

IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE
CONVENTION ON ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT IN A TRANSBOUNDARY CONTEXT
PROTOCOL ON STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

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CH-1211 Geneva 10
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Ref. Follow-up on decision VI/2 of the Meeting of the Parties
(EIA/IC/S/4 Ostrovets nuclear power plant)

16 December 2015

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) and its Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment (Kyiv, 2003).

At its thirty-fourth session, held in Geneva from 8 to 10 December 2015, the Committee followed up on decision VI/2 of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention, including compliance by Belarus. The Committee considered the reports submitted to the Committee by Belarus and Lithuania, according to the decision.

In the view of the Committee, the matters of disagreement between the two Parties relate to scientific and other technical matters. The Committee recalled that according to its Structure and functions, its mandate was to provide advice and recommendations inter alia relating to technical matters (decision III/2, appendix, as amended by decision VI/2, annex I, para. 4(c)); but since it did not in this specific case have sufficient technical and scientific knowledge to assess compliance by Belarus with the Convention on that basis, it was necessary for it to seek the services of scientific experts and other technical advice or consult other relevant sources, according to its Structure and functions, para. 7(d).

Taking the above into account and subject to the agreement of your country and Belarus, the Committee agreed that it would be useful if your country and Belarus established and financed an expert body modelled after the inquiry commission under the Convention (see appendix IV). The Committee also agreed that the Bureau including its members representing Belarus and Lithuania should be invited to discuss the establishment of the expert body at its next meeting (Geneva, 19-20 January 2016).

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Please provide your views for the establishment of such an expert body as soon as possible and no later than **15 January 2016**, for consideration by the Bureau members at their upcoming meeting.

The Committee also agreed to invite representatives of your country and Belarus to discuss the steps taken following decision VI/2. At the request of the Committee, I am now writing to invite your Government to be represented at the next (thirty-fifth) session of the Committee to be held in Geneva, Palais des Nations, from 15 to 17 March 2016. The discussion will enable the Committee in its current composition to better analyze the steps undertaken after the adoption of the Committee's report on its twenty-seventh session and to report to the Meeting of the Parties at its seventh session, following the MOP recommendations.

The Committee will consider the matter first in a closed session, on 15 March in the morning. The discussion with the delegations of Belarus and Lithuania is scheduled to take place **on 16 March, starting at 10 am** and expected to be concluded by 1pm. On an exceptional basis, the discussion may resume at 3pm, if not concluded in the morning. At the beginning of the discussion, the delegations of Belarus and Lithuania will be invited to make a brief presentation (not exceeding 20 minutes each) on the steps undertaken following the MOP recommendations. The Committee will then ask questions to the delegations to collect information necessary for its analysis. To facilitate discussion, Lithuania should expect to receive questions from the Committee in advance of the session. Lithuania should be prepared to discuss its position.

To enable the secretariat to make all necessary arrangements for your access to the Palais des Nations, you are kindly invited to provide the secretariat with a confirmation of your country's participation and the composition of your delegation well in advance of the session and no later than **29 February 2016**.

Yours sincerely,



Felix Zaharia
Chair, Implementation Committee,
Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment
in a Transboundary Context
Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment