

EATHER DRYDEN:

Good morning, everyone. We are running late this morning, so if people could begin to take their seats, we could begin our session.

All right. I think we're ready to begin.

So welcome first to the ALAC for coming to meet with us today.

It's always good to exchange views with the ALAC, and we have a few agenda items identified.

So we have proposed, first of all, the issue of conflicts of interest at ICANN, and then an opportunity to talk about some of the outstanding gTLD issues. Perhaps the JAS Working Group issue in relation to support for applicants that need additional support to participate in the gTLD program. And then also the accountability and transparency work that's been taking place.

So with that, I will hand over to Olivier Crepin-Leblond, who is the chair of the ALAC, to introduce the first topic.

Thank you.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND:

Thank you very much, Heather. And on part of the At-Large community and the At-Large Advisory Committee, I would like to thank the GAC for allowing us to come into this beautiful room and discuss the issues that we have there.

So the first one, conflicts of interest. The subject is high on the agenda of many SOs and ACs. And what I was going to do was to actually pass the subject over to Jean-Jacques Subrenat, who, thanks to the interpretation, which I understand you have now in French, English, Spanish, and

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also Portuguese -- is that correct? Fantastic. So we applaud the fact that Jean-Jacques will be able to speak either --

[ Applause ]

-- either in French or in English on that subject, or in any of the other languages. If he wishes to speak in Portuguese, he is welcome to do so.

Jean-Jacques.

JEAN-JACQUES SUBRENAT:

Thank you. Thank you all.

Olivier, I had understood you were asking me to come in and say a few words on the third topic, not on this one. Is that an error?

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND:

I think there is a mix between both the third and this one as well.

JEAN-JACQUES SUBRENAT:

Right. Well, in that case I have to improvise. And I'm glad to try.

I think the interesting thing in this meeting is that you represent the public interest. You, the representatives of the states. And you do that in a very broad sense. Based on constitutions, on law.

But there is another level of awareness and requirement, which is for the Internet user. And not everything has been taken care of in constitutional or legal terms, because the Internet is something quite recent compared with other areas of human activity.

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So I think that the challenge for all of us in the Internet community, and perhaps more specifically in the Internet community [sic], is to see in which ways it is possible to further the public interest by having all parties respect a sort of code of conduct. And that's where this element of conflicts of interest must come in.

Just to situate the debate, I would say that what characterizes our time today is that there is a big period of questioning of some of the fundamentals which have brought forward prosperity but also conflict and inequality in the world since roughly the end of World War II.

And one of those challenges we are faced with today is, in fact, the necessity of going beyond the self-regulation model. It has not failed in all sectors, but let's just dwell for half a second on one very important one which has affected all of us as taxpayers, either now or tomorrow. That is the financial sector. And it is quite evident that self-regulation has been a terrible failure. So what this calls for is some degree of empowerment of the people who are most concerned. In the case of finances, the taxpayer. But in the case of the Internet, I would suggest that ICANN has a specially significant role to play.

That's all I wanted to say in guise of an introduction.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND:

Thank you very much, Jean-Jacques.

So I now open the floor for more comments from the ALAC members, and I see Cheryl Langdon-Orr.

CHERYL LANGDON ORR:

Thank you, Olivier. It's Cheryl Langdon-Orr for the transcript record.

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We say that all the time in the At-Large community meetings, whether or not we are on the phone or whether we are being live transcribed as we are in these meetings and there's a very important reason for it. Because we actually record everything we say and do, right from the Executive Committee meetings down.

We have open meeting policy. We may close, go to Chatham House Rules and follow the normal protocols, but what we believe in in the At-Large community is the very highest levels of transparency and accountability. And that means that we have transcripts produced in the languages we use: French, Spanish, and English. And if I don't say my name is Cheryl Langdon-Orr, then Olivier's words stop and mine continue to run.

It's important that we see ourselves as setting materials up for an archive. And I think it is these high principles and attention to detail that we need to think about when we discuss conflicts of interest.

I am unaware of anyone in the At-Large community that I have ever bumped up against, since about 2000-and -- well, really, the DNS list to begin with, that doesn't have strong views on matters of conflict of interest.

