

Chris Disspain: Okay, ladies and gentlemen. We're going to start in a couple of minutes. Please take your seats. Thank you all for coming.

Well good afternoon, everybody, and welcome. I can see some new faces in the room, and lots of old faces. That's probably a slightly unfortunate choice of phrase – familiar faces, thank you very much. For those of you who don't know me, my name is Chris Disspain. I'm the Chair of the ccNSO and I'm also the Chair of the IDN policy development process Working Group thing. This is a session on IDNs.

I'm going to do a little bit of history. I'm going to go through where we've got to. The Working Group itself met yesterday and we made some, what we think is some progress. So the fast track is running, and as you know a number of IDN ccTLDs have already been launched and there are a larger number in train and in process.

The purpose of the policy development process is to produce a full blown policy for IDNs in keeping with the fast track, which is quick and – quickened – a quick way of trying to get– I almost said “quick and dirty” there– a quick way of getting the IDNs out for those who had a real need for them. A lot of the issues that the policy development process needs to look at are questions that have been answered a particular way in the fast track.

So just to take this for example, in the fast track, to get your IDNs ccTLD, there are several hurdles that you have to go over. This first hurdle is the script you are using must not be Latin script, so the fast track only works for scripts like Arabic, and Chinese, and Japanese, and Tamal and so on, because they are not the Latin alphabet. There are some other hurdles: the string that you apply for must be a meaningful representation of your territory, and it must be in a language that is an official language of your territory. And all of those things were designed to keep the fast track as small as possible, whilst answering the need of the community to have their IDNs ccTLDs.

So all of these things are up for discussion in the policy development process. Will we, for example, maintain the requirement that you can only have an IDNs ccTLD in an official language? Or will we say, “Oh no, that doesn't matter. If Australia wants to have .australia in Chinese, then that's perfectly fine”? Will we maintain the requirement that the string that you apply for must be a meaningful representation of your territory or your

country? For me, personally, that seems like a no-brainer. Clearly, there's no point in applying for an IDN ccTLD that doesn't describe the country that you are trying to describe. But all these things only need to be looked at.

But we found ourselves in a situation where we had to do that work first, on the script issue. Should we limit IDN ccTLDs to only be available in non Latin scripts? Or should we allow IDN ccTLDs to be available where ASCII is used, but is used with accents and maybe a couple of combining marks and maybe the odd letter that is slightly different from the 26 letters of the alphabet? Now the easy, simple way of doing it is to say Latin, non-Latin only, but that doesn't really work because there are countries and territories that use the 26 letters of the alphabet plus two or three others, and those two or three others are characters that appear in their names, so therefore they would need to have an IDN.

So what the Working Group did is cast around and see if we could find definition of what an IDN actually is. Now, obviously it's a definition of an IDN TLD, rather than ccTLD, but nonetheless it's still a definition. Now we found that- Bart, what's the actual definition? Where is the definition? It's in the – it's the red button there.

Bart Boswinkel: It was in the definition part of the whole IDN a suite of RFCs, the updated version. So I could look it up, but it's in- It's been shared, it's in part of the IDNaBis document suite, so-

Chris Disspain: And we will be publishing this shortly. And basically as far as I'm aware it's not actually officially adopted yet, but it's almost officially adopted. But anyway, in very simple terms an IDN is defined as where the string includes at least one character which is not part of the 26 letter alphabet, plus hyphens and whatever else was included in that definition. Where the Working Group currently is, is heading down the path of saying that an IDN ccTLD will be available, that either your script is not ASCII or your string contains at least one character that is outside the 26 letters of the alphabet, plus the other bits and pieces that are included.

So an é with an accent on it, or a letter with a circumflex or an umlaut or any of these things in the name, that is a meaningful representation of the territory and would therefore be classed as an IDN. And that would mean that it would be available under whatever the rules are that we finally decide upon for the full blown policy. So the version of the Chair's report

that you currently have, I believe, still says that it should be limited to non-Latin scripts only, but that will change. And the Working Group will publish a further version of that; they will change that to be the definition of an IDN being as I've just described.

