

UK National Statement COSP

Chair and distinguished delegates,

I'd firstly like to thank the United States for hosting the 10th Conference of States Parties in what is the 20th anniversary of the signing of the UN Convention Against Corruption, and to thank Egypt for their leadership over the last two years.

Recognising these significant milestones, we should reflect upon the pivotal role the Convention has played in uniting international efforts in the fight against corruption.

The UNCAC has undoubtedly been a force for good. But we, as a collective, must do better.

Corruption continues to pose a huge threat.

The United Kingdom is concerned that international efforts to tackle corruption have faltered; that despite the best efforts of many in this forum, corruption is getting worse.

Recent global events have demonstrated why it is so vital that we protect and preserve national security, international stability, our institutions and the rule of law.

We've seen Russia's continued aggression in Ukraine, and we've seen others, corrupt and oppressing their own people, using force in areas where we really need to be working together.

We must not allow hard-won agreements to be rolled back by those who do not share the same desire to strengthen our collective efforts.

The United Kingdom undoubtedly has a significant role to play in upholding the core principles of the Convention. We are proud of our global financial centre, but we also recognise that our

openness has been exploited by corrupt actors and kleptocrats to further their ends.

This is why since the last COSP, we have acted decisively to tackle our vulnerabilities through legislative forums.

Our 2022 Economic Crime Act gave us the tools to further fight corruption and illicit finance, including a new Register of Overseas Entities to crack down on foreign criminals and kleptocrats using United Kingdom property to launder money.

Our recently passed follow-up Act bears down further on those who abuse our open economy. This includes ground-breaking legal reforms to allow courts to dismiss lawsuits by corrupt actors that seek to stifle freedom of speech.

To promote transparency, which is so vital to tackling corruption, we will also continue to champion public registers of beneficial ownership and support international partners to implement these.

The United Kingdom places great importance on the recovery and return of the proceeds of corruption, and last year launched a comprehensive framework on transparent and accountable asset return.

Whilst proud of the action we have taken, we recognise that we can go further.

Our forthcoming Anti-Corruption Strategy will be underpinned by an enduring commitment to tackling corruption both at home and abroad.

This is complemented by our recent International Development White Paper, which renews our ambition to combat the role corruption and illicit finance play in hindering global development, prosperity and progress.

To further drive progress of the Convention, the UK has been working to improve our collective engagement with the Implementation Review Mechanism.

We encourage countries to approach the UK delegation this week and add their support to our initiative.

So, as we mark this anniversary, we must remain steadfast in our determination to build our collective resilience to corruption and its harms.

It's never been more important for us to fight corruption together – for our societies, for our governments, but most of all, for our people.

Thank you.