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ECONOMIC COMMISSION
FOR EUROPE

IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE
CONVENTION ON ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT IN A TRANSBOUNDARY CONTEXT

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Ref. EIA/IC/INFO/9

14 March 2014

Dear Mr Auglys,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Implementation Committee under the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo, 1991).

At its thirtieth session, held in Geneva from 25 to 27 February 2014, the Committee continued to consider the information it had gathered on the planned construction of the Visaginas NPP in Lithuania, close to the border with Belarus; in follow-up to the information provided by a Belarusian non-governmental organization (EIA/IC/INFO/9). The Committee considered replies provided by the Governments of Belarus and Lithuania in response to the Committee's letters of 17 December 2013.

The Committee agreed that the responses were sufficient at present. The Committee noted that:

- (a) On 27 August 2008, Lithuania had sent the EIA documentation to Belarus with a request to inform the Belarusian public and authorities;
- (b) The public had been informed and on 14 October 2008 a public hearing was held in Braslaw, Belarus;
- (c) On 24 November 2008, Belarus had provided to the Ministry of Environment of Lithuania the protocol of the public hearing;
- (d) On 21 April 2009, the final decision had been issued taking into account the outcome of the EIA in a transboundary context; and
- (e) On 5 May 2009, potentially affected countries were informed about the final decision.
- (f) Belarus and other Parties had not expressed discontent with regard to the way Lithuania had carried out its obligations under the Convention.

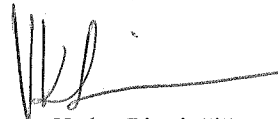
Mr. Vitalijus Auglys
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CC: Ecological Initiative, ecoin@tut.by

In the light of the above, the Committee decided that there was no need to further pursue its information gathering regarding the issue. The Committee noted that, when carrying out future transboundary EIA procedures, Parties should be advised to ensure that the public notice of the public likely to be affected should be effective and that it was appropriate to keep record of the procedures (such as copies of the public notices, protocols of the hearings, etc.).

I am now writing to inform you of the above decision of the Committee and also to request Lithuania's agreement that the correspondence between the Committee and Lithuania be placed on the Convention's website, as an illustration of the Committee's approach to information gathering and of a proper and sufficient response from a Party to address the issue. You are kindly invited to provide your answer to the secretariat by 10 April 2014.

Yours sincerely,



Vesna Kolar Planinšič
Chair, Implementation Committee,
Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment
in a Transboundary Context