



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL GEORGIA CALLS ON UNITED NATIONS AND DONORS TO OPEN DOORS TO AID MEETING

Tbilisi, 26 February 2009 – Transparency International Georgia today called on the United Nations and donors to grant independent observers access to an aid meeting in the capital of Georgia this Friday. United Nations representatives will use this meeting to advise international donors on how best to spend around one billion dollars in aid that were pledged at the donor conference in Brussels last October, but so far have not been allocated to any specific purpose.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has refused requests by TI Georgia to allow the anti-corruption organization and other Georgian watchdog groups to observe proceedings at the meeting.

“Discussions about how aid money should be spent should not be conducted behind closed doors,” said Ms Tamuna Karosanidze, Executive Director of Tbilisi-based TI Georgia, “Aid money is public money. Both taxpayers in donor nations and Georgian citizens have a right to know what is being discussed and decided in their name.” OCHA has not explained to TI Georgia why the meeting is to be placed above public scrutiny.

TI Georgia called on donors and the United Nations to abide by their commitments made in the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, and during the 2008 High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Accra, Ghana, where representatives recognized that ‘transparency and accountability are essential elements for development results’.

“International donors should not set a bad example for the Georgian government to follow,” Ms Karosanidze concluded. “As the first link in the aid chain, donors must assume the leading role in ensuring that the decisions on these huge sums are made transparently and that these sums are spent accountably, so that the money reaches those most in need.”

Please direct all enquiries and comments to:

Ms Tamuna Karosanidze
Executive Director, TI Georgia
tamuna@transparency.ge
Tel: (+995 32) 92 14 03 or 99 93 35

To access publications from TI Georgia’s previous aid monitoring and advocacy work, please visit: www.transparency.ge. To subscribe to our future publications, please email info@transparency.ge.

Transparency International Georgia has been working to combat corruption, improve governance and strengthen democracy in Georgia since 2000. TI Georgia is a non-profit, non-partisan organization legally registered in Tbilisi. As a national chapter of Transparency International, TI Georgia is an independent organization. It has no financial ties or reporting lines to the international secretariat in Berlin, but TI Georgia is able to draw on the secretariat’s experience and expertise in combating corruption worldwide.