



# Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General  
31 March 2023

Original: English

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## Economic Commission for Europe

Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on  
Access to Information, Public Participation  
in Decision-making and Access to Justice  
in Environmental Matters

### Working Group of the Parties

#### Twenty-seventh meeting

Geneva, 26–28 June 2023

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

#### Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

## Annotated provisional agenda for the twenty-seventh meeting

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, starting at 10 a.m. on  
Monday, 26 June 2023

### Introduction

The twenty-seventh meeting of the Working Group of the Parties will be held in Geneva, on 26–28 June 2023.

### Working hours:

- Monday 26 June, 10 a.m.–1 p.m. and 3–6 p.m.
- Tuesday 27 June, 10 a.m.–1 p.m. and 3–6 p.m.
- Wednesday, 28 June, 9.30 a.m.–12.30 p.m.
- Lunch breaks: 1–3 p.m. on Monday and Tuesday
- Coffee breaks (time permitting)

## I. Provisional agenda

1. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda.
2. War in Ukraine and implementation of the Convention.
3. Status of ratification.
4. Substantive issues:
  - (a) Thematic session on public participation in decision-making;



- (b) Access to information;
  - (c) Access to justice;
  - (d) Genetically modified organisms.
5. Procedures and mechanisms:
    - (a) Rapid response mechanism;
    - (b) Compliance mechanism;
    - (c) Reporting mechanism;
    - (d) Capacity-building and awareness-raising.
  6. Thematic session on the promotion of the principles of the Convention in international forums.
  7. Promotion of the Convention and other relevant developments and interlinkages.
  8. Implementation of the work programme for 2022–2025, including financial matters.
  9. Preparations for the eighth session of the Meeting of the Parties.
  10. Other business.
  11. Adoption of outcomes.

## **II. Annotations**

### **1. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda**

*Timing: Monday 26 June, 10–10.10 a.m.*

The Working Group of the Parties to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention) will be invited to adopt the agenda for its twenty-seventh meeting, as set out in the present document.<sup>1</sup>

### **2. War in Ukraine and implementation of the Convention**

*Timing: Monday 26 June, 10.10–10.40 a.m.*

Representatives of Ukraine will be invited to share challenges facing their country due to the war launched by the Russian Federation against Ukraine and any other relevant information in that regard. Delegations may wish to make statements, as appropriate.

### **3. Status of ratification**

*Timing: Monday 26 June, 10.40–10.45 a.m.*

The secretariat will provide the Working Group with an overview of the status of ratification, acceptance, approval and accession with respect to the Aarhus Convention and the amendment thereto. Delegations will be invited to report on any recent or anticipated developments concerning ratification, acceptance, approval or accession with respect to those instruments. The Working Group is expected to take note of any developments.

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<sup>1</sup> All documentation for the meeting will be made available on a dedicated web page on the Convention's website (<https://unece.org/info/Environmental-Policy/Public-Participation/events/375491>).

#### **4. Substantive issues**

##### **(a) Thematic session on public participation in decision-making**

*Timing: Monday 26 June, 10.45 a.m.–1 p.m. and 3–3.40 p.m.*

A thematic session on public participation in decision-making will be organized in a format of panel presentations followed by a general discussion. The topics for discussion are based on decision VII/2 on promoting effective public participation in decision-making (ECE/MP.PP/2021/2/Add.1), adopted by the Convention's Meeting of the Parties at its seventh session (Geneva, 18–21 October 2021), and the key outcomes of the work of the Task Force on Public Participation in Decision-making. The Working Group will be invited to focus its discussion on: (a) safe public participation and protection of environmental defenders; and (b) public participation with regard to large-scale infrastructure/transport. The provisional programme for the thematic session will be made available on the meeting web page in due course.

##### **Documentation**

Report of the meeting of the Task Force on Public Participation in Decision-making (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2023/3)

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2023/5)

Provisional programme of the thematic session on public participation in decision-making (AC/WGP-27/Inf.1)

##### **(b) Access to information**

*Timing: Monday 26 June, 3.40–4 p.m.*

The Working Group of the Parties will be informed about recent activities and future plans regarding access to information. Delegations will be invited to contribute additional information on relevant developments in this area. The Working Group is expected to take note of the information provided and consider the planned activities.

##### **Documentation**

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2023/5)

##### **(c) Access to justice**

*Timing: Monday 26 June, 4–4.30 p.m.*

The Working Group will be informed about the recent activities and future plans in this area. Delegations will be invited to contribute additional information on relevant developments. The Working Group is expected to take note of the information provided and consider the planned activities.

##### **Documentation**

Report of the meeting of the Task Force on Access to Justice (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2023/4)

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2023/5)

##### **(d) Genetically modified organisms**

*Timing: Monday 26 June, 4.30–4.45 p.m.*

The Working Group will consider the issue of ratification of the amendment to the Convention providing for public participation in decisions on the deliberate release into the

environment and placing on the market of genetically modified organisms and relevant activities since the seventh session of the Meeting of the Parties. Delegations will be invited to report on any recent or anticipated developments in that regard. The Working Group is expected to take note of the information provided and consider the planned activities.

