Transcript ICANN Marrakech
GNSO Session Saturday, 05 March 2016
New Meeting Strategy
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James Bladel: We will discuss the new meeting strategy, so we're just a little behind but we'll catch up here as we go along. The new meeting strategy, which conversation will be led by Volker who in his role as former vice chair – or how did you get stuck with this, Volker?

Volker Greimann: Yes, you're pretty much right.

James Bladel: Yeah, so as a carryover from his previous role he was voluntold to come up with a schedule for the GNSO for the shortened meeting, which will be occurring later this year meeting structure B. And I think he has some updates here. And we do know that they are getting close to announcing a replacement venue for meeting structure B which will be occurring in June of this year. It was originally scheduled for Panama.

    And so I would say watch for an official announcement at ICANN later this week. Sorry? I know that a lot of people know but it's not coming from me. There will be an official announcement later this week so – but yeah. But Volker, if you want to take it away and we'll talk a little bit about meeting structure B. Thank you.

Volker Greimann: Spoilers, it's Helsinki. Okay new meeting strategy update. We have slides here. Thank you, James, for leading up to this. We have had a couple of these presentations before. As you are knowing we are already well into the new meeting structure with this, the first meeting being the same as the old meetings but the next meeting being radically different from what we had before.

The GNSO had stuck its head together with staff. It came up with the plan of how to deal with this new structure very early on. In February 2012 we formed a drafting team to plan for the new meeting structure. We developed a skeleton schedule that we delivered to the other SOs and ACs in Buenos Aires which we saw as a basic requirement to be able to continue to function as a GNSO for this meeting, which was supposed to be focused on policy making.

We sent a letter to the ICANN board in July 2015 to request further information from the board for their planning. We received an information from the board – a letter from the board this February so last month. And this schedule was surprising to the say the least. They provided a schedule that allowed the board to interact with the community as much as possible. But it seems to have kind of taken out of the equation the original intent of that meeting which was to allow better policy making and a more focused meeting on policy making.

The board has welcomed input on this schedule. So if we could put up the next slide to just delve into the meeting plan as we have it before us. And this is a consolidated plan created by staff that puts the now existing structure of planning of the meeting from all the groups beside each other.

The first day of course being the outreach day. Question is has this outreach – the change of location that we now have seen to a non-disclosed location in any way changed the objective of the meeting? Is the outreach in the new meeting location as important or as much of a focus of the first day as it was in the original plan?

I don't really know how much coordination has gone into the planning of the different groups of their plans for outreach so it seems to me, from what I've seen so far, that this is pretty much diverse and disparate so that each group has its own plan of how to design this outreach. Next slide please.

Coming – one back please. Wait. Yes. As you can see here marked in red the plan of the board includes meetings with all the different constituencies and

stakeholder groups in Day 2 and – or into Day 3 as well. And the GNSO had planned to conduct prep sessions and joint sessions with other ACs and the board as well. So here we have some form of overlap.

As with the GNSO holding its session and the board holding its sessions in parallel we can expect that not everybody will be able to attend the GNSO sessions when their constituency has their meeting with the board.

Next slide please. This becomes even more clear on Day 3 when we have the SG meetings and the PDP working group meetings that conflict with some of the board sessions, especially later in the day. No, Day 3 is fine. Thank you. As you can see later in the day where there is a lot of meetings – PDP meetings planned on the GNSO side and the board meeting with different groups as well. So it's going to be interesting to try and find a solution to match up the board's plan of meeting with all the constituencies as they have in the past. It has been called the supplicant's line up.

If this is still desired, which it appears to be the case, then we will have to shift some of our planning and have to see how the PDP working group meetings will be able to be held if certain groups will simply not b able to attend at that time because they are just meeting with the board might be conflict of interest there as well. Next slide please.

We had some constituency meetings planned on Day 2 but it's very short. And of course Day 4 the question remains what the community – cross community policy will look like. And as well marked out here certain conflicts. Do we have another slide here? I think we're already near the end. Yes.