There might be diversity on how and to what degree we believe we should go in the reporting and accountability. But everyone in our community has a strong view. And I'd be astonished if the same was not amongst the government advisory members as well.

Let me give you an example of what the At-Large Advisory Committee is about to do, and that is put up the requirement, as we see for work groups in the GNSO, statements of interest. That's great. But the statements of interest are to be matched with a regularly maintained Wiki page which links to all of the work groups you are on, all of

the interests. All the places your voice is going and is being heard will be able to be tracked and seen.

And it is to be done under the rule of continuous disclosure.

So if I start talking to someone about how much money they'd like to offer me in the contract that I would be excellent at executing, I have to put that in my Statement of Interest when I start talking, regardless of the outcomes.

If it is a matter of such confidentiality that it would affect, because my employer would take a dim view of me going and working for the competition, then it is incumbent upon me to lodge a temporarily private statement with my chair. They're simple things, but they say a huge amount about how we can manage the curiosity people have about what is or is not conflict of interest. And they're simply darn good best practices. I believe that there are members of the GAC and members of the at-large advisory committee who, in a very short time, could come up with areas of mutual interest in this topic that we could pursue further. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

HEATHER DRYDEN:

Thank you very much for that, Cheryl. So a few points in relation to recordkeeping, the importance of maintaining good records in support of managing conflict of interest issues and also a point about statements of interest, which I've seen on boards before, where, if you wanted to participate in a particular committee, you would express your interest by describing your background, your skills and abilities, so that they could be related to the topic or area of the committee's work and increase transparency and so on into that process.

So some food for thought there. A note to those of you that would like to participate from the ALAC that are not at the

main table. We do have a roving mic. So don't hesitate, if you'd like to ask for the floor.

So, on conflict of interest issues, are there any thoughts from GAC members on this? As a committee, we have not yet discussed this; but we do intend to have an exchange with the board at the end of today. And I do know that various GAC members are taking quite an interest in this issue at this organization. So European Commission.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION:

Thank you. My apologies. Thank you, madam chair. I'm Andreas Glorioso from the European Commission. And many thanks to the ALAC community from coming and talking to us on this important matter. I would like to reiterate, noting beforehand, that, as the chair has mentioned, at this point in time I am absolutely not speaking for GAC. I am speaking for the European Commission.

The matter of conflict of interest is for us of particular relevance. We have taken, as many of you may know, quite strong positions in the past. And we have all intentions to keep on continuing with those positions. We think it is a very urgent matter and have stressed extremely urgent. We are somehow perplexed or also are worried that this matter does not become another procedural issue that is going to be drowned into working groups and working groups to prepare working groups, et cetera, et cetera. This is a matter to be solved with the utmost urgency. I have to say that, until now, our focus has been, frankly, mostly on the -- at the board level. We were not particularly thrilled to see the latest auditing report of ICANN and noting that eight board members declared conflict of interest, many of whom without specifying what that conflict of interest entailed. But, again, this is a

discussion that, as the chair mentioned, we're going to have with the board.

What I am -- besides expressing our support for the interest that ALAC has in this matter, I have a more practical question, which is what would ALAC, besides the transcriptions, et cetera, what would it practically propose to make sure that this important item is pushed forward in the ICANN environment and keeps on being a substantive issue and does not become another purely procedural matter?

HEATHER DRYDEN:

Thanks very much for sharing that, European Commission. I have a request from Kenya. Would you like to respond first, Olivier?

Kenya, please.

KENYA:

Thank you, Heather. And I thank the ALAC for putting this position on the table. I fully agree with my colleague from the European Commission that this is a very important issue and that we must ensure that it doesn't get lost, you know, as so many other issues would.

I would also be interested in, perhaps, whether the board would be looking at introducing governance structures that compel the board to disclose just not both financial and non-financial disclosure of conflict of interest and also the interests of the directors vis-a-vis management plus those of the stakeholders. So it's both -- it's not just financial. It's non-financial, financial, and the conflict of interest between the various stakeholders and management. Thank you.

HEATHER DRYDEN:

Thank you very much, Kenya.

