



## **Open Government Partnership: Citizen Action, Responsive Government**

*An OGP High-Level Side Event to the 69<sup>th</sup> United Nations General Assembly*

Hosted by OGP Co-Chairs: President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono of Indonesia,  
President Enrique Peña Nieto of Mexico, Rakesh Rajani and Suneeta Kaimal

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# **TRANSCRIPT**

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# 1. Opening Remarks by President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono of Indonesia (OGP Co-Chair)

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim,  
Assalamu'alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh,  
May Peace be upon us all.  
Good afternoon, Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates and Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to be with you at this High-Level Event on the Open Government Partnership. I am glad to welcome outstanding Leaders and their representatives here today. Welcome, Champions of Openness.

In the span of only three years, OGP has become a global movement of 65 countries and 200 civil society organizations. With numerous supporters from the academia, private sectors, and the youth. The OGP's rapid growth has been an exciting process. And Indonesia is proud to have been the lead Co-chair of the Partnership this year.

I commend President Enrique Peña Nieto of Mexico, who is here with us this afternoon, for his support and collaboration. Indonesia and Mexico worked closely together over the last year, along with our Civil Society co-chairs, Rakesh Rajani and Suneeta Kaimal. I would also like to congratulate His Excellency Jacob Zuma, President of South Africa, on his appointment as incoming support Chair of the OGP. Let me also take this opportunity to welcome Tunisia, France, and Bosnia and Herzegovina into the roster of OGP participants. To other countries that have declared interest in joining OGP, I wish to say: Come and join us. And share with us the invigorating experience of interacting freely with our constituents, and with one another in the spirit of transparency and openness.

Through the foundation of our Partnership, we share a vision—that openness and transparency as well as the people's participation and collaboration are key factors to good governance in this era of hyper-connectivity. As we are moving towards this vision, I am pleased that good governance continues to spread far and wide among the peoples of our countries.

Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

In recognition of the importance of civic participation, we have chosen the theme “Citizen Action, Responsive Government” for this High Level Event. The theme is in line with our shared views during the Bali Asia-Pacific Regional OGP Conference last May.

In Bali we agreed that openness is a form of empowerment, and at the same time an enabler. Openness indeed empowers the civil society to become a partner of government in the process of development. It is also key to sustained and meaningful dialogue between the government and the citizens. Both become partners in data gathering and information dissemination.

In that way, the government and the citizenry can accomplish so much more in terms political, social and economic development. And society could become not only more prosperous and stable, but also more coherent.

Having said that, let me once again extend my appreciation and gratitude to the Government of Mexico and our Civil Society co-chairs for their support during our co-chairmanship of the OGP. As I hand over the OGP chairmanship to the President of Mexico, I am confident that the Partnership will continue to grow in terms of membership and achievement.

Let us all redouble our efforts at fostering transparency and openness in the relationship between governments and the people so that this global movement will eventually become a universal forum.

I wish this high-level event every success in its deliberations.

I thank you.

Assalamu'alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh.

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## 2. Opening Remarks by Rakesh Rajani, Twaweza (OGP Co-Chair)

### “Open Government is Struggle”

President Yudhoyono, President Zuma, Co-chairs Kaimal and Gonzales, colleagues:

My father gave me only one piece of serious advice growing up. "Son", he said, "Avoid three things and you'll be fine: fire, deep water, and the government."

Over time, I have come to appreciate the wisdom of my father's warning. For too many people government is something to be feared, precarious and predatory, that uses its power to harass, that cares little about your wellbeing. The most insidious effect of this experience is that it dulls people's aspirations of what government can be. We often expect little of government and get little back in return.

The premise of the Open Government Partnership is that we can break this vicious cycle by demonstrating a different kind of governance, where government is transparent about its dealings, genuinely seeks people's ideas, and works with citizens to get things done. And by so doing, we restore and reinvent trust and accountability.

How is OGP faring? It is true that some country commitments are not very meaningful. Others have failed to deliver. The challenge of 'open washing' is real, and the road we need to still travel is long. But the truly remarkable story here is how committed civil servants and citizens have seized the OGP platform to get traction and deliver, in less than three years, on some 400 substantial commitments and made serious headway on another 200. This is huge.

The OGP momentum has helped spur progress elsewhere as well, such as the G8's attempt to reduce tax evasion and the Open Contracting Partnership which hopes to disclose public contracts worth over \$9 trillion each year. Both set radical new norms. If successful, their impact could be huge, saving taxpayers billions each year.

In my view, OGP's norm shifting role may be more important in the long term than even concrete delivery. The UK is trying 'open policy making'. Mexico speaks of 'co-governing' with civil society. South Africa is developing a 'Batho Pele' or 'people first' consequences framework for public servants. It's not that any of these have been fully achieved, or will be anytime soon. Their significance lies in how they are shifting underlying norms, compelling governments to make such commitments, shifting the frame of debate and negotiation.

My friend Minister Francis Maude likes to say, "transparency is an idea whose time has come". I couldn't agree more. But the time doesn't come on its own. It is wrought through painstaking efforts of citizens and reformers in government, who keep at it, day in, day out.

Indeed, if I have learned one thing, it is that the OGP cannot realize its promise without struggle.

The first struggle is of fashioning a meaningful collaboration between civil society and government. It resists the cynicism that says 'this is how things are and you cannot change them'. It goes beyond easy stereotypes of government as callous and corrupt and civil society as entitled and unfair. It avoids the temptation to evade argument by questioning the credibility of the other side. It seeks conversation and understanding, knowing that no one has a monopoly on good ideas. It is as pragmatic as it is principled, having understood that people have only so much time for visions and just speaking truth to power.

People want to get things done, results, decent work, bread on the table, safety from violence, respect when they go to the clinic and the school.

The second struggle is to think hard about what works. Often things that appear obvious are anything but. Countries have invested billions in basic education, but evidence shows that children are not learning, that too many graduate without the ability to read and to count. Or take graft. Dozens of countries have passed laws, set up anti-corruption commissions and done capacity building, despite little evidence that these things work. Open government understands that good intentions are not good enough. Effective policy making requires an appreciation for rigor, evidence, feedback and adaptation, rather than a dogmatic fidelity to a linear plan, or what the anthropologist James Scott calls “seeing like a state”. It means being open to ideas that challenge your core beliefs; to have the confidence to change your mind; and to challenge the inertia of habit and vested interests.

The third struggle is for inclusion. For long kings ruled, pillaged and enslaved at whim, and the best citizens could hope for was to be left alone. The wave of democratization in the past century has made it possible to conceive of a government of, by and for the people. But we would be blind not to see how our action and inaction let so many perish from the earth. How can we not be haunted by the images of hundreds of migrants, crammed in dinghies, craving a better life, being turned away and left to perish?

When we launched the OGP, the Occupy protests had just started a few miles south of here. Today inequality still gnaws away at cohesion and opportunity. We were inspired then by the Arab Spring, by the people who stood up to dictators and insisted on voice and dignity. But, while the significance of that moment remains, repression reigns. Across the world, including in some OGP countries, journalists are beaten, dissenters locked up, organizations shut down. We can craft legalistic arguments for why this cannot be our concern, but history will see through its prejudice and moral contradiction.

There is nothing inevitable about the opening of government or the closing of civic space. It rests upon what we choose to do. The path to progress is fraught with setbacks and uncertainty. The OGP has its limits, but I know of no other platform that offers so much possibility for reimagining government. If we put our mind and heart to it, it can become so much more. The progress we make will keep up our spirits and allow us to reach into our better selves. But we do not keep going because of the certitude of success; we persevere because we choose to care and we understand that real change takes time.

My father is 79 years old. My daughter is 10 and my son 12. I hope that one day, when my children talk with their children, they will be able to say: “Be careful of fire. Deep water can be dangerous; learn to swim. And as for government, it belongs to you. It is your friend. Make it work. Make it better.”

Thank you.

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### 3. Statements from the Floor

#### 3.1 President Jakaya Kikwete of Tanzania

Mr. Chairman and Chairman of the civil society segment, my countryman, Rakesh Rajani, congratulations on a very brilliant speech.

At the OGP Summit in London, I made a commitment that we'll put in place a progressive Freedom of Information Law. The question is "Why does access to information matter for poor people?"

Of course, getting information from government is the right of every citizen. People are supposed to know what their government is doing on their behalf. It is on the basis of this that we decided that we have to create conditions conducive for people to get the information, for people to know what their government is doing.

Even before we put in place the law we've been trying to make some information available for people to know, like the budget. Our budget discussions are open discussions. Parliamentarians have room to put ministers to tasks, to explain why they need the money and how they spend that money.

Another measure of transparency with regards to budget and government expenditure is the Office of the Controller and Auditor General. It is independent and we have enshrined that in the Constitution. And we have enacted a new law giving greater autonomy to the Controller and Auditor General to do his job and to report freely, and what he has said is final in that sense.

The reports of the Auditor General in the past were not made public. I've instructed that the reports are made public, and that the reports are discussed in Parliament publicly, and people should know who is spending the government money well and who is not spending that money well. It's another measure of giving information.

There is a public debate and discussion on government money and an audit on how that money has been spent and all these are publicly documented and the information is made public.

But of course, we need to do more so that citizens are given more information on what the government is doing. If a citizen asks to get that information it should not appear as if he or she is trying to get something that he or she is not supposed to do. That's actually the basis of where we are now.

We're now in the process. The stakeholders part has been done. In our process of making laws, after the draft, and you make it public, and the stakeholders have a meeting. The stakeholders have had their discussions and we are now preparing the bill to send it to Parliament.

Next month we will have a parliamentary session. In our process, in our legislative procedure you will have what we call the first reading. The first reading will be held in November. In February there will be a second reading with discussions and that's when the law will be passed.

So, come February session, we will have an Information Law.

## 3.2 President Ivo Josipović of Croatia (incoming OGP Steering Committee Member)

Excellences, dear colleagues.

Our experience shows that strengthening the dialogue with citizens and civil society in public policy making processes brings a number of benefits. I would stress the following three:

First of all, consulting with the citizens and civil society in policy making allows the government to tap into the ‘wisdom of society’, to collect a very wide and diverse set of information and expertise, which in return improves the quality of new policies and delivery of citizen- oriented public services.

Secondly, civil society involvement contributes to all stages of policy- making. It guarantees efficient implementation, monitoring and evaluation of existing policies. It also helps in determining where changes in policies are needed and detecting, at an early stage, possible problems in future implementation of laws.

Thirdly, by strengthening social dialogue, by improving government responsiveness and providing timely and meaningful feedback to citizens, the level of their trust in the work of public institutions is increased. In Croatia, our focus was on improving responsiveness of public institutions to citizens’ and civil society inputs to public consultations on new policy proposals. By creating new legislation and by involving citizens and civil society organizations, we have witnessed a 5000 % increase in number of citizens’ comments on new legislative initiatives in just 3 years.

Ladies and gentlemen, dear friends,

Our accomplishments in engaging civil society in public policy would not be as momentous without Open Government Partnership. Our common platform helped us raise the level of mutual trust and feeling of shared responsibility to an unprecedented level. Our Action Plan brought us significant advances in the fields of access to information, public consultations, fiscal transparency and use of new technologies for the purpose of improving efficiency and responsibility of public authority bodies. The Initiative has been an irreplaceable mechanism for advancing and sustaining achievements of Croatia’s EU accession process.

Although our initial motivation for joining the Partnership was self- improvement - that is, achieving a higher quality of our public policies and good governance - our membership has become much more than that. We are proud to be an active participant of this unique global movement, and to provide assistance and support to all countries heading in the same direction. We are looking forward to our membership in the new Steering Committee and to working hand in hand on making the Partnership an ever more exciting story.

Three years ago, at the Open Government Partnership inaugural event, we were presented with a challenge – to be a part of a new and inimitable common endeavor, to work with citizens and civil society organizations in translating ambitious goals into global universal standards of good governance. As President Obama said on the very day the Open Government Partnership was founded, “the strongest foundation for human progress lies in open societies, open governments and open economies.” I believe that we have since proven that the Open Government Partnership - with its

distinctive spirit that combines accountability with public policy innovation and dialogue - is an invaluable part of this foundation.