So the questions for us and of course also for the board is how to resolve these conflicts with the board and the other SOs and ACs. The focus of this meeting has been intended to be policy topics. And having people to drop out of – in and out of policy meetings or working group meetings to be able to attend with other meetings that are going on in parallel is of course not ideal. So the question is how can we as a GNSO ensure that the policy topic that we're

dealing with will be adequately dealt with in this short time span that we have available if there's also parallel meetings going on that do not directly involve policy development.

Meeting B is now quite soon happening right around the corner so to say. So preparation really needs to focus on engaging with the other groups and getting rid of the conflicts to make sure that smooth operation is possible. Otherwise, I foresee that it will be very difficult for the GNSO to achieve its goals during that meeting.

Further question is if the pilot project that has been going on for quite a while now where working groups that are ongoing have this face to face meeting day prior to the ICANN meeting can continue? The current work plan does not foresee this, however it has been perceived as a very valuable method to speed up the process of – and many PDPs that have taken the opportunity to have this extra day in front of the meeting. So that's the discussion that we should have with the meeting planning staff as well is whether to continue this project or abandon it at least for the second meeting.

The outreach activities needs to be coordinated of course. This of – also has not had any concrete planning yet and this can be summarized in the final question is how can we be ready for ICANN 56? There's still a lot of work to be done and there is little time. And we would welcome your input into this – into the thinking of this and what your thinking on the problems that we're facing is how to best resolve that so that we can reach out as soon as possible and try to figure this out. Obviously having another 12 months waiting period for reactions is not sufficient so we need to get this done quickly.

James, back to you.

James Bladel: Thanks, Volker. Okay so we've got some questions I think beginning with Tony.

Tony Harris: Yes, thanks for that presentation. I was trying to follow it as fast as I could with each slide but it's not clear to me will there be a Council meeting there? And will we have the Saturday and Sunday Council sessions as we're having here?

Volker Greimann: The Council meeting – there will be a brief Council meeting I think on Day 2 which is a prep session. And at the end? Okay, and there will not be the weekend session. This has been confirmed again and again by meeting planning staff that this will not happen in the former shape that we've known because it simply breaks the planning of having a short meeting.

James Bladel: I think Marika wants to respond to that. Go ahead, Marika.

Marika Konings: Maybe just to expand on that because one of the conversations that the drafting team had as well is to consider what kind of updates could, for example, be done prior to the meeting. Can some of these working group updates be done in the week leading up to the meeting so we don't need to spend time on it on the ground or actually focus the sessions on the ground on questions and discussions instead of more updates.

So I mean, I think indeed as a result the weekend session would be compressed I think into half a day basically. Again, with the understanding that the focus would be on policy development so we wouldn't have updates on, you know, finance or other issues that are not considered policy as such. And then indeed the last day would have a formal Council meeting as we currently have on the Wednesday where any decisions or votes are taken per I think our usual schedule.

James Bladel: Thanks, Tony. A quick follow up?

Tony Harris: Okay, I have another question. On Monday I saw a big emphasis on outreach. How does that vary from what we do normally? I mean, if it's – this is going to be in Finland it's going to be outreach to who, to the Finnish community or could you enlighten me on that?

Volker Greimann: Indeed it's a very good question. Originally the planning was to have an outreach session to the local community and have those be meetings in those hard to reach spots where usually we would not be able to hold a full meeting because of the size requirements. Now with the meeting being moved to a different location, almost let it slip again…

James Bladel: Allegedly.

Volker Greimann: Which allegedly is in Northern Europe, the original thinking on that has to change. There has to be at least in my view a different perspective on what we're trying to achieve with that day. And if we cannot achieve what we originally intended to achieve and do not have another use for that day we might reallocate that day. But as time is very short now and the board has only come to us with their planning two weeks ago, yeah, something like that, yeah, we are very much in the scramble now to figure out how to make this work.

James Bladel: Thanks. And just on that point, this is a topic for our discussion with the board tomorrow. Phil.

Phil Corwin: Yes, can we have the slide that showed Day 1, which Tony alluded to. Yeah, okay we've – so on Day 1 we've got an intro session, which I guess is GNSO 101 for people unfamiliar with it. Then the stakeholder groups and constituencies have their sessions. Then we have – then they have an open house. And then there's open houses on the PDP. I mean, there's an awful lot of kind of, you know, welcome to ICANN, ICANN 101 stuff on the first day, which is nice and if we're going to be in – wherever we're going to be, it's not going to be in Panama, if it was Panama it would have been for the Central and South American communities; if it's in Northern Europe it's going to be for the Scandinavian community if rumors are true.

