Statement by the European ECO Forum on the agenda item 3 (c): Substantive issues: Access to Justice (delivered by Andriy Andrusevych)

**General:** We support the activities of the Task Force and the Chair’s proposal for future activities. We highlight the need to explore the issues of the scope of the appeals, timeliness, costs and injunctive relief criteria and other areas for study that the Task Force may find relevant. Prosecution and harassment is a highly relevant substantive area for the Task Force work.

**Restricting mandate:** We consider that the Task Force mandate cannot be limited to studies, especially when we countries with no or very little practical experience, even after over 10 years of the Convention’s entry in force. At the same time, little efforts were put into other relevant tasks, such as encouraging involvement of the ministries of justice, consideration of practical arrangements for increasing support for public interest lawyers. For this reason the Task Force shall keep its mandate to work on these issues, in particular in relation to raising capacity of the NGOs to seek access to justice.

**Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR):** Proposed focus on ADR in our view cannot be considered a priority at all, as this would only weaken the effectiveness of the Task Force by distracting attention to an issue which is not directly stemming from the Article 9.

**Financial constrains & prioritization:** Being the weakest pillar of the Convention in terms of implementation, Access to Justice shall be of the highest priority in the Convention work in general.