



FOC Strategic Retreat
Embassy of Canada to France, in Paris
Wednesday, 25 May, 2022



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Strategic Retreat Agenda

Wednesday May 25, 2022

WELCOME REMARKS AND BREAKFAST

Time: 9:00 – 9:30 AM CEST | 3:00 – 3:30 AM EDT

Participants: FOC

Format: In-person only

Lead: Canada

Themes: Overview, Promoting Global Speaker Series and the Social Media Campaign

CLUSTER ONE: AFFIRMING AND SHAPING GLOBAL NORMS

Time: 9:30 AM – 12:45 PM CEST | 3:30 – 6:45 AM EDT

Participants: FOC

Format: In-person and virtual

Leads: Canada, US, Paris and Geneva Diplomatic Networks

Agenda:

- **9:30 – 11:00:** FOC Diplomatic Coordination in 2022
 - Mid-Year Review
 - The B-Tech Project
 - Discussion on the FOC's role at the Summit for Democracy
 - Copenhagen Pledge on Tech for Democracy
- **11:15 – 12:45:** FOC Diplomatic Coordination in 2022 (continued)
 - Spotlight on Paris and Geneva Diplomatic Networks
 - Membership Discussion

Objectives of the Meeting

- Highlight areas for future FOC engagement
- Understand the priorities on the ground at UNGA and HRC, identifying how the FOC can be more strategic in responding to growing attempts to weaken language

FLASH SESSION ON DISINFORMATION

Time: 2:00 – 2:45 PM CEST | 8:00 AM – 8:45 AM EDT

Participants: FOC / AN

Format: In-person only

Agenda:

- **2:00 – 2:45:** Presentation by the Partnership on Information and Democracy

CLUSTER TWO: PROMOTING MULTI-STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Time: 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM CEST | 9:00 AM – 10:30 AM EDT

Participants: FOC / AN

Format: In-person and virtual

Leads: Diplomatic Networks, Canada, and the US

Agenda:

- **3:00 – 4:30:** Open consultation period on the Ottawa Agenda (see Annex 2 for discussion questions), with updates regarding the Washington consultation

Objectives of the Meeting

- Conduct an initial consultation with both the FOC and the FOC-AN on the Ottawa Agenda
- Identify whether an FOC country wants to lead on drafting a thematic statement on Internet freedom during times of conflict

CLUSTER THREE: RAISING THE FOC'S PROFILE

Time: 5:00 PM – 6:00 PM CEST | 11:00 AM – 12:00 AM EDT

Participants: FOC / AN

Format: In-person and virtual

Leads: Canada, UN Secretary General Office

Agenda:

- **5:00 – 5:30:** Open discussion on Freedom Online South
- **5:30 – 6:00:** Open discussion on the FOC's role in the UN Secretary-General's Roadmap to Digital Cooperation and the Common Agenda

Objectives of the Meeting

- Introduce the Freedom Online South Initiative
- Discuss the UN Secretary-General's Roadmap to Digital Cooperation and the Common Agenda, identifying where the FOC can meaningfully engage

Session Summaries

Cluster One: Affirming and Shaping Global Norms

Participants: FOC / SU; Isabel Ebert, Adviser UN Human Rights' B-Tech project and Researcher Business & Human Rights in Tech at Institute for Business Ethics, University of St. Gallen; Lene Wendland, Chief of Business and Human Rights Unit, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

Format: Hybrid

Cluster One served as an opportunity for FOC Members to discuss diplomatic coordination in 2022, highlighting areas for future FOC engagement and providing an overview of the priorities on the ground at the UN General Assembly (UNGA) and the Human Rights Council (HRC). Canada led a mid-year review discussion focused on FOC's work in 2022, demonstrating the progress made in relation to activities outlined in the Program of Action (POA) 2022. The session also featured a briefing on the B-Tech Project, identifying its areas of focus, workstreams and priorities. FOC Members also discussed the Coalition's role at the Summit for Democracy, noting deliverables of the Summit relevant to the FOC. Denmark provided an update on the Copenhagen Pledge on Tech for Democracy. The session further included highlights of the work and progress of the Geneva and Paris Diplomatic Networks in 2022. Finally, Members deliberated on FOC membership and were informed about the [FOC Global Campaign on Digital Inclusion](#), launched during RightsCon 2022, by Canada.