Thank you.

### **3.2 Prime Minister Irakli Garibashvili of Georgia (incoming OGP Steering Committee Member)**

I am deeply honored and privileged to be here with you today at this important meeting of the countries striving together towards the common goal of opening up their governments for the benefit of their citizens. Ladies and Gentlemen, we gathered here at the OGP High Level Event to mark the third anniversary of OGP and reaffirm commitment towards our common aim: to support more open and transparent governments across the globe.

My special thanks go to the Government of Indonesia and the team who made this meeting possible. I would also like to applaud the work of the OGP support unit and the OGP working groups to facilitate these important processes worldwide.

The Government of Georgia is highly privileged to be elected<sup>1</sup> as one of the Steering Committee members for the next two years. We are keen to maintain the highest standards for the initiative and ensure its long-term sustainability. We see this as a vote of confidence in Georgia and in the efforts we have made to improve governance in our country. We are grateful for this trust and stand ready to contribute to the work of the Steering Committee where our Minister of Justice, Thea Tsulukiani will be represented.

Indeed, the core principles of Open Government Partnership – transparency, accountability, citizen participation, technology and innovation – are key values for our Government. With the use of advanced technologies, innovative and modern approaches to governance, we aim to build integrity and public trust and increase transparency, efficiency and effectiveness of Government. Furthermore, we aim to become even more accessible and accountable to citizens while empowering them. Our country prides itself with the most innovative solutions to public procurement, public financial disclosure and most importantly, public service delivery that have attracted huge international interest and have been praised by UN awards. Among our successful initiatives are the Community Centers, creative solution for rural development to empower citizens at the regional level and deliver to them the government services based on the principle – “everything in one space.” Our Community Centers unify modern technologies, public and private services, transformed libraries and venues for civic engagement in one space and thus meet number of development challenges existing at the local level.

Unprecedented level of openness and civil society participation has been achieved by our new Government as a part of the commitments for OGP. Nearly, every legislative or policy initiative of the Government undergoes broad, thorough, inclusive and meaningful public consultation process. The new Government has pledged to increase accountability to citizens and regularly inform them about their work. To this end, monthly press conferences, under the open government umbrella, are held by the

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<sup>1</sup> In August 2014 through voting among the OGP member states Georgia was selected as one of the members of OGP Steering Committee.

Ministers to report about the achievements and challenges of their respective fields and answer questions from the media and people directly.

One of the most ambitious changes has taken place in freedom of information area. We brought the standards of Freedom of Information to a much higher level through implementing a new obligation for state agencies to proactively disclose public information. This is an example of strong and efficient collaboration between the CSOs and Government to achieve the desired results of transparency and accountability.

We take pride that our achievements in this regard were highlighted during the OGP London summit last year. Georgia was among the 7 finalist Bright Spots showing how open and accountable government is changing our citizens' lives.

The Government of Georgia has already approved our *second* National Action Plan for Open Government Georgia developed through consultative process led by the Open Government Georgia's National Forum - regular coordination mechanism of Open Government Georgia on the national level as foreseen by the Articles of Governance of the Open Government Partnership. The Action Plan enshrines the Transparency and Accountability Agenda of the Government of Georgia and is a product of:

- Regular and intense cooperation of government and civil society in the framework of the Open Government Georgia's Forum and
- Countrywide public consultations conducted jointly by representatives of government and civil society.

We are increasing openness and accountability of public administration by developing multiple new initiatives as part of our Second Action Plan, including: New Freedom of Information and Transparency regulations, encouraging greater civil society involvement through Open Government Georgia's Forum, promoting public engagement, increasing the service delivery standards through inclusion of private sector and municipal services into our e-services portal (citizens' portal) and unique Public Service Halls, further increasing the number of our Community Centers at the regional level and creating open data portal and e-petitions portal for our citizens.

On our path to full-fledged democracy we have a number of critical challenges yet to overcome, including in the area of open governance.

Participation in OGP further encourages us to go beyond current achievements, undertake new commitments, and share experiences to partner countries. Through OGP we learn from others and engage in openness, transparency and accountability contest with partner governments.

We are deeply committed to the common goal of truly open, participatory, collaborative and accountable Government and highly value our participation in OGP. We reaffirm our strong will to continue to be active partner in the OGP and contribute to the unique processes of experience sharing, healthy and engaging competition of the governments to open up, empower citizens, and advancing the values of a modern democratic government. We are indeed committed and we stand ready to support the work of OGP in the future.

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## 4. Remarks by President Jacob Zuma of South Africa (incoming OGP Co-Chair)

President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, of Indonesia;  
President Peña Nieto, of Mexico;  
OGP civil society co-chairs;  
OGP community of nations;  
OGP partners;  
Distinguished delegates;

I rise on behalf of the people of South Africa with whom we have worked hard in the last twenty years to build a truly, democratic and free society.

We are proud of the remarkable progress we have made, though we still have many challenges to address.

We pride ourselves of the fact that since 1994 our country has been electing its governments through the popular will of the people.

Our Constitution, which was designed with the solemn idea of bringing about a particular value system on which South African society could develop and prosper, continues to guide our work as government.

Our democracy is based on the rule of law, transparency and openness; it guarantees the freedom of expression, including freedom of the press and other media.

Apart from having an effective separation of powers, which ensures healthy checks and balances among the three arms of the state, we have another distinct feature in our system; namely institutions supporting our constitutional democracy.

Over the past twenty years, we have made every effort to fully integrate into the world; playing a significant role in global political and economic affairs.

We recognize the need to build and maintain sound international solidarity around issues of open governance which are fundamental in our efforts to address the burden of poverty, inequality and unemployment.

Therefore our engagement with the international community is a vital part of our strategy to construct broad partnerships for development through clean governance.

These partnerships, in our view, must move from the premise that all countries have a role to play in world affairs.

