



8TH SESSION

MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE AARHUS CONVENTION

5TH SESSION

MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE PROTOCOL ON PRTRs

17-21 NOVEMBER 2025 | PALAIS DES NATIONS | GENEVA

BELARUS

three years later

Side event of non-governmental organizations

18 November 2025

Intro

At the 7th Meeting of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention in October 2021, Decision VII/8c was adopted on Belarus' compliance with its obligations under the Convention. The liquidation of Ecohome NGO was identified as a form of persecution of environmental activists and NGOs. In addition, the restoration of the Ecohome's legal status was demanded. As the decision on liquidation remains in force since 1 February 2022, Belarus has been subject to the most severe sanction within the Aarhus Convention, namely the deprivation of rights and privileges. The Belarusian authorities have decided to withdraw from the Aarhus Convention due to their disagreement with the application of these measures and on 24 October 2022 withdrawal came into force.



Aarhus Convention
2001 - 2021

Aarhus heritage

- the tools for exercising environmental rights (PPDM, A2L, A2I) are created in national legislation
- some environmental NGOs, working from abroad, provides consultations for public
- despite persecution public still interested in environmental issues

Losses

- the reputation and international image of country
- international development programs participation, funding
- public lost an opportunity to implement best practices of ensuring right to healthy environment into national legislation
- public lost an opportunity to use the means of Convention for env. defenders protection (ACCC, SR)

Current situation

- national legislation still provides all the tools and opportunities (A2I, PPDM, A2J)
- public scared to run any activity due to persecutions
- no NGO with expert capacity is available to assist public in exercising their rights
- most of NGO's resources are declared as "extremist materials" and using it entails persecution

Thank you for attention ! :)

despite the fact that Belarus is no more Party of the Convention, some of ACCC findings on access to information were implemented to national legislation last year