

Publish What You Pay Press Release

PWYP welcomes civil society's decision to re-enter EITI process in Niger

London, 30 September 2009: Publish What You Pay* welcomes the recent decision of the civil society representatives sitting on the national Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI)** multistakeholder group to **resume** their participation in the EITI process in Niger.

The decision was taken on 28 September 2009 following the provisional release on 15 September of Marou Amadou***, president of the United Front for the Safeguard of Democratic Assets (FUSAD), and member of ROTAB/PWYP Niger.

Mr Amadou was arrested on 10 August as part of a campaign of harassment and repression of civil society leaders including those campaigning for transparency and accountability in the natural resource sector.

As a result, on 16 August civil society representatives on the national EITI multistakeholder group decided unanimously to suspend their participation in the national EITI process 'until further notice' and denounced the rapid deterioration in the security and human rights of civil society activists. Wada Maman, one of the six civil society members on Niger's EITI multistakeholder group was also arrested on 22 August. He was provisionally released on 26 August following widespread protests over his arbitrary detention.

In their statement, the civil society representatives reiterated their commitment to the full implementation of EITI in Niger and to resuming dialogue with government authorities. They also called on the Nigerien authorities to respect the human rights and freedom of association of civil society activists.

PWYP calls for all pending charges against Mr Amadou and Mr Wada to be dropped and for the Nigerien authorities to ensure a minimum guarantee of safety and an end to all forms of harassment and repression of civil society. PWYP will continue to monitor developments in Niger and to call for free and independent participation of Nigerien civil society in the EITI process, in accordance with the initiative's principles and rules.

Notes:

* Publish What You Pay (PWYP) is a global civil society coalition with over 300 member groups working across 70 countries who work together for greater transparency in the oil, gas and mining industries.

** The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) is a global multi-stakeholder 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 multistakeholder nature of the EITI. Niger joined EITI in 2005 and has a deadline of 9 March 2010 to become fully compliant with the initiative.

*** For details on Marou Amadou's arrest, see
<http://www.publishwhatyoupay.org/en/category/countriesregions/niger>

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