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Olivier.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND:

Thank you very much, Heather. In response to the comment or question from the European Commission, At-Large and ALAC has been leading by example. We take transparency extremely important -- to be something extremely important. As we always mention, all of our meetings are open, except if we have specific points when we do have to do things under Chatham House Rules.

There is a discussion, which I'm actually going to be launching -- and I can announce it here -- with the At-Large advisory committee later on during the course of this meeting, which is that of having -- with a proposal of having all At-Large or at least At-Large advisory committee members submit a conflict of interest statement that will be stored and updated on our Web site for everyone to actually see what interests we might have outside of our ICANN activities. It's a thing that -- and, of course, we haven't discussed this, which we hope to be able to extend to all the SOs and ACs in ICANN. But that's just my personal view at this point. We will be discussing this later. Cheryl.

CHERYL LANGDON-ORR:

Just briefly to follow on from Olivier, one thing, of course, the At-Large advisory committee may do is give a piece of advice that circumvents all of those working group things that go on in the SOs. We're an advisory committee, as you are. We can advise. We can advise. This is what we believe you should do.

HEATHER DRYDEN:

Thank you, Cheryl.

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Netherlands, please.

NETHERLANDS:

Yes, thank you, chair. I'm very glad to say the ALAC and GAC we are on one line, I think, on this subject. And I agree completely with European Commission. It's also now time to act. We cannot wait -- I think Kenya said this -- we cannot wait on recommendations from committees, et cetera. And, basically, to be very, let's say, practical on it, what -- let's say the GAC and ALAC join in their communique on their exposure to the board and to other constituencies and even saying that this is a question of such a high importance that we cannot wait, let's say, one other ICANN meeting for measures to be taking place on this.

We have the new gTLD program. The board will also consider new applications in the end. I think we cannot wait for recommendations to be implemented in X or Y months. I think, basically, from the Dutch side -- I think the European Commission would also agree on this -- even the next ICANN meeting there should be already actions in place and, let's say, proposals to be accepted on this matter. Thank you.

HEATHER DRYDEN:

Thank you, Netherlands. I have Portugal.

PORTUGAL:

Thank you very much. Expressing also our particular point of view. We also regard the issue as extremely important. As a matter of fact, we think that there are two lines of consideration, one of which is the statements of conflict of interest. And that would improve, if some sort of standard is clearly defined with minimum requirements so that we are sure that at least what is obvious that should be taken

advice on each one of these particular statements is done, then we have part of the problem solved, as was quite well pointed out before. Because, as we have full recordings and they're archiving interventions, that part is well taken care of. So we don't have to handle this any more.

But there is a serious challenge now to go to procedural consequences. I give two examples. One of them is to do with employment relationships after having a particular position within the ICANN decision-making process. There should be clear wording on what the true expectations are regarding this matter. And that doesn't exist so far.

And the other point regards the decision-making process itself. So, if, for a particular reason, one board member, for instance, has a conflict of interest in a particular area and that issue is being voted, there should be procedural requirements to invite -- to impede, as a matter of fact, voting in something where there is a conflict of interest. So there may be a conflict of interest of being a member of the board, but there may be a conflict of interest not for the full scope of the board activities but particular topics. Thank you.

HEATHER DRYDEN:

Thank you, Portugal. Jean-Jacques.

JEAN-JACQUES SUBRENAT:

Thank you, Heather. This is Jean-Jacques Subrenat. Two points. The first one just mentioned by the representative of Portugal. I think that the board -- the way the board operates is, in fact, that, when there is a momentous decision to be taken, a resolution before the board, members are required to declare their vested interest or interest, let's say, in -- before that vote. That's taken care of. It should simply be made more systematic.

My second point is about timing. And there I would like to come back to what Cheryl said earlier. I think it should be made a permanent fixture that it is the obligation of each person on a board or on a committee, et cetera, to take the initiative of pointing out any evolution in her or his status on an ongoing basis and not have the chair of this or that committee or the board having to run after or ask staff to run after each individual to update that. I'm suggesting simply that this be worked into the guidelines or the principles right from the start.

HEATHER DRYDEN:

Thank you, Jean-Jacques.