Your Excellencies;

As the incoming OGP co-chair, we are alive to the calls from people all over the world for more transparent, responsive, accountable and effective government; and for greater civil society participation in public affairs.

It is in this connection that the chairs of the OGP are required to safeguard the values and principles of the partnership as well as to strengthen government-citizen relations.

Our appreciation of the role that South Africa will endeavor to mobilize all countries participating in the partnership around a common vision of promoting open governance as an important lever of sustainable development.

We are inspired by the progress this partnership has made, as well as by the theme for this year's United Nations General Assembly, on whose margins this meeting has been convened, which is: "Delivering on and Implementing a Transformative Post-2015 Development Agenda".

South Africa will advocate for governance with a 'human face'; in other words, the pursuit of open governance to produce the results of ethics, equity, inclusion, human security, and sustainable development.

Any pursuit of open governance must respond to the needs of the voiceless; the marginalized in society; especially women, the youth and people with disabilities.

At the same time our endeavors must necessarily benefit from the ideas of these people as part of deepening public participation.

South Africa believes that open governance is not necessarily an easy ideal to achieve in totality. It requires on-going and sustained commitment.

Your Excellencies

As one of the founding members of the OGP we are happy that, within just three years, membership to this partnership has grown from 8 to 64 countries.

We are also appreciative of the growth of civil society organizations that are actively participating in OGP country processes.

We must also state that it is impressive to note that a number of countries working on their second OGP action plans are making significant improvements from the first plans, thus signaling the seriousness with which they take Independent Review Mechanisms (IRM).

We, however, are strongly of the view that a need exists to spell out in clearer detail the mandate of the IRM, so that this mechanism does not, unwittingly, extend to issues which fall outside the scope of OGP country commitments.

It is equally important to continue articulating the character and nature of the OGP as a non-binding voluntary initiative.

The character of the OGP should, therefore, direct participating countries to adopt a negotiation, persuasion and consensus approach.

Your Excellencies;

As South Africa we are deeply humbled and honored by the confidence shown in us to play a leading role in the OGP.

We are, however, hopeful, that the collective of everybody in the OGP stands ready to support both lead chair (Mexico) and ourselves as the co-chair in discharging our responsibilities to the world.

I thank you.

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## 5. Statements of Support from OGP's Multilateral Partners

### 5.1 Administrator Helen Clark, United Nations Development Programme

#### “Check Against Delivery”

I am pleased to join you to mark the third year of the Open Government Partnership.

The OGP separates itself from other initiatives by offering a platform in which governments and civil society interact as equal partners. The result is evident at events such as this; but most importantly it is evident on the ground – in the joint responsibility and ownership which both partners take for delivering national action plans.

Sixty four countries have become OGP members in under three years. The governments and civil society organizations in these countries appreciate that accountable, and responsive governance is effective governance for development.

Of the more than five million people who have participated in the global MyWorld survey, nearly half selected ‘honest and responsive government’ as one of their highest priorities for the post-2015 agenda. This feedback was consistent across the world’s regions

UNDP has had a long-term commitment to building democratic governance and is delighted to be a partner of OGP. We support countries to open up to engagement with citizens and design effective institutions to support that.

Where there is little tradition of civic engagement and low capacity, well intentioned actors can find it difficult to generate the kind of meaningful consultation and engagement which informs policy, builds trust, and generates ownership.

UNDP helps governments and civil society groups to overcome such challenges, including through our work with OGP. In Armenia, for example UNDP helped bring government and civil society groups together and facilitated a national dialogue which resulted in the approval of a second generation OGP action plan. In El Salvador, UNDP worked with civil society groups – particularly in marginalized regions - to strengthen their capacity to engage fully in setting priorities for their second generation OGP action plan.

In UNDP’s experience, the broad and meaningful engagement of stakeholders not only improves transparency and accountability in governance, but also helps to sustain development outcomes. As the world shifts to an ambitious post-2015 agenda which ensures that no one is left behind, the work of OGP and its partners to advance democratic governance will become even more important. UNDP looks forward to working through the OGP to support that.

## 5.2 Secretary-General Angel Gurría, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

Dear Presidents, dear Prime Ministers, distinguished colleagues,

Our citizens' expectations have never been higher.

We are still dealing with the legacies of the crisis: slow growth, high unemployment, growing inequality and a dramatic erosion of trust in governments' capacity to deliver shared prosperity and inclusive societies. So, restoring trust through Open Government has never been more important.

I commend Indonesia, under the leadership of President Yudhoyono, for focusing its OGP Chairmanship on "the role of civic participation in improving government responsiveness, effectiveness, and accountability". That is the big challenge.

As Indonesia passes the baton of leadership to Mexico as lead government Chair, we can reflect on three years of significant progress since the OGP's inception in 2011. And we look forward to reaching the next level under the helm of President Peña Nieto – Mexico's reformer-in-chief!

For its part, the OECD has been working on Open Government issues for 15 years, but our participation in this unique Partnership has given our work new impetus:

Already since 2001, we produced the Guiding Principles for Open and Inclusive Policy Making to give policy makers a roadmap.

Through the OECD Open Government Reviews, we assist countries wishing to join the OGP and support the implementation of public sector reforms through tailored country action plans for Tunisia, Morocco, Jordan, Lybia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Peru, Myanmar and Indonesia.

Recognizing the critical role of new technologies in promoting civic participation, we recently adopted the Recommendation on Digital Government Strategies and launched the Open Data Project to help countries exploit the huge potential in this area. We have conducted "Integrity Scans" which reviews policies to promote integrity, with the focus firmly on prevention.

Looking to the near horizon, next Tuesday (30 September 2014), the OECD will host an International Forum on Open Government to explore the links between open government policies, citizens' trust and inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development. We pledge to do our best so that Open Government becomes more than an event, or a series of decisions, but a state of mind, a continuous process, and a way of life.

Thank you!

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## 6. 2014 Open Government Awards Ceremony

### 2014 Awards Winners:

**10<sup>th</sup> – France** for a government portal which allows the public to vote on, improve, and submit visualizations of government data.

**9<sup>th</sup> – The United States** where Federal Agencies host competitions to find citizen solutions to urgent policy problems.

