D8-3378 proposed Belarus to use the already existing legal instruments of bilateral cooperation in the field of environment protection. Lithuania and Belarus have at least two legal instruments (Bilateral Agreement Regarding the Cooperation in the Field of Environment Protection signed in Minsk on 14 April 1995 and Technical Protocol on Cooperation in Monitoring and Information Exchange on Status of Transboundary Surface Waters signed in Minsk on 10 April 2008) which include cooperation through joint bodies.

Following the recommendation of the sixth Meeting of Parties of the Espoo Convention and with a view to enhance practical implementation of the Convention, Lithuanian MoE in cooperation with other competent Lithuanian authorities revised the draft Bilateral Agreement for the Implementation of the Espoo Convention and provided the advanced project of it to Belarus on 5 November 2015. Lithuania underlines that the Bilateral Agreement should serve as a detailed legal and practical instrument for the transboundary EIA that would help to avoid problems Lithuania has been dealing up until now with the project of Belarus NPP. For further discussion on the draft Bilateral Agreement Lithuanian MoE proposed to hold a bilateral meeting of experts in December 2015, in Vilnius.

Despite all the efforts and initiatives, Lithuania has not recorded any positive trend towards efficient and constructive implementation of the recommendations that were endorsed by the sixth Meeting of Parties of the Espoo Convention on 2-5 June 2014 and has not received neither answers to the key questions nor reactions to Lithuanian proposals.

Lithuania maintains its position that the formal and unilateral accomplishment of procedural steps does not mean that the documents submitted to the affected party comply with the Espo Convention's requirements regarding its content and quality. Therefore, we highly encourage the Implementation Committee of the Espoo Convention to thoroughly analyze the steps undertaken by both Parties since the adoption of the Committee's report on its 27th session and sincerely hope that Lithuanian yearly report will be useful for this purpose.

Taking this opportunity, we would like to reiterate Lithuania's full support to the work done by the Implementation Committee so far and reassure our openness and readiness for further cooperation.

ENCLOSURE. Lithuanian yearly report, 2015, 12 pages.

Yours sincerely,

Algirdas Genevicius



Vice-Minister

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