Communication to the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee

I. Information on correspondent submitting the communication

The names and addresses of the communicants are set out in **Annex 1**, in which they also provide their authority to their two legal representatives referred to below:

Name: Dorian Matlija
Title/Position: Executive Director of NGO Res Publica
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E-mail: [redacted]

Name: Theodoros Alexandridis
Title/Position: International Human Rights Law Expert
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II. Party concerned

Name of the Party concerned by the communication: **Republic of Albania**

III. Length of the communication

The communication should be no more than **ten A4 pages**. If in an exceptionally complex case more than ten pages are required, in no circumstances should the communication be longer than twenty A4 pages.

IV. Facts of the communication

General note: the communicant understands that the impugned has already been brought to the attention of the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee (hereinafter the Committee) following a request filed by the Office of the President of the Republic of Albania (communication ACCC/S/2016/3). By its letter dated 3 November 2016, the Committee informed the Office of the President of the Albanian Republic that it would suspend the examination of its request pending the conclusion of the domestic proceedings whereas by its email dated 5 March 2018, the State Party requested the closure of the case. As the present communication relates to the same set of facts, the communicants will, following a very brief account of the factual context of the communication, place emphasis on the steps they undertook with a view to exhausting domestic remedies as well as on whether these remedies can be considered effective.

1. On 29 December 2014, by means of decision no. 956 of the Council of Ministers, the latter mapped out the areas that constituted the "Green Crown of Tirana"; one of these areas was the Tirana Artificial Lake with a surface of 230 ha (**Annex 2**). On the same date and by means of decision No. 4, the National Territory Council (hereinafter NTC), a collegiate body operating under the auspices of the Council of Ministers, designated the "Green Crown of Tirana" and including the Artificial Lake as an "area of national importance" and called upon the competent authorities to draft a development plan (**Annex 3**). According to Articles 8 ç and 18 of Law 107/2014 *On Territorial Planning and Development,* the authorities under the coordination of the Line Ministry of Planning and Development should have

proceeded with the drafting of a Detailed Plan for Areas of National Importance (hereinafter the Detailed Plan), which under Article 15(1)(1.1.3) of the same law, constituted a central level planning instrument (**Annex 4**); furthermore, under Article 18 (5) of the same law the Council of Ministers should also adopt a development regulation. These steps were necessary in order to set up the framework in accordance to which development / construction permits would be issued, since according to Article 28 (1) of the same law, the NTC is *inter alia* responsible for issuing development and building permits "…for types of complex development, specified in the development regulation, and **for those connected with issues, areas, or objects of national importance**". Article 28 (3) explicitly provides that "the exhaustive procedures for the review and approval of application for development and / or building permits, as provided for in paragraph 1 of this article, and the issue of occupancy permit shall be specified in the development regulation". Elaborating on the above, Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 671 dated 29 July 2015 (in force at the material time) provided more details as to the contents of the detailed plan and the detailed regulation: thus according to Article 37(1)(e) of the Decision, a detailed plan for an area of national importance should contain among others development and environmental impact assessments, while Article 37(1)(ç) stipulated that the development regulation (for an area of national importance) should contain the norms and standards for developments that have an impact on the environment (**Annex 4**). Article 38(3)(dh) of the same decision explicitly provided for the obligation to hold public consultations before and during the drafting of the Detailed Plan – an obligation also provided for by Articles 23 and 24 of Law 107/2014 (**Annex 4**).

2. Nevertheless, none of these measures were implemented until early February 2016 when, with no prior public notice, a part of the Artificial Lake Park was fenced by the Municipality of Tirana, causing reactions (including violent) by some citizens (**Annex 5**). Due to the heightened public sensitivity regarding any encroachment to the green space in question, one of the few remaining in Tirana and in fact an area designated as of National Importance Area as noted above, a large group of citizens, among whom the communicants, was engaged immediately with a view to finding out what activities would be carried out by the Municipality in the area of the park. Following repeated requests, it was subsequently discovered that the Municipality planned to construct a playground for children (hereinafter the playground). The construction work included the felling of trees as well as the pouring of concrete in the park (see photos reproduced as **Annex 6**).[1]

3. It was subsequently discovered that on 12 February 2016, the National Territory Council, by means of decision No 1/2016, had issued a conditional building permit regarding the construction of the playground (**Annex 7**). According to the decision, the final building permit would be delivered only following the fulfilment of three conditions, namely the filing of all relevant technical and legal documentation, the securing of approval by the Ministry of Environment and the national territory planning agency as well as the payment of the infrastructure impact tax. It is recalled that the National Territory Council is a political body, as it is chaired by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Albania and consists of cabinet ministers, while the then (and still incumbent) Mayor of Tirana is a high ranking member of the ruling Socialist Party. On 3 March 2016, the National Territory Council granted the final building permit which was valid until 3 September 2017 (**Annex 8**).

