

Chairs' statement on the G7 2021 civil society and private sector consultation event on anti-corruption

As part of the 2021 G7 Presidency, on September 1st the UK government, Transparency International and the Open Government Partnership co-hosted a consultation with civil society and private sector representatives on anti-corruption. Participants included government representatives and civil society from G7 countries, international civil society organizations and business representatives, including those that are part of the B20 and C20 processes.

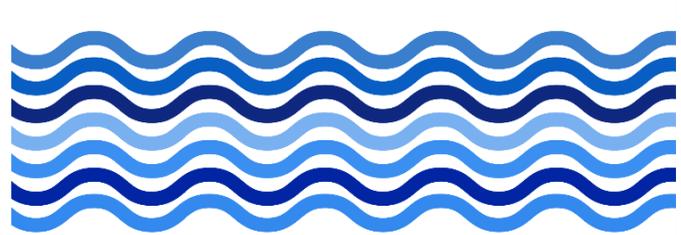
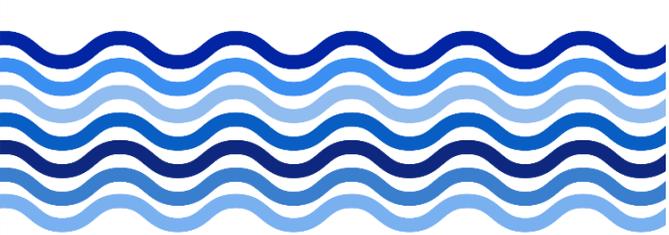
This event was intended to allow civil society and private sector representatives to feed back to G7 governments ahead of the G7 Interior and Security Ministers meeting, to inform anti-corruption work in the medium term and stimulate joint action against corruption. It builds on wider work within the G7, including recognition of the need for action on corruption by G7 Leaders, promotion of Open Societies in the Foreign and Development track and commitments to beneficial ownership transparency in the Finance track.

There was consensus amongst participants that:

- Corruption remains a threat to democracy and human rights, as well as national security priorities.
- Governments cannot fight corruption alone; civil society and the private sector are crucial allies in tackling corruption.
- Key areas for action by governments include procurement transparency, tackling corruption in real estate, improving asset recovery and tackling anonymous companies. In particular, collecting, verifying and publishing information on beneficial ownership is a key priority of especial relevance given ongoing consideration at the Financial Action Taskforce.
- The civil society and private sector recommendations were valuable to inform both upcoming multilateral discussions and domestic reform efforts.

In advance of the G7 Interior & Security Ministers' meeting that, among other priorities, will focus on strengthening international action against corruption and kleptocracies, civil society and business representatives urged G7 governments to:

- **Implement existing commitments made under G7 and other multilateral frameworks:** G7 governments should advance implementation of existing commitments and further ambition through new commitments.
- **Promote coordinated action on anti-corruption efforts at multilateral fora:** The G7 Statement ahead of the United Nations General Assembly Special Session against Corruption (UNGASS 2021) set a strong precedent for the importance of the G7 to push on global standards in a unified voice. Similar collective action will help strengthen the anti-corruption focus at other upcoming multilateral fora such as the G20 meetings, US-



hosted Summit for Democracy, OGP Global Summit, UN Conference of State Parties (COSPP) and the FATF plenary meeting. G7 governments are also encouraged to connect efforts across these multilateral fora.

- **Recognise that credibility internationally requires progress at home:** Recognising that G7 countries must walk the talk on anti-corruption both at home and abroad, the UK government [announced](#) it would be endorsing the Beneficial Ownership Disclosure Principles to join the coalition of countries advancing on this, signaling efforts towards greater transparency of beneficial ownership. Several G7 countries are making progress on beneficial ownership transparency and anti-corruption issues, including through their OGP action plans - keeping the momentum is important.
- **Protect and strengthen civil society space:** Civil society provide valuable insights from their hands-on work tackling corruption and play a crucial role in increasing transparency and accountability. However, civic space has been in decline globally for fifteen consecutive years. In this context, it is becoming increasingly dangerous and challenging for civil society and reformers working on anti-corruption. G7 governments must speak out against the worrying trends related to civic space violations. In line with the precedent set by this event, G7 countries should model effective engagement with civil society and promote this in multilateral fora.
- **Strengthen partnerships with the private sector:** Business is a key partner in the fight against corruption, with substantial interest in reforms and enforcement to create a fair and sustainable business environment across jurisdictions. G7 governments should consider utilising private sector expertise, as developed over time in such fora as the B20, to promote emerging technologies which support implementation of beneficial ownership registers and other data-driven anti-corruption tools.
- **Raise corruption as a top priority issue:** Throughout the meeting, corruption was repeatedly understood to thwart the achievement of important shared objectives - from tackling climate change, and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, to international security and stability. However, it was recognised that corruption is too often seen as a secondary priority to these issues. G7 governments should take a holistic approach, granting greater priority to anti-corruption efforts and therefore ensuring efforts to tackle other priority issues are not undermined by corruption.

The above priorities were shared with G7 Interior and Security Ministers by the Chair of Transparency International. Separately, G7 governments have been encouraged to follow up with civil society and the private sector directly on more detailed elements of the recommendations made, and to embed recommendations into their strategies.