The other issue that we've been talking about at some length is the issue of country names and their protection, which has somehow got mixed up in the IDN policy development work that we're doing; principally because we recommended to the ICANN Board that at least while we were doing the policy development process, there should be a freeze on the possibility of applying for the name of a country or territory as a gTLD. So we've had a lot of discussion about whether this PDP can have anything to do with ASCII.

Now the way the policy development process is currently drafted, it is only considering the rules for IDN ccTLDs, and so therefore is not considering, for example, Australia applying for .australia. It would be considering Australia applying for .australia in Chinese, but not .australia. And we, the current charter under which this policy development process is operating doesn't contemplate us considering those types of issues. Can Norway apply for .norway, or .norge? And that is not part of what we are currently doing.

So we are at a part now in the Working Group where we are coming to members, and we will do this officially, we will do it in writing and put it out for comment. We're not expecting decisions to be made today or for that matter any time soon. But there is a question of if we should actually stop and consider whether we cancel effectively this PDP and go back and start a new PDP that considers ccTLDs generally, and considers the possibility that we would have, what would the rules for IDN ccTLDs be, what would the rules for any ccTLD?

Should we maintain the current ASCII situation, where you get what you're given on the ISO list, and that's it? Or should we allow for the possibility under certain circumstances that a country may wish to apply as a ccTLD for a meaningful representation of its name either in a script that is not ASCII, or in a script that is ASCII but has additional characters, or in just plain ASCII?

Now, there are all sorts of consequences that flow from this if we decide to do it, and we need to think very carefully about this, if we decide to do

it or not. I just want to restate where we currently are. Where we currently are is that we will be making policy for IDN ccTLDs and that includes strings that are ASCII based strings, provided that a minimum of one character is outside of the 26 letters of the alphabet, and the hyphens and the other bits and pieces.

Now if we do that and carry on doing that, then our current policy development process is perfectly fine and it will take as long as it takes, and so be it. If we decide that we actually want to tackle the whole ccTLD question then we effectively have to do— We have to start again effectively. Now, we don't lose very much in the sense of timing, but we would need to start again.

Now one of the reasons why this has been put forward and discussed at some length is because of the concern about the possibility that .australia or .norway or .sweden might be available as a gTLD, so recently you will have seen that we received a letter from the ICANN Board, from Peter, saying that the Board has agreed to accept the advice of the GAC and the advice of the ccNSO that country names should be excluded from the first round of new gTLDs. And that's great, because that's what we asked to have happen.

Now of course, that doesn't mean that they would be excluded forever, it could mean that in the second round of new gTLDs they would get put back in again, it could mean all kinds of things. But if we had a policy in the ccNSO that said these names should be available to Outer for .australia or .norway or whatever, then of course that would mean that they couldn't be available anywhere else. Where we got to in our discussion and what I'm very interested to hear what you think about, is that we said we needed to be very careful that we didn't get confused in what we are trying to achieve here. Most people in the Working Group would say, I think, provided that names are not available as gTLDs they do not have to, therefore, be available as ccTLDs.

So in other words, as long as they're on a list that says they can't be registered, we are of the general feeling that that's okay with us and we don't really mind that they can't be registered as ccTLDs. But it's up to the members of the ccNSO and the other ccTLD managers to actually come to a decision about this, because if we decide that we should consider making them available for registration as ccTLDs, then we need

to do some stuff, and we need to then decide if we do that as a separate policy development process or change this one or whatever.

So, does that roughly cover – Herbert, does that cover where we go to?– Yeah, so what I’d like to do is throw it open for discussion in the room, and hear what anybody else thinks. Don’t all rush at once. So no one has an opinion. Tina has an opinion.

Tina Dam: Just a quick question. When you say – and I support that by the way, when you say .australia, .norway and so forth, is not covered by this type of process. Would something like .españa with the ñ with the tilde be covered?

Chris Disspain: Yes.

Tina Dam: Okay. Good.

Chris Disspain: Because that fits the definition of the – because you’ve got a character that is outside the 26–

Tina Dam: Yeah. Okay. Cool.