Flash Session on Disinformation

Participants: FOC / FOC-AN / SU; Camille Grenier, Operations Director, Forum on Information and Democracy

Format: Hybrid

Camille Grenier, Operations Director of the [Forum on Information and Democracy](#), presented on the work of the International Partnership for Information and Democracy, an intergovernmental non-binding agreement endorsed by 43 countries around the world to promote and implement democratic principles in the global information and communication space. The Partnership is based on the International Declaration on Information & Democracy, published in November 2018. The Partnership aims to help democracies take back control over public spaces and implement guarantees of access to reliable information by:

1. Establishing a set of principles as an evolution of the discourse on freedom of opinion and expression in the information and communication space.
2. Mobilising democracies to work on the sets of principles outlined in the International Partnership for Information and Democracy to promote democratic principles in the online public arena.
3. Implementing the principles in national and regional fora, as a way to keep up with challenges facing the global space of information and communication in the digital era.

The Forum on Information and Democracy is led by civil society, media and digital platforms to discuss regulation and self-regulation solutions to ensure democratic safeguards in the digital era, and provides recommendations, including on transparency, content moderation and human rights.

FOC Members discussed the possibility of finding synergies between this initiative and the work of the FOC, and how the FOC can build on the recommendations from the Forum on Information and Democracy. FOC Members agreed that the challenge to all existing initiatives is how to translate them into concrete implementation. Canada noted that in order to be more impactful and organised, the FOC should lead with a coherent position. Members noted coordination and regulatory alignment as the value in the partnership, providing a baseline of norms when engaging internationally.

Cluster Two: Promoting Multi-stakeholder Engagement

Participants: FOC / FOC- AN / SU

Format: Hybrid

FOC and FOC-AN Members led initial internal consultations on the Ottawa Agenda, which will aim to update the [Tallinn Agenda](#), adopted by the FOC in 2014, with a new set of recommendations for freedom online. Following the consultations held in Washington DC on 6 May, Canada, FOC Chair 2022, is in the process of organising regional consultations to gather views from the community in South-East Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, the Middle East & North Africa, and Europe, which will feed into the final set of recommendations for the Ottawa Agenda. In this session, Members discussed current trends and challenges that have been exacerbated in the last decade, such as disinformation, cyber attacks, restrictions on speech, censorship, and network shutdowns. Members agreed that the FOC should be clear and focused on its core vision and messaging when it comes to the proliferation of discussions on human rights in the digital context. Members emphasised that the Ottawa Agenda serves as an opportunity to develop substantive and procedural guidance to help set the rules for both states and non-state actors to create new tech and human rights-related initiatives, while reiterating strong support for the multistakeholder model.

Cluster Three: Raising the FOC's Profile

Participants: FOC / FOC-AN / SU; Fernando Perini, International Development Research Centre (IDRC)

Format: Hybrid

Freedom Online South Initiative

The International Development Research Centre (IDRC), in collaboration with Global Partners Digital and the FOC Support Unit (SU), presented the Freedom Online South initiative to FOC and FOC-AN Members. The initiative will aim to engage beyond traditional democratic stakeholders by leveraging the Coalition's activities outlined in the POA 2022, as well as its multistakeholder network, supporting global South actors to shape global and national agendas. In the session, FOC and FOC-AN Members raised questions around the terminology used to differentiate between global North/South and emphasised the need to clearly define the goals and audience of the initiative. Canada, FOC Chair 2022, noted that the Ottawa Agenda regional consultations, taking place throughout 2022, will act as a starting point for the Freedom Online South initiative in terms of integrating diverse voices into the work of the FOC.