**8<sup>th</sup> – Peru** where Children propose ideas to help the City Council meet their infrastructure and security needs.

**7<sup>th</sup> – Mexico** where Citizens report on security issues and access legal and psychological aid for crime victims.

**6<sup>th</sup> – The United Kingdom** where Citizens are involved in policymaking on complex science and tech projects.

**5<sup>th</sup> – The Netherlands** where Citizens influence how government values property to promote transparent tax assessment.

**4<sup>th</sup> – Italy** where Citizens track public spending and monitor its impact on the community.

**3<sup>rd</sup> – The Philippines** for Grassroots Participatory Budgeting, where Local government and civil society jointly allocate budgets for development projects.

**2<sup>nd</sup> – Montenegro** for a public engagement campaign called “Be Responsible”, where Citizens report unregulated economic activity and help create a fairer business environment.

**1<sup>st</sup> – Denmark** for a Statutory Elected Senior Citizen’s Council, where senior citizens empowered by law, actively influence local government policy.

### 6.1 Remarks from Social Welfare and Development Secretary Corazon Soliman of the Philippines

For 2014 USD 450.9 million and in 2015, about USD 470.1 million in projects were discussed, debated and agreed by citizens, elected duty bearers of the government local level, national government implementers - built consensus on a local poverty reduction action plan and on that basis propose the allocation of funds from the national budget. This is power of the people this is grassroots participatory budgeting.

This effort involved an estimated of 10,000 citizens organizations and CSOs in 1,590 cities and municipalities implementing 16,269 projects.

The constructive engagement of all stakeholders - citizens, CSOs, government – is key in the process; changing the ways we do project design, implementation and evaluation and audit trail are some of the challenges we continue to face.

Thank you for the recognition and I am accepting this award on behalf of all the citizens of the Philippines who invested time, talent and treasure in this effort.

Thank you.

## **6.2 Remarks from President Filip Vujanović of Montenegro**

Distinguished Co-Chairs,  
Your Excellences Heads of State and Government,  
Distinguished delegates,

First of all, I would like to commend Open Government Partnership activities on the occasion of its third year anniversary. I believe that all of us share gratitude for an excellent leadership of Indonesia as well as good wishes for full success of Mexico in that role in the forthcoming year.

Montenegro has been working with determination over the years to enhance partnership of the Government with the civil sector and individual citizens. As a result, its civil sector comprises 1500 active Civil Organizations, which is a remarkable figure given that population of Montenegro is 620.000. The Government has reiterated its call for partnership with civil sector on a number of occasions, involving Civil Organizations into legislature process and governmental working groups.

One of the remarkable examples of the partnership is the project Be Responsible to be awarded here. The Be Responsible campaign has managed to bring together the skills and resources of public authorities, academic community, international partners and citizens to tackle grey economy, as one of the challenges facing Montenegro today.

In just nine months, this campaign has given visible results. Today, the so-called ‘citizen inspectors’, make almost one percent of the adult population of Montenegro. Those responsible individuals are using their smart phones to photograph and report black market activities, submitting ten times more citizen reports than ever before.

In order to encourage citizens to report grey economy, the Government of Montenegro has committed to invest half of the revenues resulting from citizen reports to community projects that they select.

By taking a certain amount of money away from grey economy and investing it in an old people’s home or a piece of medical equipment, citizens have proved that their engagement can bring very tangible benefits to their communities.

This campaign would not be possible without the advanced academic skills of the Podgorica Faculty of Electrical Engineering, the expertise and financial support of UNDP Montenegro and British Embassy Podgorica, the dedicated and committed work of inspection services, the leadership vision of the Ministry of Finance and, of course, without the responsible citizens willing to help the authorities and create new value in Montenegro.

Finally, much of the credit goes to the Montenegrin media for their constant attention and support for this campaign and to civil society organizations: Center for Democratic Transition, Institute Alternative, Civic Alliance, Environmental Movement Ozon and Green Home for endorsing Montenegro's application for the Open Government Partnership Awards.

Therefore, it gives me a great pleasure to present this prestigious international award to the Montenegrin team. I am confident that their efforts and the evident success of this initiative will inspire the Montenegrin society to continue to work together for the good and prosperity of our citizens!

Thank you for your attention!

### **6.3 Remarks from Prime Minister Helle Thorning-Schmidt of Denmark**

Your Excellencies - ladies and gentlemen. It is a great honor to be part of this celebration of the third anniversary of the Open Government Partnership.

Denmark remains firmly committed to openness, transparency and participation - and we appreciate this opportunity to exchange experiences with so many other countries.

It is also an honor to present an Open Government Award to the Danish initiative "Statutory Elected Senior Citizens Councils".

In Denmark, we have worked hard over the years to strengthen participatory democracy. The Senior Citizens' Council initiative is one example of this.

Respect and cooperation across generations are crucial for the cohesiveness of any society. But in Denmark we realized that elderly often are at risk of being left out of the decision-making processes.

This may be due to the misguided notion that people of working age are more "useful" than the elderly. Or, that the elderly deserve to "take a break" from decision-making. Or it may simply have been due to a blind spot in our commitment to participatory democracy.

In any case, there was a need for a mechanism to ensure that the elderly would be heard and involved. The Senior Citizens Councils were first established on a voluntary basis by civil society organizations - a true grassroots effort. Later, the Danish Government passed legislation to make Senior Citizens Councils a statutory requirement in the local municipalities.

Today, the Senior Citizens Councils have become an institution. They are a vibrant fora, ensuring dialogue and collaboration between government and elderly in all local matters affecting them.

The members of the Senior Citizens Councils, who are in their sixties, seventies and eighties, are doing a marvelous and very important job. And our experience with the councils shows that they are certainly not interested in "taking a break" from decision-making.

The Senior Citizens Councils have indeed proven their worth. And I am honored and very pleased to present the Open Government Award to Marianne Lundsgaard, the head of the secretariat for the National Association of Senior Citizens' Councils. Congratulations.

