



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

## Aarhus Centres Meeting Report 27-29 January 2010, Istanbul, Turkey

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## I. Background

The UNECE Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters was adopted on 25th June 1998. Named after the Danish town in which it was signed, the Aarhus Convention serves as an instrument aiming at the protection of citizen's rights to a healthy environment, promoting democracy and good governance and furthering the openness and transparency of decision-making processes. As its title suggests, the Convention contains three broad themes, namely: access to information, public participation and access to justice.

The OSCE has been promoting the Aarhus Convention principles and supporting their implementation in close co-operation with the UNECE Aarhus Convention Secretariat. It is within this framework that since 2002, OSCE has been co-operating with several Governments for the establishment and functioning of Aarhus Centres. Mostly funded through the Environment and Security (ENVSEC) Initiative - a partnership between the OSCE, UNEP, UNDP, UNECE, REC, as well as NATO as an associate partner, Aarhus Centres have been established in Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Efforts are also in place for the establishment of Aarhus Centres in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and in Turkmenistan. These Centres serve as a link between the governments and NGOs in the sphere of environmental policy making and implementation. They also provide the platforms for coalition-building and partnerships among NGOs in addressing environmental issues.

The Aarhus Centres Meeting aimed to bring together the Aarhus Convention National Focal Points, Aarhus Centre Managers and the OSCE Economic and Environmental Officers from Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, and to provide an effective platform for sharing experiences, lessons learned, best practices and challenges in putting the Aarhus Convention into practice. In addition to the Aarhus Centre practitioners from the above listed countries, government and OSCE field mission representatives from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan; and representatives of the UNECE Aarhus Convention Secretariat UNDP, the Regional Environmental Centre and several experts participated in the meeting. The meeting provided a forum for exchange of experience, best practices and lessons learned in the three pillars of the convention. Furthermore, the recently developed Aarhus Centre Guidelines were presented, and the preparations for the 2011 Meeting of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention, and Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference were discussed. The meeting devoted particular attention to organizational and legal aspects of Aarhus Centres, to planning, monitoring and evaluation of Aarhus Centre activities, to Aarhus Centre communication strategies, and to measures for enhancing partnerships with the local authorities, youth and the private sector.

## II. Welcome and Introduction

In his welcoming statement, **Goran Svilanovic, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities**, emphasized the importance of the Aarhus Convention for the OSCE as a tool to promote participatory environmental governance. He noted the role of the Aarhus Centres in opening up channels of communication between governments and their publics, and in building and cementing a relationship of trust between them. The Aarhus Centres' accomplishments were reflected in the Road Map and the OSCE was committed to continued and expanded support to the Aarhus Centres Initiative in Central Asia, South Caucasus and South Eastern Europe.

**Jeremy Wates, Secretary to the Aarhus Convention**, gave a brief overview of the Aarhus Convention and the ongoing co-operation with the OSCE in this respect. He emphasized the importance of the Aarhus Centre Initiative in implementation of the Convention, referring to it as a "phenomenon" converting theoretical aspirations into tangible implementation. Wates went on to briefly summarize the major developments in implementation of the Convention and its future prospects.

**Marc Baltes, Deputy Co-ordinator of OCEEA**, introduced the purpose and agenda of the meeting. He requested the participants to give special consideration to the Aarhus Centres' organizational and legal aspects; planning, monitoring and evaluation of Aarhus Centre activities, communication strategy and measures for enhancing visibility, sustainability, and local partnerships. The OSCE expected participants to consider opportunities for Aarhus Centres to focus on some priority environmental security challenges in their respective countries and regions. Baltes stressed that the participatory mechanisms and processes offered by the Aarhus Centres could be utilized by the governments and international organizations as focal points for their own local, national and regional environmental programmes and initiatives.

### **III. Working Sessions**

#### **III.1 Session 1: Recent Developments and Aarhus Centre Guidelines**

**Chair: Olga Zakharova, Aarhus Centre Manager, Belarus**

**Co-Chair: Nino Gokhelasvili, National Focal Point, Georgia**

**Rapporteur: Madina Ibrasheva, OSCE Centre in Astana**

##### **III.1.1 Developments related to the Convention**

**Jeremy Wates**, Secretary to the Aarhus Convention, provided a brief overview of the **main developments in the implementation of the Aarhus Convention** and referred specifically to the following events:

- The Extraordinary Meeting of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention, 19 April 2010, Geneva;
- The first session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTR), 20-22 April 2010, Geneva;
- The Meeting of the Working Group of Parties to the Aarhus Convention, late June or early July 2010, Geneva;
- the next Task Force meeting of parties (25-27 October);

He pointed out that, with the recent ratification of the Aarhus Convention by the Government of Montenegro, the number of Parties had reached 44. The Amendments to the Convention have so far been ratified by 25 countries, only two countries short of the quorum for entry into force. The PRTR Protocol had entered into force on 8 October 2009, having been ratified by 24 countries. Japan and Australia had recently expressed interest in joining the PRTR Protocol.

One of the biggest events of 2010 was the first meeting of parties of the PRTR, the purpose of which was to put into place the institutional architecture of the Protocol. The terms of reference of the PRTR Working Group were to be elaborated and introduced at the Extraordinary Meeting of Parties of the Aarhus Convention. At the Extraordinary Meeting, parties were to examine compliance with the Aarhus Convention requirements and discuss each Party's plan for implementation of the Almaty Guidelines.

Regarding the enforcement of compliance with the Convention, Wates pointed to work of the Compliance Committee, the workload of which has increased recently. Wates also informed participants about the ongoing work for revision of the Convention's Implementation Guide and requested Aarhus Centres to provide inputs for this exercise.

##### **III.1.2. Developments related to the Aarhus Centre Initiative**

**Esra Buttanri, Environmental Officer, OCEEA**, outlined **major developments related to the Aarhus Centre Initiative**. She recalled the 2009 Aarhus Centre Meeting, which had discussed the results of the Independent Evaluation, endorsed the Road Map- an action plan in the short to medium terms for the smooth operation of Aarhus Centres. Buttanri reported on the establishment of a new Aarhus Centre for the Caspian Sea region in Atyrau, Kazakhstan in September 2009, and the

establishment of an Aarhus Centre in Kurgan Tyube, Tajikistan in April 2009. In May 2009, a regional PRTR Conference in Dushanbe, organized by the European Commission, the OSCE and UNECE, took place with the participation of representatives of governments of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. The conference, among other recommendations, also called for ratification of the PRTR Protocol. In July 2009, several Aarhus centre representatives participated in the Convention's Working Group, which recognized the central role of Aarhus Centre's in implementation of the Convention, especially with regard to the information and public participation pillars. In November 2009, the Aarhus Centre Guidelines, a reference document to provide guidance for the strategic orientation, set-up and activities of the OSCE supported Aarhus Centres was released. Also in November, staff of the newly established Atyrau Aarhus Centre visited Aarhus Centres in Georgia and Armenia on a study trip, where they also met civil society organizations and government representatives. The month of November also saw the launching of the CASE in Armenia and Azerbaijan. CASE is designed to support, with small grants, civil-society implemented projects addressing environment and security challenges, and hence complementing the efforts of Aarhus Centres. In December 2009 the first edition of Aarhus Centre Newsletters for the South Caucasus and Central Asia was published, and regional Aarhus Centre projects for Central Asia, the South Caucasus, and South Eastern Europe were approved under the framework of ENVSEC. These projects will focus on facilitation of government-civil society partnerships in tackling regional environmental and security challenges; strengthening national and local capacities for participatory and informed decision-making, planning, implementation and monitoring processes; and regional networking among the Aarhus Centres.

