Freedom Online Coalition
Strategy & Coordination Meeting, May 2024

Thursday 30 May & Friday 31 May | Geneva, Switzerland

The first FOC Strategy and Coordination Meeting (SCM) in 2024 took place on 30-31 May in Geneva, Switzerland, preceded by an FOC Steering Committee meeting on the morning of Day 1. The SCM included in-person and virtual participation from 29 FOC Members, 1 Observer, and 21 FOC Advisory Network Members.

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Session Summaries[1]

Day 1, Thursday 30 May

Steering Committee Meeting
12:30 - 14:00 CET
Participants: Steering Committee; Support Unit
Format: Hybrid

Ahead of the broader Freedom Online Coalition (FOC) Strategy and Coordination Meeting (SCM), Steering Committee (SC) Members gathered to discuss FOC coordination around the Global Digital Compact, discussions on which continued during Day 2 of the SCM with the broader Coalition and FOC Advisory Network (FOC-AN); the work of the FOC sub-entities; outreach to existing and prospective Members that took place through the FOC Regional Dialogues in Accra, on the margins of DRIF 2024, and São Paulo, on the margins of NETmundial+10, and how to continue such outreach efforts; FOC engagement in upcoming events, including IGF 2024, to which the FOC has submitted three session proposals, and RightsCon 2025, for which the Coalition plans to submit at least one proposal; and the recent FOC-AN elections to establish the 2024-2026 cohort. Regarding the latter, the SC accepted the proposed six candidates that were elected by the election committee to join the cohort, under the condition that a comprehensive review of the FOC-AN Terms of Reference is conducted collaboratively between the FOC-AN and the SC to ensure concerns around regional diversity and stakeholder balance are addressed in subsequent elections.

Action>> SC Members to reach out to the Netherlands on supporting outreach efforts.
Action>> SU to inform FOC and FOC-AN of the outcome of the FOC-AN election.
Action>> SU to liaise with the FOC-AN and SC on next steps regarding conducting a comprehensive review of the FOC-AN Terms of Reference.

FOC Member Meeting
14:30 - 16.30 CET
Participants: FOC Members and Observers; Support Unit
Format: Hybrid

Paul Bekkers, Ambassador of the Netherlands in Geneva provided welcome remarks to FOC Members. The Support Unit (SU) shared housekeeping updates, noting the most recent FOC Member being Cabo Verde and the upcoming 2025 FOC Chair Estonia. The SU updated Members on the current FOC financial state and on the progress of implementing the Program of Action (PoA) 2024, highlighting goals and priorities under the Dutch Chairship, Membership and Observership, and upcoming activities.

Members discussed Goal 1, 3 and 4 of the PoA 2024, covering respectively the Global Digital Compact (GDC) coordination, Regional Dialogues' outcomes & FOC outreach efforts, and capacity building within the FOC. Under AOB, the FOC Chair highlighted the FOC session proposal submitted to the IGF, focusing on human rights and technical standards for digital technologies, and the potential development of a joint statement.

Action>> Members to consider contributing funding to the FOC budget to address the current deficit.
Action>> Members to explore next steps to operationalise capacity-building within the FOC.
Action>> The Netherlands to follow up with next steps for the development of a joint statement on human rights and technical standards for digital technologies.

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[1] Please refer to Annex 2 for the minutes of the SC, FOC, and Joint Roundtable meetings.

Geneva Diplomatic Network Meeting
14:30 - 16.30 CET
Participants: Geneva Diplomatic Network; Support Unit
Format: Hybrid

The Netherlands provided a recap of FOC activities on the capital and Geneva network level, highlighting the coordination around digital technology governance processes, namely the Global Digital Compact, in the form of workshops, consultations, and strategic discussions that have taken place in the first half of the year. The Geneva diplomatic network went on to discuss upcoming activities set out in the diplomatic network work plan, and opportunities where the FOC can contribute in advancing human rights in the context of digital technologies. Regarding FOC engagement in the UN Human Rights Council (HRC), the Netherlands noted a potential joint statement during one of the upcoming HRC sessions, as well as a briefing for FOC Members with the OHCHR on how the FOC could support its work.

In terms of upcoming events, resolutions, and reports during HRC56, Members noted the following:
- A **side-event** co-sponsored by the Republic of Korea and the Netherlands on digital media and information literacy in the context of AI, which would be complementary to the Interactive Dialogues on Freedom of Expression, and New and Emerging Technologies;
- **Resolutions**
  - **Resolution on Freedom of opinion and expression**
    - The resolution will be presented by a cross regional core group of Brazil, Canada, Fiji, Namibia, Sweden and the Kingdom of the Netherlands.
    - The previous iteration of the resolution (50/15), which focused on digital, media and information literacy can be found [here](#).
    - The resolution will highlight the *power of voice*, namely how freedom of opinion is an enabler for the enjoyment of other human rights. It will build on previous resolutions and their agreed language with the aim of reinforcing the core elements of the right and call for legal and policy measures to protect, promote and fulfil the right.
    - At the same time it will shed light on the emerging and mounting threats facing the enjoyment of freedom of expression worldwide, as well those defending freedom of expression, in particularly journalists and other media workers and highlight ways of addressing these threats while supporting the effective enjoyment of freedom of expression;
  - **Resolution on Online sexual and gender-based violence**
    - New initiative presented by Belgium. The Core Group is currently being constituted and will be of a cross-regional nature.
    - The resolution "Online sexual and gender-based violence" will be a one-off, short and procedural resolution to request the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee to prepare a study on online sexual and gender-based violence, in order to provide a better understanding of the issue, to highlight good practices around the globe in tackling it, and to propose recommendations on how to address online sexual and gender-based violence.
    - The Advisory Committee will be requested to take into account relevant work already done by stakeholders, and to seek the contribution of States, United Nations agencies, international and regional organizations, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the special procedures of the Human Rights Council, the treaty bodies, civil society, the private sector, etc.
  - **Resolution on the promotion, protection and enjoyment of human rights on the Internet**.
    - This is a substantive Triannual resolution run by a Core Group of Sweden, Brazil, Nigeria, Tunisia, United States of America. The Core Group is still discussing internally on the timing of the resolution, i.e. whether they will present it during HRC56 or HRC57 with HRC57 looking more likely.

- - **Resolution on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of peaceful protest**
    - Biannual substantive resolution run by Switzerland, Costa Rica.
    - The previous iteration of the resolution (50/21), which was adopted by consensus can be found here.
    - The resolution will be based on the Model Protocol for Law Enforcement Officials to Promote and Protect Human Rights in the Context of Peaceful Protests develop by the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression as requested by 50/21 and its annexes, which includes *component 2: A principled-based guidance for the human-rights compliant use of digital technologies in the context of peaceful protests.*
  - **Resolution on Independence and impartiality of the judiciary, jurors and assessors, and the independence of lawyers**.
    - Biannual substantive resolution presented by a cross-regional core group consisting of Australia, Botswana, Hungary, Maldives, Mexico and Thailand.
    - The previous iteration of the text can be found here (50/5).
    - The theme of this year's resolution will be Artificial Intelligence.
- **Reports and Interactive Dialogues**
  - A/HRC/56/45 – OHCHR report - Mapping the work and recommendation of the HRC, OHCHR, the treaty bodies and the special procedures of the Human Rights Council in the field of human rights and new and emerging digital technologies, including artificial intelligence (*not yet available*).
  - A/HRC/56/49 – Report of the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity – Protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in relation to the human rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association.
    - Report looks extensively at the promotion and protection of human rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association online.
    - The report will be presented by the IE SOGIE during an Interactive Dialogue on 20 June.
  - A/HRC/56/53 – Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression – Journalists in exile
    - The report focuses on journalists in exile who face a variety of physical, digital and legal threats and analyses the responses of States and companies to these threats and challenges. Special Rapporteur also pays attention to both the possibilities created by digital technologies for journalists to continue their work even when in exile, as well as the digital threats they face, including online violence and digital surveillance.
    - There are specific sections of the report dedicated to digital threat: online violence, surveillance and disruption, and to the responsibility of digital technology companies in this area. The report also includes several recommendations clearly related to the protection of human rights online and in the digital age.
    - The Special Rapporteur will present the report on Wednesday 26 June followed by an Interactive Dialogue.
  - A/HRC/56/68 – Report of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance – Artificial intelligence and racial discrimination (*not yet available*).

