March 29, 2011

IATI Steering Committee Members
(See Distribution list below)

Dear Steering Committee Members,

Thank you for the letters to Mr. Robert Zoellick of January 25th and March 17th, signed jointly by some of you. Mr. Zoellick asked me to respond on his behalf.

I would like to share with you our progress on implementing the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI). The World Bank is firmly committed to transparency, and we see IATI as a critical initiative for us and for our international partners.

To date, as one of the first signatories of IATI, we have been contributing significantly to its policy framework and technical design through our membership in the Steering Committee and the Technical Advisory Group. Together with other IATI members, we have been making an effort to bring the partner country perspective into the initiative, so that the aid data and information reported by development partners are aligned with partner country needs for budget planning and management. With the design stage completed, we are almost ready for implementation of this important initiative.

The implementation of IATI will take place in the context of our broader transparency initiatives that are being implemented following the new landmark policy on Access to Information. As of last year, the public can get more information from the World Bank than ever before — information about projects under preparation, projects under implementation, analytic and advisory activities, and Board proceedings. Through our Open Data Initiative, we now provide free, open, and easy access to statistics and indicators about development for all users around the world.

We believe that the implementation of IATI will complement and take further these initiatives. Using largely our existing systems and processing for collecting and sharing data, we are preparing to start the implementation of IATI soon. At the same time, we are working to establish an IT systems-based solution to improve the frequency and ensure consistency and quality of external reporting provided by the Bank.
We will summarize these steps in more detail in an implementation plan to be submitted to IATI shortly, as requested.

We are committed to continuing to contribute to IATI and look forward to seeing concrete implementation plans from additional signatories going forward.

Sincerely,

Joachim von Amsberg
Vice President and Head of Network Operations Policy and Country Services

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