STATEMENT TO THE SIXTH MEETING OF THE PARTIES ON AGENDA ITEM 3:

Compliance by Austria; made by OEKOBUERO

Just very briefly if we may in our capacity as the communicants of C-48, one of the cases which led to the previous MOP’s Decision V/9b, which is now under review as Draft Decision VI/8b, we would say that:

Austria has taken truly positive steps and in our view fully implemented the requirements as set forth in Decision V/9b regarding the judicial review processes relating to access to information requests. Though this did take some time, particularly at the provincial level, we consider Austria has come into compliance as to this issue, a fact for which we truly congratulate Austria and indeed warmly welcome.

With regards to other access to justice issues, we must however echo here both the Compliance Committee’s report and the proposed Draft Decision VI/8b. Progress has been slow. In fact, we would submit there has been no progress, and perhaps even backsliding, an issue which we indeed raised – not now as a new issue – but during the course of comments on Austria’s third progress report. Since we submitted those comments there have in fact been new developments, ones which concern us deeply. And there can be no doubt but that we will raise these during the course of the further follow-up on Decision VI/8b. Unfortunately, it seems we will have much to report. In this context we would again turn to the Compliance Committee’s report and the proposed draft decision. Action is needed here. Urgently.