In terms of UPR engagement, the Netherlands noted potential information-sharing opportunities with the FOC Advisory Network, which would entail general recommendations on issues related to digital technologies and human rights. The Netherlands also noted FOC engagement on the topic of technical standards and human rights in the form of sessions such as the WSIS session on the "Impact of Technical Standards on Human Rights in the Case of Digital Technologies", as well as a proposed IGF session with a similar focus, with the possibility of issuing a joint statement before the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA) in October. Additionally, the Netherlands flagged the potential of bringing a human rights perspective to disarmament discussions, namely those on the use of new and emerging technology in times of conflict, highlighting the 34th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (ICRC Conference) as an opportunity to strengthen international humanitarian and human rights law in respect to this issue.

Action>> The Republic of Korea and the Netherlands to follow up with more information on the UN HRC56 side-event on digital literacy and information integrity in the context of AI.

Action>> The Netherlands to follow up with more information regarding FOC engagement on technical standards and human rights, including next steps regarding a joint statement.

Action>> The Netherlands to follow up regarding FOC engagement in the ICRC Conference.

FOC Advisory Network Meeting
14:30 - 16.30 CET
Participants: FOC-AN; Support Unit
Format: Hybrid

The FOC-AN's meeting focused on preparation for the Joint FOC/FOC-AN Roundtable Meeting, including discussing the background note on implementing Goal 1 of the PoA 2024. Following a request from the Netherlands, FOC Chair 2024, FOC-AN Members agreed to provide commentary to the document prior to the Joint Roundtable Meeting.

In addition, the FOC-AN discussed potential proactive advice to the FOC on IGF 2024. Members discussed civil society and other stakeholder engagement positions within the group, also noting the impact of the location change for RightsCon 2025. The FOC-AN agreed that a statement articulating issues including human rights record of hosts, security and safety of participants, as well as damage to the credibility of the multistakeholder approach and selection process should be prepared for the Joint Roundtable.

The FOC-AN then discussed the preparations for the presentation on the Diversity Equality, Inclusion Accessibility (DEIA) report, commissioned by the past Task Force on Digital Equality, to the FOC at the Joint Roundtable. FOC-AN thanked the Netherlands for the inclusion of the DEIA report in the 2024 PoA and the SCM agenda. FOC-AN also discussed upcoming pieces of proactive advice on Digital Public Infrastructure and on the multistakeholder model on Internet governance, agreeing to continue working on the documents. The FOC-AN further discussed their draft work plan to map out objectives for the remainder of 2024 in conjunction with the current PoA.

The FOC-AN discussed the recent application process for new FOC-AN members, including the possibility of commissioning DEIA consultants to produce a report on a diversity model for the FOC-AN. Points raised for discussion included: expansion of the application form, agreed and formalised process and principles, a clear criteria measurement and an inclusive approach to onboarding. The FOC-AN agreed the correspondence for the unsuccessful applicants would include details on how to engage with the FOC and FOC-AN, with a route into the Task Forces and opportunities for engagement open to externals. The successful applicants, as part of the onboarding programme, should be included in all activities of the FOC-AN, and potentially matched with a contact point in the FOC-AN to support the onboarding process. The FOC-AN also discussed the independence of the FOC-AN within the FOC, noting the importance of transparency and open dialogue on FOC-AN processes and decision-making.

Action >> FOC-AN to continue drafting the Proactive Advice on Digital Public Infrastructure.
Action >> FOC-AN to continue drafting the Paper on the Multistakeholder Model of Internet Governance.
Action >> FOC-AN to finalise the Draft Work Plan for Supporting PoA 2024 Implementation.
Action >> FOC-AN to mobilise around onboarding new members following the official announcement.

Day 2, Friday 31 May

FOC Strategic Discussion on Key Internet and Digital Technology Processes
09:15 - 11:15 CET
Participants: FOC Capital; Geneva Diplomatic Network; Observers; Support Unit
Format: Hybrid

FOC Members engaged in a strategic discussion on key Internet and digital tech governance processes, namely the UN GDC and the Pact for the Future. The objective of the discussion was to gather Members' feedback on the proposals for FOC engagement outlined in the [Discussion Paper](#) (p.14 of the doc pack), and discuss key opportunities, challenges, and concerns from Members around the two texts and the upcoming negotiations.

Group 1 discussed **human rights**, and concluded that, considering the difficulty of getting human rights language adopted, the group is overall content with the references to human rights, with additional calls for mainstreaming language and more explicit references to international human rights law. Participants highlighted the lack of references to specific marginalised communities, including people with disabilities, in the text, calling for more inclusion, as well as clarifying the meaning of a technology being "accessible", taking into account language and how it impacts inclusion and creates divides. Members noted the need to be more vigilant on supporting language on gender, specifically language on tech-facilitated gender based violence that was accepted through the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). In regards to the Digital Human Rights Advisory Service (DHRAS) proposed by the OHCHR, Members were generally supportive, with some concerns around the name, which might imply human rights do not apply online in the same way they do offline and vice versa. Participants also noted the importance of clarifying what is meant by a "multistakeholder" approach and perspective, and noted it is necessary to formulate arguments for defending pieces of the text relating to human rights that Members think should be kept.

Group 2 discussed **connectivity and digital public goods (DPG),** with participants noting that the key points identified in the Discussion Paper serve as good guidelines to prepare FOC Members' negotiators for this topic. Participants discussed the notion of digital commons, with some Members noting it is too specific to mention, and others noting the desire to specifically refer to them as a form of DPG which supports the advancement of the SDGs. Members noted the need to specifically reference international human rights law in sections, eg. para 17(c), and to consistently use language in terms of safeguards throughout the text.

Group 3 discussed **digital trust and safety** and **information integrity**, indicating that there is need for more explicit references to international human rights law, echoing remarks from other groups, and highlighting that references to specific rights would be useful. The group noted vague language around encryption and surveillance, and reiterated the importance of referencing relevant laws, specifically international human rights law, on these issues and throughout the text, as well as ensuring the framing and language used does not open up a "backdoor" for impending human rights violations, specifically of freedom of expression (eg. in para 29).