**Documentation**

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2023/5)

**5. Procedures and mechanisms**

**(a) Rapid response mechanism**

*Timing: Monday 26 June, 4.45–6 p.m.*

The Working Group will be informed about the recent activities and future plans in this area. Delegations will be invited to contribute additional information on relevant developments. The Working Group is expected to take note of the information provided and consider the planned activities.

**Documentation**

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2023/5)

**(b) Compliance mechanism**

*Timing: Tuesday 27 June, 10–11 a.m.*

The Working Group will be informed about the outcomes of the recent meetings of the Compliance Committee and other relevant matters since the twenty-sixth meeting of the Working Group of the Parties (Geneva, 22–23 June 2022). The Working Group is expected to take note of the information provided.

**Documentation**

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2023/5)

Reports of the meetings of Compliance Committee since the twenty-sixth meeting of the Working Group of the Parties<sup>2</sup>

**(c) Reporting mechanism**

*Timing: Tuesday 27 June, 11–11.10 a.m.*

The Working Group is expected to take note of the information provided by the secretariat and delegations on the status of submission of national implementation reports since the seventh session of the Meeting of the Parties.

**Documentation**

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2023/5)

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<sup>2</sup> Available at <https://unece.org/environment-policy/public-participation/aarhus-convention/compliance-committee-meetings>.

**(d) Capacity-building and awareness-raising**

*Timing: Tuesday 27 June, 11.10–11.45 a.m.*<sup>3</sup>

The Working Group is expected to take note of the information provided by the secretariat and delegations on capacity-building activities carried out since the seventh session of the Meeting of the Parties and may discuss future work in this area.

**Documentation**

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2023/5)

**6. Thematic session on the promotion of the principles of the Convention in international forums**

*Timing: Tuesday 27 June, noon–1 p.m. and 3–5.30 p.m.*

A thematic session on the promotion of the principles of the Convention in international forums will be organized in the format of an interactive panel discussion followed by a general discussion. The topics for discussion are based on decision VII/4 on promoting the application of the principles of the Convention in international forums (ECE/MP.PP/2021/2/Add.1), adopted by the Meeting of the Parties at its seventh session, and the outcomes of the previous thematic sessions. The current session will focus on the promotion of the principles of the Convention in environmental impact assessment in a transboundary context and in international trade-related decision-making; and on the issue of balanced and equitable participation and different modalities for engaging stakeholders in international decision-making.<sup>4</sup> Additional topics will include updates on: (a) subjects considered at the previous meetings of the Working Group of the Parties, such as promotion of the principles of the Convention in relation to a legally binding instrument on business and human rights under the Human Rights Council, in Sustainable Development Goals-related processes and in climate- and plastic-related international forums; and (b) subjects to be addressed by upcoming forums, including environmental-related processes under the General Assembly, such as the Sustainable Development Goals Summit, scheduled for September 2023, and the Summit of the Future, scheduled for September 2024. The provisional programme for the thematic session will be made available on the meeting web page in due course.

**Documentation**

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2023/5)

Provisional programme of the thematic session on the promotion of the principles of the Convention in international forums (AC/WGP-27/Inf.2)

**7. Promotion of the Convention and other relevant developments and interlinkages**

*Timing: Tuesday 27 June, 5.30–6 p.m.*

The Working Group is expected to take note of the information provided by the secretariat and delegations regarding promotion of the Convention and other relevant developments and interlinkages, as well as to consider future activities in this area.

<sup>3</sup> There will be a 15-minute break to set up panels for the thematic session on agenda item 6.

<sup>4</sup> Pursuant to decision VII/4, para. 11 (d), the secretariat will carry out consultations on this topic.

### **Documentation**

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2023/5)

## **8. Implementation of the work programme for 2022–2025, including financial matters**

*Timing: Wednesday 28 June, 9.30–10.15 a.m.*

The Working Group is expected to take note of the reports by the secretariat on the implementation of the work programme for 2022–2025 and on related contributions and expenditures, taking into consideration the discussions under the preceding agenda items. Delegations will be encouraged to notify the Working Group of their planned financial contributions.

### **Documentation**

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2023/5)

Report on contributions and expenditures in relation to the implementation of the Convention's work programme for 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2023/6)

## **9. Preparations for the eighth session of the Meeting of the Parties**

*Timing: Wednesday 28 June, 10.15–10.25 a.m.*

The Working Group will be invited to consider the possible dates and venue of the eighth ordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties. Parties are invited to consider hosting the session and to inform the secretariat in advance of any proposals they may intend to make in that regard.

## **10. Other business**

*Timing: Wednesday 28 June, 10.25–10.30 a.m.<sup>5</sup>*

Delegates wishing to propose points under this item are requested to inform the secretariat as soon as possible.

## **11. Adoption of outcomes**

*Timing: Wednesday 28 June, 11.20 a.m.–12.30 p.m.<sup>6</sup>*

The Working Group will discuss and adopt the outcomes of its twenty-seventh meeting.

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<sup>5</sup> There will be a 50-minute break to prepare the list of outcomes and decisions.

<sup>6</sup> With a view to ensuring equal opportunities for English-, French- and Russian-speaking delegations and reducing the amount of paper used for printing the draft report, the meeting will result in a list of decisions and outcomes that will be projected onto the screen around one hour before the close of the meeting, and presented by the Chair verbally, thereby allowing for interpretation. The list will be distributed to participants by email after the meeting.