Open discussion on the FOC's role in the UN Secretary-General's Roadmap to Digital Cooperation and the Common Agenda

Participants: FOC / FOC-AN / SU; Ms. Maria-Francesca Spatolisano, UN Assistant Secretary-General

Format: Hybrid

In this session, Ms. Maria-Francesca Spatolisano, UN Assistant Secretary-General, presented the UN Secretary-General's Proposal to create the Global Digital Compact, which is intended to outline shared principles for an open, free and secure digital future for all. As a part of an open and inclusive approach, the Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology will undertake the leading activities in the process, by launching an [online platform](#) to gather public input, including a questionnaire on topics and principles the Compact should address, and a guide on how to organise consultations. Members discussed the process for the negotiations and emphasised the importance of a multistakeholder approach.

Annex I: Participants

Attending FOC Members:

In-person: Australia, Austria, Canada, The Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Ireland, Italy (virtual), Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mongolia, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, US

Remote: Ghana, Mongolia, Poland

Attending FOC-AN Members:

In-person: Adrian Shahbaz (Freedom House), Elonnai Hickok (independent capacity), Helen Harris (Amazon), Laura O'Brien (Access Now), Tatiana Tropina (Leiden University)

Remote: Adeboye Adegoke (Paradigm Initiative), Bernard Shen (Microsoft), Elizabeth Orembo (Global Cybersecurity Capacity Centre), Emilar Gandhi (Meta), Emma Llanso (Center for Democracy & Technology), Jason Pielemeier (Global Network Initiative), Matthew Shears (Commpoli - independent consultant), Michael Samway (The Business and Human Rights Group), Sebastian Smart (NHRI Chile), Zach Lampell (International Center for Not-for-Profit Law)

Attending guest speakers:

In-person:

- Camille Grenier, *Operations Director, Forum on Information and Democracy*

Remote:

- Fernando Perini, *Senior Program Specialist, International Development Research Centre (IDRC)*
- Isabel Ebert, *Adviser UN Human Rights' B-Tech project and Researcher Business & Human Rights in Tech at Institute for Business Ethics, University of St. Gallen*
- Lene Wendland, *Chief of Business and Human Rights Unit, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)*
- Maria-Francesca Spatolisano, *UN Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs*

Attending (in person): FOC Support Unit

Annex II: List of Guiding Questions for Cluster Two

Guiding Questions - Discussion on the Ottawa Agenda

1. What regional or global trends related to the evolution of digital technologies and the internet will have the greatest impact on human rights online and offline in the coming 5-10 years?
2. What are the most pressing challenges to the protection and promotion of human rights online, both regionally and internationally?
3. How do we define a free, open, interoperable, secure and reliable Internet at the infrastructure and governance levels? How can governments guard against Internet fragmentation?
4. Where should governments focus their attention and international assistance support in bridging digital divides and increasing digital literacy?
5. How should the FOC respond to growing attempts made to restrict democratic voices online (i.e., internet shutdowns, disinformation, spyware technologies)?
6. In what programs, initiatives or processes should the FOC engage over the next 5-10 years to help protect human rights and fundamental freedoms and advance meaningful digital inclusion?
7. How can the FOC deepen dialogue and cooperation with the private sector on the effective implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights?

Annex III: Minutes

Cluster One: Affirming and Shaping Global Norms

FOC Diplomatic Coordination in 2022

- Canada provided a mid-year review of the Program of Action (PoA) 2022.

Action>> Members to reach out to Canada or the SU if interested in supporting the work around:

- The UN Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG)
- The UN Ad Hoc Cybercrime Committee (AHC)
- The Council of Europe's Committee on Artificial Intelligence (CAI)
- The Ottawa Agenda

B-Tech Project, OHCHR and Business and Human Rights

Lene Wendland and Isabel Ebert provided a briefing on the B-Tech Project.

