Minutes of the Friends of the Chair Call #7 - Wednesday 31 July - 2pm UTC

Attendance: Canada, Costa Rica, Estonia, Germany, Ghana, The Netherlands, UK, US, FOC Support Unit (SU)
Apologies: Finland, Norway:

Housekeeping
- SU provided an update on the action items from the June Friends of the Chair Call
  - SU reminded the Members to identify relevant POCs in diplomatic networks, and any opportunities for further engagement in Paris and Vienna.
- SU reported back from the FOC Meeting at the Global Conference for Media Freedom
  - SU thanked the UK for facilitating the meeting and thanked Members for coordinating the attendance of colleagues working on Media Freedom.
  - The SU summarised key points of discussion:
    - Brett Solomon from Access Now provided Members with a briefing on Internet shutdowns and the activities of the #KeepItOn coalition.
    - Members discussed the upcoming statement on 'Internet Freedom Implications of Disinformation', which is being jointly led by Finland and UK.
- SU reported back from the Christchurch Call workshop in Paris:
  - The SU is supporting New Zealand with identifying opportunities for engaging with FOC and FOC-AN on next steps of the Christchurch Call.
  - New Zealand invited the SU to attend a workshop in Paris on 9 July, to inform possible future coordination efforts of FOC Members around the initiative, and to provide guidance on existing commitments made through FOC documents.
- SU provided an update on FOC outlook for the month ahead:
  - August FotC Call is being rearranged to the first week of September to accommodate vacation schedules.
- SU provided an update on communications, including FOC calendar and shared repository for FOC documents:
  - Internet Freedom Calendar will be live shortly on the FOC website.
    - SU invited Members to share any relevant events via email to be added to the calendar.
  - SU is preparing a needs assessment to review and improve internal communications, including the FOC's Google Groups and internal FOC document sharing.

FOC Chairmanship
- Ghana and SU provided an update on the Annual Conference:

- ○ SU and Ghana are working to identify alternative dates for the FO Conference due to a scheduling conflict with the second substantive session of the [OEWG meeting](#).
- ○ The Concept Note was circulated to the Friends of the Chair for review and high level comments by COB Friday 2 August.
  - ■ Following integration of feedback from the Friends of the Chair, the Concept Note will be shared with the wider Coalition and FOC-AN before being made public.

Action >> Members to review Conference Concept Note and communicate feedback to the SU by COB Friday 2 August.

Action >> Members to highlight any existing commitments in February/March 2020 by emailing SU by COB Friday 2 August.

Program of Action 2019

- ● Diplomatic Coordination:
  - ○ New York:
    - ■ SU is working with the US to finalise the FOC NY mailing list and Google Group.
  - ○ Geneva:
    - ■ Following the initiative led by Estonia at the June HRC, Estonia and SU held a debrief call to capture good practice for developing diplomatic network statements.
    - ■ SU will develop guidelines for developing diplomatic network statements from FOCagreed language.
  - ○ Vienna: n/a
  - ○ Paris: n/a
  - ○ US provided an update on strategic use of existing FOC statements.
- ● Shaping Global Norms:
  - ○ SU provided an update on process to amend Joint Statement Protocol:
    - ■ Following the input from the meetings at RightsCon, SU is reviewing the existing protocol for developing joint statements, to consider how to improve the current outlined process.
    - ■ The revised protocol will be circulated for consideration by the FotC ahead of the next call.
    - ■ The revised protocol will be applied to upcoming initiatives on Digital Inclusion, the Cybersecurity Laws, AI and Disinformation.
    - ■ SU would like to facilitate a coherent approach to all statements, and encouraged statement leads to inform SU of plans so that SU can advise them while the protocol is being revised.
  - ○ Estonia and The Netherlands presented a proposal to set up an informal taskforce on human rights and cybersecurity.
    - ■ This task force is aimed at ensuring that the statement and follow up activities are a collaborative effort of the FOC members and the AN. Its

mandate will be to develop and disseminate the joint statement, it will run until the FO Conference in Accra and membership will be limited to FOC and FOC-AN members.The format and working methods will be decided with Members once the taskforce has been established.
- A number of Members expressed their support for the initiative and noted that they will inform Estonia and The Netherlands of their interest in joining the taskforce.
  - Germany and Ghana provided an update on Digital Inclusion Statement:
    - Germany and Ghana thanked Members for their input into the statement and confirmed they will be holding a call between Friends of the Chair Members and the FOC-AN to discuss feedback received and next steps.
    - Germany noted that the second draft will be circulated to Members after the call and consolidation of feedback.
  - Canada provided an update on AI:
    - Canada has had initial discussions with FOC-AN, and formal work on the statement will begin in September.
  - UK provided an update on Disinformation statement:
    - UK and Finland held an initial planning meeting in July.
    - The leads plan to begin the drafting process in September.

Action >> Members to inform Estonia and the Netherlands of their interest to join the taskforce on human rights and cybersecurity by COB Friday 2 August.

FOC Membership

- Members provided updates on FOC Member engagement
- Members provided updates on enlargement of FOC membership:

Action >> SU to share updated Member Directory with FOC Members.

AOB

- US provided an update on coordination on network disruptions in Sudan:
  - US noted that the shutdown in Sudan has ended and the US will no longer host the weekly calls.
  - Access Now will continue to host the calls, taking place on every Monday at 11am EST.
    - Access Now continues to monitor the situation in Sudan and may focus on other shutdowns as they happen.
    - A readout will be circulated to participants after the call.