Group 4 discussed **governance of emerging technologies, including AI**, noting the various ongoing discussions on the UN's mandate as it relates to AI governance, including through the High-Level Advisory Body on AI. The group noted the need to strengthen multistakeholder approaches for governance in the text, as well as support for existing structures and mechanisms within the UN system, such as in the ITU and UNESCO, to avoid duplication and power centralisation. There was disagreement within the group on the proposals regarding the Scientific Panel on AI and Emerging Technologies, with some Members considering it would be a low hanging fruit to agree upon, while others raised concerns around politicisation and duplication of existing responsibilities. Participants agreed the FOC needs to look at existing, agreed-upon language, such as from the [UNGA Resolution on seizing the opportunities of safe, secure and trustworthy artificial intelligence](#), to strengthen references to international

human rights law, citing para 49 of the GDC, and similar references to rights-respecting an human-centric approaches, as framing that needs to be defended.

All groups discussed **follow up and review**, with Members emphasising the need to prevent duplication of efforts and undermining existing mechanisms and structures. Members noted the lack of clarity around the role and responsibilities of the Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology (OSET), highlighting the Member States' responsibility of establishing stricter mandates for existing agencies that are expected to undertake coordination and cooperation, and to avoid overlap and uncertainty on roles. Additionally, Members noted the concern around the IGF and WSIS mandates potentially being minimised and undermined with the current framing of OSET's role, emphasising the need to defend the mandates of the IGF and WSIS.

During the plenary discussion, Members noted the importance of being cautious around the negotiations themselves in which "tit for tat" situations may arise when it comes to negotiating human rights language, and determining which lines can and should be held. Members raised some concerns around the modalities of the process and upcoming negotiations, noting a lack of clarity on the way that feedback from UN Member States has been taken on until now, as well as how the upcoming 20/21 June negotiations will be held. The Netherlands thanked the Members for a fruitful discussion, and noted that the Discussion Paper will be revised according to the additional proposals raised by Members, and distributed early next week so it can be utilised in New York. *[Please note that the revised Discussion Paper "Proposals for FOC Engagement in the GDC and Pact for the Future" has been distributed to FOC Members through capital, Geneva, and New York, and can also be found in the accompanying attachment.]*

Action>> The Netherlands to circulate the revised version of the Proposals for FOC Engagement in the GDC and Pact for the Future. *[Please note that the revised Discussion Paper has been distributed to FOC Members through capital, Geneva, and New York, and can also be found in the accompanying attachment.]*

Learning Session: World Summit on the Information Society
11:45 - 12:45 CET
Participants: FOC; Geneva Diplomatic Network; Observer; FOC-AN; External Invitees; Support Unit
Format: Hybrid

The FOC organised a learning session to build stakeholders' capacity and understanding on the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and the Review Process, including the history, key themes and stakeholders, what is at stake, and positions and motivations of key actors. The session was attended by FOC Member States' capital and Geneva-based representatives, FOC-AN Members, and invited non-governmental stakeholders working on digital issues and human rights; and was facilitated by FOC-AN panellists Konstantinos Komaitis from the Atlantic Council's DFRLab, and Fiona Alexander from the American University.

After highlighting the two phases on which the WSIS was built in Geneva in 2003, and Tunis in 2005, panellists identified the key issues that emerged out of the two phases, including:

- **WSIS Action Lines**: covering the digitalization of health, education, security and other critical fields. The ITU is mandated with the task to coordinate follow-ups on the WSIS Action Lines. To this end, the ITU hosts the annual **WSIS Forum** to evaluate the implementation of the Action Lines.
- **The Internet Governance Forum (IGF):** a compromise solution between developing countries, which wanted more UN-involvement, and developed countries, which advocated for the multistakeholder model for Internet policy.
- **Enhanced Cooperation:** an "add-on" to the IGF "Tunis compromise", and has been the most controversial issue in the post-WSIS debate, with two opposing positions: on the one hand, developed countries, which argue that enhanced cooperation already exists in practice; on the other hand, developing countries that

argue that enhanced cooperation requires a new body for coordination among governments at the UN level.

- **Political Follow Up and Review Process** to be coordinated by the UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD).

Panellists opened the floor for interventions, particularly on how the attendees consider the WSIS and its utility. FOC Members noted interest in exploring how the FOC can contribute to the WSIS work and role. Panellists recommended that FOC Members promote dialogue among local stakeholders about the WSIS Action Lines and work towards greater coordination, especially in determining what they are willing to offer and negotiate on. In addition, FOC Members and panellists deliberated on the relevance of the WSIS in 2024, considering technological advancements. They identified overlapping elements between the WSIS action lines and the roles and issues addressed in the GDC document. Panellists underscored the significance of the upcoming year in shaping the future of the multistakeholder governance model as these discussions will seek to encompass critical aspects, such as the renewal of the IGF mandate, updates to the WSIS action lines, and the alignment of the GDC follow-up with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainability.

Furthermore, FOC Members noted interest in exploring how the terminology used in the past might inform current discussions, particularly human rights centred language in the GDC document, and how the role of the FOC could take an increased proactive stance rather than a defensive one. Reflecting on the language of the past, the panellists pointed out that early documents mentioned universally held values and norms rather than the explicit human rights language that is more likely to be used today. Panellists emphasised the importance of maintaining the WSIS as the primary process, rather than allowing it to be replaced by the GDC and encouraged the FOC to focus its efforts on inclusivity and development issues more robustly.

FOC and FOC-AN Joint Roundtable
13:45 - 15:15 CET

Participants: FOC; Geneva Diplomatic Network; Observers; FOC-AN; Support Unit
Format: Hybrid

The Joint FOC and FOC-AN Roundtable focused on discussions around engagement in key Internet and digital technology governance processes, namely the GDC; engagement in the IGF 2024; and advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) in the FOC. FOC-AN Members shared input, concrete proposals for amendments, and concerns around human rights and multistakeholder language in the GDC Rev 1, highlighting the need to:

1. Include clear and explicit language that maintains and strengthens the multistakeholder model of governance;
2. Mainstream human rights language protections and commitments in a consistent manner across all of the objectives in the GDC and different technologies cited within the GDC, which should also include mainstreaming gender, by concrete references to international human rights law;
3. Ensure a multistakeholder body or mechanism is responsible for monitoring the implementation and compliance of the recommendations set forth in the GDC, which is currently missing in the text.

Regarding IGF engagement, FOC-AN Members highlighted the proactive advice on the IGF, submitted to the FOC and IGF Secretariat in 2023, which proposed actions to enable a safer environment for stakeholders to attend in-person, including:

- Clarifying the scope of UN jurisdictions, including the physical locations;
- No banning on VPNs;
- No apps or websites blocked;
- No use of spyware or other surveillance technologies on participants;
- No electronic searches by authorities, especially immigration authorities; and,

- Ensuring the UN Department of Safety and Security has an on-the-ground support system, including digital security and other assistance to participants.

As part of the FOC's commitment to DEIA and under the mandate of the past Task Force on Digital Equality (TFDE) in 2023, the FOC-AN co-Chairs of the Task Force - with the support and partnership of the IDRC, the Support Unit, and Global Partners Digital - engaged with a consultancy to conduct an assessment of the FOC's activities related to DEIA, resulting in a report that offers actionable insights and recommendations that can further integrate DEIA principles into the fabric of the FOC's work. The report was presented and discussed in the meeting, with participants noting the need to identify short and long-term actions to implement its recommendations.

Action>> FOC-AN Members to share input on the GDC in written format to inform upcoming negotiations.

Action>> The Netherlands to circulate the revised version of the Proposals for FOC Engagement in the GDC and Pact for the Future.

