

ANNEX C2: Initiating dialogue: Sample letter to businesses and business associations

This is an example of a letter that could be sent by a high-ranking government official to initiate the process of public private dialogue.

[*Official stationary*]

From: [*Name of Government Official*]

[Date]

To: [*Name of recipient(s)*]

Dear friend,

The government of [*name of country/region*] is committed to promoting the development of the private sector in [*name of country/region*]. More investment means more jobs and prosperity for the [*country/region*] and each of our citizens.

As a representative of the business community of this [*country/region*], you know first hand the issues that the private business faces in its daily commercial dealings. Starting and running a company is a hard thing to do, that demands courage and tenacity. I commend you for that. I also want you to know that the government is committed to ensure that entrepreneurs like you evolve in the best business environment possible.

To that effect, and to make sure that our policies and regulations take the views of the private sector into account, I would like to invite you to engage with your colleagues – other entrepreneurs, business associations and constructive business advocates – and provide us with your insights.

I suggest that you and your colleagues organize yourself in the manner you will find most constructive and representative, and constitute yourself as an ad-hoc private sector group. This group should be representative and include business advocates from various industries and regions. After your own internal consultation process, I would like to receive, in the form a document addressed to me, and before the end of [*insert deadline*], your single-voice insights on the following five topics:

- [*For example:*] Investment facilitation
- Registration and licensing
- Customs and Trade
- Standards and certifications
- Business and commercial legislation
- [*Other examples of pressing issues*]

The input the government is seeking is not a list of grievances and problems regarding the above matters, but rather a list of possible legal, institutional or technical solutions to specific issues in each of these areas, together with an explanation for why they are needed and how they could be implemented.

I suggest that each of the final recommendation of the private sector group include the following:

- What is the issue at stake? (Keeping in mind that issues at stake should be described in a coherent, fair and objective and non-partisan manner).
- Why is it a roadblock to private sector development? (Elaborating on the negative effects of the current situation and describing such effects with specific examples).
- What is the proposal for a solution? (Insisting on the benefits of such solution, but also taking into account the risks and costs of the chosen option).
- What are specific action items for the public authorities? (Defining what specific article of what law needs to be amended and how, what rule book or bylaws need to be modified to ensure better implementation, what institutional steps could the government take to resolve such matter, or any other action the private sector deems appropriate.)

Let me stress that we intend to consider your recommendations. It does not mean that we guarantee we will act on all your insights. But we will give a very serious consideration to your input, especially if proposals are presented with a sound cost/benefit analysis, if they make economic sense for the businesses of this country, and if they match international best practice.

If the private sector feels the need for facilitation of this process, I would suggest that [insert name of willing donor agency] could provide facilitation assistance throughout.

I know how important to you is the topic of private sector development for [name of country/region]. I hope that you will be able to contribute to its improvement by participating and leading the process mentioned in this letter. My office is available to you for further information.

Sincerely,

[*Signature*]

[*Name*]

[*Title*]

Copy: [*List of Private Sector Representatives*]
[*List of copied government officials*]