- In consultation with various stakeholders, B-Tech was launched in 2019 as part of OHCHR's greater engagement to advance the uptake of the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs). It focuses on four broad areas:
 - Identifying human rights risks that are directly associated with business models and encouraging companies to come up with strategies for mitigating those risks.
 - Identifying and addressing human rights risks across companies' internal processes, emphasising human rights due diligence.
 - Ensuring access to remedy in cases of business-related human rights harms, focusing on duties of states and responsibilities of business enterprises.
 - Exploring regulatory and policy responses to human rights challenges linked to digital technologies.
- B-Tech also explores investors' responsibilities in the techspace as a cross-cutting theme.
- B-Tech workstreams are mainly focused on:
 - Building constructive interactions with large tech companies, mostly based in North America and Europe, to identify challenges and opportunities for mitigating risks and for an effective implementation of the UNGPs.
 - Identifying questions investors can ask regarding implementation of human rights principles in the tech companies they are looking to invest in.
 - Identifying ways for productive stakeholder collaboration.
 - Engaging with stakeholders in the African region.
- One of B-Tech's current priorities is implementing the development of the guiding tools that aim to inform policymakers and regulators in developing regulatory frameworks for improving technology conduct in a rights-respecting way.
 - This is being achieved by:
 - Holding consultations in 2021 and 2022 to identify gaps in UNGPs' alignment with existing tech regulations.
 - Engaging with the EU Commission around EU digital services.
 - Drafting the guiding tools to be launched at the UN Forum on Business and Human Rights in November 2022.
 - Their aim is to guide certain processes, ensuring that the essence of the regulations is applied.
 - Engaging the African Union and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights.
- The key element in the UNGPs is the human rights due diligence process which allows companies to consult stakeholders on the impact of their products and services.
 - The challenges for companies and civil society organisations include:
 - A lack of understanding of specific technologies from civil society organisations.

- The need for consultations with human rights experts to take place as early as possible in the process.
- Civil society organisations being asked to sign non-disclosure agreements.
- A lack of visibility of input from civil society organisations.

FOC's Role at the Summit for Democracy (S4D)

- US noted that the S4D is expected to be held in early 2023, dates are to be confirmed.
 - Consultations with civil society organisations will be taking place ahead of it.
 - Different governments are taking the lead on organising cohorts which will include participation of civil society and industry as well.
 - Canada is leading the cohort on disinformation.
 - UK and Estonia are leading the cohort on tech and democracy.
- US noted that raising the profile of and leveraging the work of the FOC in the Summit is a priority.
 - US will be seeking to consult with FOC Members on ways to boost FOC's membership.
- US noted the deliverables of the S4D relevant to the FOC:
 - The Export Controls and Human Rights Initiative - the goal is to convene like-minded partners to develop a voluntary code of conduct which guides the application of human rights criteria to export licensing policy and practice.
 - US will be seeking to consult the FOC and the FOC-AN on this initiative.
 - The Multilateral Surge and Sustain Fund for Anti-Censorship Technology - the goal is to support critical censorship circumvention technology platforms, connecting more users to the uncensored Internet and sustaining these connections during challenging times.
 - The Surveillance Principle initiative - the focus is to lay out how governments should use surveillance technology in a manner consistent with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the rule of law.
 - US envisions a greater role for the FOC and FOC-AN in this initiative.

Copenhagen Pledge on Tech for Democracy

- Denmark provided an update on the Copenhagen Pledge on Tech for Democracy.
 - Denmark thanked Members for contributing to the drafting of the Pledge.
 - Denmark noted that it received feedback from more than 150 stakeholders, including governments, companies and civil society organisations during the drafting process.
 - Denmark is planning to hold a stocktaking event to track progress and lessons learned from the Tech for Democracy initiative and to identify a way for enhancing multistakeholder engagement.
 - Denmark will be presenting the Copenhagen Pledge on Tech for Democracy at HRC50 in Geneva and at UNGA in New York.

Spotlight on Geneva and Paris Diplomatic Networks

- Geneva Diplomatic Network
 - Canada provided an overview of the network's activities:
 - A virtual briefing on the topic of disinformation in the context of HRC engagement and Ukraine's resolution on the role of states in countering the negative impact of disinformation on human rights (A/HRC/49/L.31/Rev.1) was held on 21 March, including presentations from civil society and the private sector.
 - Ahead of HRC50, Canada is spearheading the Freedom of Expression resolution, which will be focusing on digital inclusion and digital literacy.
 - Canada noted the role of the FOC is being discussed.
 - FOC is also looking to advance the PoA 2022 priorities at the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) in July, in New York, through a potential side event organised by Canada and the Netherlands which links to some of the priorities in Geneva.