Action >> FOC Members are invited to read through the DEIA report and direct questions to Michael Samway , Veronica Ferrari, the FOC Chair, the Netherlands, with cc to the FOC Support Unit.

Looking Ahead to the Remainder of 2024 - Upcoming Activities & Events
15:35 - 16:45 CET
Participants: FOC; Geneva Diplomatic Network; Observers; FOC-AN; Support Unit
Format: Hybrid

The co-Chairs of the FOC's sub-entities provided updates on their activities for the calendar year. The Task Force on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights (TFAIR) noted three focus areas over the coming months, including: 1) the development of a tool to track legislative developments relating to AI and misuses of AI technologies, 2) a review of the FOC's existing language on AI and drafting a new forward-looking statement following the publication on the HLAB-AI report, and 3) organising a side-event at the Summit of the Future to present the aforementioned statement and to outline objectives for AI governance in the future. The Task Force on Information Integrity Online (TFIIO) noted that members are focusing on the development of a blueprint for the information space, with an editorial working group leading on drafting the document before an initial draft is shared with the Task Force membership. The Task Force on Internet Shutdowns (TFIS) noted that the co-Chairs are drafting a statement on Internet shutdowns in times of conflict, which has been a leading trigger for shutdowns globally, and that they are considering bringing together a small group of experts to support its development.

In response to sub-entity updates, FOC Members noted concerns around the pace of activity so far in 2024, and meeting participants discussed the need to provide clarity on Task Force objectives and to explore methods to report back on whether the Task Force work plans were fully implemented, including the impact of their outputs. The Netherlands, as Chair of the FOC, noted their intention to work closely with the Task Forces to support diplomatic outputs and to engage with the co-Chairs for a mid-term review of the progress made to date.

The Netherlands provided an overview of upcoming events and outputs that they will be leading on as the FOC Chair. The following events were noted for the remainder of the year:

- **June (Date TBC):** *Joint side-event with the Republic of Korea on the margins of HRC 56, focusing on AI, human rights, and the role of digital media and information literacy.*

- **August (21-23):** *FOC regional dialogue during the Asia-Pacific Regional IGF in Taipei, Taiwan.*
- **September (Date TBC):** *FOC Ministerial side-event on the margins of the Summit of the Future in New York.*
- **October (TBC 23-24):** *FOC SCM during the week of 22 October in the Hague, to focus on stock-taking for the GDC and FOC coordination efforts, capacity building, and looking ahead for the WSIS process.*
- **November (Date TBC):** *FOC Steering Committee in-person meeting on the margins of the Tallinn Digital Summit (19-20).*
- **December (15-19):** *FOC engagement at the 19th IGF in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.*

On the topic of upcoming FOC outputs, the Netherlands announced the intent to develop a Joint Statement on the topic of human rights and technical standards for digital technologies, which will build upon discussions from the FOC's WSIS High-Level Forum session on the "Impact of Technical Standards on Human Rights in the case of Digital Technologies". In addition, the US highlighted that the FOC AI Pledge to Incorporate Responsible and Rights-Respecting AI Procurement Practices in Government Development and Use of AI will be negotiated over summer, and members can expect to receive a revised draft shortly.

The 2025 Chair of the FOC, Estonia, provided brief remarks to highlight the process to develop next year's Program of Action, and welcomed input from FOC and FOC-AN Members. Estonia noted that the first half of next year will feature a focus on the WSIS review process, in addition to exploring how the FOC can engage in the follow-up process to the GDC. Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) was also noted as a priority area being explored for the Program of Action, linking to digital inclusion and further advancing the work of past Chairships.

Annex 1: Agenda (abridged)

Day 1: Thursday, 30 May

Time (CET)	Topic	Attendees
12.30	**Steering Committee Lunch Meeting**	Steering Committee
14.00	Coffee Break *(30 minutes)*	
14.35	**FOC Members Meeting**	FOC Members (Capital), Observers
Parallel	**Geneva Diplomatic Network Meeting**	FOC Geneva
Parallel	**FOC Advisory Network Meeting**	FOC Advisory Network
16.30	End of Day	

Day 2: Friday, 31 May

Time (CET)	Topic	Attendees
9.00	**Welcome & Opening Remarks**	FOC Members (Capital; Geneva), Observers
9.15	**FOC Strategic Discussion on Key Internet and Digital Tech Processes**	
11.15	Coffee Break	
11.45	**Learning Session: The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)**	FOC Members (Capital; Geneva), Observers, FOC Advisory Network, External Invitees
12.45	Lunch Break	
13.45	**FOC & FOC Advisory Network Joint Roundtable**	FOC Members (Capital; Geneva), Observers, FOC Advisory Network.
15.15	Coffee Break	
15.35	**Looking Ahead to the Remainder of 2024 - Upcoming Activities & Events**	FOC Members (Capital; Geneva), Observers, FOC Advisory Network.
16.45	**Closing Remarks**	
17.00	End of Day	

Annex 2: Minutes

Steering Committee Meeting
Thursday, 30 May | 12.30 - 14.00 CET

Attended: Netherlands (Chair 2024); Canada, Estonia, Finland, Ghana, Switzerland, UK, US; Support Unit (SU)

Welcome / Opening Remarks
The Support Unit (SU) welcomed FOC members to the fifth Steering Committee (SC) meeting in 2024, taking place as part of the FOC Strategy and Coordination Meeting (SCM) in Geneva in May 2024.
- Luca Kuiper, from the Kingdom of the Netherlands, FOC Chair 2024, provided welcome remarks, and thanked participants in advance for their participation.
- The Chair commented on the first five months of Chairship activity with a focus on the preparation for the Global Digital Compact (GDC). This included strengthening, coordinating and revitalising the diplomatic networks in Geneva and New York, including through holding GDC conversations within the networks, as well as Geneva-based hybrid workshops co-hosted with Canada on Internet governance and GDC coordination.
    - The second focus for the Chairship has been FOC outreach, in particular to the global majority, which involved holding FOC sessions and regional dialogues at NETMundial and the Digital Rights & Inclusion Forum (DRIF) in Ghana. This allowed regional stakeholders to put forward their perspectives on the GDC, in addition to wider concerns around disinformation and Internet shutdowns.
    - The third focus for the Chairship has been the capacity building element, with more updates to follow during various SCM agenda items.

Housekeeping

- The SU introduced a finance update, which was later elaborated on in the FOC Members' meeting.

Discussion Items

GDC coordination
- The SU opened the agenda item, noting upcoming discussions on the GDC as part of the SCM agenda, noting this time as an opportunity to provide an update on coordination efforts to date, and upcoming plans.
    - The Netherlands provided updates on activities to date, including workshops, outreach and multistakeholder events held in the first half of the year, reports of which can be found on the [FOC Digital Hub](#).
    - The complexity of the GDC exercise was acknowledged, and the opportunity to utilise the FOC networks in capital, Geneva, and New York, as well as in other regions.
    - While the difficulties of having an agreed FOC position in the GDC were noted, the Netherlands highlighted the Discussion Paper in the SCM doc pack (p. 14) as providing a balance of views on the priorities that could be achieved, and a useful tool for negotiators in New York.
    - The SU noted concerns raised previously by the SC of the amount of activity in the diplomatic networks and the ability to streamline the conversations.
        - The Chair noted the challenge of the New York focus on the GDC with concerns the document was already politicalised with little input opportunities for others, noting a lot of work had been undertaken to ensure networks and stakeholders had been involved through the FOC.

