



Freedom Online Coalition - Friends of the Chair Call #19

Wednesday 29 August

Attendance: Argentina, Canada, Estonia, Germany, the Netherlands; US; Support Unit (SU)

Apologies: Costa Rica, Finland, Norway, UK

MINUTES

- Housekeeping
 - SU informed members that there will be an FOC Open Forum at the IGF in November.

Action >> Members to contact SU with interest in speaking at the Open Forum and discussion topics.

- Updates on FOC Chairmanship
 - Germany provided an update on the preparations for the Annual Conference
 - Germany is engaging with their Minister for Foreign Affairs on further invitations at the appropriate level for high level participants. The Minister may join the second plenary session on Day 1 of the Conference.
 - SU informed members that the Conference website will launch within two weeks.
 - An 'Expression of Interest' form will be hosted on the website to for those who wish to attend. Members are encouraged by the SU to share the expression of interest form with their networks once it goes live.
 - SU is coordinating funding for global South participants.
 - SU provided an update on Conference Program Development
 - Members encouraged leadership/co-leadership from global South countries on the agenda.
 - The Advisory Network (FOC-AN) shared proposals for workshops with the Chair and their input is currently being considered.
 - The US suggested organizing an inaugural meeting for the diplomatic networks from Geneva, New York, Vienna, and Paris at the Annual Conference. The US noted this would be an excellent opportunity for the diplomatic networks to learn more about the FOC, discuss best practices and strategize future engagement, and build relationships with FOC representatives and the FOC-AN. The US offered to support the organization of an inaugural meeting and the German Chair's goal in the Program of Action 2018 of activating the diplomatic networks.

Action >> Members to contact SU for further interest in leading/co-leading sessions in Program.

Action >> Germany to follow-up on next FOC Friends of the Chair call on next steps in organizing a potential inaugural meeting of the diplomatic networks at the Annual Conference.

Action >> Members to contact SU for further interest in leading/co-leading sessions in Program.

Action >> SU to share FOC-AN's proposals with Friends of the Chair following sign-off from Germany

- Members discussed the aim and format of Peer Learning session.
 - SU noted this would be the first time a peer learning session will be held. The format will be a 1.5 hour closed-door session for FOC members held on Day 0 of the Conference. The session will enable FOC members to share information about successes and challenges in meeting member responsibilities.
 - The Netherlands offered to share best practice from the EU learning model.
 - Members discussed focus areas that would be of interest in the session, including encryption, regulation of internet services and aligning national security with human rights.
 - The US noted the importance of the presence of FOC members that are currently inactive and offered to support efforts to increase attendance, such as issuing joint demarches to local Embassies to invite inactive member governments to attend the Annual Conference.
 - The US additionally requested that the agenda be shared well in advance to enable representatives to prepare. The US noted that with topics such as encryption, the subject matter experts may not be the FOC representative which could limit the FOC's ability to meaningfully engage on these topics. The US noted that the peer learning session could additionally serve as a key opportunity to have tactical discussions on how to best leverage the Coalition to advance IF. E.g. how to re-engage inactive members and increase diplomatic coordination in countries or issues of concern.

Action >> SU to contact Members for further input into discussion aims and format of Peer Learning session

Action >> Germany to follow-up on next FOC Friends of the Chair call on strategy to increase attendance by inactive members of the Coalition.

Action >> SU to contact Members for further input into discussion aims and format of Peer Learning session

Action >> Netherlands to share best practice from EU learning model with the SU

- Implementation of the San Jose Work Plan
 - Operationalising the Stockholm TOR
 - The SU provided an update on the finalised Evaluation Framework (EF)
 - The EF had been adopted under a silence procedure which ended on 3 August.
 - Canada provided an update on the Advisory Network and the Quarterly Call held on August 22.
 - Canada noted that members on the call had discussed strategies for future FOC statements and potential strategic dissemination at regional and international meetings.
 - Canada noted the FOC-AN's interest in supporting the FOC at a number of upcoming conventions, including the ITU Plenipotentiary.

To this end, a strategy call between the FOC and the FOC-AN on the ITU Plenipotentiary will be held in September. The call will be open to FOC representatives' colleagues from other departments.

Action >> SU to facilitate a strategy call between the FOC-AN and the FOC on the ITU Plenipotentiary.

- Program of Action 2018 Objective 1
 - Defending Civic Spaces statement:
 - Canada was thankful to receive high-level feedback from the FOC-AN. The deadline for input from Friends of the Chair had been extended to **Friday 31 August**.
 - Objective 2
 - Digital Divides statement:
 - Germany informed members that they had begun work on the statement, and were considering which convention would be best for its launch and dissemination.
 - Objective 3
 - FOC engagement at the ITU Plenipotentiary:
 - Canada noted that the deadline for input on the ITU Statement had been extended to **Friday 31 August**.

Action >> Friends to provide feedback on Defending Civic Spaces and ITU Plenipotentiary statements to Canada by **Friday, 31 August**.

- Diplomatic Networks
 - Germany noted following relocation of staff, they would coordinate with colleagues in the coming weeks.
- AOB
 - The US informed members that they had secured a speaking opportunity for the FOC at the Forum on Internet Freedom in Africa (FIFA) 26 - 29 September, and invited members to express interest in speaking or attending. The US is also liaising with the AN on engagement at FIFA.
 - Canada suggested engaging with the FOC-AN on forming a response to OHCHR's report on the right to privacy in the digital age.
 - Germany informed members that their Ministry for Development are convening a conference with internet/digital focus on the 14 - 15 December in Accra, Ghana with the German organization Re:publica. The conference is include a focus on digital rights and the politics of the internet. Germany noted this would be a good opportunity to connect with the Freedom Online Coalition and worth considering engagement to workshop or otherwise engage.