Chris Disspain: So, Bart -

Bart Boswinkel: We have to choose between stopping now and going on, that is what you’re saying, that we have the options. But what we have to do is have a PDP before the first application round of gTLDs is finished, to be sure that it’s not taken back in that process again. But we are talking about ccTLDs or gTLDs all the time and these are country and territory names, so we are kind of locked up in two different sets. We’ve been that for all ages.

And I know there’s some talk in this community about perhaps making a little more differentiated, and making country and territory names not ccTLDs and not gTLDs but that we could have – we can’t expect to have ccTLDs of country and territory names on exactly the same regime as ccTLDs are today because that is kind of historic explanation for how they are. But not gTLDs either. It’s kind of peculiar. If españa should be an IDN ccTLD or at least under that regime, then sweden or norway or australia will not, so we have to discuss how we treat country and territory names more equally.

Chris Disspain: Yes, I understand exactly what you are saying. It's— There are about five different things in there, so let me see if I can pick them out. So first of all, the fact that Spain can have .españa because it's got the accent, that fits in the IDN profile because – let's assume for the moment that we , let's assume we maintain the current restriction of one. So one per language, right? So Spain would have .es as their ASCII gTLD and .españa as their ccTLD. Okay?

Now that is, that makes logical sense. But if you throw away the single requirement then you end up with a circumstance where you can have norway, norge, whatever, as many as you like, but you also end up with a risk. The risk, it seems to me, is this: if we were to allow for the possibility that your full, let's just say your full name in any language was available to you as a ccTLD, then that would sit there and nothing would happen for quite some considerable time. Then one day your government might wake up and say “Oh gosh. we can have .norway. We'll go and do that” and they don't talk to you about it, they just decide it should be run by the Ministry of Communications. Aand off they go, and they get a ccTLD which is effectively competing with .no.

And I'm not certain that that is something that we would think is a particularly good idea. So there are enormous risks in that. And just as there are recognized risks in allowing them to be gTLDs, even with government consent there are huge risks, from our point of view. There are also risks in us saying “No no no no, we want them. So it seems to me that it may be that the sensible way of dealing with this is we think that no one should have them. If we agree that that is our goal, then all we then need to do is to find a methodology that that is the case.

So if we decided that, then that would mean that we continue with our IDN PDP because that's fine because it's doing the IDN stuff and that's fine there, and we would need to find some way of fixing that. I don't know if this would fix it, but just as an example we could run our own policy development process fairly quickly, I would imagine, to come up with a policy recommendation for the Board that said country names are key assets of – and I'm making this up, these are not the words you would necessarily use - but country names are key assets of the territory, blah blah blah, and should be reserved at all times and not be available for registration as TLDs.

Now, some governments might not like that, because they might view that they should have the ability to have their country name. So this is an intensely complicated area which we have tried to avoid, and failed. So you know, I don't know what we do next, but we obviously need to make a decision. Not today, but at some point. Does anyone else have any thoughts, any thoughts at all about what we are talking about here? Are you all just exhausted on day one?

Jason Polis: Jason Polis. Super.Name. I (inaudible 0:22:59) system about back in 1996, so I've had some thoughts about this for quite some time. In the example you used about .au being for australie, in French for australia, let's say we have both of those running simultaneously and (inaudible 0:23:16) we mainly have English names. We can have French names in there as well, but without the tildes and marks, etc., at the moment. So if we have both of those top level domains set up and they're in sync, are we going to have both French and English names in australia and australie?

Chris Disspain: Why would they be in sync, though?

Jason Polis: If you want to keep the trees identical, for each top level domain.

Chris Disspain: Yes, but that would be a decision for each individual country.

Jason Polis: Would the alternative then be to have australia as a domain name, and australie as a domain name, being quite confusing to users, have them result in different IP addresses, getting to different servers.

Chris Disspain: Absolutely. I agree. Cary?

