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Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on  
Access to Information, Public Participation  
in Decision-making and Access to Justice  
in Environmental Matters

### Compliance Committee

#### Forty-sixth meeting

Geneva, 22–25 September 2014

## Report of the Compliance Committee on its forty-sixth meeting

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## **Introduction**

1. The forty-sixth meeting of the Compliance Committee under the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention) was held from 22 to 25 September 2014 in Geneva, Switzerland.

### **A. Attendance**

2. All the Committee members were present throughout the meeting. Members having declared a conflict of interest with respect to particular cases did not participate in closed sessions deliberating on those cases.

3. Representatives of the Government of Belgium took part in the open session on 22 September 2014. Representatives of the Governments of Germany, Slovakia and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland took part in the discussion in open session of the communications concerning their compliance. Representatives of Belgium took part in the open session on 25 September 2014.

4. The communicants of communications ACCC/C/2013/91 (United Kingdom) and ACCC/C/2013/92 (Germany) took part in the discussion in open session on 23 September 2014 concerning those communications. The communicant of communication ACCC/C/2013/89 (Slovakia) took part in the discussion in open session on 24 September 2014 concerning that communication.

5. Also participating as observers during the open sessions were members of the public and representatives of a number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), including the Alliance of the Austrian Environmental Movement (OEKOBUEO) (Austria) and Earthjustice (Switzerland), which participated on behalf of the European ECO Forum, and Greenpeace Central and Eastern Europe. In addition, the Municipality of Kalná nad Hronom took part in the discussion in open session on 24 September 2014 concerning communication ACCC/C/2013/89 (Slovakia) and Bündnis 90/Die Grünen, the GREENS Fichtelgebirg and Greens Germany took part in the discussion in open session on 23 September 2014 concerning communications ACCC/C/2013/91 and ACCC/C/2013/92.

### **B. Organizational matters**

6. The acting Chair of the Compliance Committee, Mr. Jonas Ebbesson, opened the meeting.

7. The Committee adopted its agenda as set out in document ECE/MP.PP/C.1/2014/10.

8. The Committee welcomed the two new members elected at the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention (Maastricht, the Netherlands, 29 June–1 July 2014). To fulfil the requirements of paragraph 11 of the annex to decision I/7 of the Meeting of the Parties (ECE/MP.PP/2/Add.8), the new members of the Committee, Ms. Elena Fasoli and Mr. Alistair McGlone, signed a declaration in which they undertook to perform their duties as members of the Committee impartially and conscientiously. The Committee also congratulated Mr. Ebbesson, Mr. Alexander Kodjabashev and Ms. Dana Zhandayeva on their re-election.

9. Following elections, Mr. Ebbesson was re-elected Chair and Mr. Kodjabashev was re-elected Vice-Chair by acclamation.

## **I. Submissions and referrals under the Convention**

10. The secretariat informed the Committee that no new submissions had been made by Parties concerning compliance by other Parties since the Committee's last meeting.

11. The secretariat informed the Committee that no submissions had been made by Parties concerning problems with their own compliance since the Committee's last meeting.

12. No referrals had been made by the secretariat since the Committee's last meeting.

13. At its fifth session, the Meeting of the Parties had expressed its deep concern that the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia had still not submitted its national implementation report for the third reporting cycle — the only country that had not done so — and had called upon the Compliance Committee, further to its mandate under paragraph 13 (c) of the annex to decision I/7 to consider the ongoing failure by the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to submit its report for the third cycle. The Committee agreed to address that issue of non-compliance with respect to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia under the reference ACCC/M/2014/1.

14. The Committee noted that it had been the first time that the Meeting of the Parties had requested the Committee to consider the compliance of an individual Party. While the annex to decision I/7 did not specifically address the procedure for the review of compliance when it was triggered by the Meeting of the Parties itself, paragraph 15 of the annex set out the procedure for a submission by one or more Parties that had reservations about another Party's compliance. The Committee agreed to apply the procedure set out in paragraph 15, *mutatis mutandis*, to requests from the Meeting of the Parties for the Committee to review the compliance of individual Parties.

## **II. Communications from members of the public**

15. The Committee confirmed the adoption of the edited version of its findings and recommendations in English, as well as their translation into French and Russian, with regard to communication ACCC/C/2010/51 (Romania), as set out in document ECE/MP.PP/C.1/2014/12.

