

Attendance: Estonia (FOC Chair), Denmark Finland, Germany, Ghana, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom; FOC Support Unit

Minutes

Housekeeping

- SU noted the following FOC events at the IGF *[please note these have already taken place]*:
 - Wednesday, 25 June
 - Joint Statement on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights to be launched at the Open Forum “Shaping Global AI Governance Through Multistakeholder Action”.
 - Thursday, 26 June
 - FOC Task Force on AI & Human Rights Meeting
 - Friday, 27 June
 - Joint Statement on Protecting Human Rights Online and Preventing Internet Shutdowns in Times of Armed Conflict
 - FOC Open Forum: How do Technical Standards Shape Connectivity and Inclusion?
 - Co-Hosted Workshop: Universal Principles, Local Realities: Multistakeholder Pathways for DPI

CSO Funding Situation

- Estonia noted the continuation of discussions following the SCM in Taiwan in February and subsequent SC meetings, where Members agreed on the utility of receiving more information from civil society and other affected stakeholders on the current funding situation, following recent challenges with aid support across the world.
 - Estonia invited Members to take information shared by stakeholders back to their capitals and opened the floor to any ideas on FOC coordination on this matter, noting the next SCM/ Ministerial in October as a potential place to come to a decision.
- Switzerland noted it is aware of a number of civil society organisations that need to make tough decisions.
- Luxembourg noted US' generous contributions in the past and suggested governments explore different options for continuing the funding.
 - Luxembourg suggested Members consider supporting a sales pitch to other countries to fund SU and broader CSO.
 - Luxembourg exploring funding from the private sector companies in FOC-AN while recognising the potential administrative reporting burden on the organisations.
- SU inquired about any structural changes that need to be made to ensure FOC's coordination is easier, while noting there are already avenues for funding expenditure, such as travel costs for civil society organisations to engage with FOC, so it would depend on the type of funding provided.
 - Estonia invited SU to prepare a one page plan on how the funds can be leveraged - something that is practical and easy to implement.
 - SU agreed to work on the plan and present to the Coalition.

WSIS engagement

- SU provided recap from the FOC SCM (22 June), including:
 - Netherlands presented the [Proposals for FOC Engagement in the WSIS+20 Review](#) (the FOC Proposal Paper), to be used as a starting point for FOC's engagement in the WSIS process and heard from a variety of Members on their positions. Members agreed that the paper can help inform and be leveraged by individual Member States as they go about their national positions.

- There were several points of agreement including: emphasising the importance of human rights and integration of human rights principles in various sections of the Elements Paper, such as AI, DPI, business and human rights, and highlighting the importance of the multistakeholder model of Internet governance.
- Netherlands reaffirmed they are open to feedback.
- Switzerland noted the need to continue encouraging the co-facilitators.
- SU encouraged Australia, Switzerland and the UK to share more about their papers.

Looking Ahead - 2026 and Beyond

- SU noted there is no bid for Chairship of the Coalition in 2026 yet, highlighting provisions in the Terms of Reference (ToR) for such a scenario, in particular giving the SC the leadership role.
- SU invited Members to discuss a way forward, including placing an emphasis on FOC internal processes and structures, reflecting on consensus building and current experiences of lengthy gathering of opt-ins in absence of consensus.
 - SU noted any changes to the ToR will need to be approved by consensus - the only document that needs to do so as there cannot be any opt-ins in this situation.
 - With regards to opt-ins, SU noted MFC's model of opting out, highlighting there are options that can be explored.
- Netherlands noted while procedures can be changed, the absence of consensus situation will remain the same for the foreseeable future.
 - Netherlands noted their preference for an opt-out procedure.
 - Switzerland noted procedurally it might be easier to opt-out; however, noting that no consensus weakens any joint statement. Opt-in can be an opportunity to engage Members.
 - Estonia noted all recent statements' silence procedures have been broken and highlighted the administrative burden required to gather opt-ins.
 - Estonia considered the sustainability of such an approach and inquired about the practicality of an opt-out approach.
 - SU noted there is currently no procedure for opting out in the ToR and highlighted MFC's practice of still issuing documents as MFC joint statements, while listing a number of signatories, in comparison to FOC, which only notes a document as an FOC joint statement if there has been consensus. Alternatively, FOC publishes a joint statement only on behalf of a list of signatories, in the absence of consensus.
 - Estonia noted it might be worthwhile to consider an opt-out procedure to collect more signatories and maintain the relevance of the Coalition.
- Ghana noted lengthy internal processes with regards to reviewing a statement, highlighting there are many priorities that capitals have to work on; thus, short timespans for consultations on documents can be challenging.
 - Ghana suggested adding quotas for statements per quarters, making it easier and more predictable for Members to engage.
 - Ghana suggested using opt-out as a first option in the process, while opting in can be done at a later time to allow for more time for review.
 - Ghana further suggested holding meetings to discuss sticking points directly with the Coalition.
 - SU noted these have been done on an ad hoc basis and depending on the lead drafter.
- Germany and Sweden noted support for opting out, highlighting the importance of knowing in advance which Members support the statement or not, as countries are more willing to join where there is a broader base of support.
 - Germany suggested utilising a silence procedure after an opt-in/opt-out process.
 - Sweden noted processes regarding an opt-out process seem easier internally, and noted the MFC's list of Members considering opt-in as crucial.
 - Switzerland expressed their support for a shared regular list of signatories.

- SU noted the request and will explore options to provide lists of signatories.
 - Netherlands suggested adding a tracker to the FOC Digital Hub.
 - SU noted it is also possible to add a live shared version of any future document for Members to provide direct feedback but highlighted it might give rise to transparency issues relating to Members providing feedback visible to the full FOC.
- Luxembourg noted their experience in different groups where more Members seem uncomfortable with an opt-out procedure.
 - Luxembourg also noted the option of having a list of States uncomfortable with “opt-out”, who would need to specifically note when they can endorse a statement in order to become a signatory.
- Switzerland noted opting in without consensus suggests unanimity, while opting out - provides a weaker picture of support - one where there seems to be nothing the Member is explicitly against.
- Netherlands raised the question of thresholds for a statement to be launched.
 - Estonia suggested $\frac{1}{3}$ of the Membership threshold for a statement to be published and $\frac{2}{3}$ of the Membership’s support to publish the document.
 - SU noted there has been precedent in the past in pausing a statement, such as in the case of the Joint Statement on Venezuela, and further noted there are no provisions in the ToR to stop a statement from being published.
- Germany inquired as to the reasons for SC countries not yet signing on to the Joint Statement on AI and Human Rights.
 - Finland, Ghana, Denmark and Sweden noted ongoing internal processes.
- SU noted in the past FOC only worked under consensus until a few years ago when Members worked together to update the ToR and allow for opt-ins. Opting out at the time was ruled out.