Cary Karp: I would like to point out— I'm Cary Karp, I'm multiply involved in all of this most recently as one of the authors of the impending IDNaBIS document suite. And there is a notion that is frequently stated, as you're doing now, of there being synchronized domains. There is no mechanism in existence that allows that to happen, and one of the reasons there is no mechanism yet conceived that would allow that to happen - a TLD is a TLD, and if the operator of two TLDs can somehow figure out how to propagate lock step policy propagation across the delegation boundaries they're welcome to do it, but there's no such thing by definition nor mandate.

Chris Disspain: Exactly.

Eric Brown: Thank you Chris, Eric Brown with (inaudible 0:24:59) and speaking from the DNS x'd side, no we're not there yet, we don't have a specification for it , a cloning mechanism or for a synchronization mechanism nor do we have a clear charter nor a clear requirement specification of what it is we should be developing.

Chris Disspain: Tina in a second, Hilde–

Hilde Thunem: Well, what you're describing here is why it is not necessarily a good idea to have several TLDs that sort of have the same country and territory name for their uses. And why when a government and a community for example decides on whether they want australia or norway in chinese for example, they would have to consider “Will this actually just be confusing?”

Will we want to try to develop policies that force there to be the same registrations in both spaces, and if so, what is the benefit of having an extra space where it's the same kind of registrations as in the old space, but that's sort of local policy questions, and different countries might come up with different results. I would suspect that Norway might not necessarily want the .norge because we have a .no. We would certainly not want a .norge to be a gTLD, and sort of purposes of not discriminating against certain languages we would want .norge if it should have access to be treated as a Spanish version or a French version of .norway, but I do see Chris' point.

And I think (inaudible 0:26:48) was in a group discussing it, and I do see the point of not delaying the IDN ccTLD process any further because there are people there who might be waiting for the result; and then instead trying to find some way of embracing the last few ASCII names so that at least they are not thrown back into the gTLD market, because I think that's something that governments have been very clear they don't want. And I think it's something that the ccNSO is very clear they don't want.

Chris Disspain: Exactly. I'll get to you in a second, Tina. Exactly, so the question was, the question the Working Group was discussing was whether we have ASCII country names because we wanted them, or if we were discussing it because we didn't want them to be available as gTLDs. And basically we, the conclusion we came to is that we don't want them to be available as gTLDs. And so, therefore, what we would need to try and do if we follow

that line is to find some kind of a mechanism, in conjunction with the GAC if at all possible, of getting ICANN a clear – not just a “Please don’t do this” but some kind of clear mandate to not do it. Tina –

Tina Dam: So, I’m sorry, I’m just going to step back a little bit. I just wanted to say thanks to Eric for the GNSx and for the fact that you’re actually looking at the subject for variants and synchronized and stuff like that. And then just to mention also that there is a session on Wednesday afternoon, we’re going to take that topic more broadly and look at what ICANN as the whole community needs to start working on to make that a reality for those parts of the community where such functionality, or whatever you want to refer to it - variants, synchronized, it has many names today - where something like that is necessary. So that’s something that’s ongoing this week, as well.

Chris Disspain: Thanks, Tina. So, if nobody else really wants to say anything, my summary of where I think we are is that we should prepare, we should finalize the current paper by making the changes we need to make on the definition and get that out, and get covered on specifically the IDN stuff. And perhaps what we should also do is to produce a document that outlines our views in respect to the specific issue of country names, which we can then send to the Council. Because it’s not our job, it’s not the Working Group’s job to deal with this, but because we’re in it we’re the right people to write the paper.

So write the paper, which we then send to the Council, and it can then be discussed on the lists of the cc community At-Large. And if there is agreement or consensus that the goal is to maintain the current reservation, if you like, of country names so they are not available, if that’s the goal, then we would then need to find some way of achieving that. So as a result of– Does that kind of reflect where the people in the room think we’ve got to? Annabelle –

Annabelle Sreberny: Just one thing. We discussed this thing with our government and even the Norwegian government feels like it’s not that easy to – they hate blocking things.

Chris Disspain: I understand that.

Annabelle Sreberny: We have a meeting, a joint meeting with the government (inaudible 0:30:38) the people from there, so I think this would absolutely be an issue to raise in that meeting, to try to figure out what they really feel about it.