- - Switzerland and the US noted the benefits of utilising the FOC recommended language in other negotiations.
    - The US noted the intersection of different directories and ministries represented within the FOC, as well as Global South representation, and the value this brought to negotiations.
    - The US noted New York would continue to be the focus for negotiations but building a strong network through FOC and the Capital and Geneva networks will continue to strengthen coordination, awareness and influence of the FOC.
  - The Netherlands noted outreach conducted around GDC and broader processes coordination by expanding beyond the usual group of contributors, citing the regional dialogues at DRIF and NETmundial+10, as well as additional events in the future planned in other regions with prospective Members and the broader multistakeholder community.
  - Members noted the potential reluctance of FOC Member States that are also part of the G77 to engage in coordination efforts.

FOC outreach to prospective members
- The SU noted the number of events hosted in Europe, North America, Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa and the Asia Pacific, including aforementioned workshops, panel sessions and regional dialogues.
  - This outreach is in line with activities under PoA goal 3, to improve outreach to existing members of the Coalition, as well as broaden out membership of the Coalition in Global South regions.
  - The Netherlands reiterated the Regional Dialogues at DRIF co-hosted with Ghana, and NETMunidal co-hosted with Chile, and the positive response from stakeholders, as well as suggestions to continue to attend such events in person to foster relationships in the regions.
  - The Netherlands noted it is continuing to work on enhancing the diversity of the FOC membership and continued to outreach to prospective member countries including; South Africa, Brazil, Dominican Republic, Fiji, Nigeria, Namibia, Romania, Armenia, Belgium, Colombia, noting Colombia, Fiji and Dominican Republic had informally expressed an interest in joining the FOC.
    - The US noted the work undertaken during their Chairship, and the work by Germany, to engage with Timor-Leste.
  - Members noted challenges in reaching appropriate government directorates or ministries and promoting deeper engagement and collaboration across human rights, technology, and foreign affairs files.
- The Netherlands noted it will be continuing outreach efforts, and called for other FOC Member States to support.

FOC sub-entities and work plans
- The SU noted Members decided to renew three sub-entities at the end of the US Chairship; the Task Force on AI and Human Rights, the Task Force on Information Integrity Online, and the Task Force on Internet Shutdowns.
- The PoA 2024, under Goal 4, outlines the objective 4.3, "Oversee and leverage FOC Sub-Entities" by supporting the development of clear objectives; reflecting on key challenges and learnings to enable focused and effective action; and supporting further coordination and sharing of good practices and lessons, as well as substantive knowledge.
- The Netherlands noted the sub-entities are an important part of the PoA, and invited Task Force co-Chairs to share plans, goals, and potential challenges for the year.
  - **Task Force on Internet Shutdowns** (TFIS) (led by the UK, Access Now, and GNI)
    - The UK noted the Task Force work plan has been finalised, noting two areas of focus: Internet shutdowns and elections, and Internet shutdowns in times of conflict.
    - The UK noted the group is working on a statement on conflict and shutdowns.
    - In terms of elections, following a deep dive meeting on the topic, next steps will be forming a working group to understand the impact in real terms, and consider linkages between conflict, elections, and the humanitarian aspect.

- The Task Force will also be hosting a briefing on the #KeepItOn report, facilitated by Access Now.
  - **Task Force on Information Integrity Online** (TFIIO) (led by Denmark, the Netherlands, and Wikimedia Foundation)
    - The Task Force developed the [Joint Statement on Information Integrity Online and Elections](#) which was launched at the Summit for Democracy III in Seoul in March.
    - An editorial working group has been set up to work on developing a blueprint for the Information Space.
    - Capacity building will continue through ad hoc learning calls.
  - **Task Force on AI and Human Rights (TFAIR)** (led by Germany and ICNL) *(please note that the following updates were delivered by the SU)*
    - The SU noted the group is discussing their work plan, noting the potential to utilise the draft response to the HLAB-AI report as a joint statement had been proposed, with no further plans at this time.
  - Members noted the need for a broader assessment and review of impact and accountability in terms of how the sub-entities perform against their work plans, with the SU noting the work may be centred around a specific goal with an agreed deadline, after which completed the sub-entity is closed, or around multi-year programmes to support the transition between Chairships.
    - The SU noted sub-entity work plans may include impact assessments.
  - The Netherlands suggested the sub-entity review process as an agenda item in upcoming FOC meetings.

FOC-AN Elections
- The SU provided a recap on the FOC-AN election cycle for the 2024-2026 cohort.
  - The process led to 6 seats being made available on the FOC-AN, with a voluntary election committee of incumbent FOC-AN members reviewing over 80 applications.
  - The election committee selected 6 nominees, which were shared with the FOC-AN before being shared with the Steering Committee for a silence procedure.
  - Silence was broken on the grounds of concerns raised about regional diversity and stakeholder balance of the AN cohort for 24-26.
  - Following this, the FOC Advisory Network (FOC-AN) co-Chairs, the FOC Chair and SC Members on the FOC-AN selection process, and the FOC-AN held a monthly meeting in which the FOC Chair was present.
  - There was consensus among participating FOC-AN members that the outcome of the current selection process should hold, with additional recommendations from the FOC-AN on addressing concerns around diversity.
- The SC was asked to consider:
  1. To approve the list of nominees, with the option of having a separate discussion on addressing the regional and stakeholder balance concerns in the future.
     - The SC could also bring forward the FOC-AN's recommendation to comprehensively review the ToR and relevant election procedures.
  2. Reject the list of nominees, which would entail either revisiting the slate of candidates, or concluding the election cycle without new candidates approved.
- The SC agreed on proceeding with option 1, i.e. approving the list of nominees, under the condition that a comprehensive review of the FOC-AN Terms of Reference is conducted collaboratively between the FOC-AN and the SC to ensure concerns around regional diversity and stakeholder balance are addressed in subsequent elections.

Engagement in upcoming events, including IGF 2024 and RightsCon 2025
- The SU opened the agenda noting in previous years the events had been opportunities to host FOC meetings, including SCMs, and were looking to understand any challenges or objections at this time.
  - RightsCon 2025
    - Estonia is open for meaningful engagement in line with its *One China* policy.
    - The Netherlands noted it also follows the *One China* policy but following internal discussions with the NL Policy Team, have been advised working-level for broader conference engagement would not be an issue.
    - The UK noted a number of internal proposals put forward for consideration.

- - The US confirmed attendance noting strict engagement protocols.
  - ○ IGF 2024
    - The FOC has submitted 3 session proposals for the IGF 2024.
    - The SU noted concerns raised by the FOC-AN regarding the IGF 2024 being held in Saudi Arabia, articulated in their proactive advice submitted to the FOC in 2023.
      - ○ The Netherlands noted it would be in attendance, flagging outreach to the FOC-AN with an offer to support engagement on-sight for those unable to travel because of safety concerns.

2025 Chairship of the FOC
- Estonia noted the 2025 PoA would be developed over the coming months and welcomed FOC input and support through the drafting process.
  - ○ The US noted Estonia is well-positioned to focus on capacity-building efforts, and digital public infrastructure as a topic under the PoA.
  - ○ The Netherlands noted the opportunities to advance key principles around Internet and AI governance, and digital public infrastructure, specifically in the context of WSIS.
  - ○ The UK noted inclusion as crucial to the advancement of these principles.

