

Helsinki, 28.02.2020

## **Coronavirus leads to first entirely remote Board of Appeal hearing**

**For the first time the ECHA Board of Appeal has held a hearing, for 9 joined and related cases, with all the participants in different locations connected by video conference.**

Andrew Fasey (Technically Qualified Member of the ECHA Board of Appeal and rapporteur in the 9 cases) explains that "the appellant in all 9 cases is based in one of the areas of concern for the coronavirus in Italy. The Board of Appeal decided, in light of these exceptional circumstances, to hold a hearing entirely 'remotely'. This possibility is allowed by the Rules of Procedure ('RoP') that govern how the Board of Appeal manages its work. Under the RoP, the Board of Appeal has a margin of discretion as to how its hearings are organised and conducted. In order to ensure equal treatment of all the parties involved in the 9 cases (the defendant (ECHA), the appellants and the 8 interveners) the Board of Appeal decided that the parties to the hearing would all join the hearing remotely, by video conference, and only the Board of Appeal and its Registry would be present in the meeting room. This approach has been supported and welcomed by all the parties as a sensible response to exceptional circumstances".