### **III.1.2.1. Recent developments in Kazakhstan**

**Anara Bulzhanova, Representative of the Ministry of Environmental Protection of Kazakhstan** expressed support to the Aarhus Centre Initiative and stressed that the rights for information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice are secured in the Environmental Code of Kazakhstan. Two Aarhus Centres were established in Kazakhstan in 2009 to strengthen the involvement of civil society in environment protection and assist the Government in efficient implementation of the Aarhus Convention. The national Aarhus Centre in Astana was established under the auspices of the Ministry of Environment, and a special Ministerial Working Group was set up to promote the Convention's principles. A Regional Aarhus Centre in Atyrau was launched together with the local authorities, and civil society and designed to serve the needs of the Caspian Sea region in the environmental field.

**Elaman Ilyassov, Coordinator of the Regional Aarhus Centre in Atyrau**, reported on the mandate and upcoming activities of the Atyrau Centre. Apart from implementing the Aarhus Convention's pillars, the Centre will concentrate on the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea and the establishment of an NGO network on the protection of the Caspian Sea.

### **III.1.2.2. Recent developments in Tajikistan**

**Munira Rahmatulloeva, Manager of the Aarhus Centre in Kurgan Tyube**, informed participants about the opening of the Aarhus Centre in Kurgan Tyube in April 2009 and gave a brief overview of the Centre's activities, notably the holding of public hearings, workshops and training exercises, and the publication of an Ecological Bulletin. She added that the Centre management works closely with the Advisory Board in the development and implementation of activities.

### **III.1.2.3. Aarhus Centre Guidelines**

**Robert Atkinson, Senior Adviser, Prospect C&S, and Vadim Nee, Executive Director, Law and Environment Eurasia Partnership** presented the **Aarhus Centre Guidelines**, a document covering policies fundamental to the Centres that was developed pursuant to the 2008 Independent Evaluation. The guidelines give guidance for the strategic orientation, set-up and activities of Aarhus Centres, hence ensuring a common understanding of all stakeholders on the role of the Centres. The Guidelines advise on institutional issues, programming and activities, monitoring and evaluation,

resource development, and communications, outreach and networking. The authors briefed participants in details about the elements of these five clusters.

They specifically encouraged a discussion on improvement of funding mechanisms, They also recommended that the Aarhus Centres rely on the Road Map for guidance for planning their activities and proposed the establishment of Aarhus Centre networks on specific topics in order to increase the efficiency and impact of the Centres' work.

## **III.2. Session 2: Access to Information and Public Participation**

**Chair: Robert Mangham, OSCE Presence in Albania**

**Co-Chair: Tilek Asanbekov, National Focal Point, Kyrgyzstan**

**Rapporteur: Nino Gvazava, Aarhus Centre, Georgia**

### **III.2.1. Access to Information**

**Kaidi Tingas, Public Participation Programme, Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe** presented on **good practice approaches in the use of electronic tools to implement the Aarhus Convention**. Her presentation was based on the results of research commissioned by the Convention's Task Force on Electronic Tools about the efficiency of modern technology and applications in dissemination of environmental information and public participation. Under this project, around 40 best practice and reference cases were collected for the information and public participation pillars, while in the justice pillar – electronic initiatives were virtually absent. Tingas went on to illustrate good practice cases for use of e-tools in supporting the implementation of the Convention, discussing the benefits and drawbacks such diverse tools as e-voting, online forums, national information portals and websites have. She concluded that there was still a lack of e-initiatives in the environmental field, which needed to be addressed.

In the following discussion participants noted major challenges related to facilitating access to information:

- One participant noted that in Azerbaijan a **lack of financial resources** and coordination between the Baku Aarhus Centre and government stakeholders were obstacles to maintenance of a joint website .
- Another participant added that devising website content is difficult due largely to the **absence of available environmental information**.
- Several other participants highlighted the **lack of technological infrastructure** as additional impediments. Deficient infrastructure and a lack of internet connections in particular, one participant noted, was a major impediment for gathering information on remote areas of Kyrgyzstan.
- Finally, one participant stressed, not only the lack of infrastructure but also the **lack of a culture on part of the population of using the internet as a source of information** diminished the effectiveness of electronic dissemination of environmental information. Another participant commented on the experience of Albania in this respect and noted that launching awareness raising campaigns, cooperation with the media, local civic groups, and local state environmental protection bodies are instrumental in reaching the population in remote areas.
- **Khatuna Gogaladze, Project Manager at the Aarhus Centre in Georgia**, presented the Centre's activities as an example of good practice in information dissemination. The Georgia Centre website, she noted, offered rich information on matters related to all three pillars of the Convention, including information on international norms, national (draft) legislation, state of environment reports, and directories of environmental organizations, experts, courts, and a database on court cases. In addition, it provides users with guidelines on the practicalities of public participation, including guidelines on participation in Environmental Impact Assessments.

### III.2.2. Public Participation

**Charlotte de Waal, Environmental Affairs Officer, UNECE**, presented the **public participation pillar of the Convention**. She informed participants about the reporting requirements under this pillar, and about the institutional set-up of the Convention's monitoring and enforcement regime, giving particular attention to the role of the Aarhus Convention Secretariat. She also pointed to the Aarhus Convention and PRTR implementation guides that have been developed by the Secretariat. De Waal noted that during the first ten years of the Convention's existence, implementation of the public participation pillar remained insufficient. The 2008 Meeting of the Parties recognized this challenge and established an Expert Group to look more closely at public participation, which had had its first meeting in 2009. In time, this group will be complemented by Public Participation Task Force. She went on to highlight some of the main problems that had been identified, including limited enforcement of legislation,- especially as concerns consideration of the outcomes of public participation processes – the lack of a clear definition of what the “public concerned” is, lack of quality standards for public participation procedures etc.. She went on to suggest solutions to these problems and suggested a role for Aarhus Centres. Where legislation and implementing regulations are in place, Aarhus Centres could serve as resource, instrument for outreach or even as mediator between the government and the public. Where legislation or regulations are lacking, Aarhus Centres could serve as information portal and communicate with the government and civil society on creating adequate legislation and implementing regulations. Aarhus Centres are also encouraged to participate in future Public Participation Task Force meetings.

