

UK National Statement ~3 minutes

Introduction

Let me start by thanking the Government of Japan for hosting this event. I am disappointed that I am not able to be with you in Kyoto but am delighted to still be able to participate virtually.

We know that criminality transcends our borders and the pandemic has shown us just how interconnected we all are. It is vital we continue to work together through global institutions like the United Nations in the face of such varied and complex threats.

In this context, I value the ability of the congress to enhance policy coherence in tackling serious and organised crime and would like to underline that the UK fully supports the review mechanism on the implementation of the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime;

We must adapt to changing threats and ensure the work we do is more effectively targeted, has greater impact and represents value for money.

Every member state has its own priorities and approach. This congress gives us that opportunity to share what we know; and reinforce our responsibilities as enshrined in the global treaties.

To those that have yet to fully sign up to those treaties: now is the time!

Policy

In the UK, we face our own challenges. I have made commitments to the British people to tackle threats from knife crime, criminal gangs, as well as cyber and terrorist threats. Like our partners, we are also tackling abhorrent practices like child sexual exploitation, human trafficking and modern slavery.

Indeed, the UK has recently published a **Tackling Child Sexual Abuse Strategy**, the first of its kind, which sets out a fresh approach to this issue, focused on the relentless pursuit of abusers and better protection for victims and survivors.

The UK has also jointly published an international statement on end-to-end encryption, which highlights significant and avoidable barriers to tech companies identifying and preventing criminal activity, and meaningfully responding to lawful requests for data. We hope to collaborate further with international partners on this issue given the severe public safety impact.

We are already working with international partners, driving coordination across the UN to fight all forms of trafficking and increase support for victims. Our efforts are supported by a £200m development commitment to address the root causes of crime that enable **modern slavery** to thrive.

Tackling **Organised Immigration Crime** remains a top priority for the UK government. The UK takes a “whole of route” approach to dismantling organised crime groups which exploit vulnerable people at all points of the migrant journey.

The UK has created “**SOCnet**”, an innovative overseas network of organised crime and illicit finance policy officers covering over 100 countries. SOCnet has facilitated joint organised crime threat assessments in Europe; supported legislative change to target illicit financial flows in the Americas; and delivered accelerated police training and crime reporting hotlines in Africa. It is a successful cooperation model that I warmly commend to other states.

Closing remarks

To conclude, let me emphasise again the UK’s unwavering commitment to confronting criminality head on. We all share the mission to protect the public.

By working closely together, we can bring perpetrators to justice, keep our countries safe and deliver improvements for law-abiding citizens.

Finally, let me express my gratitude again to my UN and Japanese colleagues for hosting this important and powerful event.