European Commission.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION:

Thank you, madam chair. I would like to support the statements made by Portugal. Two very important issues. One is what we call it a cooling off period, but I think the point is clear. After sitting on the board, it is not acceptable to go two weeks later to work for someone that has a direct interest in the decision that has been taken on the board.

Just to make an example -- and I absolutely am not comparing the College of Commissioners with the European Commission with the ICANN board. But we have clear rules for that. And a Commissioner which do not respect that lose their pension rights. And that leads me to the other point that I would like to make and to offer full reflection in this joint meeting, noting again that this is the position of the European Commission and not of GAC.

It's very good to have rules in place. Our experience on the European Commission is that, if there is no enforcement and if there are no penalties, the rules are absolutely meaningless. So any reflection of conflict of interest must,

in our view, include what are, in effect, must be comprehensive, must be effective, and must include enforcement mechanism and penalties.

I also would like to mention and again offer it as a reflection -- I'm not sure we'll have the possibility to discuss it in depth either in this joint meeting or in GAC -- there is an issue of funding of money. I mean, I think all of us know that money is always quite a good path to follow when you want to see conflict of interest.

As far as we understand, ICANN directors are not paid, except for the chair. Now, this, in our view, leaves them quite more subject to pressures from other parties. Because, at the end of the day, these are all professionals and they all need to eat and they all have interests to have careers, et cetera. So we wonder whether this, which, if I remember correctly, is one of the recommendations of the conflict of interest team, the compensation of board director should not be given high priority, which is our view is not the case at the moment.

The last point, again, not something we cannot touch in great detail on this occasion, is the funding of ICANN itself.

Is the financial structure where ICANN does take its money from? Again, the latest report of the auditors, the auditing firm that did the auditing of ICANN, is very interesting in that respect because the auditors, quite significantly, found it relevant to note that ICANN is heavily dependent on, if I remember correctly, just two registries and two registrars. It did not name these registries and registrars. But it did note that there is a clear problem with the diversification of income in the ICANN structure. That is something which we believe, in due course, should also be considered in reflection on conflicts of interest.

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HEATHER DRYDEN:

Thank you very much for sharing that experience, European Commission.

I have Alan Greenberg, Germany, and Cheryl Langdon-Orr. Alan.

ALAN GREENBERG:

Thank you. I just wanted to say something that has been implied before, but I'll try to make it explicit. I believe it's critical that, when a board member or any -- or in anywhere else in the organization declare that there is a conflict, that they declare the type of conflict.

I was rather shocked about a year and a half ago, maybe a little bit longer, when the board was having a discussion on something related to new TLDs and over half the people on the board said, "I have a conflict. I can't participate."

And in most -- in a few cases people -- it was obvious what the conflict was. In most cases it wasn't. And I think it's really important for transparency that we understand these issues. Thank you.

HEATHER DRYDEN:

Thank you very much, Alan.

Germany, please.

GERMANY:

Yes, thank you, madam chair. I would like to join the European Commission in this issue on conflict of interest, because we think it is a very important issue.

What I would like to ask the colleagues from ALAC here is - - because I would anticipate that, in particular, for a civil society, it is not so easy to work on a voluntary basis for an organization like ICANN. And for -- it might be -- in

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particular for civil society, it might be helpful if some people committed to their ICANN post would be really adequately paid for. And maybe this is a position that can be shared in particular from your constituency. Thank you.

HEATHER DRYDEN:

Olivier, you wanted to respond on that point?

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND:

Yes. Thank you, Heather. That's an interesting point. And I don't think anyone in At-Large would be against that. However, the denting of the ICANN budget would probably be huge, due to the number of hours that our members spent on ICANN matters. And, even at the lower salary rate, I think that would be pretty high. They couldn't afford us. But thanks for the suggestion.

HEATHER DRYDEN:

Thank you. Clearly, there is a relationship between volunteerism and levels of pay and conflict of interest and such.

So, Germany, did you want to follow up?

GERMANY:

Yes, just a clarification. It is only for the directors. Because the position was that it is difficult -- directors are working on a voluntary basis. And I asked if people from ALAC working for ICANN board have these possibilities. Because I consider it rather difficult to work on a voluntary basis for ICANN board, and an adequate remuneration would be helpful in this case. Thank you.

