

# Freedom Online Coalition

## Strategy & Coordination Meeting, October 2024

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Tuesday 22 - Thursday 24, October | The Hague, Kingdom of the Netherlands



# FOC Strategy and Coordination Meeting - Report

22-24 October | The Hague, Kingdom of the Netherlands

The final FOC Strategy and Coordination Meeting (SCM) in 2024 took place on 22-24 October in The Hague, Kingdom of the Netherlands. The SCM included in-person and virtual participation from 25 FOC Members, 1 Observer, and 23 FOC Advisory Network Members.

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## Session Summaries<sup>1</sup>

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### Day 0, Tuesday 22 October

#### Capacity Building for FOC Diplomats

8:45 - 16.15 CET

*Participants:* FOC Members; Observers; Support Unit

On October 22, the FOC hosted a capacity building day, focused on enhancing the knowledge of government representatives around Internet freedom, technical standards, and artificial intelligence (AI). The day was structured to provide a balanced mix of high-level discussion, technical insights, and practical skill-building, guided by distinguished experts in the field, to pilot the broader FOC capacity building framework being developed by the FOC Support Unit. The sessions highlighted the importance of inclusive, rights-based governance of digital technologies, and examined the challenges posed by the digital age.

The sessions included:

- **Internet Freedom Fundamentals:** Facilitated by Christopher Painter, the session outlined Internet freedom fundamentals and the evolution of the Freedom Online Coalition (FOC), highlighting the role of cybersecurity as a gateway to broader Internet freedom initiatives. Discussions underlined how cybersecurity concerns initially brought governments to the table on Internet governance issues, creating a bridge to more robust discussions around rights-based Internet governance.
- **Technical Standards and Human Rights Session:** Led by Mallory Knodel, this session delved into global technical standards like those from the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF), and ICANN. The session explored the role of human rights in shaping these standards and the impact of Internet technologies on privacy, content moderation, and general safety of Internet users.
- **Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights Session:** Vanja Škorić from European Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ECNL) provided insights into the burgeoning role of AI governance and its potential to support, but also challenge, human rights. The session covered global frameworks for AI regulation, highlighting the OECD, UNESCO, and various UN bodies, and examined potential benefits of AI—like combating censorship, while acknowledging concerns around disinformation, surveillance, and ethical governance.
- **Interactive Session:** Joyce Hakmeh facilitated a practical simulation session catering around developing strategies for implementing rights-respecting AI policies in real-world governance, focusing specifically on ways of implementing the [FOC Joint Statement on Responsible Government Practices for AI Technologies](#). This interactive component allowed participants to build hard and soft skills, work together in real-world scenarios, and assume different roles.

### Day 1, Wednesday 23 October

#### Opening Remarks from the 2024 FOC Chair

10.00 - 10.15 CET

*Participants:* FOC Members; Observers; FOC-AN; Support Unit

The Kingdom of the Netherlands, 2024 Chair of the FOC, opened the SCM with remarks provided by Wouter Jurgens, Director for Security Policy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The remarks highlighted the importance of strengthening coordination and proactive engagement to counteract the continued decline of Internet freedoms, especially in light of the rapid development of AI technologies and evolving threats to human rights online. Mr.

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<sup>1</sup> Please refer to [Annex 3](#) for the minutes of the SC, FOC, and Joint Roundtable meetings.



Jurgens underscored the need to ensure that international law, human rights, and the rule of law are deeply embedded in the international AI governance framework. The remarks outlined a number of activities the Netherlands has led as Chair of the FOC to address these challenges and opportunities, including the UNGA 79 Ministerial Event on AI for Human Rights, the development of capacity building initiatives to equip diplomats to engage more effectively on topics relating to the FOC's mandate, and ongoing efforts to coordinate the FOC's diplomatic networks in Geneva and New York. Mr. Jurgens also highlighted the essential role of the FOC's multistakeholder Advisory Network, and the contributions provided by its Members to help shape policy responses and support engagement in key processes.

Mr. Jurgens further highlighted the rising threat of cyber operations and disinformation campaigns aimed at undermining trust in democratic institutions, particularly during electoral periods. While it can be tempting to prioritise security at the expense of human rights in the face of these growing threats, Mr. Jurgens emphasised that such acts undermine long-term security and the principles the FOC seeks to protect, noting that open and inclusive societies where human rights are safeguarded are far better equipped to respond to the challenges of the digital age. In closing, Mr. Jurgens noted the FOC's expanding Membership, and emphasised the opportunity for the Coalition to use this pivotal moment to steer the digital space in the right direction and promote a future where freedom, innovation, and democracy thrive.

### FOC Member Meeting (*Minutes available in [Annex 2](#)*)

10.15 - 13.00 CET

*Participants:* FOC Members; Observers; Support Unit

The Support Unit (SU) shared housekeeping updates, noting that Colombia joined the Coalition as its 41st Member in September, and Armenia has expressed interest to join the FOC. The SU updated Members on FOC finances and progress towards implementing the Program of Action (PoA) 2024, highlighting activities and outputs since the Coalition last convened during the May SCM in Geneva.

Members discussed each Goal of the PoA 2024, with a focus on outreach and member engagement, mechanisms to address ongoing challenges to Internet freedom, and the functioning of FOC sub-entities. Members also reflected on efforts to coordinate FOC engagement in the [Global Digital Compact](#) (GDC) process, and identified lessons learned to guide activities around the WSIS+20 review process. Under AOB, the FOC Chair highlighted recent engagement with the FOC Advisory Network (FOC-AN) on the UN Cybercrime Convention.

### FOC Advisory Network Meeting

10.15 - 13.00 CET

*Participants:* FOC-AN; Support Unit

Members discussed the FOC-AN's input into the Joint Roundtable, focusing on the UN Convention Against Cybercrime, the [GDC](#) and the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) +20 Review, digital public infrastructure, and country-specific responses, and the FOC-AN's advice on these topics that were submitted throughout the year. The FOC-AN also discussed the process to make FOC-AN advice public, and agreed on making this standard practice.

Following this conversation, the FOC-AN continued to discuss its input to the draft Program of Action 2025 and points to be raised during the relevant agenda item on Day 2 of the SCM. Finally, the FOC-AN discussed ways to ensure diversity and inclusion in the selection of FOC-AN co-Chairs and Members, including elaborating on the criteria that would guide decision-making, and making processes and spaces more open and inclusive, including by potentially setting up a DEIA committee within the FOC-AN.



