



PRESS RELEASE
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Tanzania and Kenya to commit to be more open to citizens

The governments of Tanzania and Kenya will join over 40 other countries in pledging to be more open to their citizens, by signing on to the Open Government Partnership at a high level event on Tuesday 20 September, 2011.

President Barack Obama of the United States and President Dilma Rousseff of Brazil will host the launch of the Open Government Partnership (OGP) in New York. Both Presidents Kikwete and Kibaki are expected to be in New York at the time of the launch for the UN General Assembly.

The OGP is a new international initiative aimed at securing concrete commitments from governments, in partnership with civil society, to promote transparency, increase civic participation, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance.

OGP is overseen by a steering committee co-chaired by the United States and Brazil, and which includes 15 other founding governments and civil society organizations, including Twaweza – an East Africa wide citizen agency and public accountability initiative, and the Kenya based Africa Centre for Open Governance (Africog). Twaweza's head Rakesh Rajani and Africog's executive director Gladwell Otieno will be at the launch.

"This is a powerful opportunity for governments to be more transparent and responsive to citizens," noted Rajani, "and in the process build trust, strengthen legitimacy and involve citizens in solving persistent development problems".

At the OGP launch, the founding governments - Brazil, Indonesia, Mexico, Norway, Philippines, South Africa, United Kingdom, and the United States - will endorse an Open Government Declaration and announce concrete national action plans.

The founding governments will also welcome the commitment of a large number of governments, including Tanzania and Kenya, to join OGP and to deliver their action plans in March 2012 in Brazil. Uganda had sent a high level delegation to the pre-launch meeting in July, but has apparently declined to join the partnership. The other African governments to join OGP this September are South Africa, Liberia and Ghana.

The event will be live streamed on September 20 at www.whitehouse.gov/live starting at about 2100 (9pm) East African time. More information can be found at www.opengovpartnership.org.

Signed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph Ngwegwe".

Joseph Ngwegwe
Program Manager, Twaweza Tanzania

A handwritten signature in red ink, appearing to read "James Nduko".

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