



European Economic and Social Committee

Aarhus Convention and Nuclear

European Roundtable "Aarhus Convention implementation in the context of Nuclear Safety"

4-5 December, 2012, Brussels

European Economic and Social Committee, Room VMA3, rue Van Maerlant, 2, 1040 BRUSSELS

Organised by the ANCCLI and the European Commission (DG ENER), with the support of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and the French Institute for Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety (IRSN)

Speaking languages: English, French, German

Announcement

Context of the Roundtable

The Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters was signed in 1998 by the EC and all the EU member states. That same year, the Committee of the Regions adopted a resolution on nuclear safety and the local and regional democracy. These two documents mark a strong political and legal recognition of access to information and participation in the nuclear field.

More than ten years later, how are these principles implemented in a practical way? It is the purpose of the Aarhus Convention and Nuclear (ACN) initiative to assess this implementation and to identify in the different countries involved pathways of progress. This is done through European and national pluralistic roundtables involving civil society and policy makers.

Since September 2009, the European Commission and the National Association of Local Information Commissions and Committees (ANCCLI) have opened a European space for dialogue on the practical implementation of the Aarhus Convention in the nuclear field, notably

in partnership with the European Forum of Nuclear Energy (ENEF) and the French Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development.

This space is open to national initiatives. Several national roundtables were implemented in the Member States of the European Union as well as in Ukraine.

The European Commission and the ANCCLI also organized European Roundtables on thematic issues, in partnership with organizations involved in the ACN initiative. The first European Roundtable was held in April 2010 on the Practical Implementation of the Aarhus Convention in the field of radioactive waste management. The second Roundtable addressed issues of access to expertise and capacity building and was held in January 2011. The third Roundtable took place in February 2012 and focused on issues of preparation and management of nuclear and post-nuclear emergencies.

Instances of the Aarhus Convention to the United Nations (UNECE, Geneva) are associated with this work, including through cooperation with the working group of the Aarhus Convention on public participation.

Nuclear Safety, a major concern in the post-Fukushima context

The Fukushima accident has raised, all over the world, the societal awareness of the risks and catastrophic potential entailed by civil nuclear activities and of the imperious necessity to reach and maintain a high level of nuclear safety. The Stress Tests on the European nuclear activities have been developed in this perspective.

There is now a wide range of public and governmental attitudes towards the role of nuclear power. However, vigilance on nuclear safety will remain a topical issue whatever is the position of each Member State *vis-à-vis* the nuclear energy, even in the countries having decided to phase out, for they will have to undertake decommissioning activities for decades and radioactive waste management on the long term.

Nuclear safety does not only entail a high commitment of the nuclear operators and safety authorities but also an actual engagement and vigilance of the civil society in the follow up of the safety of nuclear activities as stated by the terms of the Aarhus Convention. Following the nuclear accident in Fukushima, the European Commission and the European Nuclear Safety Regulators' Group (ENSREG) agreed on 25 May 2011 on voluntary tests for the EU's 143 nuclear power reactors. The assessments were conducted by independent national authorities and through peer review. The tests started on 1 June 2011.

The experience of European Stress Tests on Nuclear Safety has also demonstrated the relevance of the contribution of civil society to a continuous improvement and strengthening of the safety of nuclear installations.

Creating the conditions and means for enabling citizens to effectively contribute to the surveillance of nuclear activities in the various contexts of European countries is an ambitious goal. There is a long way to walk in order to promote and enhance the role of civil society in European nuclear countries.

On 24 April 2012, in the aftermath of the Fukushima accident and the subsequent European Stress Tests, a meeting was held at the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) in Brussels involving representatives of the EESC, the European Nuclear Safety Regulators Group (ENSREG), the Directorate General of ENERGY (DG ENER) of the European Commission, the French IRSN and the ANCCLI. At this meeting, the participants agreed on the principle of the organization of a fourth European ACN roundtable on the practical implementation of the Aarhus Convention in the context of nuclear safety.

Objectives of the European Roundtable

The European Round Table is aiming at the identification of key issues for the implementation of the Aarhus Convention in the context of nuclear safety in Europe. The implementation of the Aarhus Convention in decisions regarding nuclear safety will be reviewed with the stakeholders in relevant contexts in Europe and notably:

- **Along the lifecycle of nuclear installation** involving various questions of nuclear safety at different stages such as planning, siting, operating, implementing major changes of the installation, extension of lifetime, closing, decommissioning and post-closure watching. Particular attention will be paid to transboundary aspects of public information and participation regarding nuclear safety (also linked with Espoo convention). Various case studies of public information and participation on decisions involving nuclear safety along the lifecycle of nuclear installations in European member states will be presented and assessed (and notably Poland, the Czech Republic, Romania, France, Hungary and Germany).
- **In the context of the Stress Tests of Nuclear Safety** implemented at national and European levels in the aftermath of the Fukushima accident. Case studies of public information and participation processes along the stress tests exercises in member states (notably in Bulgaria, France and the Slovak Republic) will be presented and assessed by the participants

