

TRILATERAL MEETING ON NATIONAL DISPOSAL FACILITY PROJECT TOOK PLACE IN KOZLODUY

On the 7th of December 2018 in the town of Kozloduy (Bulgaria) representatives of civil society organizations from Romania and Bulgaria and representatives of the Bulgarian State Enterprise for Radioactive Waste (SERAW) participated in a joint meeting to discuss issues related to the construction of a repository for low and medium radioactive waste located in



Bulgaria near the town of Kozloduy. The Problem-solving Initiative is led by the Project Complaint Mechanism of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD).

The Project Complaint Mechanism is the EBRD's accountability mechanism which provides an opportunity for independent review of complaints from one or more individual(s) or organisation(s) concerning an EBRD Project.

In March 2018 civil society representatives from Romania and Bulgaria raised concerns with the the Project Complaint Mechanism in relation with the construction of the Radiana repository. These concerns were related with the project's impact on the population and the environment, highlighting a necessity for transparency and public consultations. EBRD is administering the Kozloduy International Decommissioning Support Fund, which co-finances the first stage of the disposal facility construction to accommodate low and intermediate level radioactive waste steaming from decommissioning of Units 1-4 of the Kozloduy Nuclear Power Plant in Bulgaria.



In line with the Project Complaint Mechanism's Rules of Procedure, Leonardo D'Urso was appointed to serve as independent Mediator for the Problem-solving Initiative to facilitate the dialogue between civil society representatives and the SERAW Company to resolve the issues addressed to the Project Complaint Mechanism without attributing blame or fault.

During this first joint meeting, which was hosted by SERAW at their offices in Kozloduy, parties had a chance meet each other, again, and to initiate the dialogue process under the Project Complaint Mechanism. A joint visit to the repository construction site was organized by SERAW for civil society representatives. The meeting started with the signing of a Framework Agreement for the Dialogue Process by Mr. Dilyan Petrov, the Executive Director of SERAW, and Ms. Luminita Simoiu, the President of the Civil Association for Life from Craiova, Romania and lead civil society representative. The participants in the joint meeting who asked questions and expressed their concerns were: a member of Romanian Parliament, a representative from the Craiova and Dabuleni local administrations, a doctor from the Pediatric Oncology Clinique of the Dolj County Hospital, in Craiova, representatives from different trade unions, academia and civil society from both Romania and Bulgaria.

Parties agreed that: *They will make decisions by consensus during the dialogue process in order to build trust, respect, and cooperation and come up with acceptable solutions for the benefit of all stakeholders.*

During the meeting, the Chief engineer of SERAW, Ms. Ira Stefanova, made a presentation on the purpose of the repository, technical details of the construction and the current status of the project. The presentation was followed by a visit to the construction site. The main topics presented were similar with those presented at the music hall in Craiova, Romania on 9 June 2016 during the Project public debate. During the subsequent discussions, civil society representatives had the opportunity to express various concerns and to raise various questions about the repository construction, such as the repository design and storage capacity, the site selection for the repository construction, the project financing and the type of waste stored, the environmental impact on communities, the mechanisms for prevention and intervention in the case of accident, the guarantees provided by SERAW on environmental

protection and compliance with European standards on radioactive waste etc. SERAW representatives committed to continuously provide, in the months to come, relevant and up-to-date information related to the various issues raised during the meeting.

At the end of the meeting, parties expressed the willingness to continue the dialogue process in an open and transparent manner and agreed that a second joint meeting under the EBRD's Project Complaint Mechanism's Problem-solving will take place in a 2 to 3 months' time in Craiova, Romania.