**Kanybek Isabaev, Director of the Aarhus Centre in Osh**, presented activities of the Osh Centre in **promoting public participation in environmental decision-making processes**, describing in detail an instance of a successful public hearing. He noted, however, that there are still substantial obstacles to public participation in Kyrgyzstan, including a lack of environmental information, weak environmental oversight, and obstacles to seeking judicial remedies.

**Gohar Ghazinyan, National Programme Officer at the OSCE Office in Yerevan**, informed participants about the contribution of the OSCE Office in Yerevan to civil society development through establishment and functioning of 15 Aarhus Centres in Armenia. She reported that the Armenian Aarhus Centres' work programme sought to support the implementation of national as well as local Environmental Action Plans. She stressed the necessity of participation of government actors, the private sector, local civil society, as well as the importance of involving women and youth, for the successful implementation of the Aarhus Convention.

In the following discussion, participants commended the presentation and stressed the importance of information-sharing including on good practices between the Secretariat and parties to the Convention:

- De Waal invited the participants to express their positive and negative experience in serving as a **third party to mediate between the government and civil society**, especially considering that most of the Aarhus Centres were based at the government agencies.
- Participants identified **Aarhus Centres as a focal point for consultation between the government and civil society in discussing improvements of the regulatory framework covering public participation**. One participant added that the Osh Aarhus Centre also served as point of reference for the private sector.
- The discussion then turned to the question **of monetary compensation for services provided by the Aarhus Centres**. It was pointed out that the Convention did not foresee any fee for the provision of information but only compensation for certain expenses such as extensive photocopying and pointed to the responsibility of Aarhus Centres to provide open supply of environmental information free of charge. To that end, Aarhus Centres were encouraged to provide information in electronic form wherever feasible.

### III.3. Session 3: Access to Justice, PRTR, and Local Participatory Environmental Planning

Chair: Jeremy Wates, Secretary to the Aarhus Convention

Co-Chair: Aida Iskoyan, National Focal Point Armenia

Rapporteur: Nana Baramidze, OSCE Office in Tajikistan

#### III.3.1 Access to justice

Fe Sanchis-Moreno, Environmental Legal Adviser, Association for Environmental Justice, presented the **Access to Justice Compliance Mechanism**. The extensive presentation covered the legal parameters of the access to justice pillar of the Aarhus Convention, including the right to an effective remedy. She made reference to the Riga Declaration of June 2008, which acknowledged the need to remove or reduce practical barriers to access to justice and pointed participants to a series of surveys that mapped the problem. She mentioned the major shortcomings identified, including excessive length in judicial procedures, lack of remedy or prohibitively high costs of seeking remedy, lack of awareness by judges etc. and mentioned the work of the Access to Justice Task Force in addressing these challenges. Sanchis-Moreno also informed participants about the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee and its activities in improving compliance. She also made reference to the Spanish experience in promoting access to environmental justice, and how Aarhus Centres may contribute to access to justice. Aarhus Centres could be instrumental in providing the public with information on points of access, compiling and making publicly available court decisions, supporting training activities for judges and environmental lawyers, and disseminating information on good practices. Sanchis-Moreno concluded with suggesting close cooperation of Aarhus Centres with the Task Force on Access to Justice.

The following discussion turned to the challenges encountered by Aarhus Centres related to the promotion of access to justice:

- One participant pointed to **some obstacles** that Aarhus Centres in Kazakhstan face in **facilitating access to justice**. There was limited **expertise** on the national and international legal framework, to the point where members of the judiciary were not familiar with the full extent of legal environmental obligations. In this context, the Director of the Osh Aarhus Centre pointed to training activities for judges, and legal monitoring functions assumed by the Osh Centre. Similarly, a participant pointed to the persistence of serious flaws in the national legal framework that limits remedies to cases where the claimant's health is directly affected by environmental damage, and where charges can only be brought by the damaged party herself or a direct representative of the party. These circumstances significantly curtail access to environmental justice in this particular country.
- In response to a question on **how to acquire expertise on legal obligations** that governments assume guaranteeing citizens' rights of access to environmental justice, Sanchis-Moreno noted that in Spain civil society organization have **set up a network of environmental law experts** for the provision of expertise. She stressed the role of the Aarhus Convention bodies, such as the Convention Compliance Committee, or the Ombudsman and the Aarhus Centres in supplying resources in terms of legal advice. She encouraged Aarhus Centres to be proactive in seeking cooperation with prospective partners and to implement activities recommended in the Aarhus Centre Guidelines.

Participants stressed that in the past they had made good experiences in **cooperating with human rights organizations** in promoting access to justice. They noted that one solution for the expertise gap would be to include environmental law in law school curricula in countries .

In this context, **Aida Iskoyan, Professor of Law, Yerevan State University**, presented the activities of the Environmental Law Resource Centre that included student participation in expert seminars, public hearings, and featured cooperation with local human rights organization.

One participant observed a **lack of awareness on the access to justice component** for South East Europe, which has to be addressed through sustained awareness-raising. The need for provision of free legal advice to the public was also among the issues raised.

### III.3.2 Pollutant Release and Transfer Register Protocol

**Dmytro Skrylnikov, Attorney of the Bureau of Environmental Investigation, Ukraine**, presented the **Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTR) Protocol**. The Protocol foresees the improvement of public environmental information through the creation of publicly accessible registers containing information about the release or transfer of pollutants down to facility specific level. The public availability of information is expected to create downward pressure on levels of pollution, as no company wants to be identified as being among the biggest polluters on the one hand, and facility-specific information about releases and transfers provides feedback to political decision-makers on the other. Skrylnikov reported on the process of setting up a national PRTR and outlined a potential role for Aarhus Centres in promoting the development and management of PRTRs: Before the establishment of an PRTR, Aarhus Centres could promote accession of the respective country to the PRTR Protocol, support capacity-building for governmental bodies, enterprises and civil society on the PRTR, raise awareness on the PRTR of all relevant stakeholders, and share relevant information on international practice. After the establishment of an PRTR, Aarhus Centres could promote awareness on the PRTR, and could promote public access to the PRTR .

**Kodir Boturov, National Focal Point and Manager of the Aarhus Centre in Dushanbe** presented **the role of the Aarhus Centres in the implementation process for the PRTR**, the chronology of implementation of PRTR and the activities connected to the PRTR in Tajikistan. He highlighted specifically the the holding of an International Conference in Dushanbe in 2009 jointly by the UNECE, OSCE, European Commission and the Government of Tajikistan.