4. On 9 March 2016, a group of environmental NGOs addressed a letter to the Mayor of Tirana. In their letter, they contended that no meaningful consultation had been conducted and called upon him to suspend the construction of the playground pending full disclosure of all the relevant documentation (such as the development plan and the Strategic Impact Assessment). They also called upon him to more meaningfully engage the public in the relevant decision making process (**Annex 9,** page 3). To the communicants' knowledge, this letter was never answered.

[1] More pictures, taken by citizens who took part in the protest and tried to prevent the construction of the playground together with accompanying text in English, are available at: https://ba.boell.org/sites/default/files/uploads/2016/06/struggle_for_the_park.pdf The first three pictures reproduced as Annex 6 were obtained from that presentation.

5. On 23 March 2016, by means of letter no. 570/1 Prot., the National Environment Agency stated that it had not received any application or a request for a preliminary EIA Environmental Permit in connection with the project of the playground (**Annex 10,** page 2).

7. On 1 June 2016, the Mayor of Tirana inaugurated the playground (**Annex 11**).

8. According to information reproduced in a 2016 portfolio issued by the architectural designer, the playground is "one of the four pilot projects of the Grand Lake Park Master Plan. This area is well connected with other new functions proposed for the park as: a new café for parents, a floating pool, a boat club and the Firefly swarm (a light installation)"; the volume of the playground is stated to be 4,000 sq. meters […] the children's playground is designed as a platform for different games and activities for children between ages 1 and 14 years old". The construction of the playground was listed as on-going (**Annex 12**).[2] More information about the design and layout of the park can be found at the Architectural Report dated 25 September 2015 (**Annex 13**, in particular pages 2, 4, 6). The complainants consider that a mere perusal of these two documents is enough to indicate that the playground constituted a major infrastructure work and not a simple addition to the park.

Remedies

The request for interim measures

9. A number of Tirana citizens decided to challenge the Municipality's decision to construct the children's playground, as well as all related administrative acts such as the building permit issued by the NTC. Thus on 26 April 2016 the communicants, together with other concerned citizens, filed a request for interim measures, calling for the suspension of the construction work (called "request for a security measure" under Albanian law); a summary of their arguments is reproduced in the court's decision dated 12 May 2016 (**Annex 14**).[3] In their request, the claimants argued that the construction of the children's playground would cause serious and difficult to repair damage to the Lake Park as it involved the felling of trees and the laying down of significant quantities of cement, elements that would have an impact also on the quality of life of the citizens of Tirana (**Annex 14**, pages 7-8, 9); to that end, they also submitted an environmental impact assessment study prepared by Prof. Sulejman Sulce (**Annex 14**, page 21). Second, the claimants argued that the building of the children's playground was part of a wider initiative to construct other recreational facilities forming a Thematic Park (**Annex 14**, page 10) the construction of which, under Article 10 of Law 10440/2011 is subject to a preliminary Environmental Impact Assessment Report (**Annex 4**), Third, the claimants argued that no public consultation into the project had been held as required by law in relation to all projects for which an environmental impact assessment is required (**Annex 14**, page 9). The claimants also argued that suspension of the construction work would also benefit the public interest, as it would preserve the character of the park as a place of leisure for all citizens (**Annex 14**, page 11).

