

## **Statement on future of EITI in Azerbaijan**

Azerbaijan was one of the countries that achieved a lot of “firsts” in EITI. It was the first country to join the EITI and support the international efforts for higher transparency in the extractive industries in 2003. It was the first country to publish the world’s first EITI Report in 2005 and the first Compliant EITI country in 2009.

From the very beginning the government of Azerbaijan was strongly committed to the EITI and its principles, and constantly took steps to underpin positive environment for the smooth implementation of the Initiative. Azerbaijan was able to make difference in each EITI report since then by putting multi-stakeholder efforts together to advance the process as much as possible. In total 20 EITI reports were reconciled and disclosed in Azerbaijan (2003-2015).

The State Oil Fund of the Republic of Azerbaijan for the successful implementation of EITI became a winner of the 2007 United Nations Public Service Award in the category of "Improving transparency, accountability and responsiveness in the Public Service".

In order to give a strong backing to EITI process and rise it’s momentum at the international level the Government of Azerbaijan initiated and tabled United Nations General Assembly Resolution on EITI, which on 11 September, 2008 was adopted by consensus.

At its latest meeting in Astana the Board agreed that Azerbaijan had made meaningful progress in implementing the 2016 EITI Standard, and with considerable improvements across several individual requirements compared to the first Validation in 2015. According to the decision of the Board Azerbaijan maintained its “Candidate” status. The Board assigned a number of new corrective actions to be implemented till the next EITI Board meeting.

We strongly believe that as a result of significant changes made to the current regulations Azerbaijan was able to accomplish the implementation of all corrective actions. We consider Board’s decision on suspension of Azerbaijan as an unfair one. The mandate of the EITI has been significantly shifted far from transparency and accountability in extractive sectors. The irrelevant facts introduced by different advocacy groups on various occasions show that the Initiative failed to stick to its original mission and objectives.

In 2003 Azerbaijan has signed up to the principles of revenue transparency and revenue governance and remains strongly committed to those principles of good governance, transparency and accountability in extractive industries. Azerbaijan will continue to disclose all the information related to revenues received from extractive industries to the full extent. However, it is with a deep regret I have to officially announce that Azerbaijan is leaving EITI. I kindly ask the International Secretariat to remove Azerbaijan from the list of EITI implementing countries effective immediately. I wish you all success in your future endeavours.