Chris Disspain: We have a joint session also tomorrow after lunch. The main topic of conversation will probably be the Del Rido, but this is on the list as well, so I will make sure that we get at least some time on this so that we can talk to them about what sort of possibilities there are from their point of view. I mean, let's be clear here. If there is consensus – if such a thing is possible – in the GAC, under no circumstances should there be a reservation. A decision has to be made one way or the other, whether it is a G or a C. Then that informs our debate, because we say in that case we'll go away and make that decision.

But let's also be really clear here. We would have to, this is something that has a significant effect on the GNSO and the gTLDs so we would need to, even if we do decide to do a policy development process on that, specifically on country names, we would need to find a mechanism for ensuring that this was properly dealt with, and we didn't have the GNSO, quite justifiably standing outside complaining. So that's – but hopefully we won't have to do that, with a bit of luck. Although judging from the way Jayantha was smiling over there I suspect we may have a harder task than we might wish.

Hold on- Bart's just reminded me that there is one other issue that this policy development process, apparent IDN policy that our process will need to cover which is currently not addressed in the Chair's report, which is the issue of variants. The reason why it's not is because we're still waiting for the technical input, technical community input so we are clear what we're actually talking about, cause right now we're really not. But that will need to be addressed as part of this policy development process because there will need to be a policy in respect to variants - what they are, what they mean, and so on. I mentioned – Cary? Go ahead.

Cary Karp: I'd just like to point out that the technical community is busy waiting for you guys to articulate the problem so that they can decide if it's something they can solve, and it's really neat moving between the camps, hearing everybody say we're waiting for the other guys.

Chris Disspain: I apologize if I gave the impression that we're blaming you in any way, cause we're not. You explain what we think we're waiting for, Cary; which we may actually not be waiting for. What we think we are.

Cary Karp: I think what became very clear from the fast track process is that the management of variants is a very complex issue, and in order to avoid, from a policy perspective, that was the view. We don't want to set boundaries or direction on where the whole discussion within the technical and operational community is going cause that's one of the things that you don't want to do. From a policy perspective, some of the solutions, or potential solutions, will be blocked by a policy.

Otherwise we'd have – that's the reason why we were very restraining ourselves to include any language in regard to the management of variants. Because we are aware there are policy issues, but we're not aware which one. And maybe it's a good thing to, and I'm looking at Tina – maybe it's a good thing to wait for some of the experience in getting through the fast track process of what the real issues are, but that's why we have this placeholder in the (inaudible 0:35:06).

Chris Disspain: I'm guessing Tina wants to speak.

Tina Dam: Yeah. So I was trying to push it out of this meeting by my comment before, which was to say we are going to talk about it on Wednesday. The thing is that the technical community doesn't know what to do, because they don't know what we want on the policy side, and we don't know what to tell them what we want because we don't really know what the limitations are. So it goes hand in hand a little bit, this subject, when it comes to being between technical and policy.

And so because of that, what ICANN staff has been working on is to create some sort of project plan for how can we go about getting this – these discussions started in the right form. We're going to start those discussions on Wednesday, we're not done with the projection plans yet. We do have a Board Working Group on this subject matter that has been formed for this specific purpose to help us out on this. They're looking at this draft plan that staff provided them, there's a lot of stuff going on right now which makes it hard to get this launched.

One of the things that we decided was that this needs to be launched in the next fiscal year which is starting here, 1st of July. So we wanted to kick

start it with a discussion on Wednesday to get some more community discussions going on it, but in it there is also sort of like a list of things from ICANN staff saying “These are the things that we believe that we need to have settled.” And it is policy discussions but they can’t really take place without some technical input, so it’s sort of like trying to merge the two different sides of it. If I start saying anything else, then I won’t have anything to say on Wednesday.

