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Dear Karin,

Thank you for your letter of 28 June, on behalf of Non-Governmental Organisations which support the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI). I very much appreciate your active role in championing the IATI.

As you know, I am strongly committed to improving the transparency of aid flows, both in the UK and across the international system. Greater transparency will help to improve value for money, promote greater accountability to citizens in donor and developing countries, and reduce opportunities for corruption and waste. Transparency also leads to better results. I am pleased that you agree that the UK Aid Transparency Guarantee is an important innovation and I look forward to working with you on its details, including on how these principles apply to all those who receive funding from the UK.

The IATI is a unique opportunity to make progress on aid transparency internationally. Delivering comparable, comprehensive, and timely aid information internationally will help maximise the benefits of aid transparency for the very countries and people aid is meant to assist. I agree that this is a critical time for the reforms envisaged by the initiative, and I thank you for your words of encouragement. I can assure you that both the Permanent Secretary and I have been in communication with many of our respective counterparts in recent weeks. This helped to secure a very positive outcome at the recent IATI meeting, which agreed on an ambitious set of standards for phase 1 of IATI. We will continue to work with our colleagues over the next few months to encourage a similarly ambitious agreement on phases 2 and

3, and to urge them to implement the agreements reached as soon as possible.

In line with my commitment to transparency, I can also reassure you that the UK will continue to take an ambitious stance and to lead on the IATI.

In this context, I wish to express my thanks for your work with other countries in helping to secure the agreements we reached at the recent IATI meeting. I hope that we will continue to work together during the rest of 2010 to ensure further ambitious outcomes and rapid implementation of the Initiative.

Best wishes to you,  
James,  
Andrew

ANDREW MITCHELL