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### **Gabon Government Lifts Suspension of NGOs**

Publish What You Pay (PWYP), the global civil society coalition campaigning for more transparent management of oil, gas and mining revenues, welcomes the decision by the government of Gabon last night to lift [the suspension of 22 Gabonese non-governmental organisations \(NGOs\)](#), including the groups that comprise the PWYP Gabon coalition. With the suspension lifted exactly one week after it was announced, the NGOs are free to resume their activities without restriction.

“This is a major victory for civil society in Gabon and affirms our ability to operate freely and speak out on public interest issues, such as how oil and mining revenues are managed,” said Marc Ona, President of Brainforest, one of the previously suspended Gabonese NGOs, and Coordinator of PWYP Gabon. “It also sets a powerful precedent for civil society in other countries to similarly work without interference or harassment from the government.”

The lifting of the suspension followed PWYP’s widespread efforts over the past week to gain support for the Gabonese NGOs from the international community, in particular governments and institutions promoting transparency and good governance. The suspension was incompatible with Gabon’s membership in the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), the global initiative for disclosure of company payments and government revenues from oil, gas and mining. The participation of independent civil society is a fundamental component of the multi-stakeholder nature of the EITI, which champions dialogue between governments, industry, and civil society.

“This is a welcome recognition of the important role of civil society in fostering public debate about the fair and transparent management of natural resource revenues,” said Radhika Sarin, International Coordinator of PWYP. “Gabon and all other governments committed to the EITI should lead the way in working openly with civil society and companies towards ensuring that these revenues are used for the social and economic benefit of the public.”

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