



CHIEF OF STAFF TO THE PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

Republic Square, Government House 1, 0010 Yerevan, Republic of Armenia

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Honorable Members of the OGP Steering Committee

Ms. Joyce Murray,

Mr. Andres Horacio Ibarra

Mr. Nathaniel Heller

Ms. Robin Hodes

Taking this opportunity, I would like to express my deep appreciation for the endeavours and accomplishments made by the OGP Steering Committee for the development of Open Government Partnership Initiative.

The Republic of Armenia is one of the first countries joining the Open Government Partnership Initiative. Armenia has implemented three OGP National action plans during the years 2011- 2019, aimed at advancing reforms in budgeting, mining, healthcare, municipal management, freedom of information, lawmaking, education, ect. In April-May 2018, nationwide anti-government peaceful protests, referred to as the Velvet Revolution, led to drastic changes in the country's political leadership, giving hope to the Armenian people for a better future and more accountable government. This political transformation has also unleashed new momentum which will help to accelerate the implementation of OGP commitments. More Specifically, it has removed the main bottleneck to open and transparent covernance - the lack of political will. The wide-ranging fundamental reforms aimed at eradicating corruption, creating transparent, accountable, and efficient governance, safeguarding human rights and the rule of law, ensuring independence of the judiciary, and advancing economic growth through a free and competitive business environment and a favorable atmosphere for investments are at the core of the Government's programme. The Government of the Republic of Armenia has increased its

participation in the decision making processes within the OGP-Armenia community.. Effective governance will open up new opportunities for the citizens, civil society and other interested parties to influence the development of policies and laws directly affecting their interests. Despite challenges, genuine consultation, openness and collaborative approach of public officials has paid off, making the action plan more ambitious. Unlike in the previous three action plans, in the 4th NAP the Government has decided to embark on implementing legislative reforms, thus putting even more ambition in the plan. Armenia became one of the handful of countries in OGP who committed to create a publicly accessible register of beneficial ownership, tracking ultimate ownership of mining companies at the piloting stage.. The Government of Armenia has also pledged to build a platform for the electronic submission of petitions, which will enable citizens to gather support on issues of public interest and launch legislative initiatives. Currently, the OGP-Armenia team is determined to become one of the key actors in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in Armenia, linking the SDG targets with the OGP experience. With this in mind and taking into account Armenia's progress since 2011, when the country joined the initiative, we would like to present Armenia's candidacy for the OGP Steering Committee membership. We are confident that our membership in the Steering Committee will further strengthen effective and accountable governance system, which is among Armenia's top priorities since joining the OGP initiative. Armenia is committed to support the global efforts towards more accountable government and participatory decision-making with all relevant stakeholders.

Armenia also commits to undertake serious steps towards gender equality, enhancement of opportunities and empowerment of women and youth in all spheres of public life, noting that they have significantly contributed to the changes that took place in spring 2018 in Armenia and to the peaceful nature of the process. We are eager to promote the OGP Global Agenda in our region by sharing experience and making best use of partnerships. In these regards the Prime Minister's Office is a driver of above mentioned sustainable reforms and policies in Armenia.

With the anticipation of your positive consideration and support, I would like to express our strong hope that the path of changes and reform is irreversible and we are looking forward to further solidify our partnership.

Sincerely,



Eduard AGHAJANYAN