

Speech: Tackling corruption is a task for everyone

It is my pleasure to welcome you to this National Launch of the Chatham House study on the Collective Action on Corruption in Nigeria: A Social Norms Approach to Connecting Society and Institutions commissioned and funded by DFID Nigeria.

A year after the May 2016 London Anti-corruption conference, Corruption still remains one of the biggest global issues of our time.

I'm not going to make a long and detailed argument about why corruption is a bad thing. It is well known that corruption is bad for people, bad for development and bad for business; indeed the impact on business has been significant in Nigeria.

Corruption additionally fuels inequality, holds back economic development, and hurts the most vulnerable in society. In the end it is a threat to the national interests of every country.

No country is immune from corruption. Governments need to work together and work with partners from business and civil society to tackle it successfully. This is why the hugely successful London Anti-corruption Summit last year, in which Nigeria played a major and positive role, was important to galvanise global action against corruption.

The UK and Nigeria are making good and sustained progress on commitments made at the Summit. For instance, both countries recognise the value of the Open Government Partnership (OGP) in advancing transparency and good governance reform. Both have committed to reforms made together with civil society and are working with civil society to embed these commitments into National Action Plans.

Both countries are making progress on establishing beneficial ownership registers so looters can no longer, for example, use stolen funds to buy property in London and expect to keep this secret.

Why the Study on the social norms of corruption? Tackling corruption requires systems to be in place, attitudes in society attuned to the effort, and a process to investigate, prosecute and sanction. Plugging loopholes and ensuring good management systems – the prevention agenda – is important. But so is justice. I am convinced that the Nigerian people want looters to be prosecuted and, if found guilty, given long jail sentences. I am proud to say the UK supports Nigeria in all these areas.

The administration of President Muhammadu Buhari has made fighting corruption a top priority and is investing heavily in this fight. Billions of Naira have been recovered by Nigeria's anti-corruption agencies and there are many ongoing high profile investigations and prosecutions. I am sure that, like

me, many others have seen the pictures of the large amounts of cash recovered from apartment blocks and similar locations. I was particularly struck by the picture of a huge stash of cash hidden in a cellar in a slum in Kaduna – millions of dollars hidden away next to extreme poverty where children don't go to school and people are dying of disease.

These efforts to combat corruption are essential, but cannot by themselves foster a sustainable, comprehensive reversal of long-established assumptions and practices. Behavioural insights are required to enhance public policy initiatives. Institutions need to connect with society in this crucial fight.

Corruption is challenging to eradicate. Nigeria's anti-corruption efforts must be underpinned by a deeper understanding of the social drivers of corruption. There must be insights into why people engage in or refrain from corrupt activity, and the societal factors that may contribute to normalizing corrupt behaviours in the first place and desensitizing citizens to its impacts. That is why we commissioned Chatham House to conduct a study exploring social norms of corruption in Nigeria.

Chatham House Study

This Chatham House study was done in collaboration with the University of Pennsylvania's Social Norms Group, Nigeria's National Bureau of Statistics and teams from six Nigerian universities from all round the country. It provides in-depth analysis of social norms of corruption in Nigeria and puts forward options to generate action by a critical mass of local actors who want to forge a 'new normal'.

I won't reveal here all the findings of the study. You will get that shortly from the Chatham House team. Let me just say that this study shows that Nigerians – no more than any other people – are not intrinsically corrupt. It shows that people's behaviour can and will change if the environment or options change.

However it also notes that tough talk and fear-based messaging cannot substitute for authenticity and exemplary behaviour. As long as the government's interactions with citizens continue to be marred by extortionate behaviour and expectations of bribery, the state deprives itself of the moral basis to lead in addressing the corruption problem. We must all walk the talk and be seen to do so.

I believe that this study provides some new insights into corruption in Nigeria and hence some new ideas for tackling it. I hope it can generate some further momentum for change and lead to results that impact positively on the lives of all Nigerians by improving government effectiveness and the delivery of services.

Conclusion

I will end by emphasising that this issue of tackling corruption is for everyone.

I acknowledge that merely understanding the social influences of corruption

won't eradicate corruption. However, it's a crucial step in the journey of ensuring a collective action to do so. I firmly believe that, with the right effort, we can turn back the tide of corruption.

We owe this to the poorest people in the world – we owe it to ourselves. The world and our global economy can't afford not to tackle corruption.

