Launch of the Global Forum on Cyber Expertise

16 April 2015

Framework Document

Purpose

1. This Framework Document outlines the structure and operation of the Global Forum on Cyber Expertise (hereinafter: "GFCE"). It reflects the shared understanding of its members that the GFCE should be structured in a way that is voluntary, complementary, inclusive and resource driven. Activities are focused on identifying and addressing key geographic and thematic cyber issues.

2. Furthermore, it ensures the GFCE will remain a flexible, action-oriented and consultative forum that can evolve to meet contemporary challenges in cyberspace. It will complement the efforts already being undertaken in the field of cyber capacity and expertise building on a bilateral, multilateral, multi-party, regional and international level and avoid duplication and overlap. The GFCE seeks to develop a mutually reinforcing relationship with relevant multilateral institutions. This Framework Document should be seen in junction with the The Hague Declaration on the GFCE, which outlines the objectives and values upon which the GFCE is based.

Members

3. Participation in the GFCE is voluntary. The GFCE is an informal forum, with no authority to take legally binding decisions. Neither this Framework Document nor participation in the GFCE more generally imposes any legal obligations on members.

4. The GFCE is founded by an initial group of countries, companies and intergovernmental organisations that are willing to actively contribute to the GFCE.

5. The GFCE aims to be a platform for the development of initiatives that could benefit parties beyond the GFCE membership. The GFCE is open to new members, provided they subscribe to the The Hague Declaration on the GFCE, accompanying the official launch of the Global Forum on Cyber Expertise. GFCE members will be consulted on requests for membership.

Structure and Functions

6. The structure and operations of the GFCE are based on four components:
   - I. an inventory of current efforts undertaken in the field of cyber capacity and expertise building;
   - II. an umbrella framework for the promotion of new initiatives, as well as enhancing and expanding existing ones;
   - III. a platform for high level discussions;
   - IV. an Administrative Unit.

I Inventory of current efforts of cyber capacity building

7. Through the GFCE an inventory of current efforts in the field of cyber capacity building will be made available and kept up to date. This overview will allow GFCE members to identify and fill gaps in existing bilateral, multilateral, multi-party, regional and international capacity building activities and coordinate their efforts and contribute to bridging the digital divide .

II Umbrella framework for Initiatives

8. GFCE-members take new concrete initiatives or enhance and expand existing ones to strengthen capacity in cyber, through sharing experiences and best practices or other in-kind assistance, funding for capacity building projects, or a combination thereof (hereinafter: "Initiatives"). The Initiatives focus on a specific cyber area where there is a need for assistance or sharing of expertise and taken under the umbrella of the GFCE by two or more GFCE members (hereinafter: "Initiators"). The Initiators formulate the needs and assistance that a particular Initiative will contain. In addition to government entities, intergovernmental organisations or companies offering their own expertise, civil society, think tanks, academia, and in some instances international organisations, that possess expertise in certain cyber areas, could also play a role in an Initiative when invited to do so by the initiators.

9. New Initiatives can have a <u>geographic</u> or <u>thematic</u> focus, or can have both. The preliminary focus areas identified for capacity and expertise building within the GFCE are:
   - Cybersecurity;
   - Cybercrime;
   - Data protection;
   - E-governance.

10. The focus areas will be evaluated on a yearly basis and may be amended by consensus of the members of the GFCE.

11. The setting up of an Initiative within the GFCE will generally consist of the following four phases. These phases should be seen as guidelines.

Phase one: Set-up

12. The Initiators take the lead in setting up an Initiative. Of these Initiators, at least one party has knowledge and/or expertise in one of the above-mentioned cyber areas, while at least one other party has a specific need for building up capacity in that particular field. Civil society may contribute by making suggestions for new initiatives.

Phase two: Identification

13. These Initiators formulate the specific assistance that is needed in the Initiative, and the means and ways of conveying the assistance or sharing the experience (so-called terms of reference). The assistance can be in the form of financial donations and/or in-kind expertise, for example sending experts to give trainings, or by sharing reports, best practices and lessons learned. Formulating the needs can either be done by the Initiators bilaterally or in a multi-party and multi-stakeholder

setting (i.e. a regional or thematic seminar). Civil society, the technical community, think tanks and academia can also be involved in the formulation of specific assistance at the discretion of the Initiators.

Phase three: Recruitment

14. The Initiators recruit participants for the Initiative amongst GFCE members. This gives other members of the GFCE the opportunity to either contribute to the Initiative (with financial means or with in-kind expertise) or to indicate that they need the same assistance in building capacity. The setting up and the coordination of the Initiative remains the responsibility of the original Initiators.

Phase four: Implementation

15. When a clear need for capacity building has been established and adequate (financial or in-kind) resources have been found, coordinated by the Initiators, the Initiative will start its implementation phase. It is at the discretion of the Initiators to involve civil society, think tanks and academia, or use expertise within regional organisations, as implementing partners within an Initiative. Non-GFCE members could benefit from the results of specific Initiatives taken by GFCE members by associating themselves with these initiatives.

16. The Initiators will disseminate the results, lessons learned and best practices of an Initiative amongst GFCE members upon its completion to maximize the effectiveness of other Initiatives.

III Platform for high level discussion

17. An annual high level meeting amongst members of the GFCE to evaluate progress made will take place, preferably in the margins of future Global Conferences on Cyberspace. The dialogue will provide the opportunity to discuss and (re)formulate requirements as well as best practices on cyber capacity building in the focus areas. The development of best practices will promote a continuous policy discussion about ways and means to respond to emerging challenges in the cyber domain, while preserving each member's -internal decision making processes on implementation of specific measures. Civil society, the technical community, think tanks and academia will also be encouraged to be involved in the discussion, contributing to the development of best practices and advising on the formulation of requirements.

IV Administrative Unit

18. The Administrative Unit will, inter alia, provide the necessary administrative and logistical support to GFCE members. It will maintain an overview of ongoing Initiatives and circulate the results of Initiatives among the GFCE members. It will facilitate and manage the sharing of information by GFCE members and, as appropriate, other relevant stakeholders of their relevant national practices and programmes, documents, and information regarding Initiatives taken under the umbrella of the GFCE.

19. The Unit will support and assist with logistical planning for the annual high level policy meeting, preferably to be held in the margins of future Global Conferences on Cyberspace. It will, inter alia, assist in the production of an overview of results of the GFCE and its initiatives to present to the GFCE members.

20. The Netherlands will initially host and finance the Unit for a period of four years after the launch of the GFCE. Consistent with the informal format of the GFCE, there will be no assessed contributions from GFCE members to finance this Unit. The Unit is expected to include four persons and will seek to include, where possible, individuals from other GFCE members.

21. At the first annual high level policy meeting on cyber capacity and expertise building, preferably in the margins of the next Global Conference on Cyberspace, the structure and operation of the Unit will be assessed and reviewed. The most appropriate structure, operation, financing, and location of the Unit over the longer term will be seen in conjunction with the development of the GFCE and its long term requirements.