

# A cross-dimensional perspective on anti-corruption in the OSCE context: UK statement

Thank you Madam Chair,

The UK sees corruption as a complex, cross-dimensional issue, which requires a whole-of-society approach to fight, but I would like to focus my brief remarks on one topic – the media.

The media offers a key route for information about governmental activities to be disseminated, providing the public with a critical capacity to hold those in power accountable.

The OECD has declared media reporting the most important source for public awareness and the detection of corruption. But the capacity of the media to be an effective tool against corruption depends on media freedom.

The anti-corruption research centre U4 has said that when media freedom is protected, the media can fulfil at least three main functions to help counter corruption.

First, high quality investigative journalism can name and shame those representatives in public office who are either involved in corruption or help facilitate a culture of impunity, increasing the political risk of corrupt practices.

Second, when civic cynicism promotes a normalisation of corruption in people's daily experience – which can hinder attempts to counter corruption – the media can create a positive national discourse about the values of integrity, transparency and accountability. Such a discourse can both educate about the effects of corruption and show that there is a viable alternative.

And third, the media can help promote active engagement of citizens in anti-corruption efforts. Various forms of participatory and civic journalism have emerged in recent years, complementing traditional investigative media, setting alternative agendas, providing information and witness accounts from local perspectives, giving voice to marginalised groups, and documenting transgressions.

Madam Moderator, media freedom is part of strong, open societies. We have heard about the damaging effects corruption can have on a country's development. The solutions to countering corruption need to be multifaceted. But States should certainly do what they can to empower one of the strongest weapons against it – media freedom.

Thank you.