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# FRANCE AND THE WORLD RESOURCES INSTITUTE CO-CHAIR DECLARATION FOR THE OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP

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OCTOBER 2016 – SEPTEMBER 2017

*We aim to ensure that the Open Government Partnership has a tangible impact on the wellbeing of people and their ability to engage in decisions that affect their lives. To achieve this, we will develop innovative tools and partnerships to strengthen the relationship between governments and their people. We will prioritize our efforts on Climate Change and Sustainable Development; Transparency, Integrity and Anti-Corruption, and Digital Commons. We will open the Partnership to new members, stakeholders and constituencies, and improve how OGP works.*

*We believe there is an opportunity to galvanize deeper engagement in OGP by the 70 countries and thousands of civil society organizations that have already joined this remarkable global effort – an effort that promotes fundamental values necessary for the inclusive and sustainable development of our societies.*

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## OUR VISION

Establishing an open government is essential for the renewal of democracy and public action. Open government is building a world where increased government transparency and stronger

accountability to citizens leads to greater prosperity and wellbeing. A world in which access to information restores faith in government and rekindles a desire among citizens to engage with public officials and build trust. A world where open government means government for the people and which serves the larger public interest. A world where collective wisdom reinforces public action to address the great challenges facing our planet.

Our goal is to realize the transformational potential of the Open Government Partnership (OGP) so it has a visible and tangible impact on people's capacity to engage in decisions that affect their lives. We aim to foster innovative partnerships between government, business and civil society to meet the development challenges of the coming decades. As the incoming co-chairs, we will advance several critical objectives for OGP in the coming year and help to shape the longer-term agenda as will be reflected in the Strategy Refresh due to be launched at the Paris Summit in December.

We will prioritize efforts on climate change and sustainable development, transparency, integrity and anti-

corruption, and the digital commons. We will also work on a certain number of cross-cutting priorities: improving how OGP works; reinforcing collaboration between countries by sharing tools and expertise and mobilizing technical and financial resources to support successful implementation of National Action Plans (NAPs); reaching out to new members (both governments and civil society); and engaging new constituencies (subnational governments, legislatures, and the private sector).

The global context for realizing our shared ambition is complex and brings both challenges and opportunities. Global economic growth is weak, and income inequality between and within countries persists. Social exclusion is on the rise, often leading to unrest and violence, for which government's ability to find solutions on its own is limited. Civic space is closing in many countries, thereby undermining the ability of citizens to work together and to engage with governments in finding joint solutions. There is an urgent need to renew trust between citizens and public institutions at all levels of government, in order to work towards more inclusive, stable and sustainable societies. Digital innovation and the new accountability



mechanisms it creates, offer new social, economic and political opportunities to address these challenges.

At the same time, OGP is receiving even greater interest from governments and civil society organizations. More of them want to join the Partnership and to jointly pursue open government reforms. Over 3,000 commitments have been made by OGP countries since its inception in 2011. OGP's achievements in its first five years have created an important foundation for expanding open government work worldwide. Success over the next five years, however, will be judged by the impact of more open government on people's lives and their capacity to engage.

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## CORE PRIORITIES

### CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Our priority is to accelerate progress on climate action. OGP can help strengthen implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change by injecting principles of transparency, participation and accountability into climate commitments at the national and subnational levels. Article 12 of the Paris Agreement underlines the importance of public participation and public access to information to enhancing climate action. We will also support the implementation of several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) including those on climate action and sustainable cities.

We will use our co-chair period to (a) encourage OGP countries to make commitments on open government and climate action at the Global Summit; (b) support members to implement their NAP climate commitments by sharing expertise on transparency

and open data; (c) assist civil society organizations focused on climate and the implementation of the SDGs to engage with OGP, for example through a dedicated civil society event at the Global Summit; (d) catalyze innovation around open climate data and climate finance tracking; and (e) support members in deepening related commitments to increased transparency and participation in the use of extractives and natural resources.

### TRANSPARENCY, INTEGRITY AND ANTI-CORRUPTION

Government transparency and personal integrity, core values promoted by the OGP, are necessary to ensure stronger accountability to citizens through improved participation and oversight. This can help restore trust in public institutions. We believe there is enormous scope for open government to foster progress on transparency in both public and private sectors and to improve the fight against and prevention of corruption by engaging citizens in monitoring progress. Under our co-chair mandate, we will work in strong partnership with OGP members and existing international initiatives to (a) strengthen the transparency and integrity obligations of public servants; (b) promote greater transparency in lobbying; (c) promote the development, implementation and enforcement of standards on fiscal transparency, beneficial ownership, public procurement (open contracting), whistleblower protection; and (d) shape innovative anti-corruption regulation and enforcement mechanisms, both at national and international levels.

