

Are Nigeria and Afghanistan corrupt?

Published: January 16, 2026, 2:41 am

The [Prime Minister has suggested Nigeria and Afghanistan are corrupt](#). And he's right if you think that [corruption is solely about those who abuse public office or tax systems for personal gain](#).

He failed to mention the fact that a whole of army of lawyers, accountants and bankers, many in tax havens, are required to undertake this abuse. Prof Prem Sikka has called them [The Pinstripe Mafia](#).

And if you think more broadly about corruption then having a banking system that systemically mis-sells, where key financial data has been routinely rigged and [where we permit 400,000 companies a year to disappear without trace because we cannot be bothered to enforce company law](#) might also be considered signs of serious failure with regard to corruption.

But David Cameron is looking in the wrong direction. As a result he thinks Nigeria and Afghanistan are spectacularly corrupt. Actually we are too. [A tax gap of £120 billion is the evidence of that](#).

Time to take action on the home front, I suggest.