The UK continues to stand with Nigeria in this important process

News story: UK welcomes steps towards new government in Macedonia

There has been a political crisis in Macedonia since 2015. Early elections took place in December last year, but government formation has been delayed. The decision of President Ivanov to grant a mandate to the majority government led by Zoran Zaev is an important moment for the country's democratic future.

Minister for Europe and the Americas Sir Alan Duncan said:

I welcome the decision of President Ivanov to allow the parliamentary majority led by Mr. Zaev to form a government. This is an important step forward.

The UK calls on all political leaders to work together constructively and in the interests of Macedonia and all its citizens. We stand ready to support those efforts and to support Macedonia in its EU and NATO ambitions.

News story: Our Economists talking about the exciting opportunities in the Government Economic Service

For a flavour of what you can do as an [government economist](#) , check out these great mini career stories here:

I'm currently in my first role at the Department for Transport working on rail demand forecasting. This is a technical post which requires using excel and specialist rail software and I have attended training courses to help develop my skills. What I like about the job is the constant learning and development opportunities and that every day presents unique challenges. The thing I enjoy most about my career in the GES is that I am given a lot of responsibility in my job and my colleagues always take my opinion into account. I also get the opportunity to help out others with their work, getting exposure to different areas that are outside my remit. I will be rotating in October and my aim is to move department so that I can gain more experience of different working environments and policy areas. In the long term I am interested in the opportunity to take a year out and study for a Masters, and also doing a secondment at a consultancy firm.

Christopher Page

What attracted you to the GES?

In my final year of university, I still wasn't sure what I wanted to do as a career. Despite a brief belief that I, like my peers, wanted to be an investment banker, I realised I wanted to do something that served the wider British public rather than the shareholders of a company. My tutor pointed me in the direction of the GES Fast Stream, the Bank of England, think tanks, and charities. I did research into the various sectors and decided that the GES Fast Stream was my preferred choice. It offered me the opportunity to apply everything I learned in my economics degree to everyday policy problems/solutions. I was impressed by the variety of work that was on offer, the emphasis put on development, and the level of responsibility that Fast Streamers were given.

What's the best part about working as a government economist?

I think the best part of working as a government economist is also the most daunting, which is the level of responsibility Fast Streamers are given. In my first post as an economist, I led on the economic assessment of £500m worth of government capital spending, with my line manager providing support if I needed it. I was also entrusted to lead on my teams contribution to Spending Review 15, while other colleagues were on leave. While I was initially anxious about the level of responsibility given, I found the chance to be the lead economist on these projects helped develop my analytical and soft skills.

[News story: World War 1 soldier who was killed in the Battle of the Somme finally laid to rest a century later](#)

Private Henry Parker, 5th Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment, has finally been laid to rest after he was killed in action during the Battle of the Somme on 26 September 1916, just 3 days short of his 23rd birthday. The burial, with full military honours, took place on Wednesday 17 May 2017 at the Warlencourt British Cemetery, near Arras, France.

The bearer party carrying the coffin of Private Parker in view of senior dignitaries (left to right: WO Andrew Morrison; Defence Attaché to France and Lt Col David O'Kelly), Crown Copyright, All rights reserved

The service, organised by the MOD's Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC), part of Defence Business Services, was conducted by The Reverend Jonathan Wylie CF, Chaplain to the 2nd Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment.

Beverley Simon, JCCC said:

It has been an honour for the Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre to organise today's ceremony and to ensure this brave soldier has been buried with the dignity and respect he deserves. It has been a privilege to have met Private Parker's family and to personally involve them with the planning of his burial.

The greater part of Private Parker's service was holding the frontline with his Battalion in the Ypres Salient area. It was not until August 1916 that his Battalion was redeployed from Flanders, along with the other units of the 50th (Northumbrian) Division, to the Somme. Private Parker was killed during an incremental advance towards the 'Flers' enemy trench from the 'Starfish' line on 26 September 1916. Henry's body was never recovered from the battlefield until remains were found in a farmer's field almost a century later.

The recovered cap badge belonging to Private Parker, Crown Copyright, All rights reserved

Henry's brothers James and Thomas Parker, who had both seen active service during the Great War, returned home safely.

Pat Burton, great-niece of Henry Parker said:

It is a great honour for us to be here today to pay our respects to

a Great Uncle, Private Henry Parker. We are also here to represent Hazel Ranaldi, nee Croft, the daughter of Rosina Parker who was Henry's sister.

