



**Note in preparation for the seventh meeting of the negotiating committee from the Governments of Chile and Costa Rica, in their capacity as co-chairs of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Participation and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean, and from the Government of Argentina, in its capacity as host country**

The Governments of Argentina, Chile and Costa Rica are pleased to share their plans and expectations for the seventh meeting of the negotiating committee of the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Participation and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean, to be held from 31 July to 4 August 2017 in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Given the mandate to finalize the negotiation process in December 2017, the meeting in Buenos Aires will be key to review the agreement as a whole, reach consensus on the large majority of pending matters and give definite form to an ambitious text that reflects -to the best extent possible- the aspirations and singularities of our region.

At the past meeting, held in Brasilia in March 2017, and thanks to the flexible working modalities, we were able to make significant progress in the review of articles 9 to 11 as well as on the outstanding issues in articles 6 to 8. Furthermore, there were spaces to analyze the possible administrative, financial and budgetary implications that the future agreement would entail. Articles 11 to 25 were also extensively discussed during the intersessional meetings of the Committee. Likewise, the contact groups established by the Presiding Officers have been working through bilateral contacts and virtual meetings with the participation of the public in order to put forward clean texts on which to build consensus. The co-chairs and Argentina have also been working on a clean proposal of articles 1 and 5 to facilitate the review of the pending matters.

On the basis of such preparatory work and counting on the commitment of all delegations, the seventh meeting of the committee aims to reach the widest possible consensus on articles 1 and 5 to 25. To this end, half-day sessions will be devoted to the following articles: articles 6 and 7 will be reviewed on Tuesday, 1 August morning and article 8 in the afternoon; article 9 will be reviewed on Wednesday, 2 August in the morning and article 10 in the afternoon; and articles 1 and 5 will be reviewed on Thursday, 3 August afternoon. Moreover, we will discuss articles 12 to 25 through informal discussions on Tuesday and Wednesday, and in the plenary on Thursday morning and on Friday. This will give us a full and complete view of the agreement in its entirety, so that at that last meeting of the process we can agree on the text of the future agreement.

After five intense years, we are in the final stages of the negotiation process. We thus emphasize our call to use the time we have efficiently and focus on those matters of special concern for delegations, while being flexible, concrete and creative in our proposals. We must intensify our efforts in this final stretch of our work, with the aim of having a successful meeting for the negotiation and for the future agreement. We count on all of you to make Buenos Aires the prelude of a historic moment for our region and our peoples.