The court rejected the claimants' contentions, noting that they had failed to establish that the damage to them would be immediate, tangible and non-hypothetical (**Annex 14**, page 19); the court also refused to accept as evidence an environmental impact assessment study prepared *pro bono* by a former expert on environmental issues, certified by the Ministry of Environment, as he had not renewed the relevant license (**Annex 14**, page 19). The court considered that there was no evidence that the damage claimed by the claimants would be incurred and considered that it was in the public interest (and in particular, of the children's interest) for the construction of the playground to go ahead (**Annex 14**, pages 20 – 21). Last, the court noted that the claimants did not offer to submit to the court a financial guarantee, to

[2] The full portfolio is available online in English at: https://issuu.com/irisisena/docs/irisi_sena_port_p_online

[3] Please note that this is separate set of proceedings to that referred to in the context of communication ACCC/S/2016/3 https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/pp/compliance/S201603_Albania/frParty_22.09.2016/5.Lawsuit.pdf

offset any potential financial loss incurred by the construction company (**Annex 14**, page 22). The claimants filed an appeal against the decision but as of the date of writing, no hearing date had been set. In any case, and considering that the playground has already been built and in light of the administrative court's decision on the merits (see next paragraph)

The proceedings on the merits

10. On 11 July 2016, the Tirana First Instance Administrative Court issued its decision on the merits of the case. According to the court, the construction of a children's playground was not included in the list of activities referred to in Annexes I and II of Law 10440/2011 (**Annex 4**) and as a result, there was no obligation, either under the Aarhus Convention or under domestic legislation, to draft a preliminary environmental impact assessment study (**Annex 15**, page 3), even though the court acknowledged that, as mentioned in a letter issued by the National Territorial Planning Agency, the playground was a part of a wider master plan for the park's development (**Annex 15**, page 7). The court also noted that the access of claimants to justice regarding environmental issues should be regulated not by the domestic law transposing the Aarhus Convention but rather by the applicable domestic legal instrument, in this case Law no. 49/2012 *On the organization and functioning of administrative courts and the adjudication of administrative disputes* (**Annex 15**, page 4; the relevant provisions of Law 49/2012 are reproduced in **Annex 4**). The court also held that the claimants, either as individuals or as members of an association, did not have legal standing to challenge the impugned administrative acts as absolutely invalid (**Annex 15**, pages 4-5). Last, the court held that as the playground had already been built, the lawsuit was devoid of object (**Annex 15**, page 9).

11. The claimants filed an appeal against the first instance court judgment with the Tirana Administrative Appeals Court; no hearing date has been set yet but the claimants consider that their appeal is destined to fail for the reasons mentioned in the previous two judgments, namely due to the non-recognition of legal standing limited as well as due to the completion of the construction of the playground.

V. Provisions of the Convention alleged to be in non-compliance

List as precisely as possible the provisions (articles, paragraphs, subparagraphs) of the Convention that you allege the Party concerned has not complied with.

12. The communicant believes that the domestic authorities have violated the following Articles of the Aarhus Convention (in bold the main operative provisions of the Convention that the communicant thinks have been violated):

Violations of the Aarhus Convention by the Republic of Albania's state (local government, state administration) authorities

a) **Article 6 (all paragraphs):** no public consultation was held regarding the need and the arrangements for the construction of the playground even though such a consultation was required under domestic law; similarly, no environmental impact assessment was available (as no such assessment had in fact been carried out); information regarding the project was not readily available and was in fact withheld by the public.

Violations of the Aarhus Convention by the Albanian courts seized with the communicants request for interim measures and the claim on the merits

a) **Article 9 (2) and (3):** in two instances the domestic courts adopted very restrictive if not prohibitive standing requirements, effectively precluding both the public at large as well as

individual members of the public from enjoying access to justice with a view to promoting and safeguarding their rights under the Aarhus Convention, namely their right to public participation and their right of securing the protection of the environment by the courts. The domestic courts also failed to sanction the local authority for failing to comply with its obligations under domestic law which is effectively transposing the Aarhus Convention.

VI. Nature of alleged non-compliance

13. The communicant considers that the facts of the present communication give rise to two forms of violation of the Aarhus Convention

A) Violation of the right of access to environmental information together with a violation of the right to public consultation