16. Concerning communication ACCC/C/2008/32 (European Union (EU)), in the light of the communicant's request that the Committee resume its consideration of Part II of the findings, the Committee had by letter of 28 August 2014 asked the communicant to set out in more detail those aspects of its communication that were not subject to the ongoing court proceedings. The communicant had asked for further time until early October to prepare its response. The Committee agreed that it would thereafter seek the views of the Party concerned and consider how to proceed at its next meeting.

17. With regard to communication ACCC/C/2010/55 (United Kingdom), the Chair recalled that the case before the Upper Information Tribunal was scheduled for a substantive hearing on 24 November 2014. No new information had been received since the Committee's forty-fifth meeting (Maastricht, the Netherlands, 29 June–2 July 2014).

18. Concerning communication ACCC/C/2012/69 (Romania), the Committee continued its deliberations in closed session and agreed to continue those deliberations at its forty-seventh meeting (Geneva, 16–19 December 2014) with a view to completing its draft findings and, as appropriate, recommendations, which would then be sent for comment to the Party concerned and the communicant.

19. On communication ACCC/C/2012/71 (Czech Republic), the Committee continued its deliberations in closed session and agreed to continue those deliberations at its forty-seventh meeting with a view to completing its draft findings and, as appropriate, recommendations, which would then be sent for comment to the Party concerned and the communicant.

20. Concerning communication ACCC/C/2012/76 (Bulgaria), the Committee agreed to continue its deliberations at its forty-seventh meeting with a view to completing its draft findings and, as appropriate, recommendations, which would then be sent for comment to the Party concerned and the communicant.

21. Concerning communication ACCC/C/2013/81 (Sweden), by letter of 19 September 2014, the communicant had provided an update on the status of his domestic court proceedings. The Committee agreed to invite the Party concerned to comment on the communicant's update and to consider how to proceed at its forty-seventh meeting.

22. Concerning communications ACCC/C/2013/85 and ACCC/C/2013/86 (United Kingdom), the Committee continued its deliberations in closed session and agreed to continue those deliberations at its forty-seventh meeting with a view to completing its draft findings and, as appropriate, recommendations, which would then be sent for comment to the Party concerned and the communicant.

23. With respect to communication ACCC/C/2013/87 (Ukraine), the Committee noted that the deadline of 26 December 2013 for the Party to respond had elapsed but, despite the Party's e-mail of 29 June 2014 indicating that it would send its reply as soon as possible, no response had yet been received. The Committee agreed to send a reminder to the Party concerned, indicating that if no response was received by the date stated in the reminder letter, the Committee would schedule the discussion of the communication notwithstanding the Party's lack of response.

24. In relation to communication ACCC/C/2013/88 (Kazakhstan), by letter of 1 September 2014 the communicant had provided additional information. The Committee agreed to invite the communicant and the Party concerned to discuss the substance of the communication in open session at its forty-seventh meeting.

25. The Committee entered into open discussion on communication ACCC/C/2013/89 (Slovakia), with the participation of the Party concerned and the communicants. At the start of the discussion, Committee member Mr. Pavel Černý informed the meeting that he had had contact with the communicants in the past, but not with respect to the present case, and thus he did not consider he had a conflict of interest in the case. The Chair indicated that if either party considered that Mr. Černý had a conflict of interest they should indicate so forthwith. Neither party so indicated and the Chair concluded that it was agreed that Mr. Černý had no conflict of interest in the case. The Committee confirmed that communication ACCC/C/2013/89 was admissible. At the end of the discussion, the parties were invited to address some additional questions in writing.

26. In relation to communication ACCC/C/2013/90 (United Kingdom), on 23 September 2014 the communicant had provided a copy of the written judgement in its domestic proceeding. The Committee agreed to ask the communicant to comment on the judgement, and in particular whether it wished to withdraw any of its allegations, and to consider how to proceed at its forty-seventh meeting.

27. The Committee entered into open discussion on communication ACCC/C/2013/91 (United Kingdom), with the participation of the Party concerned and the communicants. The Committee confirmed that communication ACCC/C/2013/91 was admissible. At the end of the discussion, the parties were invited to address some additional questions in writing.