- The following discussion turned on the question of **cost coverage of setting up and maintaining a PRTR**, especially in cases where the private sector does not perceive the maintenance of a register to be economically beneficial and hence will not invest in it. Jeremy Wates said that there was a clear need for capacity building and technical assistance for PRTR set-up, and that UNECE would look into that together with its partners.

### III.3.3 Participatory Local Environmental Planning and Implementation

**Sadun Emrealp, the Secretary General a.i. of the United Cities and Local Governments-Middle East and West Asia Section** held a presentation on **promoting democratic local governance through the Turkey's Local Agenda 21 Program**. The program is credited with developing a new local governance model in Turkey whereby public institutions, local authorities and civil society organizations are joining in local decision-making processes on the platform of city councils. The city council provides a suitable umbrella for participatory structures and processes, and brings together, local government representatives, women's and youth assemblies, special interest groups, and neighborhood committees, which form joint working groups. In the working groups participants from different sectors, institutions and disciplines work on topics identified in local action plans for sustainable community development.

The city councils' function has been formalized in the Turkish Law on Municipalities. It is mandated to realize the development of a city vision, the preservation of urban rights and the rule of law, sustainable development, responsiveness to the environment, and mutual social assistance. The program has also been faced with some challenges, including weak penetration of the new governance principles into central government organizations, a lack of interest on part of the media, low private sector involvement etc.

**Dmitry Prudskikh, Manager of the Aarhus Centre in Khujand**, informed participants about activities designed to promote Public Participation in Local Environmental Planning and Implementation of Environmental Development Strategy in the cities of Kayrakkum and Taboshar. He outlined ways in which local populations can influence environmental planning and decision making, and pointed to major achievements the Khujand Aarhus Centre has made in this respect



### III.4. Session 4: Organizational Issues, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, and Linkages of the Aarhus Convention with other Multilateral Environmental Agreements

Chairperson: Marc Baltes, Deputy Co-ordinator, OCEEA

Co-Chairperson: Kodir Boturov, National Focal Point, Tajikistan

Rapporteur: Alma Mirvic, OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina

#### III.4.1. Organizational Issues

Vadim Nee, Executive Director, Law and Environment Eurasia Partnership, gave a presentation on **the Aarhus Centres as institutions**, explaining the steps behind the establishment of an Aarhus Centre, and touching upon the necessary logistical and administrative aspects, as well as the roles Aarhus Centres should play. He also portrayed the role of Aarhus Centres in national, regional or local contexts, noting the various stakeholders that are involved in the Centres' work. Prior to the setting up of an Aarhus Centre, meetings with key stakeholders, conferences, workshops, and trainings would feature in the needs assessment. A memorandum of understanding between the host institution, and local, regional or national government should be the basis of the work of an Aarhus Centre. Nee noted that it was not mandatory for Aarhus Centres to acquire a legal personality. The important feature, however, was that they were non-profit organizations. Aarhus Centres may be managed by governing or advisory boards, comprising representatives of civil society and the government. An Aarhus Centre governing/advisory board should not comprise more than 12 members. Voting is organized according to the principle of 'one person-one vote'. NGOs that do not work in the environmental field may also be invited to join the board. Research showed that in most cases Aarhus Centres rely on funding by environmental ministries, OSCE field presences or other institutions.

In their comments, many participants noted the important role advisory boards play in the work of Aarhus Centres:

- One participant noted that in Azerbaijan the Aarhus Centre faced problems when the advisory board stopped operating. Another participant noted that in Albania, the OSCE presence **struggled to find committed local community representatives who would partake in an Aarhus Centre board**, as this was voluntary work.
- In their work, Aarhus Centres have also encountered **obstacles and challenges**, including insufficient coordination, delays in government implementation of Aarhus Convention provisions, and funding shortages.
- A participant also mentioned **challenges in absorbing donor funding** by the Aarhus Centre in Kazakhstan.
- Another participant noted that in Albania the Aarhus Centre hosted by the national government has better **access to information**, and is **financially secure but** may be too far **removed from the population**.
- Kanybek Isabaev, Manager of the Aarhus Centre in Osh, explained that the Centre enjoys a public foundation **status**, and has a three-member observer council that supervises the Centre. The Centre also hosts the association of NGOs. One participant noted that all Aarhus Centres in Armenia, have a 10 to 11-member advisory council members coming from the NGO sector, government sector and mass media.
- Finally, a participant noted that staff of the Aarhus Centres should be trained on evaluation and advocacy tools, as well as in public relations.

#### III.4.2. Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

Robert Atkinson, Senior Advisor Prospect C&S, presented **Tools for Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation**. He relied on the example of a statement table, through which organization's staff members and board members, with the support of an external facilitator, comment on statements on human resources, financial management, organizational processes, program and project management, infrastructure and inter-organizational linkages. Once a Statement Table is completed

and evaluated, the organization sets up a development plan detailing steps to improve its capacity. Aarhus Centres can benefit significantly from employing such monitoring and evaluation tools as they enhance visibility, and ensure adequate reporting to the board, and other stakeholders.

Atkinson noted that participation in such monitoring and evaluation exercises was not necessarily to be limited to the organization's staff. It was actually desirable for the assessment to feature broad participation. He stressed that the composition of assessment board will affect the level of objectivity. In many cases, an evaluation plan would result in the removal of directors or board members. Finally, even though this method foresees statements to be scored according to a scale, resulting in a quantitative assessment, there are also qualitative methods of assessment available, which rely on focus groups and questionnaires.

- In this context, Esra Buttanri, Environmental Officer, OCEEA mentioned the **Road Map reporting system**, which was piloted by Aarhus Centres in 2010. In this blueprint, Aarhus Centre representatives would report on basis of concrete performance indicators. She noted that already Centres were required to produce quarterly progress reports that contained a lot of information on progress achieved.

### III.4.3. National Reporting on Implementation of the Convention

**Charlot de Waal, Environmental Affairs Officer, UNECE**, presented on **National Reporting on Implementation of the Convention**. Reporting on the Convention was introduced in 2002 by decision of the Meeting of the Parties, committing all Parties to report on legislative, regulatory and other measures taken to implement the Convention, and on how this works in practice. She also touched upon the basic procedures for reporting including on the features of the reporting template, and the importance of a transparent and consultative process in report preparation. She noted that, to date, there had been two reporting cycles on Convention implementation, where Parties generally provided valuable information, demonstrating positive developments in the legislative framework and in practical implementation. Reports, however, also point to challenges in implementation: For instance, the Secretariat had received complaints from civil society that in many cases the public was not consulted in the preparation of the national report.

Finally, de Waal noted that the Convention Secretariat is taking steps to enhance access to quality information on implementation: It is preparing an easily accessible electronic database of reports, and will hold a workshop on national reports preparation in July 2010. She concluded by noting that the Aarhus Centres may also play a role in facilitating a dialogue between public authorities and the civil society in the drafting of national reports.