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## 7. Remarks by Suneeta Kaimal, Natural Resource Governance Institute (OGP Co-Chair)

### "Realizing the Promise of Open Government: The Challenges Ahead"

Today, we celebrate. In just three years, 65 countries have signalled their commitment to transparency, citizen engagement and responsive government. I can think of no other global initiative that has created such a tremendous opportunity for openness in such a short time.

What is unique to OGP is that it brings together engagement and action. Action on the part of governments is not enough. Action on the part of civil society is not enough. But engagement between governments and civil society that informs action is what leads to impact.

The stories that we've just heard speak to this power of OGP. They are stories about civil society not only holding governments to account, but also as designers of policy, contributors of technical expertise, and amplifiers of citizen voice. They are stories about government listening, engaging, and responding. And across government and civil society, they are stories about learning from one another, innovating and taking risks.

But there is another story that needs telling. In the past two years, over 50 countries have introduced 69 new restrictive measures that curtail the ability of civil society organizations to operate freely. In these countries, the potential for openness is countered by the pressures of powerful institutional and political forces that seek to keep society closed. This is a worrying trend worldwide, and it jeopardizes the very premise of our multi-stakeholder partnership.

In too many countries, this is the story of OGP: open space, open expression and open organizing are being actively undercut. The potential of OGP to empower reformers and transform the lives of citizens cannot be realized when meaningful engagement between government and civil society is obstructed.

But the end of our story is not yet written. OGP can leverage its strengths – the breadth of its partnership across a diversity of countries and the depth of its high-level support, as evidenced by those in this room. Together we can shape it, promote it, protect its principles and propel its promise.

I challenge civil society: opt in. Seize the space that does exist. Use OGP as a platform to make concrete gains on the issues that matter most to citizens. Be more creative and more strategic - work across sectors and silos to coordinate and caucus to advance openness. Raise awareness where the principle of partnership is under threat. Bring to bear the power of our coalitions, our knowledge and our experience.

I challenge governments: lead by example. Your presence here today and the accomplishments we celebrate speak to your willingness to redefine governance. Engage your peers, within and outside of your own government to bolster reform efforts. Reach out to civil society as a resource to achieve common aims. Leverage the full power of your networks at all levels of government to charm, challenge and cajole fellow governments to be true to the spirit of OGP.

I challenge us all: harness OGP's potential. We can encourage a more OGP governments to establish a forum for ongoing dialogue with civil society partners. We can be ambitious in our commitments and

ensure OGP remains a platform to race to the top, not one where we gradually slide to the bottom. We can be the wind behind the sails of reformers who aspire to openness. We can put in place mechanisms to identify and counter practices that contravene our principles in a thoughtful, consistent, and compelling way.

In a year, I hope to tell a different story. A story about how we reversed a dangerous trend against openness. A story about how we demonstrated the power of action and engagement to change the lives of the nearly 2 billion people who live in OGP countries. A story about how we, together, achieved the full promise of the Open Government Partnership.

Thank you.

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## 8. Remarks by President Barack Obama of the United States (founding OGP Co-Chair)

Well, thank you very much. And thank you, Rakesh, for your introduction. It is wonderful to see all of you here today. I still remember your eloquent words when we launched this effort three years ago, and I'm very grateful for the role you've played and NGOs have played, and all the leadership that is represented here has played in making this a reality -- which is making a real difference in the lives of so many countries that are participating.

I want to thank my good friend, President Yudhoyono, for your leadership and the example that Indonesia has tried to set as a country that has transitioned from a difficult past to a full-blown democracy. And I also want to thank Minister Kuntoro for hosting us here today. Both of them have shown extraordinary leadership in this partnership over the past several years.

President Yudhoyono will be -- this will be the last time I think that we see each other in his official capacity, but not in terms of our friendship. And I think that it's fitting that he's participating here today and leading it, because it reflects the legacy of his work. And I also want to acknowledge my dear friend, President Peña Nieto of Mexico, as well as President Zuma of South Africa, who have agreed to lead the partnership in the coming year.

I'm thrilled to see so many leaders from civil society -- men and women who stand up for equality and opportunity and justice and freedom every single day. And it's not always easy to do. Yesterday, I had a chance to speak about the importance of supporting civil society across the globe -- because throughout history, progress has always been driven by citizens who have the courage to raise their voices, and imagine not just what is but what might be, and that are willing to work to bring about the change that they seek.

Three years ago, the United States and seven other nations launched this Open Government Partnership to represent the other side of that equation -- because when citizens demand progress, governments need to be able to respond. And in a new millennium flush with technology that allows us to connect with a tweet or a text, citizens rightly demand more responsiveness, more openness, more transparency, more accountability from their governments.

In just three short years, this partnership has grown from eight nations to 64. It has helped to transform the way governments serve their citizens. Together, we have made more than 2,000 commitments -- improving how governments serve more than 2 billion people worldwide. More citizens are petitioning their governments online, and more citizens are participating directly in policymaking. More entrepreneurs are using open data to innovate and start new businesses. More sunlight is shining on how tax dollars are spent. And more governments are partnering with civil society to find new ways to expose corruption and improve good governance.

Here in the United States, we've been trying to lead by example. We're working to open up and share more data with entrepreneurs so they can pursue the new innovations and businesses that create jobs. We're working to modernize our Freedom of Information Act process so that it's easier for Americans to use, so that they can see the workings of their government. And today, I'm proud to announce a series of new commitments to expand and broaden our open government efforts.

We're going to work more closely with the health care sector and state and local law enforcement -- not just to improve public health and safety, but to better protect the privacy and personal information of the American people. We're going to improve transparency with our upgraded website, USAspending.gov, to make it easier for Americans to access and understand how the federal government spends their tax dollars.

We're going to collaborate more closely with the private sector and the best minds in our country so that when we design websites or technologies to better serve the public, we're benefitting from the best of American ingenuity and the latest technologies. And because we know that education is a cornerstone for progress -- if we want good governance, we need an educated and informed citizenry -- we're going to do more to help people in other countries, especially students, access the incredible online educational tools and resources that we have here in the States.