28. The Committee also entered into open discussion on communication ACCC/C/2013/92 (Germany), with the participation of the Party concerned and the communicants. The Committee confirmed that communication ACCC/C/2013/92 was admissible. At the end of the discussion, the parties were invited to address some additional questions in writing.

29. Concerning communication ACCC/C/2013/93 (Norway), the Committee noted that the Party concerned had provided its response to the communication on 14 May 2014. The Committee agreed to invite the communicant and the Party concerned to discuss the substance of the communication in open session at its forty-seventh meeting.

30. In relation to communication ACCC/C/2013/94 (Denmark), the Committee recalled that, at its forty-second meeting (Geneva, 24–27 September 2013), the communication had been suspended pending the outcome of the communicant's ongoing court proceedings. The Committee noted that no new information had been received since the forty-fourth meeting (Geneva, 25–28 March 2014) and requested the secretariat to ask the communicant for an update.

31. Concerning communication ACCC/C/2013/96 (EU), the Committee noted that the Party concerned had requested an extension of two months, until 25 October 2014, for its response. The Committee provisionally scheduled that it would discuss the substance of the communication at its forty-eighth meeting (Geneva, 24–27 March 2015).

32. With respect to communication ACCC/C/2013/98 (Lithuania), the Committee noted that the deadline of 27 November 2014 for the Party concerned to respond had not elapsed and that the Party had not yet replied. The Committee provisionally scheduled that it would discuss the substance of the communication at its forty-eighth meeting.

33. Regarding communication ACCC/C/2014/99 (Spain), the Committee noted that the deadline of 8 February 2015 for the Party concerned to respond had not elapsed and that the Party had not yet replied. The Committee provisionally scheduled that it would discuss the substance of the communication at its forty-eighth meeting.

34. With regard to communication ACCC/C/2014/100 (United Kingdom), the Committee noted that the deadline of 9 February 2015 for the Party concerned to respond had not elapsed and that the Party had not yet replied. The Committee provisionally scheduled that it would discuss the substance of the communication at its forty-eighth meeting.

35. Concerning communication ACCC/C/2014/101 (EU), the Committee noted that the deadline of 9 February 2015 for the Party concerned to respond had not elapsed and that the Party had not yet replied. The Committee provisionally scheduled that it would discuss the substance of the communication at its forty-eighth meeting.

36. With respect to communication ACCC/C/2014/102 (Belarus), the Committee noted that the communication had not yet been forwarded to the Party concerned as the secretariat had asked the communicant to clarify which aspects of the communication it requested to keep confidential, but had yet to hear back. The Committee requested the secretariat to send a reminder to the communicant.

37. Concerning communication ACCC/C/2014/104 (Netherlands), the Committee noted that on 20, 22 and 23 September 2014, the communicant had provided additional information in response to the Committee's request. The Committee noted that the deadline of 3 February 2015 for the Party concerned to provide its response to the communication had not elapsed and the Party had not yet replied. The Committee provisionally scheduled that it would discuss the substance of the communication at its forty-eighth meeting.

38. Regarding communication ACCC/C/2014/105 (Hungary), at its forty-fifth meeting the Committee had determined that the communication was admissible on a preliminary basis and had requested the secretariat to forward the communication to the Party concerned, seeking further information from the communicant with respect to the use of domestic remedies. On 23 September 2014, the communicant had provided additional information on its use of domestic remedies. The Committee agreed to confirm its determination on preliminary admissibility with respect to all the allegations raised in the communication and noted that the deadline of 1 March 2015 for the Party to respond had not elapsed and that the Party had not yet replied. The Committee provisionally scheduled that it would discuss the substance of the communication at its forty-ninth meeting (Geneva, 30 June–3 July 2015).

39. The Committee considered the preliminary admissibility of eight communications deferred from its forty-fifth meeting and three communications received since that meeting (as set out below).

40. Communication ACCC/C/2013/106 (Czech Republic) had been submitted on 30 September 2013 by the Czech NGO “V havarijní zóně jaderné elektrárny Temelín”. The communication alleged non-compliance with article 6, paragraphs 3 and 8, and article 9, paragraphs 2, 3 and 4, of the Convention. At its forty-third meeting (Geneva, 17–20 December 2013), the Committee had agreed to defer its determination on preliminary admissibility in order to ask the communicant to identify which of the allegations contained in the communication had not already been considered by the Committee in its findings on communication ACCC/C/2010/50. The communicant replied by letter of 18 September 2014. The Committee determined that the communication was admissible on a preliminary basis. It requested the secretariat to forward the communication to the Party concerned, asking it to identify which, if any, of the allegations contained in the communication it considered had already been addressed in the Committee’s findings on communication ACCC/C/2010/50, and which might therefore be subject to the Committee’s summary proceedings procedure. Mr. Ion Diaconu was designated as curator for the case.