- One participant emphasized the importance of **allowing sufficient time for public debates** on draft reports. De Waal explained that the Convention Compliance Committee had issued related guidelines, and that public discussion time should be between one to two months.
- A participant noted that **Aarhus Centres need to be actively involved in preparation of national reports**.
- In Kyrgyzstan, the **draft report was published on a public website**, giving interested citizens the possibility to comment on the draft. The National Focal Point then decided whether to accept or reject the comments made in this process.

### III.4.4. Linkages of the Aarhus Convention with other Multilateral Environmental Agreements

**Jeremy Wates, Secretary to the Aarhus Convention**, reported on the **Aarhus Convention and its Linkages with other Multilateral Environmental Agreements**. He referred to the 2005 Almaty Guidelines on Promoting the Application of the Principles of the Aarhus Convention in International Forums, and noted that the Task Force would meet in April 2010 to focus on steps parties are taking to promote the following of guidelines. Aarhus Centres also have a role to play in this field as they are active not only in implementation of the Aarhus Convention, but also in fields covered by multilateral environmental agreements, such as the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a

Transboundary Context. A number of participants noted that the Aarhus Convention touches upon the core principles of rights and responsibilities in general and that implementation of any other convention may hence be, in some way or another, linked to the Aarhus Convention.

**Dmitry Prudtskikh**, Manager of the **Khujand Aarhus Centre**, presented the Centre's **information campaign on radioactive safety in Taboshar City**. The Centre's goal was to inform the community about the public health hazard posed by 10 million tons of uranium core waste located in dumps close to the city. The Centre produced a pocket book on radiation security, a 25-minute documentary, and organized meetings promoting the booklet and movie in the community. As a result, the local government representatives are now making plans to relocate schools which are located in the immediate vicinity of the waste dumps. In addition, this issue has been discussed at international level, and a pilot relief project will be implemented in the area. Moreover, working with fellow NGOs in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, this Aarhus Centre prepared a documentary on radioactive waste, which was screened across Central Asian countries.

### **III.5. Session 5: Communication and Advocacy, Partnerships with Stakeholders, the Aarhus Centre Network, and Preparations for Events in 2011**

**Chairperson: Christoph Opferman, OSCE Office in Yerevan**

**Co-chairperson Faig Sadigov, National Focal Point , Azerbaijan**

**Rapporteur: Olivera Zurovac-Kuzman, OSCE Mission to Serbia**

#### **III.5.1. Communication and Advocacy**

**Alexander Nitzsche**, **International Media Consultant**, presenting on **Communication and Advocacy Tools for Aarhus Centres**, touched upon a wide range of tools that could be applied by the Aarhus Centres. These include community-oriented tools, links with like-minded partners or involvement of spokespersons and celebrities in campaigns. He showed practical examples of successful internet sites and showed how these could be applied in advocating for Aarhus Centers. Nitzsche stressed that networking, clear messages in campaigning, and media outreach are key to successful communication. In terms of identifying a target audience, he opined that the Aarhus Centres could make a stronger impact by addressing individuals rather than a large group. He noted that it was crucial to develop a succinct body of messages of up to 2-3 easily memorizable messages a year. In terms of advocacy it is important to identify issues that alliances and coalitions can be built around. A public education plan needs to be developed, and selected activities evaluated for potential risks to constituents. Efficient communication tools include visual material, facts and figures personal testimonials, biographies, media liaison work, press events and social networking presence.

Nitzsche concluded by stressing the importance of identifying what works best in advocating for Aarhus Centers at the local level. He cited the Taboshar City campaign as an example for good communication. In this case the people living in the vicinity of the polluted area are not only a target group but affected individuals, and could hence tell their story directly to a wider audience. In this context Nitzsche stressed the importance of lobbying broadcast media to broadcast environmental information free of charge, in order to reach larger audience.

- Marc Baltès, Deputy Co-ordinator CEEA, stressed that **Aarhus Centers have an important role in advocating** for political support and proposed the "Focus" newsletter be utilized as a site for publishing interesting environmental stories. He added that OCEEA could work on advocacy for Aarhus Centres..
- Alexander Nitzsche stressed that in planning a campaign deadlines must be set, and in **particular a day should mark the peak of a campaign**. He suggested the coordination of efforts with the media and marking a single day on the OSCE website for campaign culmination instead of relying on clustered campaigns. He also highlighted the benefits of **reaching out and involving partners outside the established coalition** and audiences such as artists and celebrities.
- A participant stressed the importance of **verifying any information** communicated.

- Jeremy Wates, Secretary to the Aarhus convention, informed participants that a working group is currently being set up to **prepare a communication strategy for the Convention**. He stressed that this strategy needs to be tailored to regions, and it needs to define clear roles for implementation.

### III.5.2. Partnerships with stakeholders

**Hansin Dogan, Private Sector Programme Manager, UNDP** presented on **Private Sector partnerships**. In his presentation, he outlined the significance of the business community as the dominant engine for growth, and noted that fulfilment of the MDGs depends on sustainable economic activity in a sound business environment. He explained that the culture of sharing private sector wealth with society at large was alive but that wealthy companies do not necessarily know the best ways of doing so and often respond to sporadic community needs instead of having a systemic, sustainable approach. The strategy of UNDP is to try and make charity more relevant to the core business of the company. Gradually the corporate social responsibility (CSR) concept was introduced to support inclusive and responsible business strategies. Dogan clarified that CSR also covered environmental, legal and economic issues and the stakeholders involved include community, governmental bodies, NGOs and the public at large. For companies participation was motivated by a desire to stand by the UN, to earn a good reputation, to improve the branding and visibility of their product etc. Dogan also mentioned challenges involved in this process, including the risk of self deception, a lack of capacity to access funds, a lack of adequate human resources, and related to that, limited guidelines and oversight, a natural bias on part of the companies to focus on quick impact activities, non-aligned corporate visions, a risk of blurring CSR and market development strategies, etc.

- The chairperson, Christoph Opfermann, commented that all participants work in countries with economies in transition and that **international investors have CSR in place in their countries of origin and should hence apply them also in the country in which they invest**.
- A participant noted that in **Albania private companies**, including foreign multinationals, were **not interested in public participation since avoiding the public consultation processes was less costly**.
- Another participant suggested **a role for Aarhus Centres in advocacy for CSR** creating partnerships and prompting best practices in public participation.
- One participant acknowledged that Aarhus Centres could facilitate CSR but cautioned that it was **important for Aarhus Centres to preserve independence** from companies.
- Another participant remarked that in Central Asia oil exploration was initiated without any public participation process and sometimes even without the knowledge of local authorities. Here Aarhus Centres could work directly with the companies' executives to encourage CSR and public participation in oil exploration processes.

