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July 11, 2019

Alex Neve
Secretary General Amnesty International Canada
312 Laurier Avenue East
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 1H9

Jackie King
Chief Operating Officer Canadian Chamber of Commerce
1700-275 Slater Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5H9

Dear Mr. Neve and Ms. King,

I am writing to you in your capacity as Vice-Chairs of the Multi-Stakeholder Advisory Body on Responsible Business Conduct Abroad (Advisory Body) on behalf of Jean Symes to tender her resignation as alternate member from the Multi-Stakeholder Advisory Body on Responsible Business Conduct Abroad (Advisory Body), effective immediately.

Inter Pares has been engaged in strategizing and advocating for an independent ombudsperson for over a decade. During that time, thousands of our supporters have spoken up on behalf of communities in the Global South suffering from human rights abuses associated with Canadian companies. In April of this year, we were beyond dismayed when the federal government reneged on its promise and commitment to install an Ombudsperson with robust powers to investigate abuses and redress the human rights violations associated with Canadian corporations operating abroad. We stand firmly by our call that an effective Ombudsperson must be arms-length from government, and have the power to order those under investigation to produce documents and testimony under oath.

We took on the position as alternate member to the Advisory Body with the expectation that it would prove to be a productive forum of mutual trust and collaboration to provide advice to the Minister of International Trade and Global Affairs Canada on matters related to business and human rights. As expressed in the Advisory Body's Operating Procedures, acting in good faith in all aspects of the process is essential to the functioning of the Advisory Body.

The federal government's backtracking on commitments made in the January 2018 announcement of the Canadian Ombudsperson for Responsible Enterprise (CORE) has amounted to a betrayal of trust, erosion of confidence, and belief that the government has not acted in good faith during consultations on this topic.

In this context, Jean Symes has lost faith in the ability of the Advisory Body to function as originally envisioned and in accordance with its agreed-upon terms of reference. As such, I am writing on Jean Symes' behalf to offer her resignation as alternate member of the Advisory Body.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Samantha McGowan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

per Jean Symes, Inter Pares

Cc: The Honourable Jim Carr, Minister of International Trade Diversification
Chris Moran, Director General Trade Strategy and Portfolio Coordination, GAC