

19 June 2017

Dear PM&C

I wish to nominate for one of the civil society positions on Australia's Open Government Forum.

I am a former federal Member of Parliament who retired from parliament in 2016 after 9 years representing the constituency of Fremantle in Western Australia. Prior to that, I worked as a lawyer with the United Nations for 8 years in Kosovo, Gaza, Lebanon and New York.

As a three-time elected member of parliament, I demonstrated the ability to engage broad and diverse community networks. I also had experience of working with and influencing government, including as the Minister for International Development, and the Parliamentary Secretary for Mental Health, Homelessness and Social Housing.

Good governance was one of the three main areas of interest I highlighted in my first speech to parliament. My parliamentary work included advocating strongly for legal and policy reform on whistleblower protection, freedom of information, increased transparency and accountability for the public sector, including members of parliament, and for Australia to join the Open Government Partnership. I am deeply committed to OGP's vision and the Open Government Declaration.

I retained a keen interest in international affairs and policy, serving on the Joint Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade committee, the Joint Human Rights Committee and the Joint Treaties committee for most of my time in parliament, as well as being the founder and chair of the Australia-United Nations Parliamentary Group and Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA), Australia branch.

I was also Chair of the Joint Statutory Committee on the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity for five years and took an active interest in the work of GOPAC, the Global Organisation of Parliamentarians Against Corruption. In 2013 I led a delegation of Australian parliamentarians (including the now President of the Senate, Hon Stephen Parry) to the GOPAC annual conference in Manila.

In December 2013 I had the honour of being presented by the Former Chief Justice of the High Court, The Hon Sir Gerard Brennan, with a parliamentary integrity award (jointly with the Hon Judi Moylan), only awarded by the Accountability Round Table every 3 years.

My abiding interest in integrity and good governance was the reason I was tasked by the UN Under Secretary-General (Management), at UNHQ New York in 2005-2006, with planning, advocating for, and establishing the new UN Ethics Office, with responsibilities for whistleblower protection, financial disclosure for senior officials, codes of conduct, advice and standard-setting. Clearly, if the United Nations was to be able to effectively promote to member States the UN Convention Against Corruption, it needed to be able to demonstrate good practices within its own organisation.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require further information.

Kind regards,

Hon. Melissa Parke

