

## Open Government Partnership

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The Rt Hon. Sir Keir Starmer MP  
Prime Minister  
His Majesty's Government of the United Kingdom

*Sent by email*

### **Subject: UK global leadership on open government and democracy**

Dear Prime Minister,

As the CEO of the Open Government Partnership (OGP), I would like to extend my congratulations to you on your historic election victory and appointment as UK Prime Minister. In your inaugural speech outside 10 Downing Street you spoke about the need to return politics to public service, rebuild public trust and to achieve this through action not words. I believe that OGP, a global multi-stakeholder platform for action and reform that advances government transparency, accountability and public participation, can be a key enabler and supporter of that vision.

Alongside then US President Obama, the UK Government was amongst OGP's founding members in 2011, establishing an international platform for domestic reformers committed to making their governments more open, accountable, and responsive to citizens. Over the last 13 years, reformers and activists have together implemented more than 5,000 reforms spanning the fight against corruption, more participatory decision-making, enhancing political integrity and delivering better and more accountable public services. Through these, courageous reformers and activists are pushing back against corrupt and ineffective government, and renewing the relationship between governments and the people they serve.

OGP can help your government to deliver on both your domestic and international reform agendas. Domestically, the UK Multi-Stakeholder Forum for Open Government provides a ready-made forum for collaborating with civil society on addressing key priorities on political integrity, anti-corruption and restoring public trust in government. Internationally, the UK is a valued member of OGP's Global Steering Committee, along with ten other governments and an equal number of civil society representatives. Through our partnership with FCDO we are jointly

supporting reformers around the world to deliver positive change towards open and accountable governance of digital technologies, such as AI, and there is potential to work even closer together on kleptocracy and corruption, political integrity, rule of law, media freedom and other shared priorities.

Under your government there is now a critical opportunity to restore the UK's reputation as a defender of democracy and an advocate of open government both domestically and internationally. This could include the following actions:

1. Join other Heads of State and Government at OGP's High Level event at the UN General Assembly on 25 September 2024. This event will be hosted by the Co Chairs of OGP. This high-level event aims to bring together a strong political coalition in support of democracy and open government, share an ambitious agenda for the future and present the wealth of inspiring examples and evidence that the Partnership has co-created over the years. The event will contribute to the objectives and reinforce the message of the UN Summit of the Future, which focuses on accelerating delivery mechanisms for the Sustainable Development Goals and other multilateral initiatives. A formal invitation will follow.
2. Work with UK civil society, via the UK Open Government Network, to identify two to three early flagship open government commitments, making use of OGP's Open Gov Challenge, our new mechanism for members to pursue renewed ambition. This intention could be signaled at the UN General Assembly event, alongside a renewed commitment to the Open Government Declaration. There are clear areas of alignment with your government's priorities on topics such as standards in public life, tackling corruption and money laundering, regulation of artificial intelligence and bringing decision-making closer to people and communities.
3. Restore Cabinet level responsibility for the UK's participation in OGP, through appointing a senior minister as the UK's OGP Minister, whilst retaining the Cabinet Office's key role in leading and coordinating the development and implementation of the UK's National Action Plans (the UK is currently implementing its sixth OGP National Action Plan for 2023-2025).
4. Work with the UK Multi-Stakeholder Forum for Open Government to develop a long-term strategy for open government in the UK that can embed individual reforms in a longer-term programme of democratic renewal across the UK's Government and State institutions

In a world where democracy and open government face unprecedented challenges, amidst the rise of populist authoritarianism and kleptocracy, deepening conflict and systemic challenges

such as climate change, the UK can be a beacon of hope and a leader in reversing the tide. We count on your personal leadership and that of your government in championing open government values at home and abroad.

The OGP Support Unit and the Steering Committee stand ready to work in partnership with your government in these efforts. I would welcome an opportunity to meet with you at the UNGA event or in London at a time of your convenience.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with the OGP Support Unit should you have any questions about the above. We look forward to your response and to working with you in the coming months and years.

Yours sincerely,



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CC:

The Right Hon. Angela Rayner MP, Deputy Prime Minister;  
The Right Hon. David Lammy MP, Foreign Secretary;  
The Right Hon. Pat McFadden MP, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster;  
The Rt Hon. Nick Thomas–Symonds MP, Paymaster General and Minister for the Cabinet Office;  
The Right Hon. Peter Kyle MP, Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology;  
The Right Hon. Anneliese Dodds MP, Minister of State at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

