

The Hon. Beverly J. Oda, M.P., P.C.
Minister of International Cooperation
Canadian International Development Agency
200 Promenade du Portage Gatineau, Quebec K1A 0G4

15/03/2012

Cc: The Honourable John Baird, PC, MP

Dear Minister Oda

Including progress on aid transparency within Canada's Open Government Partnership Action Plan

We the undersigned civil society organisations are writing to congratulate you on Canada's signing up to the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI). This is a very positive step towards accessible, open data on Canada's external spending. As Canada prepares its Open Government Partnership (OGP) Action Plan for April 2012, we encourage you to use this opportunity to build on the transparency commitments made at the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF-4)ⁱ in December 2011 and to include aid transparency commitments within the OGP as Canada moves forward with the IATI process.

The three challenges - *improving public services, increasing public integrity and more effectively managing public resources*ⁱⁱ- that Canada names in its January 2012 OGP Country Update as priorities for the forthcoming OGP Action Plan can readily be applied to aid transparency. With Canada signing on to IATI in November 2011, we hope to see more specific action points relating to transparency of aid and related flows included within Canada's OGP Action Plan.

OGP founding members, the United Kingdom and the United States, have already made explicit links between the OGP and IATI agendasⁱⁱⁱ, and how OGP participation can complement the IATI process and vice versa.

The two processes can reinforce one another if Canada were to include the following steps within Canada's OGP Action Plan:

- Submitting Canada's IATI Implementation plan by December 2012;
- Beginning to publish Canada's aid information to the IATI Registry in 2013;
- Making Canada's *OpenData Portal*^{iv} IATI compatible;
- Setting a timetable for publication of development-related flows;
- Implementing IATI fully by December 2015.

We look forward to working with you and your officials in the future as Canada continues to make progress in this important area. Congratulations again on signing on to both the OGP and IATI.

Yours Sincerely

Robert Fox, Executive Director, Oxfam Canada

Julia Sanchez, President-CEO, Canadian Council for International Cooperation

James Haga, Advocacy, Engineers Without Borders, Canada

Warren Krafchik, Director, International Budget Partnership and member of the IATI Steering Committee

Brian Tomlinson, Open Forum on CSO Development Effectiveness, IATI Steering Committee member and co-Chair of the IATI CSO Working Group

Karin Christiansen, Managing Director, Publish What You Fund and member of the IATI Steering Committee

Robin Hodess, Director, Research and Knowledge Group, Transparency International and member of the IATI Steering Committee

Beris Gwynne, Partnership Leader for Global Accountability, World Vision International. Member of the INGO Charter of Accountability Board, representative on the CSO Open Forum on Development Effectiveness International CSO Advisory Group and co-Chair of the IATI CSO Working Group



ⁱ § 23 c of the Final Busan Outcome Document agreed on 1st December 2011

(http://www.aideffectiveness.org/busan/hlf4/images/stories/hlf4/OUTCOME_DOCUMENT_-_FINAL_EN.pdf) outlines the commitment to:

'Implement a common, open standard for electronic publication of timely, comprehensive and forward-looking information on resources provided through development co-operation, taking into account the statistical

reporting of the OECD-DAC and the complementary efforts of the International Aid Transparency Initiative and others. This standard must meet the information needs of developing countries and non-state actors, consistent with national requirements. We will agree on this standard and publish our respective schedules to implement it by December 2012, with the aim of implementing it fully by December 2015.'

ⁱⁱ Update on Development of Canada's Action Plan on Open Government - January 31, 2012
(<http://www.opengovpartnership.org/countries/canada>)

ⁱⁱⁱ For example the U.K made the following OGP Commitment on 19/12/2011
(<http://www.opengovpartnership.org/countries/united-kingdom>):

We will publish aid information from all government departments who spend overseas development assistance (ODA) in line with the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) standards, extending coverage to other departments in addition to the Department for International Development. Within 12 months, we will have agreed a clear timetable for publication of aid information with relevant departments.

^{iv} <http://www.data.gc.ca/default.asp?lang=En&n=F9B7A1E3-1>