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ECONOMIC COMMISSION
FOR EUROPE

Tel: +41 (0)22 917 3294 (direct)
+41 (0)22 917 1234 (Palais des Nations)
Fax: +41 (0)22 917 0123
E-mail: aarhus.compliance@unece.org

Palais des Nations, Room 348
CH-1211 GENEVA 10

Ref: ENV/2013/99

2 May 2013

Dear Sir,

Decision IV/9b of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention)

I am writing to inform you that at its fortieth meeting (Geneva, 25-28 March 2013), the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee discussed the implementation of decision IV/9b on compliance by Belarus with its obligations under the Convention.

The Committee took note of the report you had submitted within the deadline, as well as of your letter of 13 February 2013, in response to the Chair's letter of 5 October 2012. The Committee also took note of the comments on your report submitted by the communicant of communication ACCC/C/2009/37 on 28 February 2013. During the discussion, an observer expressed disappointment with respect to the legislative developments in the country.

The Committee noted that the nature of the information provided in the report did not allow for an accurate evaluation of the progress achieved. Therefore, the Committee invites you to provide concrete information about the exact dates of the different stages of the legislative process to reach the objectives set in the action plan, originally submitted on 30 March 2012, including information on how the relevant recommendations in communication ACCC/C/2009/44 (ECE/MP.PP/C.1/2011/6/Add.1, para. 90, in particular subparagraphs (a), (b) and (c)), which referred to the recommendations in communication ACCC/C/2009/37 (see ECE/MP.PP//2011/11/Add.2), and which had been made with the agreement of the Party concerned, had been addressed.

Mr. Vitaly Kulik
First Deputy Minister of Natural Resources
and Environmental Protection
of the Republic of Belarus
10, Kollektornaya str.
220048 Minsk

The Committee also noted with regret that your response to the Committee Chair's letter of 5 October 2012 concerning the alleged arrest and detentions of environmental activists was unsatisfactory. The Committee therefore invites you to provide more specific information.

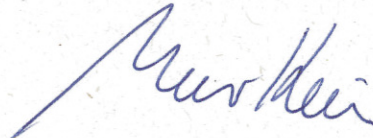
Please provide your response by **31 July 2013**. When you provide additional information to address the points raised above, please also bear in mind the Committee's recommendations on communication ACCC/C2009/44 and also the recommendations on communication ACCC/2009/37, which Belarus has already accepted.

The Committee will review the situation in detail at its forty-second meeting (24-27 September 2013). It requested the secretariat to explore the possibility of a videoconference with a representative of the Party concerned and interested observers either on **26 or 27 September 2013**. Kindly confirm your availability on these dates, so that the secretariat can then proceed with the necessary administrative arrangements.

Further to your more elaborated written submissions and the discussion preliminarily scheduled to take place on 26 or 27 September 2013, the Committee will start considering its recommendations to the Meeting of the Parties at its fifth session on the matter.

Please do not hesitate to contact the secretariat if you require further information.

Yours sincerely,



Marco Keiner
Director
Environment Division
United Nations Economic Commissions for Europe

cc: Mr. Ivan Narkevitch, Head of the Department of International Conventions and Agreements RUE "Bel SRC "Ecology", Belarus
Permanent Mission of the Republic of Belarus to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva
Mr. Andriy Andrushevych, European ECO Forum, on behalf of the communicant ACCC/C/2009/37 and communicant ACCC/C/2009/44
Mr. Thomas Alge, communicant ACCC/C/2009/44