

OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP

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Mrs. Joan Mendez
Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Public Administration
Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

7 December 2018

Dear Mrs. Mendez,

Thank you for your letter dated 4 December 2018. We welcome the commitment of the government of Trinidad and Tobago to the open government agenda, and the role of the Ministry of Public Administration outlined in your letter.

As you are aware, and communicated by the OGP Support Unit in its [letter](#) dated 5 December 2017 (attached for your reference), the Criteria and Standards subcommittee had recommended to the full OGP Steering Committee to designate Trinidad and Tobago as inactive in OGP due to acting contrary to OGP process for three consecutive cycles. This recommendation was in line with the desire to maintain a consistent and fair approach, and uphold all participating countries to the same OGP values and requirements. The Criteria and Standards subcommittee and the Support Unit further encouraged the Government of Trinidad and Tobago to submit its new action plan to prevent being designated inactive in 2018. This inactivity recommendation was tabled for decision at the recent Steering Committee meeting that took place in Washington D.C. on 5-6 December 2018, in which the Steering Committee reached a decision by consensus to regretfully designate Trinidad and Tobago inactive in OGP, effective immediately.

As outlined in the inactivity resolution (attached for your reference), the inactivity status would be immediately lifted upon the submission of an OGP action plan. Nonetheless, while we encourage the swift development of Trinidad and Tobago's action plan, we would like to underscore the importance and value of a strong co-creation process that adheres to the necessary time to engage all stakeholders in the process, including extensive consultation with citizens and civil society, and in line with OGP's Participation and Co-Creation Standards.

We reiterate our full support to aid you in the completion and implementation of the OGP action plan, and to regain active status in the Partnership.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,



Sanjay Pradhan
Chief Executive Officer
Open Government Partnership

Resolution of the OGP Steering Committee regarding the status of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago's participation in OGP

5 December 2018

The OGP Steering Committee welcomes Trinidad and Tobago's participation in the Open Government Partnership (OGP) since 2013. The OGP Steering Committee further welcomes the letter dated 4 December 2018 that outlines specific steps the country will be taking to submit an OGP action plan and recognizes the continued efforts demonstrated by both the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and civil society to remain engaged in OGP.

However, considering that the government of Trinidad and Tobago has acted contrary to OGP process by not delivering an action plan for three consecutive cycles, **the OGP Steering Committee hereby resolves that, under provisions set out in the OGP Articles of Governance, the government of Trinidad and Tobago should be designated as inactive in OGP.**

This inactivity status will be immediately ended upon the submission of an OGP action plan. The Steering Committee further agrees to offer all necessary support in order to help Trinidad and Tobago to remain engaged in the Partnership.

For countries placed in inactive status by decision of the full Steering Committee after acting contrary to OGP process, the inactive status lasts up to a maximum of one year, or:

- Until the country publishes an action plan, developed in line with OGP Participation and Co- Creation Standards, or
- The country works with the Criteria and Standards subcommittee and the Support Unit to set a clear timeline to start a new action plan cycle and re-engage with civil society for producing the new action plan.

If, however, a country remains in inactive status for a year without communicating to the Support Unit that it wants to continue to participate in OGP, the Criteria & Standards subcommittee will recommend that the Steering Committee instructs the Support Unit to remove such country from the list of participating countries.

In addition, the following inactivity conditions apply:

- While inactive, Trinidad and Tobago will continue to receive Steering Committee and Support Unit assistance, and the IRM will assess its future action plan.
- While inactive, Trinidad and Tobago will not be eligible to vote or run in Steering Committee elections, and may only attend OGP events as observers for learning purposes.
- While inactive, Trinidad and Tobago's inactivity will be noted on the OGP website and public information materials, where appropriate (e.g., in a list of participating OGP countries).
- Any country, whether in active or inactive status, may at any time decide itself to withdraw from OGP.



5 December 2017

Mr. Maxie Cuffie
Minister of Public Administration and Communications (MPAC)
Government of Trinidad and Tobago

Dear Minister Cuffie,

We welcome the Government of Trinidad and Tobago's participation in the Open Government Partnership (OGP), which now has 74 countries and 15 subnational pioneers working to implement open government commitments to promote greater transparency, accountability, and engagement of citizens in policy making.

As you are aware, the OGP Articles of Governance state that all participating countries are expected to: *Make concrete commitments, as part of a country action plan, that are ambitious and go beyond a country's current practice. All OGP participating governments are expected to develop National Action Plans that specify concrete commitments over a two- year period.*

Countries more than four months late in submitting their National Action Plan (NAP) will be considered acting contrary to the OGP process for that action plan cycle. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago has not submitted its new NAP as of October 31, 2017, four months after the deadline of June 30, 2017.

This letter is to inform you that the Government of Trinidad and Tobago has now acted contrary to the OGP process for three consecutive action plan cycles: 2015, 2016 and 2017. Copies of the letters where we notified the government of Trinidad and Tobago are enclosed for your records. Per policy, the Support Unit has referred the Government of Trinidad and Tobago to the Criteria and Standards Subcommittee of the OGP Steering Committee as part of its ongoing review of Trinidad and Tobago's participation in OGP. The Criteria and Standards subcommittee has agreed that if a NAP is not submitted by the end of 2017, the subcommittee will immediately recommend to the full Steering Committee that Trinidad and Tobago be designated as inactive in OGP. The Steering Committee would then consider inactivity at its next in-person meeting in 2018.

We strongly encourage you to publish Trinidad and Tobago's new NAP as soon as possible in order to avoid inactive status. The OGP Support Unit and Steering Committee stand ready to support the Government of Trinidad and Tobago with all appropriate technical knowledge, peer exchange opportunities and guidance so that you can re-engage in the OGP process and finalize the Action Plan.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sanjay Pradhan", is located below the "Yours sincerely," text.

