



## **Freedom Online Coalition - Friends of the Chair: Call #15**

*Wednesday, 25 November, 2015*

**Attending:** Canada, Costa Rica, Estonia, Netherlands, UK, US

**Apologies:** Germany, Mongolia, Norway

**Chair:** FOC Support Unit

### **DRAFT MINUTES**

#### Housekeeping

- The UK and US gave an update on the progress of the Internal Review
  - The external evaluator, Susan Morgan carried out a number of one-on-one interviews and a group consultation at the Internet Governance Forum in Brazil 10th-13th November, and the Review Group will be following up with her on these activities shortly.
- Members were asked to give feedback on the FOC newsletter and discuss its objective
  - Members noted the objective of the newsletter has changed since its inception, from an internal to an external document.
  - Members suggested a new format for the newsletter going forward, linking to existing news digests and focussing primarily on news of the Coalition in order to publicise the Coalition's activities and increase engagement with non-Coalition members. Members also decided that the newsletter should aim to reach a wider audience, with a first step being a subscription button on the FOC website.
  - Members decided that the newsletter draft should be sent to the Friends for editorial guidance 24 hours before it is due to be sent out.
- Members discussed mandate renewal for the Support Unit and operational budget for 2016
  - As it did not make sense to put in interim arrangements, members supported extending the mandate of the SU until January 1 2017. Members felt that the support provided by the SU was crucial, especially in preparation for the FO Conference 2016. The SU role would form a fundamental part of the Review, and care will be taken for the mandate extension not to prejudice the outcomes.

**Action Point >>** SU to draft restructured version of the newsletter and send it to the Friends for editorial guidance

#### Annual Conference

- Costa Rica/Support Unit gave an update on Annual Conference preparations
  - Costa Rica reported that the concept paper for the Conference will be shared with the Friends of the Chair at the end of next week
  - The date and venue of the Conference depends on the date of the next IGF, and they hope to confirm soon

**Action Point >>** Costa Rica to check with Ministry of Foreign Affairs if there will be a ministerial component to the Annual Conference

**Action Point >>** Costa Rica to share concept note with the Friends of the Chair once ready next week

### Outreach

- Members/SU gave updates on any outreach activities
  - The silence procedure for Spain to join the Coalition will end on December 2, and the SU hopes to meet with the cyber coordinator on 9 December in Madrid.

### Coordination

- SU gave an update on all FOC activities undertaken at the IGF
  - The SU reported on the Strategy and Coordination Meeting (minutes have been circulated), the informal meeting with civil society, the FOC Open Forum ( please find a short report that was submitted to the IGF secretariat attached) and WG1's workshop on multistakeholder and human rights approaches to cybersecurity (description available [here](#))
  - The Friends thanked the SU for their work in handling the events at the IGF

**Action Point >>** SU to write blog reflecting on FOC activities at the IGF for the FOC website

### Joint Activities

- The draft statement on cross border threats to freedom of expression will be circulated next week to the Friends of the Chair, and then to the wider Coalition near the end of the month.

**Action Point >>** SU to come up with a suggested communication strategy for joint statements

### Updates on Working Groups

- SU/WG co-chairs gave an update on Working Groups
  - WG1: held a very successful workshop at the IGF that reached maximum capacity, and received valuable feedback on the normative recommendations output which they are working to incorporate. The co-chairs are now discussing the Group's mandate for the year ahead and a plans for a call for new members.
  - WG2: After two physical meetings at Stockholm Internet Forum and the IGF, the Group is beginning to pick up steam and is discussing next steps within their sub-groups. The US noted that the concept of rule of law has great resonance for governments, and suggested reaching out to government members to understand what they would find useful coming out of the Group to ensure a practical focus.
  - WG3: discussed their agenda for the year at the IGF, focussing on qualitative transparency and government transparency. In addition, they reported good traction on the WG3 report on the relationship between governments and ICT companies.

**Action Point >>** US to discuss suggestions for gaining feedback from governments on WG2's activities on next Friends of the Chair call

### AOB

- Members discussed response to IFEX letter, addressing the situation of bloggers in Bangladesh
  - Members discussed bilateral initiatives undertaken on this issue, and supported the drafting of a group reply.