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Regional cooperation

Resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Council on 25 July 2023

[on the recommendation of the Economic Commission for Europe ([E/2023/15/Add.1](#))]

2023/21. Implementation of the rapid response mechanism for the protection of environmental defenders under the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention)

The Economic and Social Council,

Noting the adoption by the Economic Commission for Europe at its seventieth session, held in Geneva on 18 and 19 April 2023, of decision J (70) on the implementation of the rapid response mechanism for the protection of environmental defenders under the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters ¹ (Aarhus Convention), by which the Commission recommended that the Economic and Social Council endorse the decision,

Endorses Economic Commission for Europe decision J (70), annexed to the present resolution, and requests the Secretary-General to increase the support by the Commission, in order to strengthen the capacity of the secretariat to facilitate the implementation of the rapid response mechanism for the protection of environmental defenders under the Aarhus Convention.

*43rd plenary meeting
25 July 2023*

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2161, No. 37770.



Annex

Decision J (70)

Implementation of the rapid response mechanism for the protection of environmental defenders under the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention)

The Economic Commission for Europe,

1. *Acknowledging* the essential role of the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention) in furthering effective and inclusive public access to information, access to justice and public participation in environmental matters across different sectors and processes;
2. *Also acknowledging* that the Aarhus Convention is thereby playing an important role in the achievement of all sustainable development goals, in particular goal 16, by empowering the public with the right to access to information and to justice, and participate effectively in decision-making on a wide range of issues addressed by the goals;
3. *Recognizing* that the implementation of the Convention also supports countries efforts in implementing many other international commitments, including the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC); the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD); and a number of Human Rights Council resolutions and processes with direct relevance to environmental matters;
4. *Welcoming* the tangible positive changes across the ECE region and beyond in promoting access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters, stimulated by the Aarhus Convention since its adoption in 1998;
5. *Noting* that the number of the Parties to the Convention was progressively growing;
6. *Also noting* the adoption, at the seventh session of the Meeting of the Parties, of Decision VII/9 establishing a rapid response mechanism for the protection of environmental defenders;
7. *Recognizing* the importance of adequate financing for the implementation of the rapid response mechanism for the protection of environmental defenders in order to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as other relevant global and regional commitments;
8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to increase the support by ECE, in order to strengthen the secretariat's capacity to facilitate the implementation of the rapid response mechanism for the protection of environmental defenders under the Aarhus Convention;
9. *Decides* to transmit to the Economic and Social Council at its session of 2023 a draft resolution on this issue for consideration and possible adoption.