

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

Summary:

During the ninth Steering Committee (SC) call under Estonia's Chairship, the Support Unit (SU) provided general updates, including information on upcoming events and activities. SC Members discussed the 2026 Chairship, the upcoming Strategy and Coordination Meeting (SCM) in Tallinn SCM and planning the FOC's engagement in the WSIS process through the end of the year.

Minutes

Welcome / Opening Remarks

- The Support Unit (SU) welcomed Members to the ninth Steering Committee (SC) meeting of 2025 under the Estonian Chairship.
- SU introduced new points of contact: Claudia Schneider (Germany) and Ulrika Sundberg (Sweden).

Housekeeping

• SU Updates

- The FOC held an UN General Assembly high-level week, side-event in New York on 25 September. The event brought together representatives from government, the technical community, civil society, academia, and the private sector to examine how to strengthen resilience, mitigate risks such as Internet shutdowns and attacks on critical infrastructure, and promote meaningful connectivity, particularly for marginalized communities. A summary of the event will be circulated shortly.

• FOC Outputs & Processes

- FOC Rights-Respecting DPI Principles
 - Members have been invited to opt-in to the document.
- WSIS+20 Resources
 - The revised versions of the *Proposals for FOC Engagement in the WSIS+20 Process* and the Annex with comments and suggested language to the Zero Draft of the WSIS+20 Outcome Document have been circulated to the FOC. The priorities, comments, and language proposals outlined in the documents are in line with the general mission and values of the FOC as a coalition focusing on human rights online and multistakeholder governance, but as previously underlined, these remain voluntary resources for Members' consideration and do not represent consensus or any official position of the FOC.

• Upcoming Events & Meetings:

- **2 October:** FOC WSIS+20 Discussion | virtual (FOC and FOC-AN)
 - The meeting will be an opportunity for the FOC and FOC-AN to further discuss the Zero Draft of the Outcome Document and FOC priorities in the process.
- **8-10 October:** FOC at the Tallinn Digital Summit (TDS) | Tallinn, Estonia
 - 12.00 - 17.00 EEST, Wednesday 8 October | FOC Capacity Building Sessions
 - 10.00 - 12.00 EEST, Thursday 9 October | FOC Ministerial Meeting: Building a Digitally Inclusive Future for All
 - 10.00 - 17.00 EEST, Friday 10 October | FOC Strategy & Coordination Meeting III
- **4-6 November:** Global DPI Summit 2025 | Cape Town, South Africa
 - Estonia is exploring opportunities to engage in the Summit and to further amplify the Rights-Respecting DPI principles. Further details on possible FOC activities are forthcoming.

Chairship and Program of Action 2025 Updates

- Updates on the implementation of the **2025 Program of Action**:
 - Estonia thanked Members for their participation at the UNGA side event in New York and encouraged signatories to the DPI Principles, to be launched in Tallinn.
 - Germany inquired about the number of confirmed ministerial participants, noting this information would be useful for securing political-level attendance. Estonia noted a number of ministers had confirmed participation and invited Members to reach out directly with further agenda-related questions.
 - On the WSIS process, the Netherlands confirmed that work is ongoing and reminded Members of the FOC WSIS+20 Discussion on 2 October.
 - Estonia noted regional engagement efforts are ongoing, with progress being made and the expectation of one or two new Members during the Chairship. Members were invited to contact Estonia with suggestions for prospective Members to discuss possible approaches.