- Silicon Valley Working Group
 - Canada noted that the Group held learning calls on civic participation and safety, including calls with TikTok on their approach to content moderation and with Cloudflare on blocking on the DNS level.

FOC Membership

- Canada noted that attendees at the regional consultation on the Ottawa Agenda held in Washington DC highlighted the importance of increasing FOC membership.
- Canada provided an overview of the membership application process ([Stockholm Terms of Reference](#), “Membership” (pp. 1-2)).
 - Canada noted that only states can gain Observer status pursuant to the current policy of the Stockholm ToR.

FOC Global Campaign on Digital Inclusion

- Canada noted that:
 - Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mélanie Joly, will launch the FOC's Global Campaign on Digital Inclusion during [RightsCon 2022](#). *[Please note this has already taken place.]*
 - Canada is seeking to build momentum at RightsCon to draw attention to the FOC.
 - Canada will be asking the wider audience to support the campaign on Twitter, encouraging Members to amplify the FOC's messages on Twitter, along with [#MyDigitalInclusion](#) and [#RightsCon](#).
- SU thanked all Members who submitted videos, and provided more details on the Campaign:
 - The media pack, circulated by the SU, was designed to support Members' communications colleagues in sharing campaign messages.
 - To ensure the campaign reaches a wider and diverse audience, the SU will be working closely with RightsCon to feature FOC content throughout the conference.
 - SU encouraged Members to support the FOC by amplifying the campaign's content.
 - SU will be actively tagging Members via FOC's social media profiles.
- Canada noted that the launch video will be translated in English and French and encouraged Members sending their videos to speak in the language of their choice.
- Canada noted that outreach to other stakeholder groups, including civil society organisations and industry, will be conducted after the launch at RightsCon.
- Canada will be looking to present another video at the Ministerial meeting, which will likely be held towards the end of the year.

Action>> Canada encouraged Members and their missions abroad to participate in FOC's Global Campaign on Digital Inclusion either by sharing a video, photo or tweet.

Cluster Two: Promoting Multi-stakeholder Engagement

Discussion on the Ottawa Agenda: Trends, Challenges, and the Future Work of the FOC

[Guiding questions available [here](#).]

- Canada provided an update on the process of adopting the Ottawa Agenda:
 - Canada noted its commitment to launching a multistakeholder process to develop a new set of recommendations for freedom online which will update the Tallin Agenda with the Ottawa Agenda.
 - Canada noted it is in the process of organising regional consultations to gather views from the community in South-East Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, the Middle East & North Africa, and Europe, which will feed into the final set of recommendations for the Ottawa Agenda.
 - Canada already held a first domestic consultation in French, and a roundtable meeting in Washington DC in May, in collaboration with the Centre for Democracy and Technology (CDT).
 - Key takeaways and questions from the Washington roundtable include:
 - FOC should not focus solely on diplomatic coordination, but should also act as a vehicle for state accountability.
 - The Ottawa Agenda could be expanded beyond the FOC to include other like-minded initiatives.
 - FOC could be more forward-leaning, e.g. looking into Web 3.0.
 - The alignment between the FOC and the Declaration on the Future of the Internet.
 - Canada noted that reports from each regional consultation will be posted on the FOC's website.
- SU provided an introduction to the discussion, noting that:
 - All consultations the FOC and Canada host in 2022 will inform the drafting process of the Ottawa Agenda.
 - The Tallinn Agenda was developed in 2014, during the Estonian Chairship, through a multistakeholder process that took six months.
 - The Ottawa Agenda regional consultations serve as an opportunity to revisit these recommendations and see to what extent the Tallinn Agenda needs to be reviewed.
 - Some of the trends that have occurred since then include:
 - The acceleration of digitalisation.
 - The exacerbation of existing challenges by the Covid-19 pandemic.
 - The overall move from exclusively web-based experience to ubiquitous connectivity, which increases the economic, social, and cultural implications of digital technologies, and impacts the types of rights that are being affected.
 - The emergence of new threats and challenges, such as disinformation, cyber attacks, restriction on speech, censorship, and network shutdowns, leading to efforts to address these challenges.
 - The problem of regulatory measures and efforts to curtail some of these challenges often have worse consequences than the challenge they try to address.
- Australia noted that:
 - In 2021, Australia released its Cyber Engagement Strategy, which sets out a vision of how the international digital environment will evolve in the next 10 years.
 - The digital environment is changing, which raises the question of capacity-building programs and how to engage with different parts of the world.
 - Regulation can present a major issue that can impact human rights.
 - There have been two major outlooks on digital technologies from regulators: a tech-utopian and a more dystopian vision.

