

**February 7, 2017**

**Article 19  
Free Word Centre  
60 Farringdon Road  
London EC1R 3GA  
United Kingdom**

**Human rights watch  
350 Fifth Avenue  
New York, NY 10118-3299  
USA**

**International Media Support (IMS)  
Nørregade 18  
1165 Copenhagen K  
Denmark**

Dear Sirs,

In reference to your letter dated February 6, 2017, the EITI government Commission (thereinafter- Commission) hereby states that the ongoing situation within NGO Coalition for Improving Transparency in Extractive Industries (thereinafter- Coalition) directly impacts operations of the Multi-stakeholder Group (MSG) and delays EITI implementation process in the country. The 1.4.3 provision of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by three EITI parties concludes that "Any position expressed by a member of the MSG is considered to be the position of the relevant Party. Therefore, prior to the meeting, the members of MSG should seek to reach an agreement on the issue with the Party that they represent". Majority of Coalition members raised claims that this particular provision of the MoU is not met and newly appointed MSG members from Coalition are not in capacity and in interest to represent the whole Coalition. Consequently, the views of those members does not reflect the stance of the Coalition.

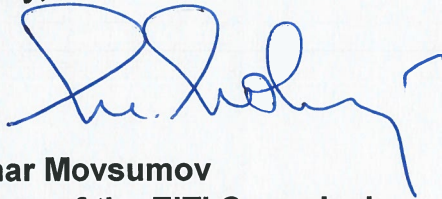
It is a fact that a serious divergence among Coalition members remains, as substantial group of people from Coalition does not trust the current Council and newly appointed MSG members from Coalition. This internal crisis was brought to the agenda of the MSG after Coalition's new appointment to the MSG. The Commission heard different voices mainly stating that both Council and appointed MSG members can not by any means represent the whole Coalition. The Commission therefore ensured full participation of newly appointed MSG members and opposite side's members at the MSG meeting on February 2 with respect to EITI Standard requirement 1.3.b which states "The fundamental rights of civil society substantively engaged in the EITI, including but not restricted to members of the multi-stakeholder group, must be respected".

Ensuring that the relevant requirements of the EITI Standard which are also stressed out in your letter and provisions of Civil Society Protocol are met, the Commission invited all Coalition members, including newly appointed MSG members to independently and freely discuss the matter of concern. The invitation was openly sent to all members of the Coalition and the meeting was held with the participation of around 60 Coalition members. The aim of this general meeting was to provide Coalition members with a neutral platform for open dialog. This attempt of the Commission is purely compliant with the 1.3.c requirement of the EITI Standard which says that "The government must ensure that there are no obstacles to civil society participation in the EITI process" and relevant provisions of Civil Society Protocol and in no way should be accepted as an intervention to Coalition's internal issues or coercion towards Coalition members.

The Commission restates that as per EITI Standard and given the current circumstances it is important to ensure that all different voices of the Coalition are heard and all views are represented in the MSG highlighting the significance of equal approach and pluaristic representation.

We call the members of the Coalition to agree as soon as possible a way forward. We all need to have a strong representation of the civil society at the MSG in order to continue successfully implementing EITI in Azerbaijan.

Sincerely,



**Shahmar Movsumov**  
**Chairman of the EITI Commission**

**CC: EITI Secretariat, Board members**