41. A communication concerning Bulgaria had been submitted on 12 February 2014 by the NGO “Den”. The communication alleged non-compliance with article 1 and articles 3 to 9 of the Convention. At its forty-fifth meeting the Committee had agreed to defer its preliminary determination of admissibility in order to seek further clarification from the communicant. By e-mail of 23 September 2014, the communicant had requested further time for its response. The Committee agreed to defer preliminary determination of admissibility to its forty-seventh meeting. Ms. Dana Zhandayeva was provisionally designated as curator for the case.

42. A communication concerning Hungary had been submitted on 5 February 2014 by a member of the public, Mr. Ferenc Tibor Zsák. The communication alleged non-compliance with articles 3, paragraph 8, and articles 8 and 9 of the Convention. At its forty-fifth meeting, the Committee had agreed to defer its preliminary determination of admissibility in order to seek further clarification from the communicant. No response had yet been received. OEKOBUERO informed the Committee that it had been following up with the communicant and would continue to do so. The Committee agreed to defer its preliminary determination of admissibility to its forty-seventh meeting and to send a reminder to the communicant, informing him that if his response was not received his communication might be found inadmissible. Mr. Alistair McGlone was provisionally designated as curator for the case.

43. A communication concerning the Republic of Ireland had been submitted on 11 November 2013 by a member of the public, Mr. Kieran Cummins. The communication alleged non-compliance with articles 6 and 7 of the Convention. The Committee agreed to

further defer its preliminary determination of admissibility to its forty-seventh meeting and to ask the communicant to further substantiate his communication. Ms. Elena Fasoli was provisionally designated as curator for the case.

44. A communication concerning the United Kingdom had been submitted on 7 January 2014 by a member of the public who had requested confidentiality. The communication alleged non-compliance with article 3, paragraphs 1, 2 and 8, and article 9, paragraph 4, of the Convention. The Committee agreed to defer its preliminary determination of admissibility to its forty-seventh meeting and to ask the communicant to further substantiate their communication. Mr. Diaconu was provisionally designated as curator for the case.

45. A communication concerning Belgium had been submitted on 12 May 2014 by the Belgian NGOs “Ardennes liégeoises” and “Terre wallonne”. The communication alleged non-compliance with article 9, paragraph 4, of the Convention in connection with awards of legal costs. At its forty-fifth meeting, the Committee had agreed to defer its preliminary determination of admissibility in order to seek further clarification from the communicant. The communicant had provided its response to the Committee’s questions on 8 September 2014 in French. The secretariat had requested translation of the communicant’s response but that had not yet been received. The Committee agreed to defer its preliminary determination of admissibility to its forty-seventh meeting in order to consider the communicant’s response once translated. Mr. Černý was provisionally designated as curator for the case.

46. A communication concerning Ireland had been submitted on 29 May 2014 by seven NGOs: Lakelands Wind Information Group; Rethink Pylons; Wind Aware Ireland; Kingscourt Residents Against Local Windfarms; Meath Wind Turbine Information Group; Environmental Action Alliance — Ireland; and the European Platform Against Wind Farms (Ireland). The communication alleged non-compliance with article 3, paragraph 1, and articles 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 of the Convention in connection with the implementation of the EU Renewable Energy Directive<sup>1</sup> in Ireland through the Irish National Renewable Energy Action Plan. At its forty-fifth meeting, the Committee had agreed to defer its preliminary determination of admissibility in order to seek further clarification from the communicant regarding: (a) which of its allegations related to events that had taken place after the Convention entered into force for Ireland; and (b) the extent to which domestic remedies had been used. The communicant had provided its response to the Committee’s request for clarification on 3 September 2014, as well as some additional information on 19 September 2014. The Committee reviewed all the additional information provided by the communicant and agreed to defer its preliminary determination of admissibility to its forty-seventh meeting in order to request the communicant to further clarify its allegations. Mr. Alexander Kodzhabashev was provisionally designated as curator for the case.