In addition, as part of our leadership in the global fight against corruption, we intend to partner with American businesses to develop a national plan to promote responsible and transparent business conduct overseas. We already have laws in place; they're significantly stronger than the laws of many other countries. But we think we can do better. And we think that ultimately it will be good for everybody, including business. Because when they know there's a rule of law, when they don't have to pay a bribe to ship their goods or to finalize a contract, that means they're more likely to invest, and that means more jobs and prosperity for everybody.

As we look ahead, I believe that continuing this global fight against corruption has to remain a central focus in this partnership. It's an area where we can expand our efforts. Corruption is not simply immoral. From a practical perspective, it siphons off billions of dollars from the public and private sectors that could be used to feed children or build schools, or build infrastructure that promotes development. It also promotes economic inequality. It facilitates human rights abuses. It fuels organized crime, and terrorism, and ultimately instability.

Passing anti-corruption laws is necessary -- and then those laws have to be enforced, so that those who steal from their people are held accountable, and so citizens have faith that the system is not rigged and that justice will be done. We need to do more to track down the proceeds of corruption and prevent our legal and financial systems from becoming safe havens for money gained through bribes or fraud. And we need to do more to ensure transparency and accountability in industries that can be especially vulnerable to corruption, such as the extraction of natural resources. That's not just good for businesses, it helps support development in countries that depend on these industries for growth and for jobs.

In all of these efforts as governments, we're going to have to deepen our partnerships with civil society. As I announced yesterday, I've directed the U.S. government to elevate its engagement with civil society groups around the world. After all, the Open Government Partnership is not simply a partnership between governments; it's between governments and their citizens. At times, this can be frustrating. At times, it can be contentious. I think it's fair to say that all governments think they're doing what's right, and don't like criticism. And it's shocking to say that not all criticism from civil society is always fair. But, as leaders, making our governments more open does mean that as a consequence of that criticism, there's self-reflection. And it means that questions are asked that might not have otherwise been asked. And that groupthink doesn't develop inside of a government, and that people don't start as easily rationalizing behavior that, if shown in the light of day, people would object to.

As we've seen through the leadership of Rakesh and so many others who are here today, open and honest collaboration with citizens and civil society over the long term -- no matter how uncomfortable it

is -- makes countries stronger and it makes countries more successful, and it creates more prosperous economies, and more just societies, and more opportunity for citizens.

So the achievements of these first three years are an example of the kind of steady, step-by-step progress that is possible for people and countries around the world. No country has all the answers. No country has perfect practices. So we have to continue to find new ways to learn from each other, to share best practices, and most importantly, to turn the commitments that we've made into real and meaningful action that improves the daily lives of our citizens. I'm confident that if we do that, we can ensure that we're living up to the basic truth that governments exist to serve the people, and not the other way around.

Let me just close by saying this: When we started this, we didn't know if it was going to work. And I could not be more proud to see the enormous changes that are taking place all around the globe -- in small increments sometimes. It's not flashy. It doesn't generate a lot of headlines. But the work you're doing here is a steady wave of better government, and a steady wave of stronger civil societies. And over time, that means that not only will individual countries be stronger, and not only will the citizens of those countries have greater opportunity and are less prone to experience injustice, but that translates into a world that is more just and more fair. And that's the kind of world that I want to leave my children.

So congratulations on the good work. But don't let up -- as I'm sure you won't, because I know some of you. Thank you very much.

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## 9. Remarks by President François Hollande of France (incoming OGP Steering Committee Member)

Je salue tous les Chefs d'Etat et de gouvernements qui sont ici présents, et qui participent à cet événement. Car c'en est un.

Nous avons évoqué des sujets terribles tout au long de la journée. Notamment, nous sortons d'une réunion, présidée par Barack Obama, du Conseil de Sécurité sur la lutte contre le terrorisme. Nous avons aussi abordé ici d'autres questions, qui vont permettre à la planète d'être plus propre, moins consommatrice d'énergie, et c'est toute la question de la Conférence sur le Climat qui se tiendra à Paris en décembre 2015.

Et puis, il y a ce forum, qui est aussi une exigence des peuples : avoir plus de transparence, avoir plus de coopération pour que les citoyens eux-mêmes puissent connaître davantage du fonctionnement des États. Pour que les administrations puissent rendre des comptes à ceux qui les ont ainsi désignées.

C'est une vieille revendication, en définitive, que vous portez, qui remonte pour nous à la Déclaration des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen, qui proclamait déjà que "la société est en droit de demander des comptes à tout agent public de son administration."

Vous voyez, vous n'inventez rien. Sauf que les technologies d'aujourd'hui font qu'il devient possible de demander des comptes, et d'assurer la transparence.

La transparence, c'est aussi celle qui concerne ceux qui décident, c'est à dire les élus et les responsables publics. En France, nous avons créé une Haute Autorité pour la Transparence de la Vie Publique, pour connaître les patrimoines, l'origine des revenus des élus qui décident au nom du peuple français. Cela peut parfois avoir des conséquences assez dommageables pour ceux qui ont manqué à leur devoir. Et c'est bien le but.

De la même manière, nous souhaitons qu'il y ait une ouverture de toutes les données de ce qu'on appelle l'e-gouvernement. Nous souhaitons la simplification : que les citoyens puissent eux-mêmes participer à cette simplification de l'action publique.

Cette exigence de transparence doit mettre à la disposition des citoyens toutes les données. Toutes celles qui sont à vocation publique, pas celles qui sont d'ordre privé. Car plus on doit être transparent sur le plan de la vie publique, plus on doit protéger aussi la vie privée. C'est finalement cette coordination, cette conjugaison, cette harmonie de la transparence pour les données publiques et de la protection pour les données privées, qui fait que nous sommes dans une démarche démocratique.

Nous voulons aussi que la France soit partie prenante de cette exigence de régulation, de transparence à l'échelle de la planète. Pour lutter contre la fraude fiscale, pour lutter contre la corruption, pour lutter aussi contre les filières, contre les trafics, contre tout ce qui peut alimenter le terrorisme.

