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Report on Problematical Exceptions to Transparency at the IFIs

In recent years, the openness of international financial institutions (IFIs) has improved considerably. An ongoing problem area, however, is the overbroad regimes of exceptions in IFI transparency policies and, in particular, the exceptions relating to internal deliberations and third-party commercial information. A new report by CLD – *Openness Policies of the International Financial Institutions: Failing to Make the Grade with Exceptions* – examines how these exceptions are dealt with at the national level, contrasting that with the much more secretive approach of the IFIs.

The report, which CLD produced as a member of the Global Transparency Initiative (GTI), explores in detail the way each of the two exceptions have been interpreted at the national level in better practice jurisdictions. It then contrasts this with the policies of the IFIs, thereby highlighting how the IFI approach is in almost every case overly broad, often by a wide margin. The GTI has always maintained that the IFIs, as organisations which are supported by public money and which perform public functions, are subject to the same disclosure obligations under international law as other public authorities.

“The GTI has had enormous success in advocating for stronger transparency policies at the IFIs,” said Toby Mendel, Executive Director of the Centre for Law and Democracy. *“These two exceptions are among the most significant remaining obstacles in these policies to openness. We hope that by demonstrating how they are approached at the national level we can help convince IFIs to narrow them down.”*

CLD intends to distribute copies of the report widely among key stakeholders, including to representatives of the IFIs themselves. We aim to follow this up, working with the GTI, with a process of policy dialogue around these exceptions with the IFIs in the hope of spurring a change in policy.

An electronic copy of the report is available at: <http://www.law-democracy.org/?p=1575>

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