FOC Members Meeting
Thursday, 30 May | 14:35 - 16:30 CET

Remarks from Ambassador Paul Bekkers
- Ambassador Paul Bekkers welcomed all FOC members attending the SCM in Geneva, highlighting Cabo Verde as the latest country to join the FOC.
  - ○ The Ambassador emphasised the need to assess achievements and set further goals for the year highlighting the strengthening FOC coordination within the work of the Human Rights Council, including in the Universal Periodic Review.
  - ○ The Ambassador reflected on Geneva being the ideal location for strategic discussions on freedom online, as the host of the OHCHR and Human Rights Council.
  - ○ Ambassador Bekkers emphasised the value of utilising the complementarity between New York and Geneva, noting the exceptional environment in Geneva for engaging stakeholders.
  - ○ The FOC's commitment to a human-rights based approach for the Global Digital Compact was reiterated, with a focus on protecting the multistakeholder model in internet governance and the GDC, emphasising the importance of technical discussions and raising awareness of less explored areas of human rights in the digital realm. Issues such as internet shutdowns and the importance of considering human rights perspectives in Artificial Intelligence were also underscored.
  - ○ Ambassador Bekkers reflected on upcoming discussions such as the WSIS+20 and expressed a commitment to strengthening and extending FOC membership.
  - ○ In closing, Ambassador Bekkers wished for fruitful discussions and reiterated his dedication to continued strong engagement as Chair and PR of the Netherlands in Geneva.

Housekeeping
- The Support Unit (SU) provided an overview of the SCM agenda, and noted the following updates in relation to the Internal Program of Activities:
  - ○ Membership / Chairship:
    - Cabo Verde became the 39th Member of the FOC in March.
    - Estonia has been confirmed as the Chair of the FOC in 2025, and will be commencing work on next year's Program of Action.
  - ○ SU provided an update on finance.

- SU provided progress updates on the implementation of the 2024 Program of Action.

Action>> Members to consider contributing funding to the FOC budget to address the current deficit.

<u>Discussion</u>
Advancing Goal 1: GDC coordination
- The Netherlands provided an overview of their plans to support the upcoming FOC coordination efforts around key Internet governance and digital tech processes.
  - It was noted that, although a number of priority areas were initially selected based on the GDC 0 draft, the selection was amended to include comments on Rev 1 following discussions during the Regional Dialogues and the GDC sessions held in Geneva and NYC.
  - The Netherlands highlighted the discussion paper, which outlines the revised priorities in a concrete manner. It was noted that the FOC should not take an overarching position on the entirety of the GDC document, given its broad scope covering various topics such as SDGs, AI, data governance, information integrity, and human rights online. Instead, the Netherlands emphasised the intention to continue facilitating FOC member discussions to guide them through the various negotiations with language proposals and by creating forums where a broader range of stakeholders beyond the FOC-AN can engage.
  - The Netherlands noted the rationale behind the current language proposals, stating that they align with the FOC's commitment to human rights online and support a multi-stakeholder approach throughout the GDC document.
  - The Netherlands highlighted the main purposes of these language proposals, such as strengthening the role of the IGF as well as the language on human rights online in specific paragraphs. This includes proposing the use of existing agreed-upon language from other processes.
  - However, it was noted that due to the extensive nature of the GDC documents, not all topics are covered and any gaps will be addressed through discussions held during the SCM contributing to expanding the language proposal documents.
- Germany mentioned the Rev 1 of the proposed Pact for the Future was published on May 14th.
  - Germany highlighted that both the GDC and the Pact for the Future are to be complementary, and though there is not enough language on human rights online or internet governance in the Pact for the Future, there are some relevant contrasts that are highlighted in the discussion pack.
  - Germany also encouraged all members to be vocal regarding both documents to ensure the reinforcement of stronger human rights language both through formal and informal conversations.
- The UK appreciated the approach of the FOC in providing guidance to members and for them to liaise directly with NYC as it seems the best way to move forwards.
- The US sought clarification on the Netherlands' approach to the GDC negotiations, recognizing, as highlighted by the UK, that the aim is not to commence a separate negotiation process within the FOC. Rather, it is to guide the relevant countries, part of the FOC, in their negotiation stance to bolster the language on Human Rights.
  - The US encouraged all members to disseminate the discussions occurring within the FOC to their respective offices. This is aimed at spotlighting allies within the coalition and advocating for the endorsement of the existing language throughout the course of the negotiations.
- The Netherlands elucidated the rationale behind the proposed additions to the Pact for the Future, which were included in the SCM discussion pack. They stated that, according to the co-facilitator in NYC, this is the optimal time to present language proposals.
  - The Netherlands also welcomed AN advice regarding Chapter 5 on AI Governance of the GDC.

Advancing Goal 3: Regional dialogue outcomes and outreach efforts

- The Support Unit provided an overview of previous regional dialogues and engagements, noting the Regional Dialogue co-hosted by the Netherlands with Ghana in April during the Digital Rights & Inclusion Forum, and with Chile on the margins of NETMundial in Brazil. Members were welcomed for remarks and advice on previous and future outreach efforts:
- Ghana appreciated the outreach efforts and considered them as a learning opportunity on how to reach African and new countries. It was noted that the Regional Dialogue in Ghana increased exposure of the FOC to other governments and CSOs.
  - Ghana suggested the need to expand outreach beyond foreign affair ministries, and include protocol offices and ICT ministries, as well as technical agencies that can ensure stability in personnel and priorities. Exploring multiple channels through which FOC can continue its outreach efforts would bridge the gap amongst those governments that do not have extensive resources and internal structure to enable a digital rights division creating better longevity to the FOC work and efforts.
  - Ghana appreciated the usefulness of the Regional Dialogue as an avenue for important conversations and pointed out a necessity to further increase digital rights awareness and frame them as human rights in order to shift priorities within the African region.
- Chile valued the Regional Dialogue in Brazil as an excellent opportunity for regional stakeholders to gain insights into the work of the FOC, and for the FOC to understand the specific challenges faced within the LATAM region. These challenges include digital literacy, disparities in regulatory frameworks, issues related to democracy and information integrity online, and insufficient resources and personnel dedicated to these topics.
  - Chile emphasised the importance of further engaging with regional networks within the FOC and suggested a collaborative effort to address the personnel capacity issue.
- The Netherlands noted the value in co-hosting Regional Dialogues and considered it a strong outreach strategy.
  - It was noted that the third Regional Dialogue will take place in Taiwan on the margins of the Asia Pacific IGF for which outreach has already been taking place.
  - The Netherlands suggested members share any relevant connections to countries in the region in order to ensure a collaborative effort.
- The United States highlighted the value of Ghana sharing its best practices on how to engage with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), noting Ghana's success in hosting such events without being part of the MFA.
- Ghana emphasised that the FOC's regional efforts and outreach provide chairs and co-chairs with valuable insights from diverse perspectives.
  - Ghana recommended adopting a holistic approach by including more Global South countries in future POAs and outcome documents, encouraging these regions to see themselves as active participants in these discussions, rather than mere observers.
- Taiwan noted the Asian Pacific IGF sessions are in the process of evaluation and results are expected to be released by 6th June 2024.

Advancing Goal 4: Capacity building within the FOC

- The Support Unit presented an overview of the capacity building assessment questionnaire as part of the FOC's Program of Action 2024.
  - The questionnaire was meant to inform:
    - The perceived value of a structured approach to capacity building;
    - Perceived learning needs of FOC points of contact;
    - Preferred formats for learning amongst FOC points of contact.
  - The Support Unit identified funding as a key constraint. This issue could be mitigated by establishing a dedicated fund to support travel participation, particularly to ensure the inclusion of representatives from the Global South.

