

Dear Mr. Minister:

I am pleased to inform you that President Obama, together with Brazilian President Rousseff, will host the official launch of the Open Government Partnership (OGP) on September 20 in New York, on the margins of the 66th UN General Assembly.

The OGP is an idea whose time has come. Citizens want more transparent, effective, and accountable government - with institutions that empower people and are responsive to their aspirations. When governments are more open and responsive, they are better able to harness the talents and resources of their people to support economic growth and broaden prosperity and opportunity.

The OGP provides a platform for countries to stand together - and with civil society and the private sector - as we take action to address important challenges of governance in the 21st century. I encourage you to take the necessary steps and signal your intent to join the OGP.

On the afternoon of September 20, President Obama and President Rousseff, together with the other governments on the steering committee (Indonesia, Mexico, Norway, Philippines, South Africa, and the United Kingdom), will embrace an Open Government Declaration and announce concrete action plans for putting open government principles into practice. We also will welcome a new set of countries that commit to join the OGP and develop action plans by March 2012.

Heads of state of countries that commit to joining the Partnership will be invited to join President Obama and President Rousseff for the formal launch on September 20.

Our embassy officials are prepared to answer your questions about OGP as well as open to hearing your ideas about how your government can contribute to this important initiative.

I hope that your government will join us in this effort and be a part of the launch on September 20.

Sincerely yours,

Hillary Rodham Clinton

The Rt Hon Francis Maude MP

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Senator Bob Carr
Australian Foreign Secretary

16 January 2013

Dear Senator Carr,

At the end of last year I had a successful trip to Australia and New Zealand, to share lessons about civil service reform and efficiency and reform in the public sector, both of which are significant areas of my portfolio.

I also had numerous discussions about transparency and open government, which I am responsible for in the UK, particularly in the context of our co-chairmanship of the Open Government Partnership (OGP). I had some fascinating conversations with Senator Kim Carr and some civil society organisations during my trip and was impressed by the developments in transparency and open government that you've made in Australia. I hope to draw on these examples to further our thinking in the UK and that, in turn, UK developments such as the Open Data Institute can provide interesting stimulus for thinking in Australia. This is exactly the kind of peer to peer exchange that we are championing through the OGP, where we've seen successful shared learning and a 'race to the top' drive increased transparency in participating governments.

We want to see global improvements in transparency, which we believe will help communities and businesses to flourish – and we're hoping to achieve this through the transparency theme running through our G8 presidency this year, and through the increasing influence of the OGP during our co-chairmanship in 2013. I understand that the OGP is due to be discussed during this week's AUKMIN meeting. I very much hope that you will consider whether Australia can sign up to the OGP this year – I believe that the partnership would see some great benefits from Australian involvement, and that Australia, along with existing OGP participants, has much to gain from progressing the objectives of the initiative.

FRANCIS MAUDE