- There has been a proliferation of discussions occurring internationally around these issues, e.g. in the FOC, OECD on AI, UNESCO, and the question is how to navigate these discussions and support efforts to regulate properly.
 - The conversation is moving from whether to regulate to how to regulate.
 - There has been a convergence of tech that is defining the national landscape, and it is no longer viable to look at tech discussions as separate tracks, since these all have implications on each other.
- Members discussed the issue of Internet fragmentation.
 - FOC-AN Members emphasised the need for clarity when using terminology in regards to Internet fragmentation (e.g. precision in defining whether this refers to splinternet, sovereign Internet, regulatory fragmentation that splits in terms of human rights, preventing the users from receiving and imparting information, or different standards that prevent the Internet from being interoperable).
 - Netherlands highlighted whether governments can guard against Internet fragmentation; the ideal vision is an open, secure, interoperable and reliable internet.
 - SU noted that the Coalition does not currently have a consensus position on Internet fragmentation and that a planned IGF session on this topic will be an opportunity to further explore the topic.
- Netherlands and Sweden emphasised the primary position of the FOC is that human rights apply both offline and online, and that it is important to articulate how the rule of law should be applied when discussing issues like Internet shutdowns, disinformation, or spyware technologies.
- Italy noted that:
 - The Ottawa Agenda serves as an opportunity for the FOC to establish itself as a platform to defend human rights online.
 - There has been a proliferation of fora where these issues are being dealt with in the last 10 years, but the advantage of the FOC is in bringing all these workflows together and having a foundational overview of human rights issues.
 - By adopting the Ottawa Agenda, the FOC has a chance to ensure consistency, using it to bring other countries on board - either in joining the FOC or consulting when strategic moves are being made.
- Germany noted that:
 - FOC should be clear on the core content and to remain strong and focused on core messaging regarding the proliferation of formats of the discussion.
 - From a broader UN context, social and cultural rights are discussed much more as being in opposition to freedoms - the FOC should reflect whether prioritising social and cultural rights before freedom of expression is helpful.
- US noted that it would be helpful to provide broad principles and more actionable points in the Ottawa Agenda.
- SU noted that sharing best-practices and capacity-building programs could be a potential area to explore, as global South countries respond to the FOC more favourably when the FOC is sharing information about its programs and activities.
- FOC-AN Members noted that at the international level, there is a growing tendency towards integrating a human rights perspective to sustainable development, e.g. the UN HRC resolution on the promotion, protection and enjoyment of human rights on the Internet ([A/HRC/47/22](#)), which mandated the office of the High Commissioner to focus on Internet shutdowns, specifically in terms of economic, cultural and social rights.
 - The High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), is focusing on SDG 5, gender equality, and SDG 4, equality and education; these issues can directly link to issues such as Internet shutdowns and connectivity.
- Canada noted that:
 - The consultations organised in Washington DC and Canada highlighted some positive obligations that countries should have, e.g. diversity of content online.
 - There is a need to discuss how to foster ecosystems that are more conducive to local languages, and how to frame the Ottawa agenda so relevant audiences feel represented.
- SU noted that Canada and the SU are already working on mapping existing FOC language that will aim to feed into diplomatic coordination efforts.

