

Freedom Online Coalition Program of Action 2026

The following consensus document was developed by the FOC 2026 Chair, Switzerland, in consultation with FOC Members and the FOC Advisory Network to outline the FOC's vision, priorities and activities for 2026

FOC Mission Statement

The Freedom Online Coalition (FOC) is a group of Member countries committed to the human rights and fundamental freedoms proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and to upholding their respective obligations under international human rights law. The FOC believes that the human rights that people have offline must also be protected online. The Coalition serves as a coordinating body that advances cross-regional diplomacy and commits to working together, including through engagement with its independent multistakeholder Advisory Network (FOC-AN) and others who share these views, to support Internet freedom and protect human rights online worldwide.

Context and Priorities in 2026

2026 marks a decisive year for global digital governance. Key UN-anchored processes — including the World Summit on the Information Society 20-year review (WSIS+20) follow-up, the implementation of the Global Digital Compact (GDC), and the inaugural UN Global Dialogue on AI Governance — will define the frameworks shaping digital cooperation for the decade ahead. The FOC can play a unique role in ensuring that these frameworks embed human rights, uphold an open, free, global, interoperable, reliable, and secure Internet, promote a secure, resilient, accessible and safe digital environment, and advance more inclusive, multistakeholder approaches to the governance of digital technologies.

At the same time, persistent and emerging challenges continue to undermine Internet freedom and digital resilience: shutdowns, disruptions, unlawful surveillance, and threats to information integrity erode human rights and fundamental freedoms, and inequities in meaningful access remain widespread. Meanwhile, the rapid deployment of artificial intelligence (AI) and digital public infrastructure (DPI) within broader digital transformation efforts brings new opportunities as well as risks, particularly for marginalised communities, underscoring the need for safeguards that ensure transparency, accountability, security, privacy, due diligence and fairness, in line with international law, including international human rights law, and without stifling innovation.

Multistakeholder participation — a core FOC principle — is also under pressure. Participation across regions and stakeholder groups remains uneven, with barriers such as affordability, language, safety, and political space limiting inclusion, particularly from the Global South. At the same time, scepticism toward multistakeholderism is growing as state-centric approaches gain ground, threatening both the openness and legitimacy of digital policymaking and raising concerns about the misuse of proliferating technologies by bad actors to undermine human rights and security. To remain credible and effective, multistakeholder approaches must be operationalised in practical ways that demonstrate impact and inclusion. Frameworks such as the [São Paulo Multistakeholder Guidelines](#) offer useful reference points for advancing transparent, participatory, and rights-respecting governance — and provide an opportunity for the FOC to model these approaches across its own work.



Building on the groundwork laid under Estonia's 2025 Chairship, the Coalition enters 2026 with renewed momentum. The 2025 agenda helped consolidate FOC engagement across key global digital governance processes, advance work on rights-respecting DPI, and strengthen cross-regional collaboration and outreach to under-represented stakeholders. The Swiss Chairship seeks to sustain and expand these efforts, translating them into deeper diplomatic coordination, stronger multistakeholder practices, and tangible policy impacts.

In this context, the FOC will advance its mission in 2026 through three interconnected priorities:

1. **Navigating and shaping global digital governance processes** — Strengthening the FOC's diplomatic engagement and coherence across major multilateral, and multistakeholder tracks, such as the implementation of WSIS+20 outcomes, and the Pact for the Future and the GDC, including the UN Global Dialogue on AI Governance.
2. **Addressing ongoing challenges to Internet freedom** — Building on previous FOC work to advance rights-respecting technology governance, from AI and DPI to information integrity, through coordinated statements, capacity building, and multistakeholder collaboration.
3. **Operationalising multistakeholder approaches** — Demonstrating how inclusive participation enhances legitimacy and outcomes in digital policymaking, with a focus on improving engagement of under-represented stakeholders and outreach to Global South governments and non-governmental actors.

Goals, Objectives, and Activities

GOAL 1: Strengthen FOC engagement in global digital governance processes

Objective: Ensure human rights are respected, and that multistakeholder perspectives and the principle of an open, free, global, interoperable, reliable, secure, accessible, and safe Internet are embedded in key UN, multilateral, and technical or standards-setting forums and processes, including WSIS+20 follow-up, GDC implementation and the UN Global Dialogue on AI Governance, other key AI governance events, and relevant UN-resolutions.