## State of Play: Internet Freedom and Digital Technology Governance in 2024 & Beyond

14:00 - 14:45 CET

Participants: FOC Members; Observers; FOC-AN; Support Unit

Facilitated by FOC-AN Members Konstantinos Komaitis from the Atlantic Council's DFR Lab, Sabhanaz Rashid Diya from the Tech Global Institute, Elonnai Hickok from the Global Network Initiative (GNI), and Zach Lampell from the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL), the session explored the evolving landscape of digital technology governance, noting a shift towards UN-centric processes and reducing multistakeholder influence. Discussions focused on recent and upcoming processes, including the [GDC](#), the High-Level Advisory Body's (HLAB) AI report, the UN Convention Against Cybercrime, and the upcoming WSIS+20 Review.

During the session, participants identified five critical areas to guide the discussion, including the FOC's role in the future landscape of digital governance in reinforcing the multistakeholder model, reversing the decline of Internet freedom, supporting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), addressing gender and climate issues, and approaching AI and data governance. The facilitator invited panellists to share their insights on these questions, opening the discussion for additional input from all participants. Key responses included the following recommendations:

- The FOC should aim to set best practices, articulate rights-respecting implementation, and embody multistakeholder, inclusive approaches in various forums. It should also enhance coordination among Members on statements, positions, and shared concerns, and explore ways to make the FOC more open and inclusive.
- The FOC should establish itself as a leading voice in the human rights online space, centering its advocacy on safeguarding internet freedoms and people's rights. A deliberate focus on engaging with civil society, particularly in regions where state engagement is limited, will strengthen this mission. Further, linking FOC's multilateral efforts with the activities of development agencies and embassies could enhance impact.
- The FOC should develop a cohesive strategy to ensure the mutual reinforcement of human rights and development in the new development agenda is essential. This approach will contribute to more sustainable and inclusive outcomes.
- The FOC should reaffirm its commitment to an intersectional gender approach, including through initiatives of diversity, equity, and inclusion, and adopt a proactive approach towards climate-related challenges.
- The FOC should develop a consolidated position on AI governance, drawing on the recommendations of the UN High-Level Advisory Board on AI and aligning with the ongoing Global Digital Compact discussions.

Participants also raised concerns about the challenges posed by limited resources and the difficulty of addressing these complex, long-term issues in a meaningful way. Speakers advocated for closer collaboration between the FOC and its Advisory Network, to leverage expertise and provide strategic guidance for Member States to advance the FOC's goals over the next five years.

## FOC & FOC-AN Joint Roundtable (*Minutes available in [Annex 2](#)*)

14:45 - 16.15 CET

Participants: FOC Members; Observers; FOC-AN; Support Unit

The FOC and FOC-AN Joint Roundtable featured a review of FOC-AN Proactive and Reactive advice provided throughout the year, centering around the UN Convention Against Cybercrime; Internet and AI governance, primarily the [GDC](#) and WSIS+20, as well as digital public infrastructure and country-specific responses.



On the UN Convention Against Cybercrime, the FOC-AN re-emphasised their concerns about the treaty's potential to infringe upon human rights and fundamental freedoms, stressing the need for rights-based implementation and urging FOC governments to carefully consider human rights impacts before endorsing the treaty. The FOC-AN highlighted that the exchange of cross-border data for law enforcement purposes is not a silver bullet and cannot be viewed by states as a one stop solution, emphasising the need to invest resources and build capacity in existing multilateral and bilateral processes and systems, as well as procedural law processes at the national level, and improve coordination on legitimate, necessary, and proportionate efforts to address cybercrime. The FOC-AN noted it will be drafting a response to the letter received from the Kingdom of the Netherlands, and arranging a briefing for FOC governments ahead of the vote in the UN General Assembly.

The discussion shifted to the [GDC](#) and the WSIS+20 review process. The FOC-AN noted the GDC fell short on genuine multistakeholder engagement, which was perceived as increasingly superficial, and raised concerns around the role of the UN Secretary-General's Tech Envoy (OSET) and lack of clarity between the GDC and WSIS+20. The FOC-AN urged the FOC to take on a more active role in coordinating a streamlined approach to the Compact's implementation, and emphasised the opportunity to shape the WSIS+20 process into a more inclusive and multistakeholder process, which FOC Members agreed on.

The FOC and FOC-AN continued to discuss digital public infrastructure (DPI) and country-specific responses. On DPI, the FOC-AN highlighted the risks in DPI projects that do not have proper human rights safeguards, particularly in countries with limited civil liberties, and emphasised that the central tenet for these projects should be human rights. The FOC-AN urged FOC governments to take a clear position on DPI that is grounded in human rights, and ensure collaboration with development agencies that are funding these types of projects. On country-specific responses, the participants explored the rapid response toolkit, with the FOC-AN citing the Coalition's activities on the situation in Venezuela, including the FOC-AN Proactive Advice, briefing, and draft Joint Statement led on by the Netherlands and Canada, as examples of coordinated action on human rights violations.

## Day 2, Thursday 24 October

### Presentation of the FOC Capacity Building Framework

09:45 - 10:00 CET

*Participants:* FOC Members; Observers; FOC-AN; Support Unit

Following discussions during the May SCM and input received from a needs assessment circulated to FOC diplomats, the FOC SU provided an update on efforts to enhance opportunities for capacity building. Nusa Tomic, SU's Diplomatic Coordination Lead, noted that the needs assessment showed a clear desire for a more structured approach to learning within the Coalition, and guided the development of the [FOC Capacity Building Framework](#), which was drafted with support from the Diplo Foundation. The Framework outlines the objectives, types of knowledge and skills, methodologies, and thematic scope of FOC capacity-building efforts, and emphasises flexibility in the formats and opportunities for Members to engage in learning on topics related to the Coalitions mandate. The presentation highlighted the ongoing development of a comprehensive orientation curriculum which will cover a range of policy areas and explore how these relate to Member commitments.

In response to the presentation, participants highlighted the crucial role of a structured and accessible curriculum especially in light of rotating focal points of FOC Member States, and the added value it will bring for Members to strengthen their engagement in FOC activities. Members emphasised the importance of not only deepening an understanding of subject matter, but also the international processes and institutions that need to be navigated in order to advance FOC priorities, and noted the opportunity to engage the FOC-AN in these efforts.



## Chairship 2025 - Priorities & Planning

10.00 - 11:00 CET

*Participants:* FOC Members; Observers; FOC-AN; Support Unit

Estonia, incoming FOC Chair 2025, provided an overview of the draft Program of Action 2025, highlighting the three draft priority areas including: 1) Governance of digital technologies and the Internet, 2) Digital inclusion and digital public infrastructure, and 3) Cross-regional engagement. Estonia underscored their efforts to ensure the FOC's priorities are continuous and sustainable, noting their intent to carry-on the work led by the Netherlands into the next calendar year.

