Attended: Estonia (FOC Chair), Denmark, Finland, Ghana, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States, the Support Unit.

Welcome / Opening Remarks

- The SU welcomed all members to the first Steering Committee (SC) meeting of 2025 under the chairship of Estonia. A brief introduction of all members was conducted, with a welcome to new members of the cohort, Luxembourg and Sweden.

Housekeeping

- SU provided an overview of upcoming events
  - **3 February:** FOC Engagement in the WSIS+20 Process | Online (capital, Geneva, NY)
  - **24 - 27 February**: RightsCon 2025 | Taipei / Online
    - **Monday 24, 9:00 - 16:00**: FOC Strategy & Coordination Meeting (SCM)
    - **Tuesday 25:**
      - **8:30 - 10:00**: FOC Multistakeholder Dialogue
      - **14:00 - 15:00:** FOC Session - *From Countering to Building: Finding the Keys to Promote Information Integrity Online* public launch of the FOC Blueprint on Information Integrity Online)
    - **Wednesday 26:**
      - **14:00 - 15:00:** FOC Task Force on AI & Human Rights Meeting
      - **17:30 - 19:00:** Side event on the FOC Donor Principles for Human Rights in the Digital Age - *Operationalising the Donor Principles: Human Rights Impact Assessments and Digital Resilience*
    - **Thursday 27:**
      - **9:00 - 10:00:** FOC Session - *Unlocking Progress through Inclusive and Rights-Respecting Digital Public Infrastructure*
  - **11-12 March:** Multistakeholder Consultation on WSIS+20 and GDC Implementation | Geneva, hybrid.
- The Support Unit provided internal updates including:
  - The SU has finalized its yearly Program of Activities, outlining objectives as mandated by the FOC Terms of Reference. Members are invited to review the document and provide any objections by **EOD Tuesday, 11 February**.
    - The 2025 FOC Budget is currently being revised in alignment with the Program of Action, and a finance presentation on fundraising efforts will be provided at the upcoming SCM.
  - Given recent funding suspensions affecting the Internet freedom community, including some Members of the Advisory Network (FOC-AN), the SU highlighted ongoing discussions within the FOC-AN regarding the future of the digital rights sector.
  - The Task Force on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights (TFAIR) will continue in 2025 under the co-leadership of the Netherlands, Germany, and ICNL. Members interested in joining are encouraged to reach out to the SU (nicholas@gp-digital.org; nusa@gp-digital.org)
  - Following discussions at the [FOC SCM in The Hague](#) and the SC meeting at IGF 2024, Estonia has compiled a list of FOC and prospective Members for SC outreach.
- Following an enquiry from Estonia, the SU noted outreach to Member States and other stakeholders around FOC activities at RightsCon is ongoing and will be strategically targeted in collaboration with the AN, particularly regarding engagement with regional actors.
- Denmark provided input regarding the UN Cybercrime Convention, emphasizing that Estonia should ensure all relevant stakeholders are included in such processes, especially given the rapid pace of developments.

Discussion Items:

Program of Action 2025
- Estonia thanked the Members for participating in the January high-level kick-off call on the 2025 Program of Action.
- Estonia expressed appreciation to the Netherlands for its leadership as the previous Chair of the Coalition, and outlined its plans for implementing the 2025 Program of Action noting the following:
  - Under Goal 1 of the PoA, with the Netherlands as the lead, a series of information-sharing and coordination events on WSIS+20 and the FOC's role in aligning positions will take place throughout the first two quarters of the year.
  - Under Goal 2, Estonia is drafting the principles for rights-respecting digital public infrastructure, with the objective of presenting a zero draft by the SCM in Taipei for in-person discussions. The principles will be further refined through multistakeholder consultations at RightsCon 2025 and regional dialogues held alongside events such as the Digital Rights Inclusion Forum (DRIF). Further updates will be shared in due course.
  - Under Goal 3, Estonia will facilitate outreach to both Global South Members and prospective Members, seeking support from the SC to advance these efforts. As a key priority, Estonia plans to visit prospective member countries, beginning with outreach in the Philippines following RightsCon, and will be leveraging the Winter School for Cyber Diplomacy in the Dominican Republic (DR), happening in March, as an opportunity to engage with DR officials and other regional stakeholders across the Caribbean region.
    - Estonia invited SC members to support in identifying additional countries where engagement could be pursued.
- Denmark raised questions regarding the FOC's engagement in these spaces and its broader purpose.
  - Estonia clarified that these activities are essential for expanding awareness of the Coalition and leveraging training initiatives as opportunities for regional outreach.
  - Estonia encouraged members to engage their diplomatic networks and coordinate with local colleagues to align on strategic actions that can advance the Coalition's agenda.

Strategy & Coordination Meeting (SCM) Agenda
- The SU provided an agenda outline for the upcoming SCM, noting the meeting will serve as a key platform for Coalition Members to assess progress, coordinate on strategic priorities, and engage in capacity-building initiatives that will shape the first half of the year.
  - On **Monday, 24 February** (9.00 - 16.00), the agenda will feature an overview of activities and engagement opportunities in Q1 and Q2, followed by a capacity building simulation session on WSIS+20, and a strategic discussion on the FOC's role in the process.
  - On **Tuesday, 25 February** (8.30 - 10.00), the FOC will host a multistakeholder dialogue, including FOC governments, the FOC Advisory Network (FOC-AN), and external regional stakeholders, on priority areas of the Program of Action 2025.
- The SU also provided an update on participation numbers, highlighting confirmed attendance and gaps in representation.
  - 12 Member States have confirmed in-person attendance at the RightsCon summit.
    - Additionally, 4 Members have registered for online participation.
- The SU encouraged members to finalize their participation plans and provide any necessary feedback on the agenda.
- The Netherlands underscored the importance of maintaining active engagement at RightsCon, emphasizing that the Coalition has historically played a significant role in the event. They highlighted that this year's conference presents a valuable opportunity to enhance outreach efforts and strengthen engagement with a broader range of stakeholders.
- Sweden inquired about the possibility of sharing relevant sessions with the wider Coalition to enhance engagement.

- ○ The SU welcomed this suggestion, confirming it will be circulating a list of relevant sessions to ensure broader awareness and participation.

WSIS+20 FOC Coordination
- The Netherlands, with support from Estonia as Chair, noted it will be leading on FOC engagement in WSIS+20, coordinating efforts across capital, Geneva, and New York networks, and outlined planned activities for Q1 and Q2.
  - ○ The meeting on 3 February will mark the beginning of FOC coordination, with capital, NY and Geneva representatives present in the call.
  - ○ The Netherlands also highlighted their active engagement with colleagues in Geneva to ensure coordination on the upcoming multistakeholder event scheduled for 11-12 March, noting that these discussions will focus on strengthening multistakeholder approaches and building upon existing principles that support inclusive participation.
  - ○ The Netherlands also noted it is prioritizing broader engagement within the NY network, particularly in light of the modalities resolution, to ensure diverse stakeholder representation, with meetings to take place in February / March.
  - ○ Looking ahead, the Netherlands noted the planning for the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) meeting in April, where an FOC-only breakfast discussion will provide a dedicated space for Coalition members to align on WSIS+20 priorities.
- Switzerland shared plans to host two awareness-raising events in coordination with the Internet Society (ISOC) and the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF), noting these events, set to take place in both Geneva and NY, present an opportunity for alignment with the Netherlands' leadership on WSIS+20 engagement.
  - ○ On the CSTD meeting in April, Switzerland emphasized the importance of strategic coordination to ensure productive discussions and effective synergies between FOC efforts and broader WSIS+20 processes.
- The US expressed appreciation for ongoing coordination efforts and underscored the value of having the FOC reinforce human rights protections in WSIS+20 discussions.
  - ○ The US proposed that FOC Members make a concerted plea to center human rights within the WSIS+20 framework, as this alignment would further support US engagement in Coalition conversations.
  - ○ The US also highlighted concerns that human rights aspects of WSIS+20 negotiations are likely to face stronger opposition compared to cyber and digital governance issues. As such, they stressed the importance of developing a proactive strategy to address and counter any challenges to human rights language within WSIS+20 discussions.

AOB
- The SU introduced an item under AOB regarding the [Joint Statement on the Adoption of the Cybercrime Convention](), following inquiries from the FOC-AN about potential follow-up actions.
  - ○ The NL noted that an internal process is currently underway to assess the Convention and determine the next steps of implementation.