**Basak Saral, Secretary-General, Youth for Habitat International Network** presented on **Youth participation in Environmental Planning and Implementation**. The Youth Association for Habitat aims at youth awareness for sustainable development, and to foster youth participation in decision making and local action for liveable environment in Turkey. It facilitates the establishment of Local Youth Councils all over Turkey, and enabled the establishment of National Youth Parliament. Specifically, it develops and implements projects on youth development through strong local networking capacity. Activities include training, facilitating access to information, development of partnerships among youth and youth groups, and linking youth with government authorities. She stressed that youth associations at all levels, from neighbourhood associations to trade unions, were included in the process. Ms. Saral stated that in its work, the network was guided by the MDGs with an emphasis on empowering youth.

**Dimitriy Prudtskih, Manager of the Aarhus Centre in Khujand**, presented the project **Green Patrols in Tajikistan**. The project currently covers 25 districts and involves more than 16 000 youth in activities promoting environmental education among schoolchildren. Apart from educational activities, which include the organization of movie nights, ecological leadership schools, environmental competitions, and environmental summer camps, the project also covers practical activities, including the organization of Water Day, a day without cars, advocacy campaigns,

participation in roundtables and public environmental monitoring. These were complemented by informational activities, including the publication of a youth ecology bulletin, establishment of an environmental library, the publishing informational brochures and the production of a TV program for youth. He stated that the partnership with TV companies was a significant step forward and that raising environmental awareness and education among the youth were among the most prominent results achieved so far. He cited the example of the Karakum water resources where young activists conducted monitoring of the water zone and publicly exposed environmental degradation of this area in the media, which prompted the government to act.

- Prudtskih commended the trainings for environmental leaders organized by the regional Environmental Centre and proposed a continuation of such trainings. Magdolna Toth Nagy, **Regional Environmental Centre**, confirmed that her organization **was interested in continuing the Junior Fellowship Programme** and are currently fundraising to support Aarhus Centres and youth participation activities specifically.
- One participant stressed the positive experience that the Aarhus Centres in Armenia had made with youth-led environmental projects and added that **youth should be informed about targeted support for innovative environmental projects** granted by local authorities and other institutions

### III.5.3. The Aarhus Centre Network

**Dimitriy Prudtskih**, Manager of the Aarhus Centre in Khujand, invited participants to reflect on **networking of Aarhus Centers at national, sub-regional and regional levels**, and to identify possible avenues for improving the Aarhus Centre co-operation. He identified possible areas of increased co-operation:

- information exchange among Aarhus Centres, including through circulation of newsletters, electronic discussions and joint databases,
- joint activities, including knowledge sharing, study visits, and joint advocacy, and
- implementation of joint projects.

For 2010 specifically he proposed:

- a wider dissemination of the Aarhus newsletter,
- the collection of country information on the implementation of the Convention,
- the organization of two thematic discussions on climate change and public participation,
- the establishment of joint databases on training materials and guidance documents, legislation and policy documents related to the Convention, and
- the establishment of a platform for communication.

During the discussion, participants made a series of proposals for strengthening coordination

- As a first step, participants should set up regular, weekly e-mail exchanges, based on a **mailing list**. For this purposes, participants should consider designating a coordinator. Participants could also create an Aarhus group on social media websites, such as Facebook.
- A central **Aarhus Centre website functioning as a clearinghouse for information** on local projects could be set up.
- Where possible, **news should be communicated in both English and Russian**, in order to improve the communication flows, and decrease expenditures.
- Quarterly Aarhus Centre **reporting** should be more strongly **standardized**.

### III.5.4. Aarhus Centre Preparation for Major Events in 2011

**Charlot de Waal**, Environmental Affairs Officer, UNECE, briefed participants on the **preparations for the Aarhus Convention Meeting of the Parties in Chisinau, 6-13 June 2011**, which was under way.. The process aims to evaluate the state of affairs in terms of implementation of the Convention, compliance with recommendations of the compliance committee, collection of reports from task forces and expert groups, the election of members of the bureau and compliance committees, and the design of mandates for future work. It was envisaged that Aarhus Centers participate to discuss capacity building, report on their activities, and provide information to the parties to the Convention.

De Waal also informed participants about the **7<sup>th</sup> Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference** that is scheduled to take place in September/October, 2011 in Astana, Kazakhstan. The conference will revolve around two main themes: sustainable management of water and mainstreaming of the environment into economic development. Aarhus Centres could have an active role both in the preparatory process at the national level as well as at the Conference itself.

- A participant noted that the Aarhus Centre in Kazakhstan and the Kazakh government are working on the preparation for Environment for Europe Conference, particularly through the Department for Biology and International Cooperation, Water Systems and Climate Change. He expressed readiness to share views with participants on this upcoming event.
- Jeremy Wates, Secretary to the Aarhus Convention, expressed pleasure at attending this dynamic and interesting meeting and hoped for meaningful impact on strengthening the Convention. He emphasized that the experiences of Aarhus Centres should be presented to Western European countries as a model of good practice for replication in these countries as well.

#### **IV. Closure**

**Esra Buttanri**, Environmental Officer, OCEEA, gave the concluding remarks and stated that the participants had demonstrated commitment to the Aarhus Centre process. She expressed satisfaction with the development of an action plan for the coming year. She thanked all participants for their active participation, UNECE for their support, the guest speakers for their contribution, and the volunteers for Youth for Habitat and interpreters for their support.



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE  
Economic and Environmental Activities

AARHUS CENTRES MEETING  
27-29 January 2010  
The Sofa Hotel, Istanbul, Turkey  
AGENDA

27 January 2010, Wednesday

08:30-09:00	Registration
09:00-10:30	<b>Welcome and Introduction</b>  Welcome statement <i>Mr. Goran Svilanovic, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities</i>  Aarhus Convention and the role of Aarhus Centres <i>Mr. Jeremy Wates, Secretary to the Aarhus Convention, UNECE</i>  Introduction of the meeting and expected outputs <i>Mr. Marc Baltés, Deputy Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities</i>  <b>Discussion:</b> Expectations of participants from the meeting
10:30-11:00	Coffee Break
SESSION 1	<b>Chairperson: Ms. Olga Zakharova, Aarhus Centre Manager, Belarus</b> <b>Co-Chairperson: Ms. Nino Gokhelashvili, National Focal Point, Georgia</b> <b>Rapporteur: Ms. Madina Ibrasheva, OSCE Centre in Astana</b>
11:00-11:45	Aarhus Convention – and Aarhus Centres Recent Developments Recent and forthcoming developments relevant to the Convention <i>Mr. Jeremy Wates, UNECE</i>  Developments relevant to Aarhus Centres Initiative <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Aarhus Centres programming for Central Asia, South Caucasus and South Eastern Europe <i>Ms. Esra Buttanni, Environmental Officer, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA)</i></li><li>• Aarhus Centre in Atyrau, Kazakhstan</li><li>• Aarhus Centre in Kurgan Tyube, Tajikistan</li></ul>
11:45-13:00	Aarhus Centre Guidelines  Introduction of the Guidelines <i>Mr. Robert Atkinson, Senior Adviser, Prospect C&amp;S s.a., Belgium</i> <i>Mr. Vadim Nee, Executive Director, Law and Environment Eurasia Partnership, Kazakhstan</i>