L'alliance entre les gouvernements – et ici vous en avez de toutes sortes – et la société civile est une nécessité. C'est ce qui fera que nous pourrons avancer. J'évoquais tout à l'heure l'enjeu du climat. Nous pourrons réussir le rendez-vous de la Conférence sur Climat s'il y a transparence, s'il y a coordination entre les gouvernements et les sociétés civiles.

La France a donc souhaité rejoindre l'initiative ambitieuse qu'est votre organisation, l'OGP, et s'engager dans son Comité Directeur. Nous voulons être un partenaire. Nous voulons être un acteur. Nous voulons coopérer avec vous.

Dans quelques jours, la France engagera une grande concertation publique sur le numérique, parce que nous voulons que l'État puisse être transformé par le numérique. Nous aurons un Plan d'Action National, que nous publierons au printemps prochain dans le cadre de l'OGP.

Votre organisation est un lieu unique pour concevoir les rôles et les responsabilités des gouvernements de demain.

Je suis heureux que vous ayez accepté que la France puisse être partie prenante de votre ambition de transparence, de démocratie et de liberté. Car il s'agit de liberté.

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## 10. Closing Remarks by President Enrique Peña Nieto of Mexico (OGP Co-Chair)

Muchísimas gracias.

Excelentísimos Jefes de Estado y de Gobierno.

Muy distinguidos representantes de la sociedad civil que participan en esta Alianza para el Gobierno Abierto.

Señoras y señores:

La presencia de Jefes de Estado y de Gobierno, así como de representantes de la sociedad civil, confirma el creciente interés que está despertando esta plataforma de la Alianza para el Gobierno Abierto.

El Gobierno Abierto es un nuevo paradigma que, gracias al avance tecnológico, está revolucionando a la forma en que los ciudadanos y autoridades colaboran para diseñar y evaluar políticas públicas. Los Gobiernos abiertos hoy son la nueva frontera de la democracia. Son el instrumento más moderno para que los interesados en las cuestiones públicas participen de manera más activa.

México recibe con gran responsabilidad la Presidencia de la Alianza para el Gobierno Abierto y reitera su compromiso con la promoción de la transparencia, la lucha contra la corrupción y el empoderamiento de la ciudadanía.

Reconozco al Presidente Susilo Bambang, a Suneeta Kaimal y Rakesh Rajani, por el trabajo realizado al frente de esta iniciativa.

A los nuevos miembros del Comité Directivo, les deseo el mayor de los éxitos en esta nueva responsabilidad.

En particular, quiero agradecer a nuestros representantes de la sociedad civil.

Gracias a su incansable trabajo, la Alianza ha tenido un crecimiento extraordinario, como aquí ya se ha referido, en tan solo tres años.

El desafío actual de nuestra alianza es doble.

Por un lado, consolidar lo que se ha alcanzado en los 64 países miembros: el modelo de gobiernos abiertos.

Y segundo. Promover que más naciones lo adopten.

Para lograrlo, como Presidente del Comité Directivo de la Alianza, México trabajará en tres ejes de acción.

Primer eje. Llevar los principios del Gobierno Abierto a la práctica, a herramientas operativas que permitan un desarrollo incluyente.

Segundo eje. Consolidar el concepto de Gobierno Abierto, mediante una alianza más sólida y amplia entre sociedades y Gobiernos, basada en la confianza.

Por ejemplo, en México constituimos un secretariado técnico tripartita, en el que participan las organizaciones de la sociedad civil, el órgano autónomo encargado del acceso a la información pública y el Gobierno de la República.

Y tercer eje. Hacer de la Alianza una verdadera plataforma de cooperación e intercambio de experiencias exitosas.

Creemos necesario impulsar nuevos mecanismos que faciliten la identificación y adopción de mejores prácticas en la materia, a nivel global. Queremos que la experiencia de cada Nación contribuya al éxito de todas las demás naciones.

En este propósito, a fin de que más reformadores puedan colaborar en un mayor número de ámbitos, impulsaremos iniciativas de Parlamento abierto, Poder Judicial abierto y ciudades abiertas.

Promoveremos que la transparencia y la rendición de cuentas sean prácticas cotidianas de todos los poderes y órdenes de Gobierno de los países miembros.

México compartirá la experiencia de su reciente Reforma Constitucional en materia de Transparencia.

Con ella, mi país tendrá un sólido sistema nacional de transparencia, compuesto por un órgano federal y 32 órganos locales; todos con autonomía para asegurar el derecho de acceso a la información pública.

Señoras y señores.

Los principios del Gobierno Abierto permitirán una efectiva gobernanza democrática, con mayor corresponsabilidad entre Gobierno y ciudadanía.

El futuro de esta Alianza depende de todos nosotros, del compromiso de los Jefes de Estado y los representantes de la sociedad civil.

México asume la Presidencia de este proyecto global con gran entusiasmo, consciente del poder positivo de esta Alianza para enriquecer nuestra vida democrática.

Muchas gracias.

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## 11. Concluding Remarks by Rakesh Rajani, Twaweza (OGP Co-Chair)

Ladies and gentleman, it is now my job to bring this event to a close.

To the government leaders here, I say, the work of opening up government, day in, day out, is done by citizens and civil servants on the ground most of whom will never ever make it into a room like this. But the success of their work depends critically on you.

There's nothing more powerful for a teacher, or a community worker or a judge than knowing that her President or Prime Minister supports her fight for justice.

Please remember how important it is to send those signals. Please remember to protect and celebrate their work. And please aim to be more ambitious in the coming year than you were in the last.

And to my civil society colleagues in the room, I say, your passion and persistence for open government really matters. You and your colleagues back at home are truly brave, truly creative, truly persistent. You are working with governments to transform government, to build trust, to get things done. We hope you return home recommitted and reenergized with new friends and new allies to build your coalition for change.

As you leave the room today, please take a look at the ambitious citizen engagement commitments that will be projected on the screens, as well as the pledges for support summarized in the Outcome Statement document which you should find on your way out. Before I adjourn shortly, I will ask you to remain seated to allow our Heads of State to exit.

Dear friends, in the past three short years the OGP has become an incredible platform for reform, for justice. Now, together, let's go make the best of it.

Thank you and good evening.

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