FREEDOM ONLINE COALITION
PROGRAM OF ACTION 2018

FOC Mission Statement*: The Freedom Online Coalition is a group of governments deeply committed to the human rights and fundamental freedoms proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We also believe that that the human rights that people have offline must also be protected online. We commit to working together, and with all others who share these views, to support Internet freedom and protect fundamental human rights – free expression, association, assembly, and privacy online – worldwide. The FOC aims to be a proactive coalition that ensures Internet freedom issues are on the international policy agenda as a way to drive concrete policy changes and outcomes.

Objective 1: To promote global norms that seek to prevent and limit state-sponsored restrictions to human rights online

Rationale	
	● Increasing trend of Internet sovereignty regimes, state-sponsored restrictions to human rights online and shrinking spaces for civil society. ● Network disruptions are a frequent problem. ● The FOC has made meaningful contributions to the global debate on network disruptions, cross-border attacks on freedom of expression online, and state-sponsored restrictions to human rights online, which makes it well-placed to leverage this work in future global forums.

Objective 2: To support civil society voices online

Rationale	
	● There is a continuing trend of closing of civic space, both online and offline ● Digital Divides (urban-rural, north-south and gender) remain acute globally; ● There is a need for global collaboration between countries to support civil society voices online; the creation and nurturing of an enabling environment is necessary for the exercise of human rights online. ● Inter alia, hate speech can silence legitimate voices, spoil healthy eco-systems for public debate and infringe human dignity and thus undermines democratic discourse, which is a prerequisite for free society and democracy. Governments need to ensure protection of individuals from hate speech. ● Continued dialogue of governments with all involved stakeholders, including civil society, private sector and academia is important to achieve an environment, where human rights online can be realized.

Objective 3: To promote and protect human rights online in the context of cybersecurity

Rationale	
	● Context of rising concerns about security of online communications; ● In order to protect human rights online in the context of cybersecurity, there is a need to mainstream human rights in cybersecurity debates, and to demonstrate support for open, inclusive and transparent approaches to cybersecurity; ● FOC has a track record in this issue area through former WG1 (E.g. WG1's Recommendations on human rights based approaches to cybersecurity).

*To support the above-stated mission statement, Members agreed in the Stockholm Terms of Reference to prioritize three primary activity areas:

   i.   Strengthening coordination and cooperation among Members, as well as with outside stakeholders who share the Coalition's objectives, with added focus on fostering cross-regional diplomacy through employing local networks;
   ii.   Shaping global norms on human rights online through joint statements;
   iii.   Holding periodic convenings with Members and other stakeholders.