

Friends of the Chair Monthly Call #6 (August 2022)

Wednesday, 31 August, 14:00 UTC

Attending: Canada, Estonia, Ghana, Germany, Netherlands, Switzerland, UK, US; Support Unit (SU)

Welcome

Housekeeping

- Outstanding items from Friends of the Chair (FotC) Monthly Call #5
 - **Action>>** Members are invited to share feedback and takeaways from the Strategic Retreat in Paris in writing, to help inform organising the Strategy and Coordination Meeting in Rome in October.
 - **Action>>** Members are encouraged to reach out to Canada or the Support Unit (SU) by **Friday, 30 September** if they are interested in chairing the Silicon Valley Working Group in 2023.
- SU noted:
 - It will be conducting a scoping trip to the US in September.
 - Germany requested that SU reports on the activities it undertakes in the US.
 - The next FotC call will be rescheduled from Wednesday, 28 September to Tuesday, 27 September; SU will be notifying Members via email and a calendar invite.

Discussion Items

- [Stockholm Terms of Reference](#) (ToR) Observer status language
 - Canada noted the discussion on Observer status language was initiated after a recognised need among Members to review the existing terms for becoming an FOC Observer, and after it was further discussed at the Paris Strategy Retreat.
 - On the proposed ToR amendments, Canada noted it agreed with Germany's edits, which indicate that an Observer should not be permitted to serve on FotC.
 - Switzerland noted the term "relevant authorities" might be unclear and suggested using: "partially recognised states or other entities" instead.
 - UK noted the latter term is ambiguous and while it prefers "relevant authorities", this it is not a red-line.
 - US noted the term "relevant authorities" is language derived from the [Declaration for the Future of the Internet \(DFI\)](#).
 - Netherlands noted it substantively agrees with the amendments, but there is a need to find a better term.

Action>> Members are invited to provide final comments and feedback on the ToR amendments from the FotC by **COB Friday, 9 September**.

Action>> Members from EU member states are encouraged to reach out to Canada by **Friday, 30 September** if they are interested in co-leading on the ToR amendments.

- Rome Strategy & Coordination Meeting (SCM) agenda
 - Canada noted the following:
 - Day 0, Tuesday, 18 October, will feature an informal FotC meeting hosted by the UK.
 - Day 1, Wednesday, 19 October, will feature three clusters based on the Program of Action (PoA) 2022.

- Cluster 1: open to FOC Members only, with discussions focusing on Membership, FOC engagement in processes, and diplomatic coordination.
- Clusters 2 and 3: open to both FOC and Advisory Network (AN) Members, including negotiations of the Ottawa Agenda, and discussions focusing on raising the FOC's profile, as well as the 2023 PoA under the US Chairship.
- Day 2, Thursday, 20 October, will feature an FOC Expo with public-facing sessions covering the FOC sub-entities' work, as well as a private, closed-door meeting with the UN Tech Envoy where the FOC will present its input to the Global Digital Compact (GDC).
- Canada noted the first draft of the Ottawa agenda is planned to be shared by early/mid September.

Program of Action 2022

- **Shaping Global Norms**
 - Capital-level diplomatic coordination
 - Canada provided an update on the FOC's input to the GDC, explaining the intent to present the FOC's submission to the Tech Envoy at the SCM in Rome on Day 2, Thursday, 20 October.
 - Canada noted it had invited the FOC sub-entities to submit input to the Chair and the SU, which will be turned into an executive summary, complemented by pre-approved FOC language from past statements, before submitted to the Tech Envoy.
 - Diplomatic Networks
 - Geneva
 - Canada noted it is working with Global Partners Digital (GPD) on an event on the margins of the UN Human Rights Council (HRC)'s 51st session, focusing on digital technologies and the principles of non-discrimination under international human rights law, to be held on Wednesday, 5 October.
 - New York
 - Canada noted it is working with the Netherlands on a hybrid side-event related to disinformation at the UN General Assembly (UNGA) high-level week, which would feature the FOC, the Media Freedom Coalition (MFC), and International IDEA, as well as ministerial-level participation.

Action>> Members of FOC Task Forces and Working Groups are invited to submit their input for the Global Digital Compact (GDC) to Canada and the SU by **COB Wednesday, 21 September**. *[Please note that the deadline was extended from 15 to 21 September following a request.]*

- **Promoting Multistakeholder Engagement**
 - Task Forces / Working Groups
 - Task Force on Digital Equality (TFDE)
 - Ghana noted TFDE is discussing next steps for the Freedom Online South stakeholder workshop event at the SCM in Rome.
 - Ghana noted the Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business (MCRB) has expressed interest in cooperating with TFDE. TFDE has shared

- the external engagement questionnaire, developed to assess external stakeholders and their commitment to principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- TFDE is planning to host a session on gendered disinformation at the SCM in Rome, and is currently finalising the concept note.
 - Task Force on Internet Shutdowns (TFIS)
 - US noted TFIS is finalising the new version of the Best Practices document.
 - US noted Access Now is finalising a document on judicial decisions on Internet shutdowns, to be circulated to TFIS Members by early September.
 - US noted TFIS' GDC submission is in progress, and that a side-event at the SCM in Rome is being organised.
 - US noted it is updating the concept note to reflect the outcomes of the TFIS co-Chairs retreat.
 - US shared TFIS is considering implementing an informal rapid coordination channel.
 - Task Force on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights (TF-AIR)
 - TF-AIR is currently drafting its input to the GDC.
 - Silicon Valley Working Group (SVWG)
 - SVWG submitted input for the GDC to Canada.
 - SU has shared an open call for FOC Members to join the SVWG by Thursday, 1 September.
 - Advisory Network
 - Canada noted the AN has provided feedback on the bi/multilateral engagement toolkits that had been developed by Canada to improve accessibility of FOC language for diplomats.
 - Canada further noted that relevant language, provided by the AN, outside of the agreed-upon FOC language has been moved to the footnotes. Canada noted FOC Members are to decide whether to include these in their bi/multilateral engagements.
 - SU suggested that Members can test the effectiveness of the toolkits by having a few FOC Members commit to piloting the toolkits.
 - SU noted the AN held a consultation call with US to inform the 2023 Chairship in lieu of their August monthly call.
 - AN submitted their advice in writing to the US following the consultation call.
 - **Ramping up Advocacy, Communication, and Outreach**
 - **Advocacy, Communication, and Outreach**
 - Ottawa Agenda
 - Canada noted the first draft of the Ottawa Agenda is going through an internal approval process, with plans to circulate it to the FOC by early/mid September.
 - Canada noted the second draft is planned to be negotiated at the SCM in Rome on Day 1, Wednesday, 19 October.

Chairship / Program of Action 2023

- US noted the internal US Strategic Review, which will inform the development of the 2023 PoA, is being finalised.

AOB

- Netherlands noted there has been some hesitance from Ethiopian non-state stakeholders to participate in this year's Internet Governance Forum (IGF), and inquired about the FOC's involvement in the forum.
 - Canada noted the FOC Open Forum session on Internet fragmentation has been approved, and will take place in virtual format on Tuesday, 29 November.
 - Germany noted they are planning an IGF session with Ghana on AI.

Action>> Members to reach out to Canada by **Friday, 30 September** if they are interested in informing the FOC Open Forum at the upcoming Internet Governance Forum.