Chris Disspain: Thanks Tina, that’s very helpful. This really is extremely hard, especially for intensely non-technical people like me, but just to give you an example of how confusing I find it, I still – I am still completely unclear, and I don’t know if anybody is clear on what a variant actually is. I understand that it is a variant for example, I think Steve [Ashe]’s uranium example is probably the best one I’ve heard, which is – Steve [Ashe], could you just tell us really quickly –

Steve [Ashe]: Okay, there are different kinds of variants. I can tell you what one kind is. One kind is a file, you can have different Unicode representations of the same visual symbol. And so if a country registers its name, has the name and the root in one form on one Unicode, and it cannot possibly be reached with the other version. So that’s one of the problems. There are other kinds of variants–

Chris Disspain: Sure, I mean but my understanding is that it is not – that a – a name may be spelled two different ways, that doesn’t necessarily mean that that’s a variants, right?

Steve [Ashe]: The problem is that human beings write things with squiggles - some set of squiggles, that’s the name of our country. Unicode doesn’t know terribly much about the squiggles, they’ll assign a number. Unicode is just this long numbered list of all the squiggles used on the planet, and some on other planets. Really. And the thing that’s difficult, it’s intrinsically opaque is that okay, this is the way I write the name of the country. And some other guy says “Well, this is the way I write the name of the country,” and they are identical. Except in my keyboarding practice, when I say that my keyboard, the sequence of numbers that I’m actually storing in a database someplace differs from a sequence of numbers that the other guy is storing in a database someplace.

And in a situation where you expect something to match, okay, I’m using a web address that includes this label; I’ve typed it as I type it, why

doesn't it respond? Well, because you're typing it using one sequence of code points as they're called, and the guy who registered it typed it with another sequence of code points. That's the one flavor of variation.

And the other important flavor of variation is where it is in fact the exact same word; the same concept, the same country name, but it can be written using minor squiggle variations in the same script, or two entirely different scripts. There are countries who have two entirely different writing systems, languages that have two writing systems - the language is identical, its spoken identically, but the characters used for a certain representation are taken from two separate-

Chris Disspain: Like the difference between simplified and traditional Chinese.

Steve [Ashe]: Yeah, if you wish. It is, well the Chinese situation is a single script, but there's a traditional variant of it and-

Chris Disspain: Okay.

Steve [Ashe]: That's what's actually an issue under contention - is it one script? Because if it's one script, the rules of the fast track say then one label; and if it's two scripts well then it's okay. But it's not two scripts, it's one script. Hey wait a second, everybody is confused, and -

Chris Disspain: I thank you, and yes, I get that. It's a bit like the shift 3 on my keyboard is a dollar sign but shift 3 on an English keyboard is a pound sign, and it depends on -

Cary Karp: Are they interchangeable? Pounds and dollars?

Chris Disspain: I work in Sweden, I use a Swedish keyboard. When I work elsewhere, when I am in Paris, using a French keyboard - it's the exact same alphabet. It works, but it's confusing as heck. James.

James Seng: Hi. Just to add to the discussion, if regular point that different kinds of variant but more importantly confusion lies in that the different form of variant in different languages requires different policy to hinder. While one solution that adopt may make sense for Chinese may not be the same for Indian languages, and that when you classify variants in a single class and try to resolve in a single policy solution, then you have a problem.

Chris Disspain: So the policy problem that we have is, I understand the Unicode, the numbers. The policy problem that we have is we have to figure out what fits into that. Is it simply I come and I say “This and this are the same, and therefore I want this as a variant of that”? What do I have to do as an applicant for a ccTLD to prove, if you like, that this is a variant? Are you going to take more of your words from Wednesday, Tina?

Tina Dam: You know, actually it’s such a good topic. I don’t mind at all having it as a conversation throughout the week.

[Male]: Just so you know, I don’t think some of the – what time is the session on Wednesday?

Tina Dam: I can’t remember off the top of my head. I think it’s 4 to 5:30?

[Male]: Okay, that works. So you know some of the cc’s present will be at the ccNSO meeting itself. We have this conflict, so don’t feel – don’t hesitate to say anything.

Tina Dam: So unfortunately some meetings are overlapping and that’s just a challenge, with everything going on. So in terms of the variants what we really need to figure out from a policy perspective is first of all we need to define the different types of variants that we have. Chinese is perhaps some type, and others are other types, and they all have different characteristics around them and we heard some examples of some of them. The question is do we want to have the same policy for all of them?

