



# Terms of Reference

The Global Forum on Cyber Expertise (hereinafter: GFCE) has been established to strengthen cyber capacity and expertise and to make the existing international cooperative efforts in this field more effective. It is a flexible, action-oriented and consultative forum.

The Terms of Reference of the GFCE build upon, supplement and should therefore be seen in junction with The Hague Declaration and the Framework Document as adopted at the GCCS2015. The ToR provides further details on the operational aspects of the GFCE.

To ensure that the GFCE remains a flexible and consultative forum, the Terms of Reference will be reviewed and if needed, amended by the Members at the annual high level GFCE meeting.

## Overall structure

1. The GFCE consists of the Members, the two Co-Chairs, the GFCE Secretariat, and the GFCE Advisory Board.

## Members

2. Members are countries, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and private companies. Members have the resources and/or commitment to contribute to cyber capacity building initiatives.
3. Participation in the GFCE is voluntary. The GFCE is an informal forum with no authority to take legally binding decisions. It operates based on consensus.
4. Members have committed themselves to upholding the principles as set out in The Hague Declaration and the Framework Document.
5. All Members are equally responsible for the functioning of the GFCE and its initiatives.
6. The GFCE Members will discuss challenges, share experiences, strategies and best practices.



7. Members will each designate a(n appropriate senior official as their) GFCE focal point. The focal point will act as the primary point of contact and take GFCE related decisions on behalf of the Member.
8. Applications for new membership will be considered by the Members, based on their merit and will be considered by the Members at the next annual meeting or if necessary in consultation by the Co-Chairs with the Members
9. New Members will need to commit themselves to The Hague Declaration and the Framework Document.

## Co-Chairs

10. The two Co-Chairs will serve a term of four years which can be renewed for another four years. The term officially begins and ends after four years at an annual meeting in which new Co-Chairs are selected.
11. Co-Chair nominations occur prior to the end of the third year of the current Co-Chair term, during the appropriate annual meeting.
12. The Co-Chairs will jointly put forward their self-nomination for the next term. GFCE members will vote on the next pair of Co-Chairs during the final annual meeting of the current Co-Chair's term.
13. In collaboration with the Secretariat:
  - a. Preparation and agenda setting for the annual high level meeting
  - b. Ensuring the necessary follow-up to the annual meetings
  - c. Report annually on the GFCE's activities and accomplishments, in collaboration with the GFCE Secretariat
  - d. Coordination and planning of events

## Secretariat

14. The Secretariat will be responsible for providing the necessary administrative, logistical and analytical support to the members and their initiatives.
15. The responsibilities of the Secretariat include:
  - a. Be the main point of contact for all Members;
  - b. Give support to initiatives;
  - c. Organize the annual high level GFCE meeting;



- d. Bear the costs for the annual high level GFCE meeting
  - e. Contribute to matchmaking between members and partners
  - f. Share relevant information among members and partners
16. The Secretariat will provide the Members with a catalogue of the services they provide to assist Members in carrying out their initiatives
17. The Secretariat will be initially hosted and voluntarily supported by one or more GFCE members for a period of four years. There will be no assessed contributions from the GFCE members to finance the Secretariat. After four years, the Members will review the structure, operation, financing and location of the Secretariat over the longer term.

## Partners

18. Partners are experts from the multi-stakeholder community, to include civil society think tanks, academia and the technical community who are involved in cyber capacity building.
19. GFCE Members will seek to ensure appropriate participation and involvement of Partner officials.
20. The GFCE Advisory Board constitutes of Partner representatives, providing non-binding but formal guidance to the GFCE Members on cyber capacity building. The mandate and structure is documented in the Terms of Reference of the GFCE Advisory Board.

## Initiatives

21. The Members may establish new initiatives within the parameters of the GFCE principles, to be endorsed by the GFCE Members at the annual meeting or if necessary in consultation by the Co-Chairs with the GFCE Members.
22. The initiatives will focus on one of the four thematic topics of the GFCE and will have concrete activities.
23. Each initiative will be coordinated by two (or more) official GFCE Members (Initiators)
24. Upon consultation and with the agreement of the Initiators, Members will be able to participate in any of the initiatives.



25. The Initiators will establish the objective(s) of each of the initiatives; Initiators are responsible for developing and implementing the activities under the initiative.
26. The Initiators are responsible for coordinating with the relevant stakeholders to identify needs and challenges in their respective area and for developing efforts under their initiative to address these gaps. By working with the relevant stakeholders, Initiators seek to mobilize the political will, financial resources and required expertise to implement the activities.
27. The frequency and location of the activities will be decided by the Initiators of the initiative. The Initiators will have the opportunity to report at the annual meetings on the progress of their initiative.
28. Participants in the activities will be identified by the Initiators. Non GFCE Members and Partners may be invited by the Initiators to the activities of an initiative where they could benefit from participation and share relevant experience, and/or local expertise.

## Annual high level meetings

29. The Members will meet at least once a year, preferably in the margins of other meetings; both the frequency and the location of the meetings will be determined by the Co-Chairs, upon considering the views of the members.
30. The meetings of the members will be chaired by the Co-Chairs
31. The annual high level meetings will be hosted by a GFCE Member
32. The Secretariat will bear the costs for the GFCE annual high level meeting
33. Partners and interested countries, IGOs and private companies, may be invited by the Co-Chairs and the host to participate in the annual meetings, upon considering the views of the members.