5. **CONVENTION ON THE PROTECTION AND USE OF TRANSBOUNDARY WATERCOURSES AND INTERNATIONAL LAKES**

*Helsinki, 17 March 1992*

**ENTRY INTO FORCE:** 6 October 1996, in accordance with article 26(1).

**REGISTRATION:** 6 October 1996, No. 33207.

**STATUS:** Signatories: 26. Parties: 54.¹


*Note:* The Convention was adopted by the Senior Advisers to the Economic Commission for Europe Governments on Environmental and Water Problems at their Resumed Fifth Session held at Helsinki from 17 to 18 March 1992. The Convention was opened for signature at Helsinki from 17 to 18 March 1992 and was open for signature at United Nations Headquarters in New York until 18 September 1992.

Amendments to Articles 25 and 26 of the Convention entered into force on 6 February 2013.

[See the status page for the amendments.](#)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Ratification, Accession(a), Acceptance(A), Approval(AA)</th>
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<td>28 Sep 2021a</td>
<td></td>
<td>Uzbekistan</td>
<td>4 Sep 2007</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>29 Aug 2012a</td>
<td></td>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
<td>19 Jul 2024a</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>8 Oct 1999a</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Declarations and Reservations**

(Unless otherwise indicated, the declarations and reservations were made upon ratification, accession, acceptance or approval.)

**AUSTRIA**

"The Republic of Austria declares in accordance with article 22 paragraph 2 of the Convention, that it accepts both of the means of dispute settlement mentioned in this paragraph as compulsory in relation to any Party accepting an obligation concerning one or both these means of dispute settlement."

**FRANCE**

The Government of the French Republic, in approving the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, declares that reference to the concept of reasonable and equitable use of transboundary waters does not constitute recognition of a principle of customary law, but illustrates a principle of cooperation between Parties to the Convention; the scope of such cooperation is specified in agreements, to which the Convention between States bordering the same transboundary waters - such agreements being concluded on the basis of equality and reciprocity.

**GERMANY**

"The Federal Republic of Germany, in order to protect information related to personal data according to its national law, reserves the right to supply personal data only under the condition that the part receiving such protected information shall respect the confidentiality of the information received and the conditions under which it is supplied, and shall only use that information for the purposes for which it was supplied".

**LIECHTENSTEIN**

[Same declaration, identical in essence, mutatis mutandis, as the one made under Austria.]  

**LITHUANIA**

"The Republic of Lithuania declares that, for a dispute not resolved in accordance with paragraph 1 of Article 22 it accepts the means of dispute settlement provided in paragraph 2 (b) of Article 22 of the said Convention."

**NETHERLANDS (KINGDOM OF THE)**

"The Kingdom of the Netherlands accepts for a dispute not resolved in accordance with paragraph 1 of article 22 of the Convention both the following means of dispute settlement as compulsory in relation to any Party accepting the same obligation:

(a) Submission of the dispute to the International Court of Justice;

(b) Arbitration in accordance with the procedure set out in annex IV."

**SERBIA**

"In accordance with Article 22 paragraph 2 of the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, the Republic of Serbia declares that, for a dispute not resolved in accordance with paragraph 1 of the Article 22, it accepts both means of dispute settlement in the manner and under the conditions referred to in Article 22 paragraphs 2 and 3."

**SPAIN**

In relation to article 3, paragraph 1 (c), the Spanish State takes it that the limits for waste-water discharges stated in permits shall guarantee, in any case, respect for the water-quality criteria of the receiving environment, based on the best available technologies and the technical features of the affected installation, its geographical site and local environmental conditions.

**Notes:**

1 For the purpose of entry into force of the [Convention/Protocol], any instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession deposited by a regional economic integration organization shall not be counted as additional to those deposited by member States of that Organization.

2 With reservation of application to the Faroe Islands and Greenland.

3 On 14 August 1998, the Government of France made a declaration with respect to the above Convention. The said declaration was communicated to all Contracting States by a depositary notification. Within a period of 90 days from the date of the depositary notification (i.e. 5 October 1998), none of the
Contracting States to the Convention notified the Secretary-General of an objection. Consequently, the declaration is deemed to have been accepted for deposit on 3 January 1999.

4 For the Kingdom in Europe.

5 On 28 June 1999, the Government of Portugal informed the Secretary-General that the Convention would also apply to Macau. See note 1 under "Portugal" in the "Historical Information" section in the front matter of this volume.