



September 27, 2016

Mr. Braam Hanekom
Board Member
PASSOP
Tulbagh Centre Building, 4th Floor
3 Hans Strijdom Avenue Lane
Cape Town 8000 South Africa

Dear Mr. Hanekom,

On behalf of the Criteria and Standards Subcommittee, I would like to thank you for your letter dated July 26th, 2016 to the Steering Committee and Support Unit of the Open Government Partnership. The "[Policy on Upholding the Values and Principles of OGP, as articulated in the Open Government Declaration](#)" (Response Policy) was approved by the Steering Committee on September 25th, 2014 in order to safeguard the Open Government Declaration, including to protect "the ability of not-for-profit and civil society organizations to operate in ways consistent with our commitment to freedom of expression, association and opinion." Henceforth, when needed, the policy seeks to provide assistance to countries that allows them to overcome difficulties and re-establish an environment for government and civil society collaboration.

As per the terms of the Response Policy, an inquiry into whether an OGP participating country is acting in a manner that undermines OGP values and principles can be triggered by:

- 1. A Steering Committee member – government or civil society – brings to the attention of the chair of Criteria and Standards concerns, including details on which country and why.*
- 2. One of the official OGP multilateral partners or Working Group co-anchors brings to the attention of the OGP Steering Committee or Support Unit concerns, including details on which country and why.*
- 3. The OGP Steering Committee or Support Unit receives a letter of concern from a civil society, not-for-profit organization, or media organization involved in OGP at the national or international level, including details on which country and why.*

The Criteria and Standards Subcommittee of OGP met in New York City on September 20th, 2016 and came to the following conclusions regarding your letter:

1. The Subcommittee reiterates its commitment to contribute to protect civic space in OGP participating countries, as there cannot be a truly open government without freedom of speech, association or opinion. The Response Policy has shown its value in this regard over the last two years.

2. The Subcommittee is dedicated to ensuring that the current Response Policy adheres to the principles enshrined in the Articles of Governance and its procedures and protocols. It is important that the application of the Response Policy closely follows firmly established processes, rules and mandates and is seen as consistent, fair and trustworthy.
3. The Subcommittee has concluded that the information provided does not indicate this letter has been filed by an organization or individual which falls under any of the categories considered by the Response Policy. There is no evidence to suggest that the Alternative Information Center (AIC) has been involved in the OGP process at the national level in Israel or at the international level. Furthermore, the information provided does not indicate that PASSOP has a direct link with the OGP process in Israel.
4. The Subcommittee acknowledges receiving additional letters of support by Ronnie Kasrils dated September 11th, 2016 and "Boycott! Supporting the Palestinian BDS Call from Within," dated September 9th, 2016. However, as with the previous case, there is no evidence to suggest that they have been involved in the OGP process at the national level in Israel or in their international work.
5. The Subcommittee therefore has concluded that this letter is not in the scope of the Policy on Upholding the Values and Principles of OGP, as articulated in the Open Government Declaration, and will not trigger an inquiry at this time. This decision is no reflection on the merit or otherwise of your letter of concern.

Yours sincerely,



Sanjay Pradhan

Chief Executive Officer

Open Government Partnership