14. The communicants note that under domestic law, the competent authorities were enjoined to hold two round of public consultations, regarding both the drafting of a detailed plan for the area of national significance (namely the Green Crown of Tirana) as well as the construction of the playground in the Artificial Lake Park; moreover, they should have facilitated the public's access to all relevant information / documentation. Nevertheless, no public consultation was ever held in relation to the drafting of a detailed plan, as no such plan has been drafted, even though, as noted above, the adoption of such a plan was necessary in order to subsequently issue development / building permits. Similarly, and more importantly for present purposes, no consultation was held in relation to the construction of the playground. At the same time, the authorities also did not allow access to any documentation from the playground project's case file, arguing that access to the file should be restricted since the Prosecutor's Office had launched a criminal investigation against the Mayor of Tirana over the allegations that the playground was been constructed without a valid permit (**Annex 16,** page 3). In this respect, the communicant considers that although the two rights (right to information and right to public participation) are distinct, in order for the right to public participation to be able to be exercised effectively, a minimum amount of information should be made available *proactively* by the authorities, if only in order to allow the potential participants to the public consultation to make more informed interventions – indeed, the communicants consider that such an approach is also adopted by Article 6(2) of the Convention. Moreover, the provision of information proactively is particularly important – indeed, crucial- in relation to works affecting the environment that are to be completed in a short period of time, such as the impugned one. It is reminded that the construction of the playground lasted four months (February to May 2017); it would have been impossible for any member of the public to secure a final decision ordering the disclosure of the information requested within such a short timeframe (see in this respect the obligation on State Parties to institute reasonable time frames for "the public to prepare and participate effectively during the environmental decision-making" under Art 6 (3)). The complainants also note that there was no real reason for the urgency demonstrated by the Municipality in building the playground; it is reminded that the building permit was valid until 3 September 2017; as a result, the Municipality had enough time to either not begin the construction without holding a consultation or to suspend its construction and respond to the citizens' (including the claimants') concerns.

15. The communicants consider that the failure to hold the simplified form public consultation mandated by domestic law regarding the construction of the playground should be seen against the wider backdrop of what, in the communicant's opinion, constitutes a *structural problem*, namely the consistent and recurring failure of the Albanian authorities to conduct proper consultation in relation to

environmental issues, in accordance with the relevant provisions of domestic law. In that respect, the communicant notes that the Committee has already found Albania in violation of Article 6 regarding the failure to hold a public consultation into the construction of an industrial park (see communication ACCC/C/2005/12). In the present case, the communicants raised the issue of the non-holding of a consultation before the domestic courts, claiming in their submissions before them that the playground, both on its own and as part of a wider renovation project, constitutes a thematic park for the purposes of Annex II of Law 10440/2011, and therefore the competent authorities should have prepared a preliminary impact assessment study and have held public consultations. More specifically, the communicants adduced evidence before both domestic courts that the literal interpretation of the term "thematic park" mentioned in Law 10440/2011, Annex II, section 12, letter d) amply supported their contention that the playground should be considered as one. Thus they referred to the authoritative *Dictionary of the Albanian Language,* published by the Albanian Academy of Sciences, according to which a park is defined as: "a large garden with trees and ornamental flowers that serves as an area of recreation; a playground equipped with toys or different facilities for recreation or sports, examples; park in Tirana, sports park, amusement park for children", while the term thematic is defined as an adjective indicating that something is: "relevant to a specific topic"; similarly, in English, the Collins English Dictionary defines a theme park as: "an area planned as a leisure attraction, in which all the displays, buildings, activities, etc, are based on or relate to one particular subject."[4] In the present case, the communicants argued that an amusement park for children, containing different recreational activities for children aged 1 to 14 years old, did in fact constitute a "thematic park" for which, under domestic law, a preliminary environment impact assessment was required and concomitantly the obligation to hold a simplified form of public consultation arose[5] (**Annex 4**, Law 10440/2011, Annex II, section 12 (d) and Council of Ministers Decision No. 247/2014, Title 1). Indeed, it is difficult to reach a different conclusion; the playground in question did not consist of a few sets of swings but rather of a facility of a surface area of 4,000 square meters, built of concrete and containing different facilities depending on the children's age groups. Nevertheless, the Tirana Administrative First Instance Court rejected the communicants' arguments without advancing any pertinent reasoning and held that the playground did not constitute a "thematic park" for the purposes of domestic law; as a result, its construction did not fall within the ambit of Annexes I and II of Law 10440/2011 *On Environmental Impact Assessment* (**Annex 4**). Consequently, and always according to the domestic court, since under domestic law the holding of a consultation was not required, then it followed that Annex 1 to the Aarhus Convention (containing the list of activities referred to in Article 6(1)(a) of the Aarhus Convention, in relation which Member-States are required to provide for public consultation) and in particular of section 20,[6] also did not apply.