Discussion

Chairship 2026

- The SU invited Switzerland and Luxembourg to provide updates on their Chairship bids.
- Switzerland noted discussions with Luxembourg had progressed, with Switzerland offering to take up the Chairship in 2026, given other commitments in 2027.
- Luxembourg indicated that 2027 would be a better fit for them, though they remain flexible should the Coalition's needs change.
- The Support Unit (SU) noted that the process will formally begin once Switzerland submits a bid, at which point it will be shared with the full Coalition for consideration, including the opportunity to raise objections or counter-bids.
 - Following confirmation, a transition process would take place at year-end. SU also noted informal engagement with Switzerland could begin earlier to align priorities.
- Estonia expressed gratitude to both Luxembourg and Switzerland, noting the developments as a sign of the Coalition's vitality.
- The United Kingdom welcomed the news, highlighting that this provides two years of Chairship planning.
 - The UK inquired about preparations for discussions at the SCM in Tallinn on 10 October regarding the Program of Action for 2026.
 - SU confirmed materials will be shared ahead of time.
- Luxembourg thanked Switzerland for its cooperation, noting flexibility regarding the 2027 Chairship.
- Switzerland suggested initial priorities for the 2026 Program of Action, including continuity on WSIS+20, engagement on AI given key upcoming meetings, and further operationalising the multistakeholder approach, while remaining open to suggestions.
- SU noted the Coalition's 15-year anniversary in 2026 and recommended consideration of ways to mark the occasion.
- The SU will work to develop a high-level one-pager with "food for thought" when it comes to carrying on and introducing focus areas for next year, to help guide next week's SCM discussion on the 2026 PoA.

FOC Strategy & Coordination Meeting III and other FOC Activities

- The SU noted that the FOC and Advisory Network will convene during the Tallinn Digital Summit (TDS) for the final Strategy & Coordination Meeting of 2025 under the Estonian Chairship.
 - The meetings at TDS will be an opportunity for the FOC to advance the Coalition's key priorities in the WSIS process, in addition to looking ahead to 2026 and discussing the

priorities of the Coalition next year.

- SU proceeded to present the full program of FOC activities at the Tallinn Digital Summit.
- SU noted that there will be an opportunity for the SC Members to meet in Tallinn on Thursday, 9 October, which would provide an opportunity to discuss any topics ahead of the SCM; more information on this meeting will be shared shortly.
- SU reminded Members there are only a few meetings remaining until the end of the year and noted this period is an important milestone for the Coalition.
- SU encouraged Members to review the agenda and think critically about any items that may be missing.
- SU asked that the government leaders of Task Forces treat reporting on their progress as part of the Program of Action 2026 discussion.
- SU also raised the upcoming renewal of the Advisory Network (FOC-AN) mandate, noting the current cohort was selected last year for a two-year term, which will expire at the beginning of 2026.
 - SU recalled the decision of the Steering Committee to accept the elected candidates for the 2024-2026 cohort under the following condition:
 - "The Steering Committee has accepted the candidates under the condition that a comprehensive review of the FOC-AN Terms of Reference is conducted collaboratively between the FOC-AN and the SC to ensure concerns around regional diversity and stakeholder balance are addressed in subsequent elections."
 - SU noted it will work with the FOC-AN and the SC to develop proposals for a clear process and set of procedures.
 - SU suggested covering this in Tallinn, given the time required to run an open call for elections, and confirmed information will be shared ahead of next week's meetings.
- Estonia encouraged Members to attend the Tallinn Digital Summit next week, noting it will take place at the newly renovated National Library, and looked forward to welcoming all participants.

UN Convention Against Cybercrime Signing Ceremony

- SU noted that following discussions at the previous SCM on this topic, and in advance of the UN Convention Against Cybercrime signing ceremony in Hanoi, Vietnam, from October 25-26, this is an opportunity to discuss the FOC Members' presence and engagement at the ceremony.
- Estonia recalled earlier discussions highlighting significant concerns with the Convention, particularly from civil society.
 - Estonia noted they were not planning a presence in Hanoi and asked about others' plans.
- Germany noted internal discussions are ongoing.
- Luxembourg noted likely EU agreement and confirmed ambassador-level attendance, while recognising civil society concerns and emphasising the importance of avoiding misuse for state repression.
- The United Kingdom and the Netherlands confirmed plans to attend, both stressing the importance of embedding human rights messages.
- The United States noted their attendance.
- SU advised that the Advisory Network is likely to raise this at the upcoming Joint Roundtable in Tallinn, and encouraged Members to share their individual plans in the absence of a joint statement.