FOC and FOC-AN Members provided reactions and input to the PoA, noting support for the outlined priorities and suggesting the following considerations for the draft text and the PoA implementation in 2025:

- Further incorporating gender and development issues, including by facilitating development-focused discussions across the PoA goals to recognise the importance of human rights while also addressing development needs.
- Fostering further dialogue with Global South countries, by prioritising discussions to further identify and explore the priorities of existing and prospective Global South Members, to promote meaningful collaboration and enhance inclusion.
- Advancing capacity building and knowledge sharing activities, including by further developing the FOC's capacity building program through the provision of training and workshops which are accessible to all Members of the Coalition to encourage informed and consistent participation.
- Defining clear outputs and objectives for each goal, including through the identification of measurable outputs where progress can be tracked and accountability across FOC activities enhanced.
- Including specific activities to address challenges to Internet freedom, and the use of FOC tools and resources to share information on threats to the protection of human rights online.
- Promote a long-term vision and plan for the Coalition, to proactively plan beyond the next Chairship and ensure continuity to strengthen the effectiveness of the FOC in advancing its priority areas.

## Session 1: The Blueprint on Information Integrity (led by the FOC Task Force on Information Integrity Online)

11:00 - 11:45 CET

*Participants:* FOC Members; Observers; FOC-AN; External Stakeholders; Support Unit

This session facilitated the soft-launch of the FOC Task Force on Information Integrity Online (TFIIO) "Blueprint on Information Integrity", and featured a panel discussion with input from Costanza Sciubba Caniglia (Wikimedia Foundation), Mia Møhring Larsen (Office of Denmark's Tech Ambassador) and Zach Lampell (International Center for Not-For-Profit Law), and remarks from Giovana Fleck (Global Voices) and Veronica Ferrari (Association for Progressive Communications). Speakers introduced the goal for the blueprint to promote a positive vision of the online information ecosystem and to centre the discussion in human rights, and outlined the three interconnected pillars identified in the blueprint: Agency; Trust; and, Inclusion.

The panel discussion highlighted the practical recommendations outlined in the blueprint, which are designed not only for governments but also for private companies and Internet users. Rather than placing the focus on eliminating the spread of disinformation or misinformation, the blueprint puts forward a vision for people to navigate the information ecosystem to identify and share trustworthy information in an inclusive and responsible manner. Speakers highlighted that the blueprint seeks to not only put the onus on the most prevalent platforms to review and revise their policies and procedures, but to also allow small independent platforms to operate in a similar manner so they can continue to grow and to innovate.



The session also highlighted the blueprint's reference to inclusion and agency, and the importance of deepening an understanding of how users respond to information, and the tools that can help them navigate the vast information landscape while also ensuring users are at the forefront of dialogues with online platforms. On the topic of inclusion, speakers noted the importance of ensuring a diversity of voices and information online, which is not only central to the promotion of democracy and human rights, but can be a positive antidote to the spread of disinformation.

On next steps, the panel noted forthcoming activities to publicise the blueprint and identify ways for the TFIIO, in coordination with the broader FOC, to engage civil society, government, and the private sector in implementing its recommendations. Opportunities for collaboration with the UN Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR) Business and Human Rights project and FOC Member governments were also highlighted to further advance the recommendations.

Session participants, including members of the TFIIO, highlighted the benefit of engaging in the process to develop the blueprint which provided opportunities for mutual learning and developing common understandings on related topics. Participants also noted how outlining a positive vision for the information ecosystem adds significant value to the ongoing discussions on information integrity happening in a range of fora, especially with references to linguistic and cultural diversity, universal meaningful connectivity, and community networks, to promote the inclusion of global voices. The importance of exploring positive possibilities of how resilience can be built among users, and advancing digital literacy, were also raised by participants for which the panel welcomed opportunities to further discuss such initiatives that feed into the blueprint's recommendations.

In response to a question on balancing responsibility among governments, platforms, and users, panellists noted the emphasis on user empowerment rather than responsibility, and further explored the responsibility of governments, noting that this should include a greater focus on investing in digital literacy programs. On the role of the media and pluralism, Task Force members noted the blueprint includes recommendations on how to positively impact independent and local journalism, and how to make such sources read and perceived within platforms that may suppress these sources.

## Session 2: Tracking the progress on global Internet-related commitments (led by the European University Institute)

11:45 - 12:30 CET

*Participants:* FOC Members; Observers; FOC-AN; External Stakeholders; Support Unit

In this session, Nils Berglund, Research Associate at the European University Institute (EUI) presented the idea of an interactive tool developed by the [Global Initiative on the Future of the Internet](#) (GIFI), funded by the European Union, which aims to unpack the implementation of different commitments governments have made to promote open, free, and safe Internet. In addition, the session aimed to collect initial feedback on the tool and encourage FOC governments to share examples of implementation practices.

The presentation showcased a beta version of the tracker and highlighted that it is structured through specific indicators and verification sources in five areas, corresponding to the five principles based on the Declaration of the Future of the Internet (DFI): Protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms; A global Internet; Inclusive and affordable access to the Internet; Trust in the digital ecosystem; and Multistakeholder Internet governance. The speaker highlighted the importance of tracking accountability when it comes to states integrating the various principles that they have agreed upon in political declarations, such as the Global Digital Compact (GDC), the DFI, as well as various FOC founding documents, etc. Thus, the GIFI tool was established to support the global upholding of such principles, in particular the DFI's, in a collaborative and rights-based approach through supporting the translation of these commitments into concrete policies and actions, and through monitoring the progress and accountability of these activities. The speaker further clarified that the





tracker will present mostly secondary data, collating all information that already exists, rather than collecting primary data. It was noted that EUI aims to present the tracker during RightsCon 2025 in Taiwan.

### Session 3: Implementing the Donor Principles for Human Rights in the Digital Age

12.30 - 13.15 CET

*Participants:* FOC Members; Observers; FOC-AN; External Stakeholders; Support Unit

A year since the launch of the FOC [Donor Principles for Human Rights in the Digital Age](#), this session provided an opportunity to explore how the Donor Principles have been leveraged by stakeholders, and to facilitate a discussion on next steps to support their implementation. The session featured remarks from Theo Dolan, Digital Technology and Civic Activism Advisor at USAID and Sidney Leclercq, Senior Program Officer at IDRC, co-Chairs of the FOC's Funding Coordination Group (FCG).

