



**МІНІСТЭРСТВА
ПРЫРОДНЫХ РЭСУРСАЎ І АХОВЫ
НАВАКОЛЬНАГА АСЯРОДДЗЯ
РЭСПУБЛІКІ БЕЛАРУСЬ**

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На № _____ ад _____

**МИНИСТЕРСТВО
ПРИРОДНЫХ РЕСУРСОВ И ОХРАНЫ
ОКРУЖАЮЩЕЙ СРЕДЫ
РЕСПУБЛИКИ БЕЛАРУСЬ**

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Chair,
Implementation Committee,
Convention on Environmental
Impact Assessment in a
Transboundary Context

Dear Ms. Kolar-Planinšič,

I would like to thank you for the letter of August 15, 2013 and to inform the Implementation Committee on the measures taken by Belarus for implementation of the Committee's recommendations related to participation of the Lithuanian public in the transboundary EIA procedure for the planned NPP in Belarus.

Taking into account the draft recommendations of the Implementation Committee, in November-December 2012 the Belarusian Side sent to the Lithuanian Side materials on justification of site selection for the construction of the NPP and on expected transboundary radiological impact of the NPP. By the letter of June 11, 2013 (see Attachment 1) the final EIA report translated into Lithuanian was sent to the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania with a request to distribute it, *inter alia*, among the Lithuanian public. The final EIA report in English was sent to the Lithuanian Side as early as in February 2011. However, contrary to the provisions of the Espoo Convention, recommendations of the Implementation Committee and relevant provisions of the Guidance on the practical application of the Espoo Convention (ECE/MP.EIA/8) and despite our requests, the Lithuanian Side has not disseminated the final EIA report among the Lithuanian public.

Taking this into account and following the Committee's recommendations, the Belarusian Side posted the final EIA report in Lithuanian in the Internet. An announcement for the Lithuanian public (see Attachment 2) about possibilities for reviewing the final EIA report and for making comments on it in accordance with Article 4, paragraph 2 and Article 3, paragraph 8 within the period from July 17 till August 17, 2013, and about the hearings in Ostrovets on August 17, 2013 was disseminated through the Lithuanian mass media and posted on the web-site of the Embassy of the Republic of Belarus in Vilnius.

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In order to facilitate participation of the Lithuanian public in the hearings, the Belarusian Side provided the hearings participants with free entry visas and insurance and transportation from Vilnius and Visaginas (Lithuania) to Ostrovets and back.

The Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Belarus invited (see Attachment 3) the Lithuanian officials, *inter alia*, the Minister of Environment, Minister of Energy, parliamentarians and others to attend the public hearings in Ostrovets.

The public hearings were held on August 17, 2013. 101 Lithuanian citizens participated in the event, that exceeded the number of participants (which was 83) of the public hearings in Vilnius in March 2010. The minutes of the hearings and report of the event are attached (see Attachments 4-5 respectively).

The Belarusian Side has been sending proposals to the Lithuanian Side to hold consultations in accordance with Article 5 of the Espoo Convention repeatedly by the letters of February 6 and November 16, 2012, of February 27, April 30, June 11 and July 19, 2013. The Lithuanian Side has not expressed its intention to hold a bilateral meeting. This fact is likely to be a result of the replies given to the questions of the Lithuanian Side on the final EIA report in the course of 2011-2013.

Taking this opportunity we kindly ask to consider the implementation of the Committee's recommendations by Belarus at its upcoming session in September 2013. We would also like to participate in, or to be present during, the consideration by the Committee of this issue in order to provide the Committee members with the relevant clarifications.

- Attachment: 1. letter of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Belarus of June 11, 2013;
2. announcement for the Lithuanian public;
3. invitation letter of the Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Belarus;
4. minutes of the public hearings;
5. report of the public hearings.

Sincerely,

Deputy Minister of Natural Resources
and Environmental Protection
of the Republic of Belarus



I.M.Kachanovski