Dear Mr. Zuckerberg and Mr. Pichai,

In the past few years, you have pioneered important transparency tools to help your platform users understand, learn about and contextualise the political advertising they see. We agree that advertiser verification processes and ad repositories are key safeguards against online manipulation and misinformation. However, we are saddened to observe that these benefits have not been equally distributed among your global user base.

Each platform operates fluctuating and often widely differing transparency standards for different countries. While some users benefit from seeing political advertising in an ad repository, others do not. Where some users are offered detailed information about a political ad, others are not. There are no legitimate or otherwise publicly disclosed reasons justifying this difference in treatment.

The combined effect of these inconsistent policies is to create a two-tiered user base within each platform, with a wide regulatory gap separating the transparency haves and have-nots. We first highlighted these problems in 2019. While some progress has been made since, we are disappointed to conclude that the transparency divide persists.

Online transparency should not be a privilege of the few, but the right of all. To that end, the changes we believe are necessary are as follows:

- Accelerate the expansion of full transparency tools to all countries where you operate to ensure that the least favoured countries benefit from the same level of transparency as the most favoured countries
- Develop, and make public, a plan of action setting out commitments and related timescales to roll out full transparency tools globally
- Disclose the full array of criteria, both past and present, used to select countries qualifying for higher transparency standards

The above changes, which we believe to be fair and reasonable, are only a starting point to begin to correct the current platform-created inequality between users. By contrast, the benefits are conclusive: heightened transparency standards for millions of users worldwide, and increased legitimacy of online political advertising for the sake of fair and informed decision-making by voters.
We urge you to take responsibility as two of the most influential platforms in online political campaigning, and empower users and voters with heightened ads transparency.

Yours sincerely,

Access Now
Africa Freedom of Information Centre (AFiC)
Aliansi Jurnalis Independen/Alliance of Independent Journalists (AJI)
Amnesty International
ApTI
Article 19
Articulo 19 México y Centroamérica
Asociación Derechos Civiles
Asociación para una Ciudadania Participativa, ACI Participa
Associação Data Privacy Brasil de Pesquisa
Asociación para el Progreso de las Comunicaciones (APC)
Association for International Affairs (AMO) in Prague
Association pour le Developpement Integré et la Solidarité Interactive (ADISI-C)
Citizen D
Centre for Independent Journalism Malaysia (CIJ-M)
Collaboration on International ICT Policy for East and Southern Africa (CIPESA)
Balazs Denes, Civil Liberties Union for Europe
Bytes for All (B4A)
Intervozes - Coletivo Brasil de Comunicação Social
IPANDETEC Centroamérica
Irish Council for Civil Liberties (ICCL)
Laboratorio de Datos y Sociedad (DATYSOC)
Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA)
Media Institute of Southern Africa MISA- Zimbabwe
Media Matters for Democracy
Merit Legal Advocacy & Human Rights Initiative (MELAHRI)
OBSERVACOM
Paradigm Initiative (PIN)
Privacy International
R3D: Red en Defensa de los Derechos Digitales
SFLC.in
Stiftung Neue Verantwortung (SNV)
Sursiendo, Comunicación y Cultura Digital AC
TEDIC
The Tor Project
Unwanted Witness
Usuarios Digitales
Venezuela Inteligente
Who Targets Me
World Wide Web Foundation
Xnet