16. More recently, the Albanian Government themselves admitted the problems encountered in implementing Article 6 in practice: according to the latest (2017) National Implementation Report: "Obstacles encountered in the implementation of article 6 results due to the fact that several liabilities, in the process of public participation in environmental decision-making, are on local government, which changes every 4 years, which requires continuous attention of the Ministry of Environment on

[4] https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/theme-park

[5] Thus under Albanian law, a fully blown consultation process that would comprise public hearings should be held only in relation to (major) infrastructure projects / work specified in Annex I of Law 10440/2011 (e.g. thermal power stations with a heat output of 20 megawatts or more). For other projects, such as the ones falling in Annex II of Law 10440/2011, a more limited form of consultation (consisting of soliciting the public's opinion over email, without having to hold a public consultation hearing) is required.

[6] "Any activity not covered by paragraphs 1-19 above where public participation is provided for under an environmental impact assessment procedure in accordance with national legislation."

legislation enforcement. Second, it is noticed that meeting minutes which are kept in hearings, for activities which have impact on the environment, are not put in the website of National Environmental Agency. There is missing a report/statistic which shows how much is taken in consideration public opinion and how it has affected in the improvement of the document or investment." Answer to Question 29 entitled "Obstacles encountered in the implementation of article 6"). [7]

17. Summarising, the communicants consider that the domestic courts **first**, did not take into account that the authorities failed to adopt a detailed plan for the "Green Crown of Tirana" area (that includes the Artificial Lake Park in which the impugned playground was constructed); under domestic law, the adoption of such a plan was contingent on, among others, the holding of a consultation process. Adoption of such a plan was also necessary in order to establish the standards by reference to which any development / building permit should be granted. The failure of the authorities to adopt the detailed plan effectively meant that the NTC, a political body, was allowed to issue the relevant building permits (the conditional and the final one) solely on the basis of its discretion and without having regard to any planning or environmental regulations, as none had been drafted; as a result, the building permit for the construction of the playground was not issued in accordance with particular environmental / legal criteria, as should be the case with any construction taking place within an area of national importance. **Second**, the domestic court refused, without advancing any convincing argumentation, to consider a "playground for children" as a "thematic park", despite the fact that according to a literal interpretation of the term in Albanian, a recreational facility for children such as the playground in question amply falls within the definition of the term. By holding, without advancing any pertinent reasoning, that the playground did not in fact constitute a "thematic park" under Albanian legislation, the domestic courts effectively sidestepped the obligation provided for under domestic law to hold a public consultation. Indeed, if the domestic court's reasoning were to be accepted, it would mean that for none of the constructions envisaged under the Master Plan would the authorities need to commission a preliminary impact assessment study.

B) Violation of the right of access to justice

18. The communicants note that they filed before the domestic courts both a request for interim measures and a lawsuit on the merits, alleging violation of their right to take part in a public consultation over the construction of the playground (Article 9(2) of the Aarhus Convention) as well as of their right to challenge the decision of the authorities to proceed to the construction of the playground without first commissioning a preliminary impact assessment study (Article 9(3) of the Aarhus Convention). As these two issues are interrelated, the communicants will address them jointly.

19. The domestic courts in two instances (in the hearing of the request for interim measures and in the hearing on the merits before the first instance administrative court) rejected the communicants' claims without examining the well-founded nature of their arguments. More specifically, both courts considered that the development and building permits were issued lawfully, disregarding in this respect the clear wording of Articles 28(3) (which provided that the "exhaustive procedures" for the issuing of such permits should be specified in the development regulation) and 39 (which provides that a building permit issued in violation of, among others, the applicable planning instrument (i.e. the detailed plan) is "absolutely null and void") of Law 107/2014 (**Annex 4**). Moreover, the court that turned down the

[7] The Report is available at:
http://apps.unece.org/ehlm/pp/NIR/listnr.asp?YearID=2017&wf_Countries=AL&wf_Q=QA&Quer_ID=&LngIDg=EN&YearIDg=2017

communicants request for an interim measure noted that, on the basis of Law no. 49/2012 *On the organization and functioning of administrative courts and the adjudication of administrative disputes*, the communicants should have adduced evidence of a **serious**, **irreparable** and **immediate** damage **to their interests**; as the communicants failed to prove such damage, the court held that they did not have active legal standing to challenge the construction of the playground. Similarly, the court that reviewed the merits of the communicant's legal action also held that the communicants did not have standing in accordance with the provisions of the same law. By imposing such a high evidentiary burden borrowed from Law no. 49/2012 *On the organization and functioning of administrative courts and the adjudication of administrative disputes,* the domestic courts effectively ignored Article 9(2) of the Aarhus Convention which requires only "a sufficient interest", made it impossible for the communicants to exercise their right of access to justice. The communicants note that recently the ACCC held that a similarly restrictive requirement for accessing justice contained in Article 263(4) TFEU was contrary to Article 9(3) of the Aarhus Convention because: "[…] the restrictions to access to justice imposed by the *direct and individual concern* test are too severe to comply with the Convention." (Findings and Recommendations of the Compliance Committee with Regard to Communication ACCC/C/2008/32 (PART II) concerning compliance by the European Union, adopted on 17 March 2017, at paragraph 66).