We would like to thank the Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre of the Ministry of Defence for inviting us to the burial ceremony here in Warlencourt, and feel very humble to be part of this occasion and extremely proud of our Great Uncle.

Margaret Parker, niece of Private Parker, who was unfortunately unable to accompany the other 20 family members to the ceremony, said:

Since the news that Uncle Henry has been found, I have had the honour and privilege to not only catch up with relatives I did know but also to meet others for the first time when I went to Richmond. We have been brought together through the brave actions of Uncle Henry, who, 100 years ago, gave his life for us and all that we hold dear.

I would like to thank all who have been involved, having given time and unstinting efforts to reunite Uncle Henry with us, his family, and bring us some closure. My thoughts are with you today, when I will be in Wansford Church thinking about Uncle Henry, our family and all those who have guided and supported us on this journey. God bless you all.

In 2014, the remains of Private Parker were discovered in a farmer's field situated on the outskirts of Matinpuich, Nord-Pas-de-Calais, France. The military insignia recovered with the remains was key to the eventual identification of this soldier.

Steve Erskine, the Assistant Curator at The Green Howards Museum, responsible for extensive historical research in determining Henry's identity, along with volunteer Mike Crisp, said:

We are incredibly proud to have played our part in helping identify this member of the regimental family after so many years. What's followed has been a fascinating journey into local and family history research, capturing the interest of a range of people along the way who all want to understand more about the world in which Henry lived and the circumstances in which he died. It has been an honour to meet them all and work together to give Henry the resting place he deserves.

Having received formal notification of remains being found, the JCCC

undertook genealogy and historical research with The Green Howards Museum in an attempt to discover a potential identity. A shortlist of 12 possible names was identified and JCCC was able to trace surviving relatives of all 12 families and arrange DNA testing. In February 2017, the news came through that Francis Storry, a great-nephew of Private Parker, had been confirmed as a surviving relative and the identification of Henry Parker was confirmed.

The recovered artefacts belonging to Private Parker that led to his identification, Crown Copyright, All rights reserved

Soldiers from the Yorkshire Regiment provided the bearer party and fired a salute at the service.

Francis Storry, great-nephew of Henry Parker, lays a wreath, Crown Copyright, All rights reserved

Francis Storry, great-nephew of Henry Parker said:

When we got the letter from the MOD Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre, we were very surprised as we didn't know anything about Henry Parker. It's a great honour to be here today with 20 family members to pay our respects.

Lt Col David O'Kelly, Regimental Secretary of The Yorkshire Regiment said:

The Yorkshire Regiment is immensely proud to be able to lay to rest one of its brave soldiers, even 100 years on from the war in which he was tragically killed. He was an inspiration to his comrades then, and is still an inspiration to those who serve in the Regiment now. We will remember him.

A new headstone bearing Private Parker's name has been provided by the CWGC, who will now care for his final resting place in perpetuity.

Private Parker's newly engraved headstone, Crown Copyright, All rights reserved

Peter Francis, CWGC said:

Today's service is a poignant reminder of the human cost of the Great War. Henry has been given the honoured burial he so richly deserves and it is a privilege that we can care for his grave, and those of his comrades, at this cemetery and thousands of others across the world in perpetuity. In doing so, we will ensure they are never forgotten.

[News story: Vehicle data platform merger faces in-depth investigation](#)

Solera's acquisition of Autodata faces an in-depth merger probe, unless it offers acceptable ways of addressing competition concerns.

The companies both supply vehicle maintenance and repair information platforms across the UK and the Competition and Markets Authority's (CMA) initial investigation found that they are the 2 main suppliers of these platforms in the UK and compete closely with each other.

These platforms give access to digital data and are mainly used by workshops and other repairers for the purposes of diagnosing, servicing and repairing vehicles. The CMA found that the merged company would face very limited competition in the UK and that there are significant barriers to entry and expansion for other suppliers.

The CMA therefore believes that the merger could significantly reduce competition in the supply of these platforms on a national basis.

Solera Holdings Inc. (Solera) therefore has until 24 May to offer proposals to resolve the competition concerns. If it does not offer undertakings, or if the CMA is unable to accept undertakings offered, the merger will be referred for an in-depth phase 2 investigation.

All information relating to the investigation is available on the [case page](#).