



17 September 2013: For immediate release

Canada: Contribution to Review of the OGP Action Plan

The [Open Government Partnership](#) (OGP) is a global initiative to promote greater transparency, participation and accountability in government founded by Presidents Obama of the United States and Rousseff of Brazil. Member countries must meet minimum openness standards and pledge to make further commitments to openness. Having presented its first Action Plan in April 2012, setting out the key actions it will undertake to promote open government, Canada's government is now preparing an implementation report on the Action Plan for formal review by the OGP. The Centre for Law and Democracy has submitted a Progress Report as part of this process.

"We very much welcome Canada's active participation in the OGP and the fact that it has largely delivered on its Action Plan commitments," said CLD Executive Director, Toby Mendel. *"However, the process of consultation around the development and implementation of the Action Plan was weak, and the specific commitments can only be described as modest."*

OGP Members pledge to consult widely with local stakeholders to develop action plans which set out the specific actions they propose to undertake. The process of consultation on Canada's Action Plan was limited, involving an online commenting process, a Twitter town hall and one meeting of the Advisory Panel, a multi-stakeholder body set up by the government. At no point in the consultations did the government publish a draft Plan for comment.

In terms of substance, the Action Plan contains 12 specific commitments, and the government has largely moved forward to implement them in line with the timetable it set for itself. However, the commitments are modest, with a strong focus on technology and posting more information online, and relatively relaxed time lines for implementation. Importantly, the Plan fails to make a commitment to reform the Access to Information Act, despite the fact almost all informed observers agree this is a key priority.

CLD calls on the government to undertake robust consultations as it develops its implementation report to the OGP and again when it develops its second action plan, due in March 2014. We also call on the government to ensure that the second action plan is far more ambitious than the current one.

The Progress Review is available at: <http://www.law-democracy.org/live/cld-contributes-to-canadas-ogp-consultation/>.

For further information, please contact:

Toby Mendel
Executive Director
Centre for Law and Democracy
Email: toby@law-democracy.org
Tel: +1 902 412 0872
www.law-democracy.org
Twitter: [@law_democracy](https://twitter.com/law_democracy)