

Statements on behalf of OEKOBÜERO; ACCC meeting March 2019

14 March 2019

Decision VI/8e (Czech Republic)

Regarding the question of public participation in procedures according to the Nuclear Code, ÖKOBÜRO would like to point out that especially in permitting procedures regarding nuclear power plants and the possible environmental risks involved, it is crucial to provide for full public participation including notification of the public concerned in both, national and transboundary context. This is currently not the case in the Czech Nuclear Code.

15 March 2019

Decision VI/8i (Slovakia)

ÖKOBÜRO would like to point out the importance of making environmental information available to the public within decision-making processes, as insufficient disclosure of information jeopardizes the entire concept of public participation. Especially in cases regarding nuclear energy, there is an indispensable need for transparency, in a national and international context.

The fact that the Nuclear Regulatory Authority considers to hold the applicant responsible for possible negative consequences for public security, caused by dissemination of information, which it has obtained in terms of free access to information is more than disturbing. As well is the idea to oblige the applicant to compensate the costs spent on increasing the protection of the nuclear installation in question. The approach of the Nuclear Regulatory Authority indicates a clear misunderstanding of the principles of the Convention, especially the provision of Article 3 (8).

We would also like to address the example brought up by the party in its first progress report that the Convention does not indicate clearly when in case of changes in the construction a separate impact assessment is required and from that resulting public participation in the proceeding: Eventhough such changes might be common, a change or extension to already permitted activities requires reconsideration of the existing permit which requires a procedure according to Article 6 if appropriate. Construction changes of serious public concern should therefore lead to a separate process including public participation.

The first progress review as well as the party's statement give reason to assume that there have not yet been any regulatory measures to ensure that the refusal to disclose nuclear-related environmental information or the removal of information in disclosed documents is handled in a restrictive manner. We therefore would like to know whether there are any plans for legislative amendments in that regard.