47. A further communication concerning Ireland had been submitted on 5 June 2014 by a member of the public, Mr. Kieran Fitzpatrick, who had requested partial confidentiality. The communication alleged non-compliance with article 3, paragraphs 1, 2 and 8, and article 9, paragraph 4, of the Convention in connection with court costs. At its forty-fifth meeting, the Committee had agreed to defer its determination on preliminary admissibility and to ask the communicant to further substantiate his communication, including with reference to case law. On 5 August 2014, prior to the Committee’s request to the communicant being sent, the communicant had submitted a revised version of his

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<sup>1</sup> Directive 2009/28/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources and amending and subsequently repealing Directives 2001/77/EC and 2003/30/EC.

communication. On 24 September 2014, the communicant had submitted a further revised version of his communication, withdrawing his request for confidentiality. At its forty-sixth meeting, the Committee had reviewed the revised communication and concluded that the Committee's questions should still be sent to the communicant. The Committee thus agreed to defer its preliminary determination of admissibility to its forty-seventh meeting in order to request the communicant to further substantiate his allegations. Ms. Heghine Hakhverdyan was provisionally designated as curator for the case.

48. A communication concerning Greece had been submitted on 31 July 2014 by the Archbishop of Crete and others. The communication alleged non-compliance with articles 3, 4 and 5 of the Convention. The Committee agreed to defer its preliminary determination of admissibility to its forty-seventh meeting in order to request the communicant to clarify its allegations, its use of domestic remedies and the status of the communicants. Mr. Diaconu was provisionally designated as curator for the case.

49. A communication concerning the United Kingdom had been submitted on 16 July 2014 by a member of the public, Mr. Ian Miller. The communication alleged non-compliance with articles 4, 6, and 9 of the Convention. The Committee agreed to defer its preliminary determination of admissibility to its forty-seventh meeting in order to request the communicant to clarify and further substantiate its allegations. Ms. Zhandayeva was provisionally designated as curator for the case.

50. A communication concerning Belgium had been submitted on 30 August 2014 by the NGO "Straatgo" and two members of the public. The communication alleged non-compliance with articles 4, 6 and 9 of the Convention. The Committee agreed to defer its preliminary determination of admissibility to its forty-seventh meeting in order to request the communicant to clarify its allegations, the chronology of events and its use of domestic remedies. Ms. Hakhverdyan was provisionally designated as curator for the case.

### **III. Reporting requirements**

51. The Committee noted that at its fifth session, the Meeting of the Parties had urged those Parties that had not yet submitted their national implementation reports — i.e., Portugal, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkmenistan — to do so by 1 October 2014.<sup>2</sup> To date, only Portugal had submitted its report.

### **IV. Follow-up on specific cases of non-compliance**

52. The Committee discussed a draft road map prepared by the secretariat regarding the follow-up to the decisions V/9a–n on compliance adopted by the Meeting of the Parties at its fifth session. The Chair invited the curators responsible for each decision to review the draft road map and to make note of those dates in the road map relating to the decisions they were responsible for.

53. The Committee then reviewed any developments with respect to decisions V/9a–n since their adoption.

54. Regarding decision V/9c concerning Belarus, by letter of 20 August 2014 the Government of Lithuania had requested to be an observer in the follow-up on that decision. The Committee clarified that the status of observer meant that the observer would be copied on correspondence and documentation sent to the parties by the Committee. It did not give

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<sup>2</sup> See ECE/MP.PP/2014/2, para. 26.

the observer any other special status, as any Party or person was entitled to provide information or comments to the Committee

55. With respect to decision V/9l concerning Spain, by e-mail of 12 September 2014 the Party concerned had informed the Committee that an ordinance regulating fees for environmental information at the national level had been formally adopted and published in the Spanish Official Journal. The Committee agreed to ask the communicants of communications ACCC/C/2008/24 and ACCC/C/2009/36 to comment.

56. Regarding decision V/9n concerning the United Kingdom, on 15 September 2014 the communicant of communication ACCC/C/2013/86 had provided additional information in the context of that case which it had requested the Committee to also take into account in the follow-up to decision V/9n.

## **V. Programme of work and calendar of meetings**

57. The Committee agreed to hold its forty-seventh, forty-eighth and forty-ninth meetings in Geneva, from 16 to 19 December 2014, 24 to 27 March 2015 and 30 June to 3 July 2015, respectively.

