



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

June 12, 2014

Linda Frey, Executive Director
Open Government Partnership Support Unit

Dear Ms. Frey:

The United States (U.S.) hereby seeks re-election to the Steering Committee of the Open Government Partnership (OGP). With OGP's rapid growth to 64 countries, and the adoption of the new Four-Year Strategy, the United States believes the partnership is at an important crossroads. The United States envisions continuing our leadership in OGP, particularly toward reducing corruption, supporting civic engagement and creating a more enfranchised citizenry. We also look forward to working with other Steering Committee members to further refine the OGP's ability to identify, convey, and augment its impact. We look forward to supporting Mexico during its co-chair year, and its vision of building a global network of change agents and making OGP more inclusive of the range of civil society actors.

The United States is a champion of the idea, embodied in OGP, that multi-stakeholder partnerships are key tools for addressing today's global challenges. We bring substantial experience in building effective, results-focused partnerships. We also bring the ability to leverage our global diplomatic reach with significant technical resources and expertise, to convene others and inspire joint action; and to lead by example through robust, innovative action at home. We remain vested in ensuring the success of this initiative as a founding member of OGP, which is rooted in our core national values; we are committed to optimizing the OGP as a unique vehicle for advancing more open and sustainable governance worldwide.

The Obama Administration has demonstrated a strong commitment to open government from its first day in office, with a Memorandum on Transparency and Open Government calling for new measures to promote transparency, participation and collaboration. The December 2009 Open Government Directive instructs agencies to establish long-term goals involving greater openness and transparency through the preparation of biannual Open Government Plans. Since President Obama helped launch OGP at the 2011 UN General Assembly, we have developed our OGP National Action Plans (NAPs) through extensive stakeholder consultations. Our first NAP included 26 concrete open-government initiatives. The second NAP, issued last December, includes ambitious flagship commitments on Open Data, Freedom of Information, and Fiscal Transparency.

The U.S. has maintained or improved its eligibility score since we first joined OGP, and published all required documents in a timely fashion. We have been an active participant in all Steering Committee meetings, as well as in the Criteria and Standards Subcommittee. We contributed \$200,000 to the Support Unit's financial needs in FY 2012, and committed \$350,000 in both FY 2013 and 2014.

The U.S. has been a global leader in supporting implementation of the OGP and advancing its values and principles through a wide range of programs and partnerships. For example, the United States launched a \$55 million Grand Challenge for Development, "Making All Voices

Count" (MAVC), in partnership with other donors in late 2012. MAVC recently conducted a Global Innovation Competition, which awarded entries from Indonesia and South Africa for innovations to increase citizen engagement and improve government responsiveness. The U.S. has provided over \$16 million to support OGP implementation in Liberia, Indonesia and Georgia, and a further \$1.5 million to work with the United Kingdom, Germany, Spain and Italy through the OECD to promote open governance and anti-corruption in Arab countries engaged in democratic transitions, helping Tunisia join OGP on the anniversary of its Arab Spring revolution, and assisting Morocco in coming closer to OGP eligibility. We also assisted Sierra Leone implement a robust citizen engagement process in developing its first NAP.

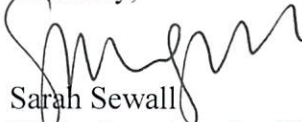
Our diplomatic efforts leverage our technical assistance, and help elevate OGP globally. In the past few months, we have helped the Support Unit and Civil Society Coordinator reach out with respect to OGP implementation or leadership in at least ten countries. We are working with Indonesia and Mexico to plan an OGP side event for heads of state at the U.N. General Assembly meeting, and are developing an OGP side event at the upcoming U.S.-Africa Leaders' Summit that will highlight successes and encourage more robust implementation of OGP commitments. We are also leading efforts to deepen OGP's reach to the full range of interested stakeholders, having spearheaded the creation of the Council on Private Sector Engagement and supported efforts to engage a wider range of sector-focused civil society organizations.

As Under Secretary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights, I will represent the United States at the Ministerial level. Lawrence Sperling, Senior Advisor in my Office, will be the point of contact (POC) (sperlingli@state.gov; 202-736-7626). We work closely within the U.S. government with Gayle Smith, Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director and Corinne Graff (Corinne_A_Graff@nss.eop.gov) of the National Security Council; Nick Sinai, U.S. Deputy CTO (nsinai@ostp.eop.gov) and Corinna Zarek (czarek@ostp.eop.gov) of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP); and with U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) on issues involving foreign assistance (POC: Victoria Ayer: vayer@usaid.gov).

In addition, a growing network of public servants supports U.S. leadership in OGP. Nearly 100 federal agencies contribute to domestic NAP implementation. State's Bureaus of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, International Narcotics and Law Enforcement, and International Organizations, the Office of the Legal Advisor, six Regional Bureaus, U.S. Embassies in 63 OGP countries, their counterparts in USAID Bureaus and Missions, the Millennium Challenge Corporation and others provide diplomatic and technical support to help others implement OGP.

I look forward to our continued collaboration with all OGP participants and stakeholders, as we build OGP into an ever more effective, innovative partnership for transformational change.

Sincerely,



Sarah Sewall
Under Secretary for Civilian Security,
Democracy and Human Rights