20. Furthermore, although the communicants did invoke and produce to the domestic courts an evaluation report compiled by an acknowledged expert on environmental issues that clearly outlined the negative consequences for the environment that would be brought about by the construction of the playground, the domestic courts failed to take it into consideration for formal reasons, without however examining the possibility of commissioning *propio motu* such a report. Last, the domestic courts also considered that the communicants should have undertaken to deposit a (sizeable) financial guarantee in order to compensate the construction company for any loss it would incur from the suspension of the construction of the playground; such an onerous requirement could only serve to further narrow, if not completely extinguish, the communicants' right of access to justice. In this respect, the communicants note that the Albanian Government themselves have admitted in their latest (2017) National Implementation Report: "Costs is one of the concerns on matters related to environment: To initiate a judicial process; For expertise (mainly in the case of EIA and Environmental Permit, when it is necessary a detailed expertise to object it); For legal representative in the process (if used/needed); Also one of the main problematic, especially noticed during different sessions on environmental matters, is lack of environmental legal framework knowledge from the judiciary side in its entirety, both for the prosecution party and judging side." (Answer to Question 29 entitled "Obstacles encountered in the implementation of article 9").[8]

VII. Use of domestic remedies

22. The communicant launched two legal proceedings, namely a request for interim relief and a lawsuit on the merits. As noted above, the competent courts in both cases rejected the communicant's claim. Whereas the case is currently pending before the Appeals Court of Tirana, the communicant considers that the case has no prospects of success for the following reasons:

23. First, the construction of the playground has already being completed. As a result, it is almost certain that all subsequent proceedings shall be struck out as devoid of object – indeed, this was on the grounds invoked by the Tirana Administrative First Instance Court. Moreover, in light of the publicity that the

[8] Op. cit.

construction of the playground has gathered, it is impossible that the relevant town-planning authorities would have failed to notice that an allegedly illegal construction has been erected (see *a contrario* the judgment of the European Court of Human Rights in the case of *Hamer c. Belgique*, no. 21861/03, 27 November 2007). As a result, their continuing failure to proceed to *propio motu* to the demolition of the playground amply attests to the fact that they do not consider it to be built illegally.

24. Second, there is no case law in Albania that would indicate that the communicant's claim has any, even a remote, chance of success before the domestic courts. For these reasons, and even though they will continue pursuing their case before the domestic judicial instances, the communicants consider that they have exhausted all available effective domestic remedies.

VIII. Use of other international procedures

25. The subject matter of the present communication has not been brought before any other international body or organ and is not examined under any other international procedure.

IX. Confidentiality

26. No granting of confidentiality is requested.

X. Supporting documentation (copies, not originals)

Avoid including extraneous, superfluous or bulky documentation. Attach only documentation essential to your case, including:

- Relevant national legislation, highlighting the most relevant provisions.
- Relevant decisions/results of other procedures, highlighting the most relevant sections.
- Relevant correspondence with the Party concerned's authorities or other documentation substantiating your allegations of non-compliance, highlighting the most relevant sections.

For documents other than key legislation and decisions, there should be no more than **five** attachments (one document per attachment).

For all documentation, highlight those parts which are essential to your case.

Provide all documentation in the original language, together with a legal standard English translation thereof, or if that is not possible, a legal standard translation in either Russian or French.

XI. Signature

Sign and date the communication. If the communication is submitted by an organization, a person authorized to sign on behalf of that organization must sign it.

Tirana, 28 May 2018

Dorian Matlija **Theodoros Alexandridis**

XII. Sending the communication

Send the communication by **e-mail and by registered post** to the following address:

Secretary to the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee
United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
Environment Division
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland

E-mail: aarhus.compliance@unece.org

Clearly indicate:
"Communication to the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee"