

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

Welcome / Opening Remarks

- The SU welcomed Members to the tenth SC meeting of 2024 and thanked Members for their participation in the recent SCM hosted in The Hague.

Housekeeping

- The SU provided housekeeping updates, including:
 - The lead drafters of the **Joint Statement on Digital Repression in Venezuela**, the NL and CA, are in the process of consolidating received comments, with a second draft forthcoming.
 - The second draft of the **Program of Action 2025** is also forthcoming for input from the FOC.
 - The FOC-AN will be looking to facilitate a briefing on the UN Convention Against Cybercrime for FOC governments, to be held in the next 2 weeks. *[Please note the FOC-AN Briefing on the Convention will be held virtually on 7 Nov, 14:00 UTC.]*
 - The call for expressions of interest to join the **2025 Steering Committee**, and the call for expressions of interest to **chair the FOC in 2026**, will be circulated shortly.
 - For the SC, there will be 14 seats available should the FOC's Membership increase to 42 Members.
 - **Taiwan's Observership status** will be coming up for review in February 2025. As per the FOC Terms of Reference, Observership is valid for two years at which point it must be reviewed and may be renewed by the SC.
 - The SU informed members that Taiwan has expressed interest in supporting FOC activities, and requested the SU assess the feasibility of receiving funding from Taiwan.
- The SU also provided a breakdown of all upcoming deadlines:
 - **EOD Friday, 1 November:** Comments in response to Armenia's Letter of Intent to join the FOC. *[Please note this deadline has now passed]*
 - **EOD Tuesday, 5 November:** Comments on the [Joint Statement on the Future of the Multistakeholder Model at the UN](#)
 - **EOD Tuesday, 5 November:** Comments on the [Joint Statement on Protecting Human Rights Online and Preventing Internet Shutdowns in Times of Conflict](#)
- The SU also provided a breakdown of upcoming events and meetings:
 - **28 November (TBC):** Geneva Diplomatic Network - Briefing on the UPR and human rights online;
 - **15-19 December:** IGF 2024, featuring 4 sessions led by FOC Member States, and a reception.
 - Day 0 Event #174 [Human Rights Impacts of AI on Marginalized Populations](#)
 - Day 0 Event #82 [Inclusive multistakeholderism: tackling Internet shutdowns](#)
 - Networking Session #169 [A Rights-Respecting Approach to Emerging Tech Development](#)
 - Open Forum #12 [Ensuring an Inclusive and Rights-Respecting Digital Future](#)
 - The SU is currently conducting outreach to speakers for all of the sessions - should any of your governments be interested in participating in any of the noted sessions, please let us know.
- The Netherlands (NL) noted outreach efforts in regards to the Joint Statement on Digital Repression in Venezuela are ongoing.
 - Together with Canada the NL will be sharing the next draft with the FOC for line edits shortly.

- The NL also noted the potential in-person SC meeting on the margins of the Tallinn Digital Summit, inquiring about Members' attendance. *[Please note that the SC meeting in Tallinn will not be taking place; the November SC meeting will take place online.]*

Discussion Items:

FOC Strategy & Coordination Meeting (SCM) Feedback

- The SU provided a recap of the SCM in The Hague, noting it marked a significant step in piloting the forthcoming FOC capacity-building program for points of contact. The program featured dedicated sessions for governments, and joint sessions with FOC and FOC Advisory Network (FOC-AN), enabling a comprehensive review of FOC's ongoing efforts toward advancing priorities in the Global Digital Compact, discussions on the WSIS+20 process, and strategic planning for 2025, as well as opportunities for collaboration with external partners.
 - The SU noted stronger engagement from capital-level participants of Global Majority countries, however also emphasized some limitations in the meeting schedule, with no dedicated SC meeting and minimal time for networking.
 - The SU also confirmed that the meeting saw robust attendance, with representatives from 23 governments present, of which 31 Points of Contact (PoCs) were in person.
 - Notably, 4 Global Majority governments—Ghana, Chile, Colombia, and Cabo Verde—received funding to support their in-person attendance.
 - Taiwan attended as an observer, alongside 21 members of the FOC-AN and several external partners and facilitators.
- The NL expressed appreciation for feedback on all facets of the meeting, including logistics, session formats, and opportunities for improvement.
- Estonia provided positive feedback on the capacity-building day and thanked participants for their insights on the PoA, which they aim to integrate into ongoing planning efforts.
- Switzerland commended the event's organization and particularly valued the capacity building day and community dinner.
 - Switzerland emphasised the capacity-building day was impactful, with the simulation session being an engaging approach to understanding human rights issues and responses to challenges. Switzerland also appreciated insights from the Task Forces.
- Denmark praised the SCM's organization and substantive discussions.
 - Denmark expressed interest in exploring methods to action the feedback gathered, particularly concerning Task Force initiatives and member engagement, and raised a question regarding the absence of private sector FOC-AN Members
- The United States (US) highlighted the simulation session as the most beneficial aspect of the SCM, as it fostered dialogue with Members outside the SC.
 - The US noted the need to implement feedback received from the SCM and suggested circulating a doodle poll to determine when SC Members can attend an extended meeting focusing on FOC processes and follow-up to action points and discussion items from the SCM.
- Germany highlighted the capacity-building day as an effective icebreaker and valuable learning experience, emphasising the importance of tools gained from the training that can be leveraged within their own governmental structures and diplomatic training.

FOC Sub-Entities

- The SU announced that the call for expressions of interest to lead an FOC sub-entity in 2025 would be circulated shortly, and presented the opportunity for SC Members to raise any concerns or suggestions about the process of establishing or renewing [sub-entity mandates](#) and capacity requirements for Task Force leadership.
 - The SU provided an overview of the FOC sub-entity renewal/establishment process:
 - Opening up the call for expressions of interest to lead a sub-entity in 2025 (existing or new);
 - Asking those interested to fill out the [mandate request form](#);
 - Reviewing the mandate request form by the FOC SC, who will decide during the final SC call of 2024 on whether to grant or extend mandates for the 2025 term.

- Estonia inquired about the procedure once the SC receives mandate forms, specifically if a vote would be held.
 - The SU clarified that SC strives to reach decisions by consensus, and any objections would be open for discussion.
- Denmark raised points concerning the renewal of the Task Force on Information Integrity and Online Harms (TFIIO) and whether information integrity remains a priority for Denmark, including activities to socialize the [Blueprint on Information Integrity](#).
 - Denmark proposed establishing a Task Force with a broader focus on Digital Inclusion, which would enhance alignment with the PoA and subsume work on the Blueprint.
 - Denmark also emphasized that the WSIS+20 review, and the Global Digital Compact (GDC) implementation would be key areas of focus, inquiring the potential to establish a Task Force dedicated to the GDC, while acknowledging Estonia's capacity and suggesting further discussions on how other FOC countries might lead PoA-related efforts.
- The NL expressed support for prioritizing information integrity and proposed scheduling a separate call to discuss it further.
 - NL suggested that rather than formalizing a new GDC-specific Task Force, it may be more effective to keep these efforts open and accessible to all FOC members.
 - NL also noted an intention to advance the work on AI and human rights in 2025, highlighting ongoing discussions with Germany on the Task Force on AI and Human Rights.
- The US observed there was some confusion about processes, and suggested sharing information on how Members can lead on initiatives according to the [Terms of Reference \(ToR\)](#), and ensure all members understand the range of engagement options within the Coalition.
 - The US also suggested extending SC meetings beyond one hour.
- The SU concluded this item, noting that the matter will continue to be discussed.

AOB:

RightsCon attendance

- Estonia inquired about members' availability to attend RightsCon to help inform discussions on upcoming FOC meetings and events which will be held under the Estonian Chairship.
 - The NL, US, Denmark, and Canada confirmed their intention to participate at RightsCon, while other Members noted that their decisions would depend on FOC-related engagements.

IGF Participation and Stakeholder Engagement

- The US reported that civil society organizations (CSOs) are organizing a campaign with specific action points for both in-person and virtual participation.
 - The US emphasized a significant concern regarding political prisoners in Saudi Arabia, highlighting the high number of Internet freedom organizations with detained employees. There are worries that even virtual actions may provoke repercussions from the Saudi government.
 - The US requested that NL maintain engagement with the IGF Secretariat, and encouraged open communication among countries to ensure clarity on who will be attending in person and who will participate virtually.

Joint Statement on the Future of the Multistakeholder Model at the UN (Zero Draft)

- The US requested context on the background of the Joint Statement (JST) and noted the unconventional nature of co-drafting a government-led JST with the Advisory Network (FOC-AN).
- Canada highlighted that, given ongoing discussions, CSOs have expressed concerns regarding the process and implementation of the GDC and WSIS+20. Canada emphasized that this is a timely opportunity for FOC to respond actively.
 - While recognizing the US' caution about action-oriented language, Canada noted a shared desire among stakeholders for more substantial action beyond statements of support.
 - Canada pointed out that the co-drafting with FOC-AN members strengthens collaboration and legitimacy, suggesting that timing of the announcement will depend on capacity and availability.
- The NL underscored that co-drafting is not without precedent, referencing the Statement on the Human Rights Impact of Cybersecurity Laws, Practices and Policies, which was developed by the multistakeholder Task Force on Human Rights and Cybersecurity, as well as the Technical Standards and Human Rights in the Context of Digital Technologies statement which was co-drafted with FOC-AN members.
 - The NL noted that this Joint Statement aligns well with current dialogues.
- Denmark discussed the significance of multistakeholder collaboration in relation to Internet governance and urged careful consideration of language in the [NETmundial+10 Multistakeholder Statement](#)
 - Canada noted that the text draws on established principles, including those from NETmundial.
- The SU noted ambiguity within the Terms of Reference (ToR) regarding individual FOC-AN Members' involvement in drafting; while the ToR refers to opportunities for FOC-AN input, the nature of involvement is open to interpretation.
- The US reiterated their concerns around potentially setting a precedent when it comes to drafting statements.
 - While supportive of the Joint Statement's substance, the US raised concerns about duplication, noting that the NETmundial statement already exists as a foundational document.
 - The US stressed that their hesitations are related to the process and alignment with established frameworks, rather than disagreement with the content of the statement.
- Canada reiterated that the intention of the Joint Statement is not to overextend the 2025 PoA but rather to serve as a call to action. Canada welcomed further discussion with the US and other Members if the statement appears to conflict with PoA objectives, and openness to address any remaining concerns.