**DIGITAL COMMONS** Sharing digital resources such as data and source code in an open format is key for facilitating access to data, innovation, knowledge

sharing, improving public services and initiating new forms of collaboration between the public and private sectors. These open data tools can facilitate co-creation and inclusive decision-making. We must work to unlock the full potential of digital resources for open government everywhere. This implies identifying how all societies can take full advantage of the digital revolution, ensuring citizens as well as government reformers are empowered to address inequalities in access and technological literacy, working towards data portability and full rights to personal data, guarding against new forms of monopoly, and developing stronger accountability and ethical frameworks. Citizens should be able to use digital resources to influence decision-making and close the feedback loop with governments. Under our joint mandate, we will work to (a) foster proactive opening and sharing of data, models, and source codes; (b) promote civic technologies for open government and citizen engagement in particular through the open government toolbox that we are co-creating in open source (to be announced at the Summit) (c) drive the content of open source policies; and (d) develop data infrastructures and digital technologies for climate change and sustainable development; transparency, integrity and anti-corruption, and improvement in public services.

These three themes reflect our interest as co-chairs. However we recognize that other OGP partners and Steering Committee members will want to take a leadership role on other priorities. We strongly support greater thematic leadership across OGP and will seek to encourage it over the next year. We will work to ensure that all Steering Committee members take on at least one thematic or leadership role during their tenure.

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## STRENGTHENING HOW OGP WORKS

**OGP MODEL** We will play an active role in finalizing and advancing implementation of the updated OGP strategic plan, which will include a review of the OGP model or “rules of the game”. This includes examining OGP eligibility criteria, strengthening the response policy, and ensuring active civil society engagement through the co-creation of NAPs and in responses to IRM recommendations. We strongly support efforts to strengthen OGP communications to improve accessibility and transparency and to make the OGP more widely known, especially among ordinary citizens. The Mid-Term Review may well surface additional priorities to address.

We also want to deepen the engagement of key political and civil society stakeholders. Ministerial engagement is uneven and we want to ensure that Steering Committee meetings attract ministers who will, together with senior civil society partners, make strategic decisions, drive implementation forward and promote the values of the Partnership. This ministerial buy-in and political support needs to be revived from the wider Partnership too, and we will seek to create opportunities for senior political engagement throughout the coming year, including through cabinet-level workshops on open government.

### NEW FORMS OF COLLABORATION

One of the main objectives for OGP in the coming years is to support members in the implementation of their NAP commitments to achieve measurable impact. To this end, we will enhance hands-on collaboration between members, and strengthen the mobilization and coordination of technical and financial resources. We will work to develop digital tools that

can empower both governments and citizens and lead to open collaboration in the creation and implementation of the NAPs, in particular through the new open government tool box.

### NEW MEMBERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

While actively working with existing members who are strongly vested in the Partnership, we aim to bring a small number of new countries into the OGP, in particular countries that are willing to play a future leadership role. Particular emphasis will be given to French-speaking African countries, Europe, and Asia. We also plan to raise the profile of the Partnership by strengthening engagement with multinational bodies including the European Union, G8, and G20. We also aim to bring in civil society from the worlds of international development and climate change who have not yet actively engaged with OGP. We are keen to invigorate and broaden civil society engagement through more active and inclusive OGP processes in member countries.

**NEW CONSTITUENCIES** We believe that the mandate of OGP will have more impact if we are able to engage a wider range of interested constituencies. Over the coming year, we will deepen engagement with:

- **Subnational governments:** We will support robust implementation of the new subnational government pilot program. We will convene subnational entities and the citizens they serve to share good practices on open government. We will work with leading cities and subnational governments to shape thinking at the global level, for example by ensuring that transparency, citizen participation and open government are built into the implementation of

the New Urban Agenda of Habitat III, the SDGs and other global initiatives.

- **Parliaments:** Building on the past co-chairs leadership and the work of the Legislative Openness Working Group, we will support legislatures that wish to engage more closely in OGP, and build on effective lesson-learning. We will support the implementation of new policy guidance on open parliaments that will seek to proactively engage legislatures in OGP national processes.
- **Private sector:** We will create more structured opportunities for engaging the private sector at national and global levels.

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## LOOKING AHEAD

We have very ambitious goals for the OGP during our co-chair period but appreciate we cannot achieve these on our own. We fully recognize that this agenda would require continued work well beyond our tenure as co-chairs. We will therefore work very closely with other Steering Committee members and the OGP Support Unit to advance these objectives and lay the basis for a transformational agenda with major outcomes over the next five years.