## **VI. Other business**

### **A. Modus operandi and Compliance Committee guidance document**

58. The Chair provided an overview of the Committee's working methods for the benefit of the new members. The secretariat then presented the draft revised Guide to the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee, together with a draft revised recommended format for communications. The Chair informed the Committee that the draft revised Guide to the Compliance Committee would shortly be circulated to Committee members for their electronic comments. Following receipt of the Committee's comments, the draft would be posted on the Compliance Committee's web page in advance of the Committee's forty-seventh meeting when it would be discussed in open session.

59. The Committee continued its discussions on its procedure for handling new communications. In that regard, the Chair presented a draft procedure for processing communications pending determination of preliminary admissibility prepared by the secretariat in consultation with the Chair. Members of the Committee and observers provided their comments on the draft. The Chair informed the Committee that the comments would be taken into account in the finalization of the draft procedure, which would thereafter be posted on the Committee web page for communications and included in the revised Guide to the Compliance Committee.

### **B. Other matters**

60. The Chair recalled that he had participated at the Final Conference on Public Participation in Environmental Impact Assessment of the EU-China Environmental Governance Programme, held in Beijing on 22 May 2014, and had given a presentation entitled "The Aarhus Convention: Ambitions, Experiences and Potentials". He had also participated at a meeting in Brussels on 24 July 2014 with the China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development. As an outcome of those meetings, the EU-China Environmental Governance Programme had offered to prepare a Chinese version of the second edition of the Aarhus Convention Implementation Guide and

the secretariat was liaising with the EU-China Environmental Governance Programme to that end.

61. The secretariat informed the Committee that the EU-China Environmental Governance Programme was organizing a meeting in Beijing on 15 and 16 October 2014 with senior Chinese Government officials to discuss the Aarhus Convention. Several Convention experts, including Mr. Jerzy Jendrośka and a representative of the secretariat had been invited to attend the meeting.

62. The Chair announced that he had also been invited to attend a Conference held in Lviv, Ukraine, in memory of Mrs. Svitlana Kravchenko.

63. The secretariat recalled that, following a request by Belarus for clarification of certain of the Convention's provisions, the Meeting of the Parties at its fifth session had agreed a procedure pursuant to paragraph 13 (b) and 14 of the annex to decision I/7 for that purpose.<sup>3</sup> The procedure would also apply to any similar requests to be made in the future.

64. The Chair reported that he had been invited to take part in the upcoming meeting (Santiago, November 2014) of the Latin American and Caribbean initiative to explore the feasibility of a regional instrument on principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development.

65. The Chair also reported that, on the occasion of the Elizabeth Haub Prize ceremony in Stockholm on 5 November 2014, a special ceremony would be devoted to the memory of Mr. Marc Pallemarts, who had been awarded the prize in 2013.

66. Mr. Alistair McGlone, in his capacity as the Chair of the Compliance Committee of the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers, reported that that Committee had received no communications, submissions or referrals to date. At its third meeting (Maastricht, the Netherlands, 3–4 July 2014), the Protocol Compliance Committee had agreed, among other matters, to identify and provide advisory support on systemic issues concerning compliance.

67. Mr. Jendrośka said that he had recently participated in a conference in Brussels convened by the European Environmental Law Foundation. He also reported that the European Commission had initiated training for EU judges on several environmental conventions; it appeared that the judiciary were aware of the Aarhus Convention, but would value further guidance on its interpretation.

68. The secretariat informed the Committee that the World Bank was revising its environmental safeguard policies and was currently undertaking a consultation process on its draft new environmental and social framework. The secretariat had recently met with representatives of the World Bank to provide its oral comments on the draft, and had been invited to provide written comments by the end of 2014.

69. The secretariat further reported that it had given a presentation on the theme, "The Aarhus Convention as a benchmark on environmental governance", to the Open Symposium on the Practice of Independent Accountability Mechanisms (London, 17 September 2014), which had been organized back to back with the annual meeting of the network of the independent accountability mechanisms.

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<sup>3</sup> See ECE/MP.PP/2014/2, para. 53.

## **VII. Adoption of the report and closure of the meeting**

70. The Committee adopted the report of its forty-sixth meeting. The Chair then officially closed the meeting.

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