



Freedom Online Coalition - Friends of the Chair: Call #18

Wednesday, 24 February, 2016

Attending: Canada, Costa Rica, Estonia, Germany, Netherlands, US

Apologies: Mongolia, Norway, UK

Chair: FOC Support Unit (SU)

MINUTES

Housekeeping

- The US gave an update on the progress of the Strategic Review:
 - A draft of the report by consultant Susan Morgan will be ready by the end of this week.
 - Next steps:
 - The draft report will be circulated to the Strategic Review Working Group for comments, followed by a call with Susan to go over said questions and comments. Canada confirmed that they would facilitate the Coalition-wide call.
 - The revised report accommodating comments will then be shared with the whole Coalition for a 30-day silence procedure. Susan will work with University of Pennsylvania to publish the report.
 - An FOC statement would be released at the same time of the report publication to acknowledge the effort and make the purpose of the report clear.
- Costa Rica expressed interest in asking Japan and Spain to join the Friends of the Chair group.
 - Members gave feedback on the idea.
- SU/Costa Rica gave an update on FOC fundraising efforts.
- The fundraising letter has been circulated and GPD/Costa Rica will follow up with individual approaches.

Action Point >> SU, UK and US to facilitate / coordinate the drafting of the FOC statement to accompany the publication of the report produced by Susan Morgan.

Action Point >> SU to consult with Costa Rica and circulate a note with a proposed way forward to the Friends of the Chair.

Action Point >> SU and Costa Rica to help liaise and follow up individually with countries that might be interested in supporting the annual FO Conference.

Annual Conference

- Costa Rica gave an update on Annual Conference preparations
 - Costa Rica has recently hosted a meeting with representatives of Coalition countries in Costa Rica (Canada, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Spain, US), and good cooperation was established for the conference. A follow-up meeting is planned for next month.
- The concept note for the Conference is being finalised.
- A launch event for the Conference will be hosted on April 27th.

Action Point >> Costa Rica to share details of launch event with the Coalition.

Action Point >> Costa Rica to circulate draft note regarding venue for endorsement.

Outreach

- Members gave updates on outreach activities.

Coordination

- Members gave feedback on Spain's proposal for granting observer status for the Coalition at the UNGA.



- Members agreed to reschedule the next Friends of the Chair call because of overlap with several members' participation in RightsCon in San Francisco.
- Members were reminded to suggest potential dates for Strategy and Coordination Meetings in 2016.

Action Point >> SU to communicate reactions to Spain's proposal and discuss possibilities of preparing a brief to assess value add of such an arrangement.

Action Point >> SU to assist in rescheduling the next Friends of the Chair call to avoid clash with RightsCon.

Joint Activities

- Members discussed the communication plan for the joint statement on cross-border threats to freedom of expression.
 - The silence procedure for FOC comments expires on Thursday, March 3.
 - Once the statement is posted, members will be encouraged to promote and share it.
- Members discussed The Netherlands' proposal regarding Indonesia emoji ban tweet.
 - Members agreed not to take action in this specific case, but agree that there is value in drafting guidelines for quicker response procedures.

Action Point >> SU, Costa Rica and the Netherlands to work on the draft guidelines for managing tweets and circulate them to the Friends of the Chair and later to the whole Coalition.

Updates on Working Groups

- The US gave an update on Working Group 2. There was a call earlier this week. Members interested in rule of law were encouraged to consider getting more engaged in the group.

AOB

- Members discussed upcoming events to include in the March edition of the FOC newsletter.
 - SU suggested to feature a new report by Citizen Lab on issues relevant to the Coalition.
 - Members agreed to hold off on the publication of the FOC newsletter until the cross border free expression statement is published so it can be featured.
- The Netherlands will host a roundtable with UN's Special Rapporteur on Privacy in early March.

Action Point >> SU to circulate Citizen Lab report and delay newsletter until after March 3rd to feature the FOC statement on cross-border threats to freedom of expression.