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HEATHER DRYDEN: Thank you for that clarification. Okay. So -- Olivier, you did want to respond.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Thank you, Heather. Olivier, for the record. It's a very good point. So thank you.

HEATHER DRYDEN: I have a request from Cheryl, Sala, and a request from Alan. And then we will try to close the speaking order. Thank you, Cheryl.

CHERYL LANGDON-ORR: Thank you, madam chair. Cheryl Langdon-Orr, for the transcript record. To come back to the point that was made by the European Commission and, indeed, others at the table about director -- board of ICANN, director remuneration, I had the honor of serving on the accountability and transparency review team. And I guess it's important to remind everybody that we know the recommendations about compensation, which is a term I do not like. It should be something else than that -- but remuneration, stipend, whatever -- for very, very good reasons, because it does, in fact, hook in to the need for higher levels of accountability than if you are acting in a purely voluntary way.

So it's not just being nice. It is, in fact, a very practical point to try to have this happen.

That said, when we met with the community, we found no significant voice in terms of number of people objecting to it. And, in an organization that's a multistakeholder model with competing interests, that, in itself, says how important this issue is. And, therefore, I believe, as a personal thing, that appropriate remuneration for the ICANN board is one

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step in a pathway of professionalizing, globalizing, and internationalizing ICANN.

HEATHER DRYDEN: Thank you, Cheryl. And we have a request here to speak. If you could introduce yourself, please.

SALANIETA TAMANIKAIWAIMARO: Salanieta Tamanikaiwaimaro, for the record. It's a privilege to be amongst you this morning. Just very quickly, if I could make a quick comment. First, I'd like to acknowledge the excellent work done by the review team. If I could just propose for them to consider current corporate governance mechanisms that already exist within the IESCO, (phonetic) I also recognize and appreciate that a lot of the countries that actually represented within the ICANN community already subscribe to IESCO. And a lot of the corporate governance mechanisms and principles are tested and, to a large extent, may not need a lot of reinvention. And so we could just tweak it a bit here and there.

Thank you.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Thank you, Sala. Olivier, for the transcript. This is a name, Salanieta and the rest, which I can't pronounce yet, which I'll have to learn. She is joining the At-Large advisory committee. She's been selected by the Asia-Pacific region to join. She's the new Cheryl Langdon-Orr.

HEATHER DRYDEN: Thank you. Welcome to you, Sala.

Next I have Alan. And then I think we need to move on, please.

ALAN GREENBERG:

Just a quick comment in response to the interpretation that others had to the comment from Germany on remuneration of ALAC and other civil society and non-industry volunteers. Clearly, we cannot simply pay everyone. That's not likely to happen.

On the other hand, having just chaired a group, which was looking at some rules related to registrars and registration -- and, typically, at any given meeting over half the people were registrars and very few were users -- it's really hard getting participation to make sure this is really a multistakeholder group and not a single stakeholder group with a couple other hangers on. It's really an issue we're going to have to address, as the years go by, on how to make sure that we are really representing all of the stakeholders and not just those with money. Thank you.

HEATHER DRYDEN:

Thank you, Alan, for that.

Okay. So let's move on and touch very briefly on the next two topics. The first one was -- well, item number two on the agenda.

But the next item is in relation to the new gTLD program. And we had suggested, in particular, the joint applicant support working group or support for those applicants that need additional assistance. And I understand that Portugal is able to perhaps make a few brief comments about where we are at or questions or comments to consider at this stage with those issues. And then, regarding the agenda item on ATRT, I understand Jean-Jacques has a few comments that he may wish to make on that topic. And then we can try to close this session.

So, Olivier, did you want to comment?

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND:

Thank you very much, Heather.

By closing this previous section, perhaps could we take an action item, which is, I would suggest, to have a small working group to put together a statement of the ALAC -- joint statement of the GAC and ALAC on this matter. Is that something which the GAC would entertain? We don't require an answer right now, but the question has been asked.

HEATHER DRYDEN:

Thank you for the question. Okay.

All right. So Portugal, please.

PORTUGAL:

Thank you. On behalf of -- I'm going to speak in Portuguese. So, please, your headphones. For those that don't understand Portuguese. That's very good to know many people understand Portuguese.

