

UK National Statement at the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

The United Kingdom welcomes the Thirty-First Regular Session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

Transnational crime cannot be tackled without cross-border cooperation. We are united in our pursuit and promotion of fair criminal justice systems. It is essential that we maintain an open dialogue and continue working in close partnership on this issue. The Commission plays a vital role in helping foster that co-operation and collaboration, and the UK Government is, and will remain, a committed and active participant in these discussions.

Before I outline some of the UK's key priorities in this space, I would like to comment briefly on the situation in Ukraine. First and foremost, we continue to stand shoulder to shoulder with the Ukrainian people. And more broadly, we must remain alert to the potential impact of the crisis on transnational organised crime threats.

Turning to the main agenda, the UK welcomes the Commission's thematic focus on strengthening the use of digital evidence in criminal justice and countering cyber crime.

One of the most pressing challenges facing us all is the fight to prevent the spread of online child sexual abuse.

The UK is at the forefront of addressing this issue, but no country can mount a truly effective response in isolation.

A single instance of abuse can span multiple jurisdictions, and the threat continues to grow and evolve as offenders exploit rising global internet access and new technologies to harm children.

This is why the UK has tabled a resolution for this session on tackling online child sexual exploitation and abuse, and the importance of fostering partnerships with private technology companies. The resolution challenges members to set consistent expectations and standards for technology companies to keep children safe on their platforms and services. The protection of children is among the most fundamental responsibilities for any government. We hope Members will engage constructively in this debate, because the goal we share is a common one: to keep citizens safe and bring the perpetrators of these heinous crimes to justice. The UK will also be hosting a side event on this topic which I would encourage delegations to join.

The UK continues to engage with the UN Cyber Crime Treaty process. We want to develop international cooperation and capacity building as part of our ongoing efforts to prevent online crimes, such as child sexual exploitation

and abuse.

As a major UNODC (UN Office of Drugs and Crime) donor, the UK has several key priorities including drug trafficking, criminal flows from Afghanistan, modern slavery and human trafficking, and anti-corruption. Of course, effective partnerships across borders must be further supported by robust national frameworks. In October last year, the UK and UNODC launched a transnational organised crime strategy toolkit.

This will enable policy-makers to create or enhance their own national strategies to combat transnational organised crime.

Four regional workshops have already taken place and we will continue to work with the UNODC to assist in developing holistic national serious organised crime strategies.

In closing, I'd like to thank the UNODC again for facilitating this event. Given the scale and diversity of the threats we face, it is more important than ever before that we confront them together. Thank you.