Is there some of them where the variants can be dealt with through registration policies, and is that good enough? Is there somewhere it needs to be a technical guaranteed, synchronized solution which doesn’t exist today, and do we need to test that out, and try and see if we can find– And ask the technical community if they can try and find something like that or get very close to it? Which works for which, and how do we want to go about that?

That is partly a policy question, but it is also a little bit of a technical question because what you quickly get into a discussion of on that is security. So there you go, it’s really – I think it’s really hard. We’ve had a couple of Working Groups on it, they’ve come up with some suggestions on how to differentiate between the different types, I don’t think we’re quite there yet. And as long as we’re not quite there yet, we can’t really go

to the technical community and say, hey, can you fix this for us, because we can't really tell them what exactly is it that we're trying to fix, and what we would like to see the policy to be fixed around it.

So that's what we should figure out - definitions, what rules to we think works, and they can come back and say, well, we don't think those rules are good enough. We think you need something stricter than that because of the problems that will arise here, or they could say, or no, this is good enough; but we don't have a solution for that technically. But we can do some tests and see if we can figure it out. So it is going to go back and forth like that.

Chris Disspain: All right. So James—

James Seng: Just want to make a point - the solution to variants requires different outcomes, depends really very much on what the, really the community wants. One set of community may say "I want both variants dedicated" and a separate community may say "I want one variant, and the other variant, I don't want it to be dedicated ever."

Chris Disspain: Yes, you're right, but you also need to decide what is a variant, because what you're effectively doing here is by claiming something as a variant, that has an effect on the policy that we make. Because if it could be run as two separate registries, then is that actually two TLDs? Or is one a variant of the other, and what policy do you need to have in respect to that, and could you possibly in five years time decide to split the management of your two variants and have Hilde running one and Annabelle running the other?

It – there's an intensely complicated policy problem here which we need to try and figure out. If there was a simple definition that said a variant is – green is a variant of blue, that's it – okay, simple. Then you'd be able to say right, well as long as it's green, it's not a problem. Cary.

Cary Karp: Everybody is kind of circling around the core of this. There's no such thing as a variant. The concept of variants has enormous linguistic and cultural attributes to it, and we can start to articulate, we can say there is a notion of variants applicable in the idiographic realm that lacks counterpart in the alphabetic realm, and those are the two main ways to do it. But still, if you take a look at the alphabetic realm, one of the real problems, and this does get technically complex pretty quickly, is that the

Unicode procedure for encoding different scripts can be based on significantly different principles.

So there's a certain attribute of writing that two scripts share, but the way that Unicode has dealt with them in both cases differs wildly, which makes it very difficult for there to be a neat technical solution that fits everything.

Chris Disspain: You just need to fix Unicode then.

Cary Karp: Oh boy.

Chris Disspain: Okay. I think we're coming to the close of this. I think I can say for the Working Group that we are pretty clear on what we need to do next from the point of view of moving this forward, and I think we'll also take the discussion on the variants and see if we can't maybe, instead of waiting on each other, start talking to each other. It might be a good idea. Any last comments before I close? Okay.

So we start – we are tomorrow, for the ccNSO members meeting in the big room where we have been today. We're in the gold room or whatever it's called, we're not in here. Yeah, I know, it's going to be great, isn't it? So we're where on Wednesday, but tomorrow we're in the big room, so please invite all your friends so that it looks as if there are a few people there. We start at 9:00 and we have a pretty full day, including a session with the GAC and a few other things, and Peter and Rod are coming at 10:00.

Please think of any questions that you would like to ask them. We will be calling for questions if you would like to – if you are not comfortable asking your own question and you would like to send it to me to be asked on your behalf I'll be happy to do so. I already have one of those. And Pete of course, will be quite comfortable to ask his own. Okay, so thank you very much indeed everybody for coming along this afternoon and we'll see you all tomorrow morning, 9:00 in the big room.

--End of recorded material--