

**First Meeting of the Signatory Countries to the Escazú Agreement  
October 11, 2019**

**Opening remarks**

**Irene Murillo  
Representative of the public  
Costa Rica**

Good morning and welcome and welcome to the first meeting of the signatory countries of the regional agreement on access to information, public participation and access to justice in environmental matters in Latin America and the Caribbean

We offer our fraternal welcome in Costa Rica

I share with you a couple of important messages from civil society.

We are here as representatives of the public to give first our congratulations to the countries represented here

Particularly those countries which are the first signatory of Escazu

And those who have taken the next step and have already ratified the Agreement, our thanks. Today we have half the ratifications needed for the entry into force of the agreement

We understand that some countries have already begun the process of ratifying the agreement, we urge them to continue on that path.

Thank ECLAC whose support has been crucial to that right now we are already halfway towards the entry into force of the Escazú.

From civil society we instantiate our governments, to continue on this path. Vehemently we say it is for us of the utmost importance that all countries in the region to sign and ratify the agreement Escazu. It is, after all the necessary guarantee for this region walk towards the future in the context of the climate crisis and the vulnerability of defenders environmental

Our vision is to reach eleven ratifications required to hold the first Conference of the Parties in 2020

In this regard, civil society organizations throughout the region enthusiastically see the possibility of collaborating with governments to achieve the entry into force of the Agreement. We have been working hard on the disclosure of the agreement and its contents in organizations and communities

We already learning from the process of negotiating the Agreement: has left us a successful experience of civil society participation governments in this context. Is the time to capitalize on this experience in this meeting and those to come.

we wish all the people present a working day full of successes.

Thank you

Irene Murillo  
Representative of the public  
Costa Rica