- Denmark noted that:
 - FOC is a platform to share best practices and lessons learned.
 - In order to translate policies into legislation, it is important to keep the messaging simple to understand.
 - FOC-AN Members reiterated the importance of clear messaging in terms of terminology.
 - It is important to ensure that shared democratic values and a human rights-based approach apply in the design, development, deployment, and use of digital technologies.
- Netherlands noted it is important to make a distinction between the different layers of Internet infrastructure to avoid the risk of wrong messaging with unfavourable implications.
- Canada noted that:
 - There were discussions on the scope of rights when negotiating the [Helsinki Declaration](#), with the accepted phrasing being “human rights in online and digital context”, which can lead to confusion.
 - The Ottawa Agenda is a vehicle to think about the way forward for the FOC in terms of its scope and intent.
 - During the regional consultations, Canada will be seeking the answer on what should be the core function and value of the FOC.
- FOC-AN Members noted that:
 - There is a push from governments, media and tech companies to shift attention to newer areas before strong foundations for the Internet are built, and noted it is important not to lose sight of advancing all human rights, not just digital rights.
 - Governments around the world are pushing regulations on technology companies, which have an impact on civil and political liberties.
 - There has been more governmental intervention in the digital sphere since the adoption of the Tallinn Agenda.
 - The Tallinn Agenda is missing a clear commitment to digital inclusion, as opposed to the PoA 2022, which should be considered when drafting the Ottawa Agenda.
 - The Ottawa Agenda could be an opportunity to focus on the positive obligations of governments to foster a more diverse and reliable information space, and point to good practices of human-rights respecting regulation to guide other governments.
 - The Ottawa agenda could centralise the necessity to build a strong, human rights-based framework for technologies of today that can serve to regulate technologies of tomorrow.
 - If the focus is technologies instead of human rights, regulation and governance efforts are always too late.
 - It would be useful to understand how the Ottawa Agenda will align with different initiatives and where there is clear overlap.
 - The regional approach regarding consultations is useful, as there are a number of trends that come in nuanced ways in different regions.
 - The Ottawa Agenda serves as an opportunity to come up with substantive and procedural guidance to help set the rules for both states and non-state actors to create new tech and human rights-related initiatives, while reiterating strong support for the multistakeholder model.
 - It should be clear who the audience for the Ottawa Agenda is to help with the framing of the document.
 - There is a proliferation of different processes and initiatives that are dealing with digital issues, which calls for a consistent approach around these conversations with a clear strategy to avoid the risk of regulatory divergence and contradictory guidance.
 - Ensuring connectivity should be a priority, so empowerment and rights can be realised.
 - FOC should double down on its primary mission, protecting Internet freedom and human rights online, and build on what has already been asserted and adopted by the FOC and other like-minded initiatives in terms of principles and values.
 - FOC should focus on the reasons human rights are important, and how these could lead to realisation of rights, such as education, empowerment and economic growth.

- FOC can also gain understanding of challenges and solutions around digital issues, such as disinformation, cybersecurity, and combating hate speech online, from non-member countries.

Action>> Members are encouraged to reach out to Canada with questions or feedback in written format to further inform the process of adopting the Ottawa Agenda.