- - It was also noted that in-person capacity building efforts are highly valued, with topics such as internet fragmentation and online information integrity being of particular relevance to the majority of FOC members.
- The United States proposed engaging in funding discussions with private sector experts within the Advisory Network, who have substantial experience with digital issues. Additionally, it was suggested that these training programs could operate as an independent model within the FOC.
  - The U.S. also highlighted that enhancing capacity building can foster greater engagement. This approach would enable FOC members and governments to perceive the Coalition as a valuable learning environment, thereby creating additional synergies and encouraging further investments in capacity building.
- The Netherlands appreciated the feedback on Capacity Building efforts and noted that in order to take concrete actions, the upcoming SCM planned to take place in The Hague will have an extra day focused on in person Capacity Building.
- Sweden noted the importance of Capacity Building efforts as an avenue to ensure successful onboarding of new FOC members' PoCs.
- Estonia expressed appreciation for the Netherlands' efforts in focusing the upcoming SCM on capacity building.
  - However, Estonia noted the potential added burden regarding funding opportunities that could be addressed by concentrating on specific topics rather than attempting to cover all areas.
- The United Kingdom highlighted the risk of excluding certain countries due to a lack of resources, noting that capacity building efforts will require substantial resources and structure. It was suggested that involving less resourceful countries as co-chairs for the 2025 and 2026 chairships could bridge the gap and ensure inclusion.
- The U.S. noted that yearly chairships are not always known in advance. To ensure that Chairs and co-chairs are not consistently representatives of the Global North, the vice chairship role could be used to enhance inclusion.
- The Support Unit highlighted the possibility of establishing a co-chair or vice chairship as outlined in the newly revised Terms of Reference (TOR).
  - Additionally, it was noted that having FOC member governments host SCMs, as seen in past SCMs hosted in Italy and Switzerland, can also help address the capacity needs of each member country and decrease load of responsibility from the Chairs ensuring collaborative efforts.

Action>> Members to explore next steps to operationalise capacity-building within the FOC.
Action >> The Netherlands to follow up with next steps for the development of a joint statement on human rights and technical standards for digital technologies.

FOC and FOC-AN Joint Roundtable
Friday, 31 May | 13:45 - 15:15 CET

Welcome Remarks
- Ambassador for Cyber Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Ernst Noorman, provided opening remarks, highlighting recent activities and priority areas as part of the 2024 Program of Action, and acknowledging the contributions of the FOC-AN and multistakeholder community to support advancing the FOC's mission.
- The co-Chairs of the FOC-AN, Elonnai Hickok and Tatiana Tropina, thanked the Netherlands, Steering Committee, and SCM participants, noting the FOC-AN's recent activities to provide advice on the IGF, Internet Governance, and the GDC, among other topics, and highlighted the network's readiness to identify further opportunities for collaboration and coordination.

- The Support Unit provided a brief overview of FOC Member meetings on Day 1 and 2 of the SCM, highlighting that the FOC-AN 2024-2026 cohort has been confirmed by the Steering Committee, and sharing an overview of government discussions to strengthen FOC engagement in the GDC process..

<u>Discussion</u>
Strategic Discussion on Key Internet and Digital Tech Processes

- The Support Unit and the Netherlands presented the outcomes of the FOC-only discussions, and presented the background documents relevant to this agenda item, noting the proposals for FOC engagement in the GDC and the Pact for the Future.
- The FOC-AN noted three overarching recommendations to FOC Member States in relation to the GDC Rev 1, including:
    1. Ensuring the inclusion of clear and explicit language that maintains and strengthens the multistakeholder model of governance.
        - Pushing for, at a bare minimum, the use of language from the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) resolution on the promotion, protection and enjoyment of human rights on the Internet, referring to the Internet as "free, open, interoperable, reliable, and secure", and not lean into into the securitisation agenda that would jeopardise the multistakeholder model of Internet governance.
        - Using the word "global" instead of "international" in various instances in the text, with the former being more reflective of a collaborative multistakeholder environment.
        - Changing the use of "equitable participation of stakeholders" to "meaningful participation", and emphasising the relevance of all stakeholders, ensuring consistency of the multistakeholder environment throughout the document.
        - In the preamble, individuals and the public should be included as stakeholders.
    2. Mainstreaming human rights language protections and commitments in a consistent manner across all of the objectives in the GDC and different technologies cited within the GDC, which should also include mainstreaming gender.
        - Changing international law references in the development and use of technology, particularly around surveillance and encryption, to more specific international human rights law, and strengthening these obligations in the text.
            - This includes more specific rules around making sure surveillance practices, including mass and targeted, as well as the use of spyware, align with human rights law, as well as specific protection of encryption within the text.
        - While welcoming the call to refrain from Internet shutdowns, FOC-AN Members noted a need for better recognition of different censorship tactics that are deployed around the world.
        - An acknowledgement that AI is not necessarily separate to the Internet, but embedded within it, and that AI exacerbates different forms of existing repression.
        - Consideration of the humanitarian framework in specific elements of the text, including the deployment and use of technologies such as AI, to ensure new tools and systems are compliant with those frameworks.
        - More explicit language for companies and governments to commit to not developing technologies that are not in line with international human rights law.
        - Concrete commitments to prevent the deepening of digital inequalities.
    3. Ensuring a multistakeholder body or mechanism is responsible for monitoring the implementation and compliance of the recommendations set forth in the GDC, which is currently missing in the text.
- In addition, FOC-AN Members noted the following concerns and suggestions:
    - In relation to Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI):

- - - There should be an identification of global digital public goods (DPGs) and public infrastructure, and it should be framed in a way to ensure equality and access to DPG and DPIs.
    - An explicit commitment to promote and protect DPGs by supporting robust digital commons, as well as an increase in investment in DPI.
  - In relation to Digital Trust and Safety:
    - A better definition for social media platforms, as the current description is too prescriptive and broad, going into detail on prescribing specific actions, rather than focusing on best practices.
  - In relation to follow-up and review of the GDC:
    - The FOC-AN noted that any additional forums should adhere to multistakeholder principles, processes, and practices.
- Sweden noted that in article 8(k), multistakeholderism is defined more precisely, and posed the question on whether the definition should be repeated throughout the document or methods in which it could be strengthened in the text.
  - FOC-AN Members noted there is a difference between talking about multistakeholder and the idea of having a multistakeholder governance model, the latter of which is not specifically used in the text.
  - FOC-AN Members emphasised the need for consistent language, and noted a civil society document with specific suggestions to strengthen the language in article 8(k).
  - In addition, it was noted that a reference to the NETMundial+10 Outcome Document would be beneficial within the GDC text given the multistakeholder nature of the process.
  - It was noted that throughout Section A and other parts of the document, use of phrases such as "equitable participation" should be switched to use the term "meaningful" to ensure consistency.
- Sweden noted that along with the received recommendations on which language to change, it would be useful to identify paragraphs with existing language that need to be kept and defended.
- US noted the dynamics in terms of language in New York and Geneva negotiations is different, with New York delegations only accepting language regarding any contentious or difficult issues that has already been used or initiated in the 1st or 3rd Committees; any other language would be difficult to defend.
- FOC-AN co-Chairs noted the group is currently working on a background paper on digital public infrastructure, which problematises the lack of recognition of the importance of proper rights-respecting structure, and what the safeguards should be.
  - In addition, the group will also be working on a paper on multistakeholderism, as well as linking human rights and development.
- The Netherlands thanked the FOC-AN for their insight and recommendations, noting that it will be revising the proposals for FOC engagement in the GDC following the discussion.