USAID provided an overview of ongoing efforts to mainstream the Donor Principles within their internal programming, which includes the development of an implementation plan in collaboration with Global Partners Digital (GPD). The implementation within USAID consists of three stages: an internal evaluation process; the development of socialisation and communication plans; and, the development of talking points to support engagement opportunities in external forums. USAID noted their focus on two of the principles which the broader FOC community identified as priorities during multistakeholder consultations held in Japan on the margins of IGF 2023: principle #4 "Request an impact assessment process for how human rights considerations are integrated into all programs with digital components"; and, principle #8 "Prioritise digital security and safety in the development and implementation of programs, the use of digital tools, and the management of data".

In regard to IDRC's efforts to embed the Donor Principles internally, the importance of developing tailored messaging supported by evidence for implementation was noted, and the need to communicate how the Donor Principles serve various objectives across multiple levels, including working methods, community programming, and systems. IDRC also emphasised the need to advance collaboration between stakeholders on the activities to implement the Donor Principles, and noted ongoing efforts relating to the development of responsible AI ecosystems, to identify effective practices for human rights impact assessments and creating tailored guidance for donors, and activities being explored to enhance digital security and resilience.

The FOC Support Unit noted the ongoing challenge of streamlining discussions on the Donor Principles within the broader activities of the FOC and for Members to engage with interagency colleagues, and posed the question on what role the FOC can play to bridge the gap. Participants recommended further engagement with international agencies such as the World Bank; the development of realistic and sustainable key performance indicators to measure the operationalisation of the Donor Principles; connecting discussions between the development and donor communities; and to promote frameworks for multistakeholder participation at a national level.

On next steps, the FCG co-Chairs noted next steps to finalise their internal implementation plans and encouraged further discussions with FOC Members and the broader multistakeholder community. Speakers also noted a number of internal and external recommendations gathered from recent consultations, including: developing key indicators and other methods of formal reporting; providing training to development missions and staff on implementation; incorporating the Donor Principles into requests for proposals and project applications; and, to explore incorporating the Donor Principles into the GDC and UNDP's DPI safeguarding framework.

### Session 4: Exploring key findings from the Learning Paper on Maximising the Impact of Joint Government Statements

12.30 - 13.15 CET

*Participants:* FOC Members; Observers; FOC-AN; External Stakeholders; Support Unit



In this panel session, FOC Members Estonia and the United States, representatives from the Media Freedom Coalition (MFC)'s Secretariat and Consultative Network, respectively, as well as an independent media development consultant and researcher, explored key findings and recommendations from the [Learning Paper on Maximising the Impact of Joint Government Statements](#), which was commissioned by the MFC Secretariat, with input from the FOC Support Unit (SU), earlier this year.

Derek Thorne, Head of the MFC Secretariat, welcomed participants and introduced Dr. Aida Al-Kaisy, a media development consultant and academic researcher who was commissioned to carry out the research. He further highlighted that the purpose of the paper was to explore how international initiatives, such as the MFC and the FOC, that produce joint statements on human rights issues, can maximise the impact of these outputs.

Dr. Al-Kaisy noted that the paper employed desk research of available information and documents from the MFC, FOC and academic literature on public diplomacy, as well as qualitative research consisting of semi-structured interviews with government, civil society, and media/journalism stakeholders. Dr. Al-Kaisy provided an overview of the key findings and recommendations from the paper, including the importance of clarifying and aligning statement objectives across a variety of stakeholder groups; the value of statements for internal advocacy within governments; the need to include more specific and clear 'calls to action' and to root statements in human rights principles; the importance of governments amplifying statements; the merits of achieving consensus and how which governments opt in plays a key role in how effective a statement will be.

Katrin Kivi, Ambassador at Large for Human Rights and Migration for Estonia, currently co-Chairing the MFC and an upcoming Chair of the FOC in 2025, underscored the critical value of timeliness when it comes to issuing effective joint statements. Ambassador Kivi highlighted the need to react quickly in response to a specific event or situation, and provided examples of both consensual and non-consensual statements issued by the MFC. It was further noted that coalitions should focus on outreach and collaboration, using positive language where possible and avoiding condemnation for a more effective statement.

Niki Masghati, Senior Foreign Affairs Officer from the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, and past Chair of the FOC in 2023, talked about the United States' experience with developing joint statements within the FOC. She highlighted the value of FOC Advisory Network's expertise and noted some of the challenges that governments meet internally during the rigorous process of developing a statement. Masghati further underscored the importance of thinking about what happens after a statement is issued, including the need for follow-up, amplification publicly and dissemination.

Rosie Parkyn, Global Director of Impact and Learning at Internews and a member of the MFC Consultative Network, reiterated some of the points made so far and added that there is a need to look at the geographic spread within the coalitions, as negotiating statements is vital. She noted that, in MFC's case, when statements have fewer signatories, that weakens the Coalition's collective voice as each statement is seen as a reflection of the Member States' commitment to MFC's values.

Finally, following the panel interventions, the audience participated in a Q&A session, discussing further the need to think about the geopolitical context, challenging internal government structures, the value of thematic statements which focus on partnerships and are followed by strong public campaigns, as well as the difference between the FOC and the MFC, in terms of internal processes and thematic priority areas.



## Annex 1: Agenda (abridged)

### Day 0: Tuesday, 22 October - Capacity Building

Time (CEST)	Topic	Attendees
08.45	Arrival & Welcome Coffee	FOC Members; Observer
09.00	<b>Session 1: Introductory Session on Internet Freedom</b> Facilitator: Christopher Painter, The Global Forum on Cyber Expertise	
10.30	Coffee Break (15 minutes)	
10.45	<b>Session 2: Technical Standards and Human Rights</b> Facilitator: Mallory Knodel, Exchange Point Institute	
11.45	Break (5 minutes)	
11.50	<b>Session 3: Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights</b> Facilitator: Vanja Škorić, ECNL	
12.50	Lunch Break (40 minutes)	
13.30	<b>Session 4: Skills-Based Interactive Session</b> Facilitator: Joyce Hakmeh, Chatham House	
16.00	Recap & Reflections	
16.15	End of Day	

### Day 1: Wednesday, 23 October - Strategic Meetings

Time (CEST)	Topic	Attendees
9.30	Arrival & Welcome Coffee / Snacks	FOC Members; Observer; FOC-AN
10.00	Opening Remarks from the 2024 FOC Chair	
10.15	FOC Member Meeting - Reflecting on the 2024 Program of Action	FOC Members; Observer
10.15	<i>Parallel Meeting:</i> FOC Advisory Network	FOC-AN
11.30	Coffee Break (30 minutes)	
12.00	FOC Member Meeting (Cont.) - Global Digital Compact & Ways Forward for the WSIS+20 Process	FOC Members; Observer
13.00	Lunch Break (1 hour) - FOC Advisory Network Joins Meeting	
14.00	State of Play: Internet Freedom and Digital Technology Governance in 2024 & Beyond	FOC Members; Observer; FOC-AN
14.45	FOC & FOC-AN Joint Roundtable Meeting	
16.15	Recap & Agenda for Day 2	
16.30	End of Day	



## Day 2: Thursday, 24 October - FOC Community & Strategic Partners

Time (CEST)	Topic
9.30	Arrival & Welcome Coffee / Snacks
9.45	<b>Chairship 2025 - Priorities &amp; Planning</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Remarks from Estonia, 2025 Chair of the FOC</li><li>2. Presentation of draft 2025 priorities</li><li>3. Discussion on planned activities in the draft Program of Action</li></ol>
10.45	Coffee Break (15 minutes)
11.00	<b>Session 1: The Blueprint on Information Integrity</b> (led by the FOC Task Force on Information Integrity Online)
11.45	<b>Session 2: Tracking the progress on global Internet-related commitments</b> (led by the European University Institute)
12.30	<b>Session 3: Implementing the Donor Principles for Human Rights in the Digital Age</b>
	<b>Session 4: Exploring key findings from the Learning Paper on Maximising the Impact of Joint Government Statements</b>
13.15	<b>Plenary: Session Recap &amp; Closing Remarks</b>
13.30	Lunch / Sub-Entity Meeting Spaces

## Annex 2: Minutes

### FOC Members Meeting

Thursday, 30 May | 10:15 - 13:00 CET

#### 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:
    - Colombia became the 41st Member of the FOC in September.
    - The SU noted ongoing process for prospective Members of the Coalition.
  - The SU provided progress updates on the implementation of the 2024 Program of Action
  - The SU provided an update on FOC finance

#### Reflections from the 2024 Chair

- Guus van Zwoll, Task Force on International Cyber Policies in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, provided initial reflections on progress to implement the 2024 Program of Action (PoA).
  - The Netherlands noted the focus on Goal 1 of the PoA, especially during the process to negotiate the Global Digital Compact (GDC), and highlighted the activities that took place to connect capital and diplomatic network focal points to share knowledge, expertise and build capacity, as well as form a bridge between the FOC's mechanisms.
    - The Netherlands acknowledged the ongoing challenge of the New York dynamic, and how this impacted coordination between FOC Members in GDC negotiations, noting further work needs to be done next year to strengthen the network.
  - The Netherlands noted a number of achievements for Goal 2 of the PoA, and acknowledged the numerous pieces of advice provided by the FOC-AN to support FOC activities.



- The Netherlands highlighted the ongoing development of the Joint Statement on Digital Repression in Venezuela, and noted the discussions that have taken place to determine when and how the FOC responds to challenges to Internet freedom, especially in the case of country-specific situations.

## Discussion Items

### FOC Outreach and Member Engagement

- The SU introduced the discussion item, noting Goal 3 of the PoA to advance principles of DEIA and efforts that have taken place so far in 2024, including inviting Global Majority governments to join the FOC, and hosting regional dialogues on the margins of multistakeholder fora.
- The Netherlands highlighted efforts to diversify the Coalition’s membership, noting the need to further discuss both the opportunities that come with growth, as well as the potential challenges, including increased difficulty in decision-making.
- Canada noted that while there has been expansion in the FOC’s Membership, attention also needs to be placed on the level of participation of current Members and efforts to improve engagement.
  - Denmark echoed the need to increase existing Members’ engagement in order to strengthen the exchange of perspectives within the Coalition’s global membership.
  - The US noted that recent efforts to form joint positions have demonstrated that while the FOC is composed of like minded Members, there are differences that are starting to appear and need to be considered as the Coalition tries to create spaces for open discussion.
- Estonia highlighted the potential to expand Membership and include those who may not necessarily have the exact same views, but are sufficiently like minded to join the FOC’s efforts to coordinate in various fora and ultimately strengthen the Coalition.
- The US reflected on past discussions on a big tent versus small tent approach, and noted the value of the FOC having a diverse global membership, where Members can engage with others who are likeminded on issues related to the Coalition’s mandate, and may not necessarily be part of other groupings or alliances.
- Denmark highlighted the need to be mindful of the various priorities of prospective Members, noting that the GDC outlines a variety of priorities, some of which fall within the FOC’s mandate and others less so.
- Austria noted a concern with the proliferation of joint statements, which draws resources away from efforts to engage with decision making bodies and in key processes such as the GDC, and results in additional time being spent to negotiate internally and may impact Members’ level of engagement.
  - Austria emphasised that expansion should not be the goal itself, and that while new Members should be welcomed the focus needs to remain on ensuring the Coalition is composed of like minded countries, otherwise there is a risk of making it increasingly difficult to pronounce positions clearly and profoundly.
- The UK echoed Members’ comments on identifying the right balance between expanding and diversifying membership while maintaining the like-minded nature of the Coalition, and further emphasised the need to consider the resources Members have available when reflecting on levels of engagement.
- Taiwan noted the significant benefit of engaging stakeholders through activities such as regional dialogues, which enhanced the FOC’s visibility in the Asia Pacific region, and furthering these discussions into next year’s Chairship.
  - Switzerland suggested strengthening the coordination of outreach efforts to prospective members, and to further build upon the momentum of FOC activities in various regions.
- The Netherlands acknowledged the need to advance these discussions within the Steering Committee to better determine when new Members or activities and outputs should be paused or not proceed, and encouraged Members to closely review the 2025 PoA, bearing in mind the resourcing needs to fulfill the listed activities.
  - The Netherlands also referenced the DEIA report, noting both past and ongoing efforts to incorporate recommendations from the report around strengthening engagement with Global Majority countries into this year’s activities.



## Reflecting on FOC Mechanisms to Address Ongoing Challenges to Internet Freedom and FOC Sub-Entity Activities

- The Netherlands acknowledged challenges faced by Task Forces, including a lack of engagement and resourcing, and emphasised the importance of these mechanisms fulfilling their plans of action. The Netherlands also noted the ongoing development of statements on country-specific situations and key challenges to Internet freedom including the use of Internet shutdowns.
- The US noted two differing opinions on the effectiveness of the Coalition, one of which is focusing on responding to internal stakeholders and the other responding to external stakeholders, including the FOC-AN and beyond, who are looking to the FOC's reaction to various situations around the world concerning the protection of human rights online.
  - The US emphasised that the FOC-AN has been calling on the FOC to facilitate external responses and actions, for which government members need to balance between what is the most effective use of resources and how the FOC can be responsive to situations globally.
- The US noted that FOC sub-entities and other mechanisms have at times been effective, but as the Coalition has expanded and activities have proliferated, there is growing confusion on how to best engage and where to focus efforts.
  - The US suggested exploring how the FOC can create accountability for the leadership of Task Forces, and how to best determine when their work should conclude.
  - The US raised questions on what Members see as the most effective use of resources, what Members are able to achieve through FOC mechanisms, and how Members can be responsive to the requests of the FOC-AN and the advice they are providing.
- Estonia echoed the input from the US, and emphasised the importance of reviewing when a Task Force has completed its work and coming to a decision on whether its mandate should be concluded.
  - On country-specific statements, Estonia raised the question on whether the FOC is the best suited platform for these statements, or are there other fora where these statements could have more effect and be easier to coordinate.
- The Netherlands noted statements as an output of capacity building and internal coordination, both important tools to develop common language and a shared vision of the FOC. Although this may become a resource burden, the Netherlands emphasised it is the most effective way to ensure all Coalition Members are being represented.
- Canada noted the budgetary implications that need to be considered when taking on new initiatives, such as additional Task Forces and the FOC's expanding membership, in addition to being aware of the risk of becoming over-institutionalized, with increasing resource needs for administrative work.
  - Canada also highlighted the example of AI, raising the question as to whether the FOC needs a specific focus on AI when it is becoming so pervasive in the multilateral system, and other topics such as data governance potentially needing more of a focus through FOC mechanisms.
  - Canada suggested holding further discussions with the FOC-AN in regard to what is expected of the FOC and what is realistic, ensuring there are clear priorities communicated.
- Denmark noted that the FOC needs to reflect on the budgetary and support implications of the sub-entities, and encouraged members to further engage in sub-entity activities as they can be effective platforms to build capacity, develop joint positions, tap into the expertise of Members and the FOC-AN, and better understand the complexity of the topics the FOC is engaging on.
- The US suggested exploring a different system to approve sub-entity mandates, such as requiring a 2/3 of the Coalition to proactively indicate that they support the Task Force being renewed, as a way to ensure Members are understanding and supportive of Task Force activities.
- The Netherlands noted that the lack of activity from some of the sub-entities mandated in 2024 should not be a sole reason to close them down, as from a substantive perspective they are dealing with important topics linked to the FOC's priority areas.
  - Chile queried whether this is a clear procedure in the ToR to close a Task Force, such as conducting an evaluation, and noted if the effectiveness of any existing procedure may need to be revisited.





## Global Digital Compact Process & Way Forward for WSIS (breakout discussions)

- The SU introduced the discussion before the participants divided into breakout groups, underscoring that engagement and coordination of FOC diplomatic activities to shape the outcomes of the Global Digital Compact (GDC) has been a key focus of the Dutch Chairship, and provided an overview of the input document.
- The Netherlands provided reflections on the FOC's coordination efforts, highlighting the effectiveness of the FOC's efforts to bridge conversations between Geneva, New York, and Capital and noted that challenges with the dynamics in New York during the parallel negotiations of the Pact and GDC, in addition to certain trade-offs in negotiations which contributed to not all of the FOC's priorities being fully reflected in the final text.
  - The Netherlands noted implementation discussions and consultations have already commenced, and encouraged FOC members to remain in close contact with New York colleagues on GDC follow-up.
- **Breakout group guiding questions:**
  - Which shared priorities of FOC Members are positively reflected in the GDC?
  - How can the GDC's implementation and FOC engagement in the WSIS +20 process further strengthen the promotion of human rights and the multistakeholder model, as per the FOC's shared priorities?
  - Which lessons can be learned from FOC coordination efforts on the GDC, both in substance and process, for future FOC engagement?
- Breakout group rapporteurs provided an overview of discussions, noting:
  - General agreement that FOC priorities were able to be successfully defended in the GDC, and coordination efforts to bridge the gap between diplomatic networks and capital were broadly successful;
  - The focus on capacity building, especially in New York, supported Members' ability to engage in the process and advance FOC priorities;
  - A similar approach should be taken for the WSIS+20 process, including further building on the shared language that has been developed, and forming a reference document identifying language that the FOC would want to avoid;
  - Further calls and communications are needed with FOC focal points to ensure they remain updated on discussions happening in New York;
  - More emphasis needs to be placed on New York in the coming months and year, especially due to New York representatives not necessarily having the depth of knowledge on WSIS and its history in comparison to those in Geneva,
  - A need to quickly reset the FOC's coordination mechanism with a focus on GDC implementation, including how it will be operationalised and where, and the WSIS process, as discussions on both are quickly advancing.
- Switzerland noted that it may be time to take a more proactive stance looking ahead to WSIS+20, as there is still time to frame the issues at hand in a way that promotes the FOC's mission of protecting freedom online, and to utilise the FOC-AN's advice to help frame WSIS+20 discussions in a more rights-friendly manner.
- The Netherlands noted that coordination is ongoing with the NL Mission in New York to organise a workshop on the WSIS+20 process in the coming weeks, and there will be a session at the upcoming IGF on how to advance the multi stakeholder approach in the implementation of the GDC and in the WSIS process.
- The Netherlands called on Members to communicate with their focal points for ICANN in advance of the elections for members of the Governmental Advisory Committee, noting that Australia, Switzerland, Colombia, and the Netherlands have put forth candidates.





## AOB

### FOC response to FOC-AN Advice on the UN Cybercrime Convention

- The Netherlands noted the FOC-AN's call for Coalition Members to vote against the adoption of the convention and their request for a response from the Chair in reaction to the proactive advice.

## FOC and FOC-AN Joint Roundtable

Wednesday, 23 October | 14:45 - 16:15 CET

### Welcome

- The SU opened the meeting with a summary of the Members-only discussions from earlier.
- FOC-AN co-Chairs provided welcome remarks, and noted this as the first Joint Roundtable with the new FOC-AN cohort.
- FOC-AN Members provided an overview of Proactive and Reactive Advice submitted to the FOC throughout the year, with the discussion in the Joint Roundtable focusing on the various categories of advice.

### Discussion

#### Cybercrime

- FOC-AN co-Chair noted the Kingdom of the Netherlands' response to the FOC-AN three pieces of advice on the UN Convention Against Cybercrime (further referred to as 'Treaty'), which was received with surprise.
- FOC-AN Members noted they stand by their advice, rearticulating the concerns with the Treaty and its potential impact on human rights and human rights defenders, the flaws in the text, and the fact that the treaty does not address a number of issues with combating cybercrime globally.
  - FOC-AN noted they will be drafting a response to the letter, and are planning to facilitate a briefing for FOC governments on the topic.
  - FOC-AN Members encouraged governments to prioritise this topic, not to vote in favour of the Treaty in the UN General Assembly vote, and commit to rights-respecting implementation and adhere to international human rights standards in the case of the Treaty's ratification.
- Regarding the substance of the Treaty, the FOC-AN noted there are still opportunities to make substantive changes to ensure strength when it comes to its human rights elements, and emphasising concerns around the breadth of the Treaty, establish limitations in terms of the types of crimes encompassed.
  - The FOC-AN noted the application of this Treaty may have effect on many other issues, and may provide opportunities for governments that want to use legislation to clamp down on free speech and dissent.
  - The FOC-AN emphasised the need for further discussion between the FOC and FOC-AN, as well as between the governments themselves on how to move forward and achieve common ground.
- Regarding the implementation of the Treaty, the FOC-AN noted the importance of considering how to ensure the procedural safeguards and rule of law are integrated into this process, including court orders from independent courts when there are data requests, in those cases where appropriate, Internet service providers may be able to challenge those processes.
  - FOC-AN highlighted the need to ensure that activities done in the public interest are not penalised to this type of crime Treaty.
- FOC-AN Members also noted the importance of ensuring resources for assistance to governments in capacity and implementation, as well as assistance for civil society to defend against abuses of the Treaty, including mechanisms for implementation monitoring.
  - FOC-AN noted there are a number of good human rights implementation and monitoring mechanisms, including through the EPR and the Office of the High Commission on Human Rights (OHCHR), that can be strengthened and bolstered in the implementation of the Treaty.
  - The FOC-AN urged the FOC to recognise exchange of cross-border data for law enforcement purposes is not a silver bullet and not view it as a one stop solution. Governments should put in resources and build capacity in existing multilateral and bilateral processes and systems, as well



- as procedural law processes at the national level, and improve coordination on legitimate, necessary, and proportionate efforts to address cybercrime.
- The Netherlands thanked the FOC-AN for their advice and engagement on this topic, and acknowledged their concerns around the letter response by the Netherlands to the advice, for which it was noted the Netherlands did not consult the Steering Committee (SC) or wider FOC on.
    - The Netherlands welcomed comments around the process that were raised and noted learned lessons going forward.
  - In response to the FOC-AN feedback, the Netherlands noted its position on the Ad Hoc Committee, which proves the importance of multistakeholder cooperation, including exchanging views and concrete text proposals.
    - The Netherlands acknowledged the concerns around the Treaty, however noting the aim to achieve a consensus outcome considering the many voices in the room, particularly democratic countries, for whom having an international instrument to combat cybercrime is significantly important, as well as having a seat at the table where they can have impact on what such an instrument would look like.
    - The Netherlands noted there are many elements they would have liked to see in the text that are not there, but ultimately this outcome is the result of compromise, emphasising that principles such as legality or necessity did not enjoy consensus by the majority of the room.
    - While appreciative of the discussion and recommendations from the FOC-AN, the Netherlands noted it cannot accept voting against the adoption of the Treaty for two primary reasons:
      1. **Process:** The Netherlands noted being faced with two critical objectives: establishing an effective mechanism for implementation, and navigating efforts by some UN Member States to include even more crimes and additional protocol. Proceeding with the call for a vote on a document that has already been agreed upon in the Ad Hoc Committee could significantly undermine the Netherlands' credibility and influence in the UN, as well the confidence of state parties and the discussions on the future protocol.
      2. **Substance:** Acknowledging the raised concerns, the Netherlands noted it does not agree that the current conditions for safeguards and human rights language in the Treaty are not sufficient, citing article 6 which makes clear that not only should all obligations under the Treaty be implemented in a manner consistent with international human rights law, but also that nothing from the Treaty shall be interpreted as permitting suppression of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including rights related to freedom of expression, opinion and belief.
        - Having this provision in the Treaty does not prevent some countries from undertaking repressive procedural measures, but it does clearly state that it cannot be used to legitimise such activities, including those targeting service.
        - Regarding the scope of international cooperation, the Netherlands noted it has shown flexibility to broaden the scope to serious crimes, which is often a national perspective, however this was done because of the broad support for from a lot of middle-ground countries in Latin America and Asia, who for whom it was important to be able to share electronic evidence for murder and femicide. The Netherlands noted difficulties including qualifiers.
  - Austria commended efforts by non-governmental stakeholders, including the FOC-AN, on providing advice throughout the process to develop and negotiate the Treaty.
    - Austria agreed with the Netherlands' remarks on the Treaty, noting that it will be making a recommendation on the national level to ratify the Treaty, and highlighting the implementation is not to be left to countries with a different agenda.
    - Austria noted that the key is ensuring strong coordination between like-minded countries for human rights-respecting implementation, and emphasising room for improvement in the work of human rights bodies and in utilising mechanisms such as the Universal Periodic Review (UPR).
    - Austria echoed the strong need for many countries in the Global Majority for more effective mechanisms and instruments to combat cybercrime.
  - The FOC-AN noted the importance of the FOC being vocal on the Treaty and its limitations for the credibility of the Coalition as a body dedicated to protecting and expanding Internet freedom around the world, citing this issue as one of the major threats for Internet freedom.
    - Noting the Coalition as claiming to protect freedom online in accordance with its foundational documents, the FOC-AN posed the question on how language on necessity and legality and proportionality, which are in every major human rights instrument regarding freedom of



expression, right to privacy and other fundamental freedoms online, is not being insisted on in this instance.

## Internet and AI Governance

### [Global Digital Compact](#) (GDC) and WSIS+20

- The FOC-AN noted that from the perspective of non-governmental stakeholders, the GDC process was not as multistakeholder as it could have been, highlighting that as the process progressed the idea of inclusion became more of a tick-box exercise, rather than insisting on meaningful inclusion and engagement with stakeholders.
- When it comes to civil society participation, the FOC-AN noted there was a certain degree of fatigue due to the broad scope of topics covered by the Compact, but also because the process was held in New York, and participation of civil society in these kinds of processes in New York, is extremely difficult.
- The FOC-AN noted the importance for more streamlined coordination between like-minded governments.
- Considering that the GDC was adopted by the UN General Assembly and has the same standing as the WSIS document, the FOC-AN encouraged the FOC to consider the following:
  - How implementation and coordination will take place;
  - The intersection between the GDC and WSIS, considering the lack of direction from institutions that are meant to lead the implementation;
  - Engaging in scoping and ensuring the mandate of the UN Secretary-General's Tech Envoy (OSET) mandate is limited and appropriately placed;
    - More clarity needed around whether endorsement is a precondition for non-governmental stakeholders to participate in the implementation;
  - The role of the OHCHR advisory service on human rights in the digital space, and how this service will be funded;
  - Setting clear goals and terms of reference for the proposed new bodies and processes, particularly in the AI section, eg. the Global Dialogue on AI Governance, as well as how engagement will be facilitated in regional and local contexts;
- Based on the GDC, the FOC-AN highlighted the following priorities regarding WSIS+20:
  - Establishing the relationship between WSIS+20 and the GDC;
  - How the FOC can strengthen the IGF in the WSIS+20;
  - Agreeing on modalities the FOC wants and can promote to make sure the process is effective and multistakeholder.
- Switzerland noted that while the GDC has been adopted, there are still many opportunities and risks in its implementation, and ensuring how well the GDC will be implemented and build on existing processes that promote multistakeholder collaboration.
  - On WSIS+20, Switzerland noted the opportunity to offer a more adequate home for digital and AI governance issues, which is much more multistakeholder than the GDC and New York processes can be.
  - To that end, Switzerland noted there are lessons learned for updating the WSIS infrastructure, including the IGF, to be rights-respecting and multistakeholder, and reflect current challenges around digital governance.
  - Switzerland welcomed suggestions from the FOC-AN on how to frame the WSIS architecture and review, in process and product, in a way that is as multistakeholder and rights-friendly as possible, citing the [NETMundial guidelines](#) as an example of good practice.
  - Switzerland noted a useful resource from the Diplo Foundation on navigating the GDC.
- The Netherlands noted the need to think more concretely about what is meant by “multistakeholder” depending on the process in question, emphasising the importance of improving multilateral processes to be more mindful of other stakeholders, particularly in New York.



- In terms of the GDC implementation, the Netherlands noted ongoing discussions about the role of OSET, including about making sure implementation is facilitated through Geneva and New York, is transparent, and that OEST does not overstep its mandate.
  - When it comes to AI governance, the Netherlands noted implementation will be starting in December, when the co-facilitators for the Global Dialogue on AI Governance are meant to be identified.
- In terms of substance, the Netherlands noted that despite a lot of initial concern, the outcome document is relatively positive and does not carry the threats it started with, however emphasised the need to further clarify the relationship between the GDC and WSIS.
- The FOC-AN agreed on the importance of defining what kind of “multistakeholder” engagement we want, however emphasised the same battles non-governmental stakeholders already went through 20 years ago in the WSIS process to engage.
  - The FOC-AN noted that when GDC and WSIS are compared, it is evident that WSIS was about development, technology, and putting people in the centre of conversations; the GDC’s premise seems to be to fix multilateralism.
- The US noted the importance of applying the NETMundial principles going into the WSIS+20 process, underlining some of the challenges that FOC governments face due to coming from different ministries, departments, and agencies.
  - The US noted it would be helpful to hear recommendations and reflections on the FOC’s coordination efforts to date, and how the FOC can ensure multistakeholder engagement in the WSIS process.
- Canada noted there is a lot of confusion and ambiguity, with many different players trying to navigate what digital governance means, and states struggling to handle all of the ongoing processes.
  - Noting WSIS has a lot of symbiosis with the GDC, Canada noted that Sec Gen has largely given the OSET free reign for a roadmap to take over by April
  - Canada noted that for the WSIS process, it is important to take a step back and map the next 12 months in terms of milestones and opportunities for coordination and engagement.
  - While there is a multi stakeholder component, Canada noted the WSIS+20 Review will be a multilateral process ending in New York with a lack of clarity what multistakeholderism means, and highlighting the importance of the Coalition in making sure the doors are not shut for other stakeholders to engage.
- Denmark echoed the importance of making New York processes more inclusive, and inquired around the timeline for the GDC implementation.
  - In terms of WSIS, Denmark noted the need for strong argument on why the WSIS architecture needs to be kept, and having more concrete discussions about this in the relevant spaces, including in New York.
- Denmark and the US noted the need for guidance in terms of the timeline and engagement in the WSIS process.

### Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)

- The FOC-AN noted that while DPI is generally a good thing for inclusivity and access, DPI initiatives are often used as a lever for Global Majority countries to advance certain agendas, and are often implemented without adequate human rights safeguards.
  - Local civil societies are often excluded from these conversations, with the FOC-AN noting that if DPI is not implemented in a rights-respecting way, this takes away agency and how they interact with their governments.
- The FOC-AN provided the following recommendations to FOC governments in terms of engaging on DPI:
  - Develop a clear position on DPI, ensuring it is rights-respecting and mandated;
  - Ensure governments are coordinating with development agencies that are funding these kinds of projects, and placing human rights as central tenet for these projects;



- Advocate for human rights not to be subsumed under economic rights to avoid DPI projects becoming tools for taking away the right to privacy, assembly, and participation, and ensure their development and implementation is grounded in human rights.

#### Country-Specific

- The FOC-AN provided an overview of the rapid response toolkit, developed collaboratively between the FOC, FOC-AN, and the SU in 2023 under the US Chairship.
- The FOC-AN cited the activities on Venezuela, including the FOC-AN Proactive Advice, briefing, and draft Joint Statement led on by the Netherlands and Canada, as positive examples of utilising a number of actions from the toolkit.
  - The FOC-AN supported the development of the Joint Statement and thanked the Netherlands and Canada for their efforts in leading the drafting.
- The Netherlands noted the need to further discuss what the measure of success would be in terms of issuing country-specific joint statements, and what the minimum number of countries signing on to the statement would need to be for the statement to be considered effective and useful.
- The SU noted this as the most prolific year in terms of FOC-AN advice, and emphasised the depth and breadth of the work and support of the network that helps the Coalition move forward on these issues.
- The Netherlands thanked the FOC-AN for their engagement and support throughout the Chairship, and welcomed further collaboration.

