



Freedom Online Coalition Strategy and Coordination Meeting

IGF, Joao Pessoa, Brazil
09 November 2015

Attending: US, Canada, UK, Finland, Netherlands, Sweden, Estonia, Germany, Costa Rica

MINUTES:

Housekeeping

- The US gave an update on the progress of the Internal Review:
 - The strategic review is designed to look at where the Coalition sees itself 5 years down the road. The Strategic review group, having been created in May, has been busy putting together a framework for the review. The finalised framework focuses on 4 areas: structure, goals membership and funding. These 4 areas are now being discussed in an internal and external capacity.
 - Externally, an independent researcher (Susan Morgan) has been recruited to consult with stakeholders, this week at the IGF as well as other avenues, and provide an external evaluation of the four areas mentioned. She will produce a report that will be published early next year. They will be submitted to the Coalition for consideration
- Members discussed the scope and nature of Coalition's work:
 - There are currently 5 main areas of the Coalition's work: annual meeting, intersessional work (Working Groups), joint statements, FOC Networks in different capitals (Paris, Geneva, New York), and communications (website/social media/newsletter)
 - Members discussed the need to improve the Coalition processes internally if the Coalition wanted to be more responsive to urgent incidents
 - The long time taken to coordinate and publish joint statements was seen as an issue. Members expressed the desire to look into this in order to maximise impact.
 - Members expressed the desire to find out more about the perceived value of the Coalition to those whose rights are being curtailed. It was suggested that this issue could be part of the internal review, and as a starting point Susan Morgan would be put in touch with the Digital Defenders `Partnership
- Members discussed the operation budget and member state contributions for 2016, as well as longer term funding arrangements for the Coalition
 - Norway has agreed to a contribution for next year towards Support Unit costs. Members congratulated Norway on their meaningful contribution.
 - Members thanked Norway and the US for supporting Susan Morgan's work on the evaluation and travel to the IGF
- Members discussed potential meeting dates for 2016. These included:
 - World Press Freedom Day 2016 (3rd May) as many states' UNESCO representatives attend this, and may be a good platform a joint statement
 - Re:publica 2-4 May 2016
 - Rightscon
 - FO Conference 2016 in Costa Rica

- Members gave feedback on the FOC newsletter and discussed its objective
 - Members noted the the evolution of the newsletter from an internal to an external document
 - Members fed back that the primary aim of the newsletter should now be for people to learn more about and engage with the Coalition
 - Suggestions for the newsletter included:
 - Linking to other curated newsletters for the news digest and focussing on updates of the Coalition
 - Translating the newsletter into different languages
 - Broadening out the mailing list to a wider range of stakeholders
 - It was decided that a more detailed discussion on the newsletter will take place on the next Friends of the Chair call

Action Point >> SU to put Susan Morgan in touch with the Digital Defenders Partnership as part of her consultation

Action Point >> SU to send note round Coalition asking for suitable meetings to convene at in 2016

Action Point >> Members to send suggestions of contacts to add to the FOC newsletter mailing list to raise awareness of the Coalition and its activities **by COB Friday November 27**

Annual Conference

- Costa Rica gave an update on Annual Conference preparations and asked for members' feedback on several points:
 - Financial assistance to contribute towards the FO Conference 2016, and advice on soliciting funding from corporate sponsors
 - Development of Conference output document:
 - Members advised starting early to craft the output document, preferably in April
 - Members provided the following suggestions:
 - Develop concept note early in order to have it ready to present to sponsors – they will want to know the Conference dates, themes and package for sponsor contributions. The package can be developed along the lines of the package used for the Tallinn Conference.
 - Suggested taking into account the dates for the IGF in 2016 when planning the Costa Rica Conference. It was noted that having the Conferences back to back may not be useful, as it will be hard for people to commit to such a long time travelling
 - Members agreed that the Internal Review Group should feed back their findings to Costa Rica to feed them into Conference planning

Action Point >> SU to liaise with Costa Rica on developing the budget for the FO Conference 2016

Action Point >> SU to share the Tallinn agenda and Mongolia statement with Costa Rica

Action Point >> Internal Review Group to feed back their findings to Costa Rica to feed them in to Conference planning

Outreach

- Members/SU gave updates on outreach activities:

Action Point >> SU to make the link for information on joining the Coalition on the FOC website more prominent

Coordination

- The SU gave an overview of FOC activities over the week at the IGF including the informal meeting with civil society stakeholders, the FOC Open Forum, Working Group meetings and WG1's workshop on multistakeholder and human rights approaches to cybersecurity

Joint Activities

- Members discussed the impact of FOC joint activities e.g. joint statements, acknowledging that a lot of time and energy is invested in creating them, and that more could be done to ensure they have maximum exposure
 - As a starting point, it was decided that three recent joint statements would be handed out at the FOC Open Forum

Updates on Working Groups

- SU/WG co-chairs gave an update on the three Working Groups, highlighting the following points:
 - The WG3 report on privacy and transparency is out, and members were urged to read it. You can find it [here](#). The report was praised as a good example of what the Working Groups can do, adding value to the Coalition
 - WG2 has two sub-groups working on freedom of expression, and data protection and privacy. The sub-group's work will be combined to make a principles document to present to stakeholders and an implementation guide to accompany them. In addition, WG3 will reach out and strengthen relations with the established rule of law community, and aim to link their work to the SDG framework.
 - WG1 will present the latest draft of their normative recommendations on multistakeholder and human rights approach to cybersecurity at their workshop at the IGF on 13th November. They will use this opportunity to further socialise the recommendations, and seek feedback on them from the IGF community.

AOB

- Members discussed the Coalition's response to the IFEX letter, addressing the situation of bloggers in Bangladesh