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Asian Infrastructure Bank: Access to Information Policy Weak

The Centre for Law and Democracy (CLD) and the Bank Information Center (BIC) have jointly prepared Comments on the Public Information Interim Policy of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) in preparation for the first annual review of the Policy, due in January 2017. The analysis shows that the AIIB is lagging behind other international financial institutions (IFIs) when it comes to information disclosure.

“It is positive that the AIIB adopted an Interim Policy on information soon after it was created”, said Toby Mendel, Executive Director of CLD. *“But as we approach the first anniversary of that Policy it is time for the AIIB to significantly upgrade its commitments in this area.”*

Some of the key problems with the Interim Policy, as outlined in the Comments, are:

- The scope of proactive publication commitments lags far behind better practice IFIs.
- The regime of exceptions is vastly overbroad, including many open-ended exceptions, lacking harm tests in many cases and failing to provide for any public interest override.
- The failure of the AIIB to adopt guidelines on implementation means that the Interim Policy lacks almost any procedural rules governing the processing of requests.
- Unlike many IFIs, there is no provision for an appeal to an independent oversight body.
- As a matter of practice, the AIIB has on at least some occasions failed to process requests for information.

CLD calls on AIIB to undertake a wide-ranging consultation on the Interim Policy as part of its first annual review and then to introduce major changes so as to bring the rules more into line with the practice of other IFIs.

The Comments are available at: www.law-democracy.org/live/asian-infrastructure-bank-access-to-information-policy-weak/.

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