

## Minutes of the Friends of the Chair Call #5 (June)

30 June 2021 at 14:00 UTC

Attendance: Finland (FOC Chair), Canada, Germany, Ghana, Netherlands, Switzerland, UK, US; Support Unit [SU]

### Housekeeping

- Recap of outstanding action items from the Friends of the Chair (FotC) monthly call #4
  - FotC to let US and SU know if interested in an FOC-AN briefing on the Cybercrime Treaty.
  - Canada to share the revised stock language on privacy with FOC.
  - Finland and the SU to coordinate to prepare readouts of the FOC Africa Outreach events, as well as key takeaways and best practices for organising similar outreach activities.
  
- In accordance with the Internal Program of Action updates
  - The SU is working on revamping the FOC's website, which will be officially launched at the SCM, on 6 July.
  - The SU has also:
    - Developed communications materials in line with the new website design, including the formatting of FOC joint statements which can be viewed on the new website.
    - Liaised with communications consultants from Independent Diplomat on the development of media and social media strategies, planned to be finalised by the end of July.
  
- Outlook for the month ahead
  - *Internal FOC events:*
    - July 6 - Strategy and Coordination Meeting (SCM)
    - July 7 - Joint FOC and FOC-AN Roundtable
    - July 8 - T-FAIR call on UNESCO Draft Recommendation on Ethics of AI
    - July 9 - FOC-US Virtual Briefing on the UN Ad Hoc Committee on Cybercrime
    - July 28 - Friends of the Chair Monthly Call
    - July 29 - Task Force on Digital Equality Monthly Call
    - July (TBC) - FOC-AN Monthly call
    - July (TBC) - T-FAIR Monthly Call
  - FOC activities after summer:
    - FOC Membership Applications Process - expedited silence procedure to begin on:
      - July 26 (Italy)
      - August 5 (Luxembourg)
    - Political Declaration drafting process (TBC)
    - FO Conference Invitations (TBC)
    - Program of Action 2022 drafting process (September-December)

### Program of Action 2021

- **10th Anniversary**
  - High-level ministerial meeting and Political Declaration
    - The Ministerial meeting will be postponed to take place on the margins of the FO Conference.



**Action >>** Friends to disseminate the event invitation to their cyber experts in New York and Vienna.

- Vienna
  - US noted having a network in Vienna to coordinate around the AHC once it is in session in the fall would be useful.
- **Shaping Global Norms/ Advancing Priority Issues**
  - Disinformation (Finland/UK)
    - Finland noted Ukraine drafted a [joint statement on disinformation](#), and encouraged FOC members to sign on. *[The deadline for signing on to the statement has since passed.]*
    - SU noted that Finland and the SU have submitted an IGF Open Forum proposal on Internet governance in the 2020s, which includes topics of disinformation, digital inclusion, and artificial intelligence.
  - AI - Task Force on AI and Human Rights (Canada)
    - Canada participated in a RightsCon panel on the governance of technology rooted in human rights.
    - Canada will be participating in an event on the margins of the HRC on July 5, where the [FOC Joint Statement on AI and Human Rights](#) will be featured in the remarks.
  - Digital inclusion - Task Force on Digital Equality (Ghana and Germany)
    - There will be an informal learning call before the next monthly meeting, to be later extended more broadly to the wider FOC.
    - Efforts are being made to define the priorities of the Task Force, drawing from a number of documents such as the [Joint Statement on Digital Inclusion](#), the Task Force's ToR, and the AN Proactive Advice on Priorities.
    - The Task Force held a RightsCon panel on June 11.
  - Cybersecurity: N/A
  - Challenges by authoritarian regimes
    - Finland is exploring how it can be incorporated into the FO Conference programme.
  - Stock language on privacy
    - Canada noted that the revised stock language on privacy will be shared with Members once the document is finalised.
  - Country-specific statements
    - Finland noted there could be Members that would be hesitant about issuing country-specific statements.
    - In terms of next steps and in-line with previous discussions with the Friends, Finland will be:
      - Circulating a questionnaire to the full Coalition inquiring on their views and potential approaches for country-specific statements;
      - Reaching out to Members to encourage participation in the questionnaire.
      - Bringing up the topic in the upcoming SCM.
    - Upon UK's inquiry on the process of issuing statements, the SU noted that the only time the Stockholm ToR have been revised was with the aim to shorten this process - from 30 days to 15 days for the regular silence procedure, and from 10 to 5 days for the expedited silence procedure.
- **Stakeholder Engagement and Outreach**
  - SU provided an update on the Silicon Valley Working Group

- The group convened on June 23 with featured presentations from Facebook's Nick Clegg on challenges with and approach to disinformation, and experts Kristina Wilfore and Lucina Di Meco, who presented their findings on gender disinformation online and how this tool is used to undermine democracies.
- The group is currently taking a summer hiatus, and will be reconvening again in September.
  - The group is also currently in the planning stages of an in-person meeting in July in San Francisco.

#### **Advisory Network (AN)**

- **Finland** provided an update on the AN
  - Finland participated in the June AN monthly call following the AN suggestion made at the Joint FOC/AN Roundtable meeting in April to encourage more informal discussion
  - On the call, Finland provided an update on general FOC activities over the past six months.
  - For the Joint FOC/ AN Roundtable meeting, the AN raised the following:
    - Discussion on the Political Declaration,
    - Discussion on the Proactive Advice on Online Freedom in India, which includes a background paper on the situation in India.
    - FO Conference Concept Note

#### **AOB**

**Action >>** Netherlands to share the suggestion of inviting a representative from the European Commission to FOC processes with the Friends in writing.