Expected outcomes of the European Roundtable are:

- A participatory assessment involving the civil society and other stakeholders of the present conditions of practical implementation of the Aarhus Convention in the context of nuclear safety (at the various stages of expertise and decision-making). The interactions between the public, the experts, the public authorities and the operators will be reviewed in this perspective.
- Recommendations for further improvements of Aarhus Convention implementation in the context of nuclear safety, at local, national and European levels and notably regarding:
 - The practical conditions and means for an effective contribution of the civil society to the quality of decisions regarding nuclear safety in the various contexts of nuclear installations lifecycle.
 - The contribution of the various other categories of stakeholders (experts, regulators and operators) in order to support public information and participation on the long run in the context of nuclear safety.
- Recommendations regarding the practical implementation of the Directive 2009/71/Euratom on the safety of nuclear installations regarding public information and participation (and more specifically the expected updates of this directive regarding nuclear transparency).

Agenda

Speaking languages: English, French, German

First Day, 4 December 2012

13:30 Welcome coffee

14:30 Introduction

- M. Peter FAROSS, Deputy Director General, Directorate-General for Energy, EC
- M. Jean-Claude DELALONDE, Chairman of the ANCCLI
- Ms. Ulla SIRKEINEN, Vice-President of the Section for Transport, Energy, Infrastructure and the Information Society (TEN), EESC
- M. Jacques REPUSSARD, Director General, IRSN

14:45 Session 1 - Nuclear installation Safety along Lifecycle

- Citizen & expert group on ASSE II Radioactive Waste Repository Closure in Germany, Beate KALLENBACH-HERBERT, Öko – Institute
- The Hungarian Paks NPP Life time extension Environmental Impact Assessment, Zsuzsanna KORITAR, Energia Klub
- The implementation of the Aarhus Convention in the context of the siting Belarusian NPP in Ostrovets, Tatyana NOVIKOVA, Ecohome

15:45 Coffee break

- 16:00**
- The Czech Republic Temelin 3&4 reactors Environmental Impact Assessment, Jan HAVERKAMP, Greenpeace
 - Civil Society contributions to nuclear safety in Gravelines, France, Coralie PINEAU, Gravelines, Local Commission of Information

16:40 Discussion

17:30 Adjourn

18:00 Buffet Dinner in Brasserie Van Maerlant, offered by the ANCCLI

Second Day, 5 December 2012

9:30 Session 2 – Stress Tests (EU & National levels)

- The European stress tests transparency framework, Andreas MOLIN, Chairman of the ENSREG Transparency Group
- The European nuclear stress tests : an analysis of transparency and public engagement, Richard ADAMS, EESC
- The National and Local civil society involvement in the French Stress Tests, Ludivine GILLI, IRSN, Michel LAURENT and Charly VARIN, chairman and director of the three Local Commissions of Information of la Manche

10:30 Coffee Break

- 10:45**
- Public involvement in the Bulgarian Stress Tests exercise, Albena SIMEONOVA, Foundation for Environment & Agriculture
 - Presentation of the stress tests public engagement in the SLOVAK Republic, Dagmar ZEMANOVA, Slovak Nuclear Regulatory Authority (UJD)
 - A review of NGOs contribution to the Stress Tests, Patricia LORENZ, Friends of the Earth Europe

11:45 Discussion

13:00 Lunch in Brasserie Van Maerlant, offered by the EESC and the ANCCLI

14:30 Session 3 – Practical implementation of AC in the context of Nuclear Safety: What should be a step forward?

- The Nuclear Directives Transparency Framework, Massimo GARRIBBA, DG ENER
- Civil society interactions with experts, the recommendations of the French ACN Roundtable for public involvement in nuclear safety, François ROLLINGER, IRSN
- The work of Aarhus Convention Task Force on Public Participation in Decision Making, Phil KEARNEY, Chairman of the TFPPDM
- The PIPNA framework for Public Information and Participation in the context of Nuclear Safety, Stephane BAUDE, Mutadis
- Civil society input in framing public research in nuclear sector: current challenges, Roger GARBIL, DG Research
- Raising civil society participation: the experience of REC, Sylvia VAGHI, Regional Environmental Center

16:00 Discussion

16:30 Conclusive session

- Andreas MOLIN, ENSREG
- Fiona MARSHALL, Aarhus Secretariat (Unece)
- Jean-Jacques DUMONT, ASN
- Jacques REPUSSARD, IRSN
- Pierre-Jean COULON, EESC
- Peter FAROSS, DG ENER
- Jean Claude DELALONDE, ANCCLI

17:30 End of the meeting