	<b>Discussion</b>
<b>13:00-14:00</b>	<b>Lunch</b>
<b>SESSION 2</b>	<b>Chairperson: Mr. Robert Mangham, OSCE Presence in Albania</b> <b>Co-Chairperson: Mr. Tilek Asanbekov, National Focal Point, Kyrgyzstan</b> <b>Rapporteur: Ms. Nino Gvazava, Aarhus Centre Georgia</b>
<b>14:00-15:30</b>	Access to Information  The survey of good practices on using electronic information tools <i>Ms. Kaidi Tingas, Public Participation Programme, REC</i>  <b>Discussion:</b> Aarhus Centre activities in 2009 – Achievements, challenges, the way forward
<b>15:30-16:00</b>	<b>Coffee Break</b>
<b>16:00-17:30</b>	Public Participation  Public participation in environmental decision-making <i>Ms. Charlot de Waal, Environmental Affairs Officer, UNECE</i>  <b>Discussion:</b> Aarhus Centre activities in 2009 – Achievements, challenges, the way forward
<b>17:30</b>	Wrap-up of the day and announcements
<b>19:00</b>	<b>Dinner at Kumkapi</b>

## 28 January 2010, Thursday

<b>SESSION 3</b>	<b>Chairperson: Mr. Jeremy Wates, UNECE</b> <b>Co-Chairperson: Ms. Aida Iskoyan, National Focal Point, Armenia</b> <b>Rapporteur: Ms. Nana Baramidze, OSCE Office in Tajikistan</b>
<b>09:00-10:30</b>	Access to Justice  Access to justice and compliance mechanism <i>Ms. Fe Sanchis-Moreno, Environmental Legal Adviser, Spain</i>  <b>Discussion:</b> Aarhus Centre activities in 2009 - Achievements, challenges, the way forward
<b>10:30-11:00</b>	<b>Coffee Break</b>
<b>11:00-12:00</b>	Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTR)  PRTR Protocol and the Role of Aarhus Centres <i>Mr. Dmytro Skrylnikov, Head of Bureau of Environmental Investigation, Ukraine</i>  <b>Discussion:</b> Role of Aarhus Centres in PRTR
<b>12:00-13:00</b>	Participatory Local Environmental Planning and Implementation  Local Agenda 21 Experience – Turkey <i>Mr. Sadun Emrealp, Secretary-General a.i., United Cities and Local Governments-Middle East and West Asia Section (UCLG-MEWA)</i>  <b>Discussion</b>
<b>13:00-14:00</b>	<b>Lunch</b>



<b>SESSION 4</b>	<b>Chairperson: Mr. Marc Baltes, OCEEA</b> <b>Co-Chairperson: Mr. Kodir Boturov, National Focal Point, Tajikistan</b> <b>Rapporteur: Ms. Alma Mirvic, OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina</b>
<b>14:00-15:30</b>	Organizational Issues  Aarhus Centres as an Institution <i>Mr. Vadim Nee</i>
<b>15:30-16:00</b>	<b>Discussion:</b> MOU, legal status, advisory boards <b>Coffee Break</b>
<b>16:00-17:00</b>	Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation  Tools for Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation <i>Mr. Robert Atkinson</i>
<b>17:00-17:45</b>	2011 National Implementation Report Preparations  National Reporting on Implementation of the Convention <i>Ms. Charlot de Waal, UNECE</i>
<b>17:45-18:30</b>	<b>Discussion:</b> Role of Aarhus Centres in national reporting  Thematic Focus  Aarhus Convention and its Linkages with other Multilateral Environmental Agreements <i>Mr. Jeremy Wates, UNECE</i>
<b>18:30</b>	<b>Discussion</b> Wrap-up of the day and announcements

### 29 January 2010, Friday

<b>SESSION 5</b>	<b>Chairperson: Mr. Christoph Opferman, OSCE Office in Yerevan</b> <b>Co-Chairperson: Mr. Faig Sadigov, National Focal Point, Azerbaijan</b> <b>Rapporteur: Ms. Olivera Zurovac-Kuzman, OSCE Mission to Serbia</b>
<b>09:00-10:00</b>	Communication and Advocacy  Communication and Advocacy Tools for Aarhus Centres <i>Mr. Alexander Nitzsche, International Media Consultant</i>
<b>10:00-10:30</b>	<b>Discussion:</b> Aarhus Convention Communication Strategy preparations, Aarhus Centre activities in 2009 - Achievements, challenges, the way forward  Partnerships with stakeholders – Business Community  Private Sector Partnerships <i>Mr. Hansin Dogan, Private Sector Programme Manager, UNDP</i>
<b>10:30-11:00</b>	<b>Discussion</b> <b>Coffee Break</b>

11:00–11:45	Partnerships with stakeholders – Youth
	Youth Participation in Environmental Planning and Implementation <i>Ms. Basak Saral, Secretary-General, Youth for Habitat International Network</i>
	<b>Discussion</b>
11:45-12:30	Aarhus Centres Network
	<b>Discussion:</b> Networking of Aarhus Centres at national, sub-regional and regional levels
12:30-13:15	Aarhus Centre preparations for major events in 2011
	Aarhus Convention Meeting of the Parties, Chisinau, and Environment for Europe, Astana <i>Ms. Charlot de Waal, UNECE</i>
	<b>Discussion:</b> Aarhus Centres’ representation and preparations
13:15	Closure of the Meeting
13:30-14:30	<b>Lunch</b>