According to the -- related to the JAS working group, the work that has been carried out, I can say that I was -- attended yesterday the session where the outcomes were presented. It was a very good job. There is a group within the GAC that was working or accompanying this issue. We tried to help them. We did our best. But I have a doubt. And I would like to discuss these with you in this meeting.

When taking office or when considering the issues, I feel that in the board meeting this issue is not being discussed. So I don't know the information the ALAC has. I don't know what you think is going to happen with this issue. But I think this is going to be postponed for many months, so the realization of this is going to be quite long and delayed. And I feel that nowadays we might have good ideas. We have a good report. But I believe that perhaps decisions

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are going to be postponed. So I would like to share this feeling with you and see what ALAC thinks about it. Thank you very much.

HEATHER DRYDEN:

Many thanks, Portugal.

So what is an ALAC perspective on the progress made with support for other applicants? Alan, please.

ALAN GREENBERG:

I always have that same concern of, when you raise something and someone nods their head, will something really be done in a timely manner? In this particular case, I don't have that fear. This is linked tightly to the release of new gTLDs, and the process will start in January. I don't believe the board is masochistic enough to do anything which will delay that process. So I think we're going to see some action. Whether we will see the exact thing that the -- that the JAS committee recommended in line with the ALAC and GAC advice or whether we'll see another variant of it, I do not know. And I'm not sure I care a lot. I think we are going to see some significant action. So I don't have a concern right now. I may eat those words in a week or two or three.

HEATHER DRYDEN:

Thank you for that, Alan.

Evan?

EVAN LEIBOVITCH:

This is Evan Leibovitch, for the record. Of course, we don't have access to the board meetings, and we can't read their minds. But, in the informal talks that we've had with multiple people talking to us, I think there's a very good

indication that this issue won't be ignored. When it's mentioned in the opening address in the ICANN meeting, when it's part of the resolution passed in Singapore, it looks like the board has committed itself to some kind of action. It's asked for the community response. We've given it the community response. As you know, we have worked hard together to create a joint GAC/ALAC statement. I'm curious to know whether the board has responded to you on this. We know that we -- the board has asked for community input. It's received that input. Of course, the board meeting is not open to us, but I have every indication that at least we will see some action on it this week.

HEATHER DRYDEN:

Thank you, Evan. I think the short answer to your question about a response is that we have not received a response yet.

But I do hope we will.

Okay. So we're short on time. Can we leave this topic and then touch upon accountability and transparency where I believe Jean-Jacques may have a few remarks to make? Jean-Jacques?

JEAN-JACQUES SUBRENAT:

Thank you. A few short comment. And, here again, I would suggest a fairly longer term view. I think that the whole exercise of ATRT was extremely beneficial. There was a risk that, because of this, ICANN would be sucked into a continuous operation of self-analysis and that that would eat up so much time and human resources that it could be to the detriment of other activities of ICANN.

But I think that what this has pointed out is at least a couple of challenges for the future in ICANN. One of them is the

whole area of the relationship between the decision-making structure, which is the board, and the rest of ICANN.

And here I must say that we are heartened by the reactions, the invitations from our openness which have been shown by the board to, for instance, ALAC. But we have to go further along that road. The other challenge, in that sense, is the interrelation between the various elements of ICANN and not only vis-a-vis the board. And here I think that what we are doing today is of particular significance. The way we're working together or learning to work together between the GAC and the ALAC is, I think, significant.

And the proposal just made by Olivier to take away one action item from the previous discussion is important. I think that the more we are able to concentrate on a small number of really important topics and to give voice to them in -- how should I say? -- a confederated way, at least, let's say, with a common language, will reinforce the whole of ICANN.

I underline the fact that it's for the benefit of the whole of ICANN because we're way past the signpost which said "This way" The interest of this or that part of the community. And this is the direction to some other group interest. I think that as an article in "The Economist" pointed out recently, there is a wider challenge, which is to the validity of the ICANN model itself. Let's keep that in mind. Thanks.