Sanjay Pradhan
Chief Executive Officer
Open Government Partnership

Enclosures



March 3, 2017

Minister Maxie Cuffie
Minister of Public Administration and Communication
Government of Trinidad and Tobago

Dear Minister Cuffie,

We welcome the Government of Trinidad and Tobago's participation in the Open Government Partnership, which now has 75 countries working to implement national commitments to promote greater transparency, accountability, and engagement of citizens in policy making.

As you are aware, the OGP Articles of Governance state that all participating countries are expected to: *publish a midterm self-assessment report at most three months after the end of the first year of action plan implementation.* All OGP participating governments are expected to develop Self-Assessment Reports that assess the government's performance in meeting its OGP commitments as outlined in its National Action Plan. In addition, it states that: *An end of term self-assessment report will be required after two years of action plan implementation.* Furthermore, Articles of Governance outline that a country will be considered to have acted contrary to OGP Process if *"the Self-Assessment Report is not submitted within 4 months of the due date."*

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago did not submit its Self-Assessment Report as of January 31, 2017, four months after the deadline of September 30, 2016 and therefore, is considered to have acted contrary to OGP process in this action plan cycle. Furthermore, please note that Trinidad and Tobago remains under review by the Criteria and Standards subcommittee.

In order to ensure successful engagement in the OGP, we recommend that the Government of Trinidad and Tobago make every effort to meet its upcoming OGP deadlines. Please review your country's [individualized calendar](#) along with the OGP Calendar Guidance section in the [Government Point of Contact Manual](#) for full information on requirements and timelines. Given that Trinidad and Tobago has recently been shifted to the 'odd year' grouping of OGP countries, the next important deadline for your country is the publication of its new National Action Plan by June 30, 2017.

The OGP Support Unit and Steering Committee stand ready to support you in whatever way would be useful in creating the new action plan. Please do not hesitate to contact the OGP Support Unit if you require any assistance.

Yours sincerely,

A blue ink signature of Sanjay Pradhan, written in a cursive style.

Sanjay Pradhan
Chief Executive Officer
Open Government Partnership



14 November 2016

Mr. Maxie Cuffie
Minister of Public Administration
Government of Trinidad and Tobago

Dear Minister Cuffie,

We welcome the Government of Trinidad and Tobago's participation in the Open Government Partnership (OGP), which now has 70 countries working to implement national commitments to promote greater transparency, accountability, and engagement of citizens in policy making.

As you are aware, the OGP Articles of Governance state that all participating countries are expected to: *Make concrete commitments, as part of a country action plan, that are ambitious and go beyond a country's current practice. All OGP participating governments are expected to develop National Action Plans that specify concrete commitments over a two year period.*

Countries more than four months late in submitting their National Action Plan (NAP) are considered acting contrary to the OGP process for that action plan cycle. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago has not submitted its new NAP as of October 31, 2016, four months after the deadline of June 30, 2016.

This letter is to inform you that, based on OGP policies, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago has now acted contrary to the OGP process for two consecutive action plan cycles (A copy of the previous letter where we notified the government of Trinidad and Tobago is enclosed for your records). As such, the Support Unit has to refer the Government of Trinidad and Tobago to the Criteria and Standards Subcommittee of the OGP Steering Committee, which will review Trinidad and Tobago's participation in OGP. We encourage the Government of Trinidad and Tobago to respond quickly with an update on the latest developments with regards to OGP in the country, so as to inform the Criteria and Standards Subcommittee in their deliberations.

The OGP Support Unit and Steering Committee stand ready to support the Government of Trinidad and Tobago with all appropriate technical knowledge, peer exchange opportunities and guidance so that Trinidad and Tobago can re-engage in the OGP process and finalize the Action Plan.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Sanjay Pradhan", is located below the "Yours sincerely," text.

Sanjay Pradhan
Chief Executive Officer
OGP Support Unit



March 21, 2016

Mr. Randall Seth Mitchell
Minister of Public Administration
Government of Trinidad and Tobago

Dear Minister Mitchell,

We welcome the Government of Trinidad and Tobago's participation in the Open Government Partnership, which now has 69 countries working to implement national commitments to promote greater transparency, accountability, and engagement of citizens in policy making.

As you are aware, the OGP Articles of Governance state that all participating countries are expected to: *publish an interim self-assessment report approximately three months after the end of the first year of action plan implementation*. All OGP participating governments are expected to develop Self-Assessment Reports that assess the government's performance in meeting its OGP commitments as outlined in its National Action Plan. Furthermore, Articles of Governance outline that a country will be considered to have acted contrary to OGP Process if *"the Self-Assessment Report is not submitted within 4 months of the due date."*

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago did not submit its Self-Assessment Report as of January 31, 2016, four months after the deadline of September 30, 2015 and therefore, is considered to have acted contrary to OGP process in this action plan cycle.

In order to avoid the possibility of a future review by the Criteria and Standards subcommittee, we recommend that the Government of Trinidad and Tobago make every effort to meet its upcoming OGP deadlines. Please review your country's [individualized calendar](#) along with the OGP Calendar Guidance section in the [Government Point of Contact Manual](#) for full information on requirements and timelines. As you will see, the next important deadline for Trinidad and Tobago is the publication of a new National Action Plan, which is due by June 30, 2016.

The OGP Support Unit and Steering Committee stand ready to support you in whatever way would be useful in creating the new action plan. Please do not hesitate to contact the OGP Support Unit if you require any assistance.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Joseph Powell", is positioned above the typed name and title.

Joseph Powell
Acting Executive Director
OGP Support Unit