Activities:

- **Coordinate Member engagement and coherent messaging** across key UN, multilateral, multistakeholder, and technical forums shaping global digital governance in 2026 to advance coherent, rights-based positions that support a secure and resilient digital environment— in particular:
 - WSIS+20 follow-up process and related discussions at the Internet Governance Forum,
 - GDC implementation, including through its UN Global Dialogue on AI Governance, and
 - the UN Human Rights Council.
- **Promote cross-regional and multistakeholder collaboration** by linking Member efforts with regional organisations (e.g. African Union (AU), Organisation of American States (OAS), European Union (EU), Council of Europe (CoE), Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), including through information sharing, exploring joint outputs and co-organizing events, and ensuring perspectives from civil society, academic, and technical communities, and the private sector inform FOC interventions.



- **Amplify the FOC’s diplomatic voice** through joint statements, shared talking points, and public advocacy to reinforce a consistent, rights-based narrative across global digital-governance processes.
- **Enhance coherence and learning** by monitoring developments across digital governance spaces, sharing insights and good practices among Members, the Advisory Network and other stakeholders, facilitating learning sessions, and identifying opportunities to align and strengthen FOC engagement.

GOAL 2: Address ongoing challenges to Internet freedom and digital resilience

Objective: Strengthen collective capacity to respond to persistent and emerging challenges to Internet freedom and digital resilience, building on the universally established framework of human rights and principles and the FOC’s existing body of work, including on AI, surveillance, digital public infrastructure (DPI), information integrity, and Internet shutdowns.

Activities:

- **Advance implementation and uptake of existing FOC outputs and principles¹** – including the Rights-Respecting Digital Public Infrastructure Principles and the Joint Statement on AI and Human Rights, among other Joint Statements and relevant materials – through capacity-building, peer learning, Member-led briefings, regional dialogues and consultations, and integration into national, regional, and multilateral policy discussions.
- **Facilitate collective analysis and knowledge exchange** among Members and the Advisory Network to identify trends, share good practices, and coordinate timely diplomatic or public responses to incidents that threaten Internet freedom or digital resilience, and provide a platform to exchange information and build knowledge on emerging or cross-cutting issues.
- **Promote rights-respecting approaches to existing and emerging technologies** by convening dialogues that bring together governments, civil society, academic and technical communities, and private-sector actors to discuss transparency, accountability, robust safeguards, and responsible innovation.
- **Strengthen cross-regional learning and collaboration** to surface and amplify diverse experiences and approaches to protecting human rights online.

GOAL 3: Operationalise multistakeholder approaches to digital governance

Objective: Strengthen the effectiveness, inclusivity, and legitimacy of multistakeholder approaches across digital governance processes by supporting the meaningful participation of those who may be more vulnerable, or under-represented stakeholders – including those from the Global South – and translating FOC principles on openness and collaboration into practice.

Activities:

- **Facilitate meaningful collaboration** with non-governmental stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector, the technical community, and academia— through the FOC Advisory

¹ Not all FOC outputs are adopted by consensus, and may not reflect the positions of all FOC Members.



Network and otherwise — ensuring their perspectives inform the Coalition's priorities, statements, and activities.

- **Maximize the impact of diplomatic forums**, including those in Geneva and New York, as key platforms to proactively facilitate the participation of Global South governments and non-governmental stakeholders, using these convenings to host inclusive side-events, briefings, and capacity-building sessions.
- **Advance inclusion and accessibility** within and beyond the Coalition by addressing barriers to participation in digital governance processes — language, connectivity, affordability, institutional, disability- or safety-related accessibility, or otherwise — and promoting equitable engagement of stakeholders, especially from the Global South, as well as youth, women, persons with disabilities, in key digital policy discussions.
- **Support capacity building and practical implementation** by strengthening traditionally underrepresented stakeholders' ability to participate in complex digital policy negotiations, equipping governments with tools to operationalise multistakeholder collaboration at national, regional, and global levels, and encouraging contributions from the private sector, drawing inspiration from the São Paulo Multistakeholder Guidelines and other relevant benchmarks.
- **Leveraging international forums** such as the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) and others, to promote their practical implementation and encourage broader adoption of the São Paulo Multistakeholder Guidelines across regions and stakeholder groups.
- **Promote learning, training and cooperation** by documenting and disseminating evidence-based models of effective and meaningful multistakeholder participation and by working with complementary coalitions and organisations — such as the Media Freedom Coalition (MFC), Open Government Partnership (OGP), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the Council of Europe (CoE) — to advance cross-coalition collaboration on shared objectives and to promote and protect Internet freedom through these bodies.