Action>> FOC-AN Members to share input on the GDC in written format to inform upcoming negotiations.
Action>> The Netherlands to circulate the revised version of the Proposals for FOC Engagement in the GDC and Pact for the Future.

Internet Governance Forum (IGF) 2024 Engagement & Approach
- The Support Unit noted that the 19th IGF is taking place in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia from 15-19 December, and the that the FOC has submitted three session proposals on the following topics:
  - Ensuring an Inclusive and Rights-Respecting Digital Future
  - A Rights-Respecting Approach to Emerging Tech Development
  - Human Rights Impacts of AI on Marginalised Populations
- The Netherlands acknowledged challenges for stakeholders to attend the IGF, and noted that the Netherlands has offered for FOC-AN members to reach out to the Chair should they require support hosting sessions in case they are unable to attend in-person.

- The UK noted they are planning to send a delegation to the IGF to support a number of sessions on WSIS+20 and digital development, and posed the question of whether Saudi Arabia has reached out to any FOC Members to proactively alleviate concerns around participation.
- FOC-AN Members highlighted the [advice on the IGF](#) which was provided to the FOC in 2023 and submitted to the IGF Secretariat, which proposed actions to enable a safer environment for stakeholders to attend in-person, including:
    - Clarifying the scope of UN jurisdictions, including the physical locations;
    - No banning on VPNs;
    - No apps or websites blocked;
    - No use of spyware or other surveillance technologies on participants;
    - No electronic searches by authorities, especially immigration authorities; and,
    - Ensuring the UN Department of Safety and Security has an on the ground support system, including digital security and other assistance to participants.
- The UK noted they will be engaging directly with Saudi Arabia on the approach towards the IGF, and encouraged FOC and FOC-AN members to share further information on their planned engagement and how the event can be made as constructive an engagement as possible.
- FOC-AN Members noted the expensive nature of IGF engagement this year due to the need for a layer of digital and physical security, and made the suggestion for FOC Member States to set aside funding to support attendance through digital security training, device scanning, and the purchasing of burner devices, which would help to ensure organisation can attend in a safer manner than they would at present.
- The Netherlands noted their intention to engage with the IGF Secretariat and the relevant authorities in Saudi Arabia to raise these concerns and provide further updates to FOC and FOC-AN Members.
- The US echoed the request for FOC and FOC-AN Members to share updates on engagement with the organisers and to note concerns, and raised the potential for the Chair to host a global listening session with a broader range of stakeholders from different regions in relation to IGF engagement.
- Wikimedia Foundation noted that two volunteers are currently incarcerated in Saudi Arabia and asked that Members consider raising such cases, and to explore how the IGF can be sustained in a manner where situations such as the concerns and risks around this year's IGF do not repeat in the future.

Action >> FOC-AN members are invited to continue sharing concerns in regard to IGF engagement with FOC Members and the FOC Chair.

Advancing Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) in the FOC
- The Support Unit noted that as part of the FOC's commitment to DEIA and under the mandate of the Task Force on Digital Equality (TFDE) in 2023, the FOC-AN co-Chairs of the Task Force - with the support and partnership of the IDRC, the Support Unit, and GPD - engaged with a consultancy to conduct an assessment of the FOC's activities related to DEIA.
    - The consultancy produced a report that offers actionable insights and recommendations that can further integrate DEIA principles into the fabric of the FOC's work.
- The FOC-AN co-Chairs of TFDE, the Association for Progressive Communications and Michael Samway (The Business and Human Rights Group) provided an overview of the FOC's work around DEIA through the TFDE, including:
    - Working with the Chairships of Canada, the United States, and the Netherlands, which have included advancing DEIA principles as part of the respective Programs of Action.
    - Supporting initiatives for people in vulnerable situations, including human rights defenders, women and girls, LGBTQI community, minorities, indigenous peoples, persons with disability and historically marginalised communities.
    - Collaborating on statements and policy documents to inform the DEIA language.
    - Advancing knowledge sharing and advocacy efforts in relation to technology-facilitated gender-based violence and gendered disinformation.

- - - Supporting the FOC Chair in regional consultations to convene diverse groups and civil society organisations.
  - The TFDE AN co-Chairs noted the role of the Advisory Network in supporting FOC Members engagement and positions on governance issues from the perspectives of inclusion, connectivity, and gender, in addition to exploring opportunities to enhance engagement with global majorities and empowering voices of those who are often excluded from decision making.
  - The TFDE AN co-Chairs provided an overview of the findings of the DEIA report, noting:
    - The consultants attended a number of Task Force meetings and conducted stakeholder meetings with past Chairs, members of the FOC, and members of the FOC-AN.
    - The report is structured in three parts, 1) A review of the internal infrastructure of the FOC, 2) Policy and advocacy, and 3) Learning landscape.
    - The report identified four key strengths:
      - The FOC has brought alignment with DEIA principles;
      - The strategic partnership with the Support Unit;
      - The FOC-AN's active participation and expertise on digital inclusion topics; and,
      - Proactivity on inclusive engagement.
    - The report identified opportunities to further advance DEIA, including:
      - Increasing structural clarity, expectations, and accountability around inclusion;
      - Increasing transparent feedback;
      - Increasing alignment and resources; and,
      - Showing and demonstrating impact internally and externally.
    - The report provides recommendations to the SC, FOC-AN, and Support Unit, including:
      - Increasing reporting mechanisms for accountability purposes;
      - Dedicating more resources for outreach, guided by a strategy;
      - Ensuring feedback is two-way and transparent;
      - Creating a comprehensive plan for the FOC-AN for diverse and inclusive membership;
      - Increasing communication around digital inclusion; and,
      - Identifying a DEIA representative within each sub-entity.
  - The co-Chairs thanked Ghana as a government Chair of TFDE, past and present Chairs of the Coalition, the IDRC, and Global Partners Digital.
  - FOC-AN Members raised questions on the TFDE mandate not being renewed despite DEIA being a priority in the 2024 Program of Action, and queried what framework will be used to advance Goal 3 of the Program of Action, with the suggestion that if the mandate cannot be renewed then a working group to advance DEIA in collaboration with FOC Members could be formed.
  - The US noted previous discussions on TFDE's mandate, highlighting the FOC's commitment to DEIA internally and externally, and confusion on the Task Force's internal versus external activities and how to engage with TFDE.
    - The US highlighted the report as a foundation for further discussions on whether a mechanism is needed to move the recommendations forward, and to clarify whether this work is internal facing or focused on external international discussions on advancing digital inclusion.
  - The Netherlands noted the value of the report, its commitment to continue discussions to identify both short and long-term goals for current and future Chairships, and the opportunity to explore mechanisms and efforts to streamline DEIA outside of the mandate of a Task Force.

Action >> FOC Members are invited to read through the DEIA report and direct questions to Michael Samway, Veronica Ferrari, the FOC Chair, with cc to the FOC Support Unit.
Action >> The Netherlands together with the TFDE AN co-Chairs to advance discussions and identify short and long-term actions to implement recommendations from the DEIA report.