

**RAI Kickstart Meeting
March 17, 2015
PSM Statement**

Thank you Madame Chairperson,

The RAI guidelines offer important guidance to companies engaged in agriculture at local, national and international level. Private sector firms of all sizes are already engaged in responsible corporate practices related to agricultural investments and the guidelines will offer a helpful framework for their work.

It is important that as we move to operationalize the guidelines, we should emphasise their role as a means to enhance and attract investment, both foreign and domestic. The private sector is already the biggest engine of poverty reduction and economic growth in the developing world. On average, business provides 60% of GDP, 80% of capital flows and 90% of jobs in developing countries. It is the major source of the US\$1 trillion a year needed to finance development

To help leverage this potential, governments must prioritize creating stable, predictable and transparent regulatory frameworks and legal systems to attract sustainable investments in agriculture.

Many companies have already started to review the principles in the context of existing reporting mechanisms and relevant laws and are willing to examine how the principles may work in practice, with a view to operationalizing them.

To ensure investment in agriculture support food security and development, all stakeholders need to work together collaboratively. Investments should help foster choices among consumers and producers. This will require a variety of activities and partnerships inspired by the principles.

As we look to specific activities in the coming year or two of implementation, we would like to call for the following:

- 1) Active support of the CFS bureau and secretariat to prepare a PowerPoint presentation that can be used to outline the RAI and to assist all stakeholders in increasing awareness of the principles over the next 24 months. We are ready to assist in high profile events and trainings, and awareness raising (for example media outreach).
- 2) Consideration of one or more pilot projects with businesses to test the implementation of the principles “on the ground”. The PSM has already found companies willing to volunteer for this. A possible means to conduct this work is the team at UNCTAD, IFAD, World Bank, and FAO.
- 3) We need to consolidate processes. The PSM believes the CFS has the leadership role in this area and notes with concern the continued proliferation of processes and guidelines at OECD, among civil society, and others. We encourage a consideration of clarity on who is doing guidelines and variations and to encourage coherence. We suggest a work group be set up on the topic of coherence of the principles with other processes.

We stand ready to help in all matters Madame Chairperson.