Dear Commissioner Piebalgs,

Subject: Congratulations on IATI and delivering aid transparency for the Fourth High Level Forum in November in Busan

Thank you for your letter of 8 February outlining your support for the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) in the lead up to the recent meeting on 9 February 2011. We would like to congratulate you on the agreement of a common standard for aid information at that meeting and thank you for all your hard work with this Initiative.

This historic agreement will ensure that the wider goals on aid effectiveness are achievable, particularly those relating to results, mutual accountability and donor division of labour. It also provides a consistent and coherent framework for meeting the aid transparency commitments of the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA).

In the run up to the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF-4) in Busan at the end of this year, donors have an opportunity to demonstrate where progress has been made. By agreeing and implementing a common aid transparency standard for HLF-4, you are at the forefront of efforts to achieve a new consensus on aid and development, underpinned by improved effectiveness and impact of aid.

With eight months to go until Busan, the focus on implementation is critical, starting with implementation schedules published by 31 March and ensuring that systems (financial, operational and IT) are made ready to deliver the information.

We are pleased that the Commission has already made a commitment to implementing IATI prior to HLF-4 and we look forward to working with you to build on the momentum of IATI’s success.

We believe that aid transparency is an area in which donors will be able to demonstrate real progress at Busan, with implementation of IATI being crucial to that success. As a lead donor on aid transparency, we would like to enlist your support in promoting the topic as a key theme, and as a cross-cutting issue at HLF-4. In practice this means that:

- Aid transparency remains a core principle of further implementation of the Aid Effectiveness principles or political outcome document at Busan;
- The IATI standard is recognised as the international common standard for sharing timely, comprehensive and comparable aid information;
- The principles and standards developed by IATI are actively promoted as the best mechanism for stakeholders to deliver on improved aid transparency and greater aid effectiveness at Busan.

Once again we would like to thank you for your continued support of IATI. We greatly welcome the role the European Commission has assumed on aid transparency and hope that Europe as a whole can lead the way
by ensuring that aid transparency remains firmly embedded in a common European consensus on aid effectiveness in the lead up to Busan.

Yours sincerely,

Gerry Barr, President of the Canadian Council for International Cooperation and Better Aid, Reality of Aid and the Open Forum on CSO Development Effectiveness and member of the IATI Steering Committee.

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

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

Cobus de Swardt, Managing Director, Transparency International and member of the IATI Steering Committee and signatory of the International Non-Governmental Organisations Accountability Charter.