



## **Minutes of the Friends of the Chair Call #5 - Wednesday 29 May - 2pm UTC**

*Version: FOC Members only: highlighted sections redacted from public minutes.*

**Attendance:** Canada, Estonia, Finland, Ghana, The Netherlands, UK, US; Support Unit

**Apologies:** Costa Rica, Germany, Norway.

### **Housekeeping**

- SU provided an update on the informal FOC/FOC-AN meeting at Stockholm Internet Forum (SIF) on 17 May:
  - Members from Costa Rica, Estonia, Finland, The Netherlands, Sweden, UK, US, as well as members of the Advisory Network (FOC-AN) joined the meeting.
  - Members discussed how to improve the development and distribution of future statements, the joint statement on Defending Civic Spaces Online which was launched at SIF, and other activities under the Program of Action.
- SU provided an update on FOC outlook for the Month Ahead:
  - The US is hosting an FOC briefing in New York on Wednesday 5 June (details below).
  - The [Open Government Summit](#) is taking place in Ottawa 29-31 May, where Canada planned to further promote the Defending Civic Spaces statement.
  - The following FOC activities are scheduled to take place at RightsCon *[agendas attached]*:
    - Tuesday 11 June: Strategy and Coordination Meeting and FOC/FOC-AN Roundtable. The SU encouraged leads to prepare updates on their activities for the meetings.
    - Wednesday 12 June: FOC Open Forum Session and Joint FOC/GNI Reception.
    - Members reviewed the FOC/FOC-AN Roundtable draft agenda
  - The UK encouraged further promotion of the joint statement on Defending Civic Spaces Online on social media and through the FOC website.

**Action >>** FOC leads to prepare updates on activities for FOC meetings in Tunis on Tuesday 11 June.

**Action >>** Members yet to do so to RSVP to RightsCon meetings via [this form](#).

### FOC Chairmanship

- Ghana provided an update on FOC Chairmanship and confirmed the dates of the Annual Conference as the 12-14 February.
  - The SU will be sending around the 'Save the Date' for the Conference in the following week.

**Action >>** SU to share 'Save the Date' notice for FO Conference in Accra for wider dissemination.

### **Program of Action 2019**

- Diplomatic Coordination:

- The US provided an update on FOC meeting in New York, taking place on Wednesday 5 June 2019.
  - The invites for the meeting had gone out to the governments and the US thanked those who already RSVP'd.
  - The US summarised the agenda for the meetings *[attached]* and noted that minutes and action points would be circulated following the meeting.
  - The aim of the briefing is to provide the attendees of the New York diplomatic network with a clearer understanding of the FOC and potential ways for leveraging the FOC in the context of relevant UN processes in NY.
- The US noted that the strategic review of FOC Statements is ongoing.
- Members discussed ways forward for diplomatic coordination in Geneva, Paris and Vienna.
  - The SU noted that there were currently no leads for FOC's diplomatic coordination efforts in Geneva, Paris and Vienna.
  - The SU noted lessons from previous coordination efforts, noting the importance of having a government lead and clear value add of FOC engagement
  - Members noted it would be valuable to discuss further how to strengthen FOC diplomatic coordination.
  - Ghana informed Members that they are in the process of identifying their points of contacts within the networks to support with diplomatic coordination.
  - Estonia highlighted the upcoming Human Rights Council sessions, and suggested delivering an FOC joint statement in conjunction with a session with a special rapporteur.
- Shaping Global Norms:
  - Canada provided an update on the finalised Joint Statement on Defending Civic Space Online, including plans for further dissemination.
    - The statement had been launched at SIF by the Swedish HR Ambassador Annika Ben David in closing plenary.
    - The statement had been well received by governments and civil society, with support in particular for the statement's language on encryption.
    - The SU thanked Canada for their leadership on the statement and noted that the lessons learned from the drafting of the statement would be valuable and welcome from Canada.
  - Ghana and Germany provided an update on the Digital Inclusion Statement.
    - The first draft of the statement had been circulated to the Friends of the Chair and the FOC-AN for input by COB Wednesday 5 June.
    - Members on the call requested for an extension for a deadline for input.
  - Estonia and The Netherlands provided an update on the Cybersecurity Laws Statement.
    - Estonia noted that a Request for Advice would be sent to the FOC-AN in the following week for input into the framing of the statement.
    - The leads highlighted FOC Meetings at RightsCon include an 'opt-in' session to discuss the upcoming statement on Cybersecurity Laws, lead by the Netherlands open to all.
- Multistakeholder Engagement:
  - n/a

**Action >>** SU to add diplomatic coordination to the agenda of the upcoming Strategy and Coordination Meeting at RightsCon.

**Action >>** Members to provide input into the first draft of the joint statement on Digital Inclusion COB Friday 21 June.

- **Operationalising the Stockholm TOR**

- n/a

- **FOC Membership**

- The SU provided an update on FOC Member engagement

- The SU thanked Members for their efforts with the outreach to less engaged Members of the Coalition.
- The SU noted that they had circulated a Member Directory *[attached]* to Coalition Members with the newly established POC's contact details.
- The SU noted there were ongoing re-engagement efforts with Kenya, Mexico and Tunisia, and encouraged Members to engage with these governments on the FOC where possible.
- The US noted they were assisting the SU with outreach to re-establish a point of contact for Tunisia.
- The SU noted that it had invited New Zealand and France to join the FOC meetings at RightsCon to share details on the Christchurch Call with Members.
- The Netherlands noted that they would be able to assist in encouraging New Zealand and France in engaging with the FOC.

- Updates on enlargement of FOC membership

- n/a

- **AOB**

- n/a