HEATHER DRYDEN:

Thank you, Jean-Jacques. I can inform you that, currently, in relation to the recommendations that are relevant to the GAC itself, the work continues. There is a working group of sorts comprised of some members of the board along with the GAC. And we're trying to coordinate that so that we

can look at implementation of the recommendations in relation to not only the accountability and transparency review team work, but also the joint working group report, which was to review the role of the GAC and dealt very much with accountability and transparency issues.

And that report was worked on with the board and contains, I think, a lot of useful information about how the GAC works, what constitutes GAC advice, and points like that, as well as recommendations to help track GAC advice and ensure that, when we provide advice, that it is tracked and it's visible to the GAC, what the action is that has been taken in response to various pieces of advice received.

So that's, I think, going to be an important tool for us. And so I would just report that to you for information. And for the GAC, our colleague from Egypt, Manal, is leading the effort on the GAC side. So we'll continue with that.

European Commission, please.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION:

Thank you, madam chair. I would like to take the occasion again of this joint meeting to perhaps make a statement which is a bit too much, but to clarify the position of the commission, which has been reported in confusing way past weeks concerning the ATRT communications.

I would like to confirm that the European Commission believes that the accountability and response review team recommendations are of huge importance. As some of you know, Fabio Colasanti, who was already at the time former director general of the information society of the Commission, (indiscernible) participated closely in the work of those -- that review team. And, although he spoke on a personal basis, he, obviously, brought the commission perspective. After 30 years on the commission, he brought that perspective into the work.

We believe that the recommendation of the ATRT recommendations had to be implemented urgently by all parties involved, including us. And I do not repeat what the chair has already said in terms of how we're working to ensure that happens.

At the same time, reiterating the importance of the recommendations, we also need, as a community -- but, if I may say so, as public authorities to keep in mind the possibility that there might be elements of reform, which ICANN may not be able for other reasons, relate to implementing by itself. What I'm saying is that while it may be desirable for the model just to improve by itself internally, there may be occasions where that may not be possible. And the position of the commission is we cannot -- we cannot say that certain changes -- if certain changes cannot be implemented by ICANN itself through its internal processes, then those changes will not happen. That is not acceptable to the commission.

If there are changes, including, for example, on conflict of interest, that needs to be implemented urgently and ICANN is not able to do it by itself, that has to happen anyway. How we do it we can discuss it. It's a matter of discussion, but I want to make sure clear what is the position of the commission on this matter.

Thank you.

HEATHER DRYDEN:

Thank you very much for that. I have one more request, and then we will close today's session.

Australia, please.

AUSTRALIA:

Thanks, Heather. Peter Nettlefold here, the GAC representative from Australia. I'd like to agree -- not sure if that's the right word -- with the commission that the ATRT recommendations are critically important and that we should be looking to see them implemented as soon as possible.

I think they are a very good example of reform that is coming from within the current ICANN model. And we've all talked here today, and I think there is a considerable degree of agreement around the room that there are potentially other forms that should also be looked at.

So, as to our potential action item from this item, I would certainly like to support the idea of a small working group that looks at taking forward some of those other potential reforms so that this is, again, hopefully, another example of reform that can be progressed from within the ICANN model. We're all here in the bottom-up multistakeholder model, and we've identified potential issues. Let's talk about them. Let's give some advice up through the model. So we've got a number of things which we can look at which are coming from within ICANN itself. And I think ICANN being able to take these difficult governance decisions and progress difficult governance reforms will be critical to ICANN's ongoing legitimacy. So I -- I'm very keen to work as part of the community to take these forward from within the model and to see these difficult reforms go forward.

HEATHER DRYDEN:

Thank you very much, Australia.

So thank you very much to the ALAC for meeting with us today. We've had an interesting exchange on a number of topics. We value our discussions with you. So thank you very much. And, please, Olivier.

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OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Thank you very much, Heather. I like well rounded off meetings. And I notice the discussion has gone full circle. We started with conflicts of interest, and we ended up with how to act in the public interest and a subject that favors the public interest. So great. Thank you very much for this frank discussion. And I guess the meeting is now closed.

HEATHER DRYDEN: Closed, yes. Thank you, ALAC.

For the GAC, if you can be back in this room at 11:15 so we can receive an update from the SSAC.

Thank you.

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