Cluster Three: Raising the FOC's Profile

Freedom Online South Initiative

- Fernando Perini, International Development Research Centre (IDRC) noted that:
 - IDRC is looking to advance and expand global South leadership on digital topics, and highlighted there is room for collaboration with the FOC due to similar agendas.
 - FOC's PoA 2022 aligns with IDRC's values; there are a number of actions that can be taken to expand and address the challenges outlined in the PoA.
 - The main objectives of the Freedom Online South initiative are to:
 - Mobilise knowledge from the global South experts to expand the reach of the FOC and shape its work in the next decade, bringing actors from the global South into the work of the FOC.
 - Promote digital inclusion by strengthening southern voices in drafting and promoting the Ottawa Agenda.
 - Ramp up the collaboration between the FOC and networks in African, Latin American and Asian regions, as well as to potentially expand FOC membership in those regions, ensuring an agenda that fits their needs.
 - IDRC has been working with the FOC SU and Global Partners Digital to expand on this initiative.
- UK noted this initiative should consider addressing global South needs to incentivise their engagement.
- Canada noted that:
 - The goal of the Ottawa Agenda regional consultations is to build a community of experts from the global South, and have their voices heard.
 - The regional consultations will act as a starting point beyond the Ottawa Agenda in terms of integration of diverse voices.
 - Canada aims to invite non-digital partners to participate in the regional consultations in order to expand the community of experts, making sure those voices are present in relevant conversations.
- Italy raised that:
 - FOC should consider reviewing the global North/South framing.
 - The focus should be on identifying targets of outreach.
- Canada noted that:
 - FOC's engagement through its diplomatic networks, especially in the context of HRC, is valuable in making connections with countries that are interested in FOC's work.
 - PoA 2022 outlines the use of a toolkit, which would make FOC language easily accessible, explaining in a concise and clear way what the FOC does.
 - The Global Campaign on Digital Inclusion will also aim to amplify voices, not just of FOC Members, but of participants on the local level as well.
 - FOC should do more outreach outside of its membership, as it remains a value-based organisation at its core.
- Germany noted that:
 - The regional consultations are a good step forward in terms of developing a multistakeholder approach and outreach.
 - A valuable output would be to assess whether new members are joining from a value-based perspective.
 - Capacity building needs to be part of the conversation when engaging with governments.
- Switzerland welcomed the efforts and noted that:
 - It would be valuable to see how the FOC can reinforce bilateral engagement.
 - It is important for the governments to reiterate the right aims and messaging, in both bilateral engagement and in the regional consultations.
- FOC-AN Members raised:
 - That it is essential to consider how civil society and industry participation is envisioned in the initiative, and how different stakeholders can input into its agenda.
 - Questions around the use of global South/North terminology.

- That it is important to include representatives from the global South into planning of this work to identify how they want to be approached and included.
- That the Task Force on Digital Equality has been discussing diversity, equity and inclusion through:
 - Infrastructure questions and tools that allow diversity and inclusion.
 - Approaches to policies, ensuring that the values of the FOC are emphasised.
 - Continuous learning and improving a knowledge-based approach to relevant topics.

Open discussion on the FOC's role in the UN Secretary-General's Roadmap to Digital Cooperation and the Common Agenda

In the last session of the retreat, FOC and FOC-AN Members were joined by Maria-Francesca Spatolisano, UN Assistant Secretary-General, to discuss the UN Secretary-General's Roadmap to Digital Cooperation and the Common Agenda, and to identify where the FOC can meaningfully engage.

Following the political declaration adopted at the occasion of the United Nations' 75th anniversary in September 2020, the Secretary-General in September 2021 released his report "Our Common Agenda". The Common Agenda proposes a Global Digital Compact to be agreed at the Summit of the Future in September 2023 through a technology track involving all stakeholders: governments, the United Nations system, the private sector (including tech companies), civil society, grass-roots organisations, academia, and individuals, including youth.

Ms. Spatolisano presented the UN Secretary General's Proposal to create the Global Digital Compact, which is intended to outline shared principles for an open, free and secure digital future for all, which aligns with values promoted by the FOC. Ms. Spatolisano noted that the UN is interested in hearing ideas about what can be included in the Global Digital Compact. Therefore, as part of an open and inclusive approach, the Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology, who will undertake the leading activities in the process, launched an [online platform](#) to gather public input, including a questionnaire on topics and principles the Compact should address, and a guide on how to organise consultations. Members discussed the process for the negotiations and emphasised the importance of a multistakeholder approach. Ms. Spatolisano highlighted that engagement by Member states is essential, but other stakeholders, e.g. companies, civil society organisations and human right defenders, should all have a role. FOC was encouraged to consider organising consultations and submitting input to the Global Digital Compact.

Ms. Spatolisano informed the participants of the following upcoming events related to the Global Digital Compact and the work of the Coalition:

- The Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology will convene a meeting on digital human rights and a recommendation group during RightsCon, providing a session on the Global Digital Compact. *[Please note this meeting has already taken place, the description of the session can be viewed [here](#)]*
- Another session related to the Global Digital Compact will be held at IGF 2022, providing additional opportunities for stakeholders to provide input.

For more information on the process and timing, Members are invited to visit the following links:

- [Global Digital Compact online platform](#)
- [Our Common Agenda Report](#).