## List of Participants

	NAME	TITLE	ORGANIZATION
<b>ALBANIA</b>			
	Mr. Robert Murataj	Aarhus Center Manager	Aarhus Information Centre Vlora
	Mr. Robert MANGHAM	Economic and Environmental Officer	OSCE Presence in Albania
	Mr. Elton QENDRO	Project Assistant	OSCE Presence in Albania
<b>ARMENIA</b>			
	Ms. Aida ISKOYAN	Aarhus Convention National Focal Point	Yerevan State University
	Mr. Victor MARTIROSYAN	ENVSEC National Focal Point	Ministry of Environment
	Ms. Liana SAHAKYAN	Co-ordinator	Aarhus Centre in Goris (Syunik region)
	Ms. Mary CHAKRYAN	Co-ordinator	Aarhus Centre in Egvard (Kotaik region)
	Mr. Christoph OPFERMANN	Economic and Environmental Officer	OSCE Office in Yerevan
	Ms. Gohar GHAZINYAN	National Programme Officer	OSCE Office in Yerevan
	Mr. Karen ARZUMANYAN	Project Assistant	OSCE Office in Yerevan
<b>AZERBAIJAN</b>			
	Mr. Faig SADIGOV	Aarhus Convention National Focal Point	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Azerbaijan
	Mr. Nazim MAHMUDOV	Adviser of Environmental Awareness Department	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Azerbaijan
	Ms. Afet EYYUBOVA	Aarhus Centre Administrator	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Azerbaijan
	Ms. Khoshbakht ISMAILOVA	Senior Programme Assistant	OSCE Office in Baku
<b>BELARUS</b>			
	Ms. Elena LAEVSKAYA	Vice-Chairperson/Legal Adviser of Aarhus Centre	Ngo "Ecopravo"

	Ms. Olga ZAKHARAVA	Manager	Aarhus Centre - Minsk
<b>BOSNIA &amp; HERZEGOVINA</b>			
	Mr. Igor JEVTIC	Senior Expert Adviser	Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations
	Ms. Vanda MEDIC	Senior Expert Adviser	Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations
	Ms. Alma MIRVIC	National Reporting Officer	OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina
<b>GEORGIA</b>			
	Ms. Nino GOKHELASHVILI	Aarhus Convention National Focal Point	Ministry of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources
	Ms. Nino MALASHKHIA	ENVSEC National Project Coordinator	ENVSEC in Georgia
	Ms. Khatuna GOGALADZE	Manager	Aarhus Centre-Georgia
	Ms. Nino GVAZAVA	Project Coordinator	Aarhus Centre-Georgia
<b>KAZAKHSTAN</b>			
	Ms. Anar BULZHANOVA		Ministry of Environmental Protection
	Ms. Gulsara YESKENDIROVA	Representative of Research Center on Environmental Protection	Ministry of Environmental Protection
	Mr. Yeleman ILYASSOV	Co-ordinator	Regional Aarhus Centre - Atyaru
	Ms. Shynar IZTELEUOVA	Deputy Co-ordinator	Regional Aarhus Centre - Atyrau
	Ms. Madina IBRASHEVA	National Economic and Environmental Coordinator	OSCE Centre in Astana
<b>KYRGYZSTAN</b>			
	Mr. Tilek ASANBEKOV	Aarhus Convention National Focal Point	Republican Fund of Nature Protection under the State Agency for Environmental Protection and Forestry
	Mr. Kanybek ISABAEV	Director	Aarhus Centre - Osh
	Ms. Kalys HASANOVA	Senior Programme Assistant	OSCE Centre in Bishkek/Osh

<b>MONTENEGRO</b>			
	Ms. Maja RAICEVIC	Independent Advisor	Ministry of Spatial Planning and Environment
	Mr. Srdjan CETKOVIC	Project Assistant	OSCE Mission to Montenegro
<b>SERBIA</b>			
	Mr. Dragoljub TODIC	Aarhus Convention National Focal Point	Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning
	Ms. Daiana FALLONI	Head of Democratization	OSCE Mission to Serbia
	Ms. Olivera ZUROVAC-KUZMAN	Environmental Adviser	OSCE Mission to Serbia
<b>TAJIKISTAN</b>			
	Mr. Kodir BOTUROV	Aarhus Convention National Focal Point	Government of the Republic of Tajikistan
	Mr. Dmitry PRUDTSKIKH	Manager	Aarhus Centre - Khujand
	Ms. Munira RAHMATULLOEVA	Manager	Aarhus Centre - Kurghan Tyube
	Ms. Nazokat YAKUBOVA	Assistant	Aarhus Centre - Khujand
	Ms. Nana BARAMIDZE	Environmental Officer	OSCE Office in Tajikistan
	Ms. Sabrina ULMASOVA	Programme Assistant	OSCE Office in Tajikistan
<b>TURKMENISTAN</b>			
	Mr. Serdar MAMMETNYAZOV	Head Aarhus Centre/Deputy Director	Aarhus Centre/ Tebigy Kuwwat Social organization
	Ms. Lyale NAZAROVA	Programme Assistant	OSCE Centre in Ashgabad
<b>UZBEKISTAN</b>			
	Mr. Timur TILLAEV	Head of Ecological-Legal Department	State Committee for Nature Protection
	Mr. Murodjon RAKHMANOV	Coordinator	International Relations Department Ecological Movement Of Uzbekistan
	Ms. Caroline MILOW	Senior Project Officer	OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan

	Mr. Murod KHUSANOV	National Project Officer	OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan
<b>RESOURCE PEOPLE</b>			
	Mr. Robert ATKINSON	Senior Advisor	Prospect C&S Belgium
	Mr. Hansin DOGAN	Private Sector Programme Manager	UNDP
	Mr. Sadun EMREALP	Acting Secretary General	UCLG-MEWA
	Mr. Vadim NI	Director	NGO "Asian-American Partnership, Kazakhstan
	Mr. Alexander NITZSCHE	International Media Consultant	
	Ms. Fe SANCHIS-MORENO	Environmental Legal Adviser	Association for Environmental Justice (AJA)
	Ms. Basak SARAL	Secretary General	Youth for Habitat International Network
	Mr. Dmytro SKRYLNIKOV	Head	Bureau of Env. Investigation, Lviv-Ukraine
	Ms. Kaidi TINGAS		Regional Environment Centre
<b>UNECE</b>			
	Mr. Jeremy WATES	Secretary to the Convention	Aarhus Convention Secretariat
	Ms. Charlot de WAAL	Associate Environmental Affairs Officer	Aarhus Convention Secretariat
<b>REC</b>			
	Ms. Magdolna TOTH NAGY	Senior Expert	Civil Society Support and Implementation of Aarhus Convention
<b>ZOI Environment Network</b>			
	Ms. Christina STUHLBERGER	Project Coordinator	ZOI Environmental Network
<b>YOUTH FOR HABITAT</b>			
	Mr. Sezai HAZIR	President	

	Ms. Emel Gul CAKIR	Volunteer	
	Ms. Asli GURKONAK	Volunteer	
	Mr. Adam BORUCKI	Volunteer	
<b>OSCE</b>			
	Mr. Goran SVILANOVIC	Co-ordinator	OCEEA
	Mr. Marc BALTES	Deputy Co-ordinator	OCEEA
	Ms. Esra BUTTANRI	Environmental Officer	OCEEA
	Mr. David SWALLEY	Economic/Environmental Affairs Officer	OCEEA
	Ms. Mylene LICHTENBERG	Executive Secretary	OCEEA