But I think while we need some time for the stakeholders I just don't see on this schedule with the very limited time for Council on the second day and then the only time the Council gets together again is for a few hours on the final day,

how we – I mean, we do important work on these weekend sessions. We've been told flat out they're not going to fund us to come in early to do that work.

I think we need to have some serious discussions about how we're going to restructure this to give the stakeholders groups and constituencies ample time and have maybe a one hour welcome to ICANN for the local community but get our work done. Otherwise we're talking about this Council only really having two working face to face sessions per year because we just can't get the important work done that we get done in these weekend meetings done in the amount of time that's currently allocated on this schedule, not that I can see. Thank you.

Volker Greimann: Thanks, Phil. And we also have to bear in mind that when you say the GNSO on this slide it does not mean just the Council, it means the entire GNSO so this also means the outreach of the working groups, the outreach of the different parts of the jurisdiction introducing themselves, having their talks, having their internal discussions on all these four days.

So this is the Council, this is the stakeholder groups, this is all of the GNSO. This is very tall order to shorten what we had before this entire week of meetings into four days. And with the added complications of the new board planning I – frankly I personally see this as a very daunting task bordering on the impossible.

James Bladel: Thanks.

Phil Corwin: Just a quick follow up. I mean, I think you have two things in conflict here. The – if the plan was to focus on working in the our days it's in conflict with a lot of sessions that seem to be educating newcomers to ICANN about ICANN, whereas I believe the best way for them to learn about ICANN is to watch them actually do the work, watch us do the work. Thank you.

James Bladel: Thank you. And got quite a queue building up here so I would ask if we could be as brief as possible. Olivier.

Olivier Crépin-LeBlond: Thanks, James. Olivier Crépin-LeBlond, ALAC liaison. Two points. First, looking at Day 2 if we can go to that, there appears to have been no coordination between the different parts of ICANN. And you can see that the GAC has got a cross community town hall meeting day but every other community in ICANN is busy doing their own thing so the GAC will be cross community doing things with itself. So that's one of the things that needs to be worked out somehow.

The other thing is there was a discussion on this yesterday in the SO AC SG C RALO chairs' meeting, which turns out to be probably more people than sitting in this room at the moment now. But there was a mention of a B+ meeting with an additional day before the whole start. This morning the At Large leadership team had a post-discussion discussion. And we really have a problem with the four day week where one day is used by outreach, which means it reduces it to a three day week.

And exactly the same way as what Phil was saying, we wouldn't have enough time to work on our own work. So we would really be insisting on a B+ type meeting. And I think that having the option – the SOs and ACs being able to have the option of having a B+ or a B meeting so four days or five days would really help. That's it. Thank you.

James Bladel: Thank you, Olivier. And that was a topic that came up yesterday as well this idea of an optional fifth day. But next up was David, you had your flag up and then put it down so we're good? I think your question I think was also asked by Tony. Okay so next up is Michele.

Michele Neylon: Thanks, James. Michele for records and what have you. Yeah, I was also at the meeting yesterday where we did spend quite a bit of time discussing the options around this. I mean, the outreach segments, nice idea but there's probably plenty of ways to do outreach in nice big air quotes, without kind of screwing up the actual policy work. You know, a day has 24 hours, there's no

reason why you can't have outreach in, I don't know, you've got your morning session, you've got your evening thing, you can do something at lunch time.

It doesn't have to be the entire bloody day. I have no problem with the concept of outreach. But this just kind of outreach for the sake of it just doesn't seem to be particularly functional as a concept. And the other thing as well, just repeating what I and a couple other people said yesterday during that meeting, being able to hold those PTP-specific full day type things, which is not a meeting for the entire community, it's something that could be supported with minimal infrastructure.

I mean, unfortunately it means poor Marika it means she gets dragged in early but, you know, apart from that. You don't need to have absolutely everything and all singing and all dancing in order to put, you know, one or two groups of 20 or 30 people in a couple of rooms in some kind of hotel or conference center so we can actually get stuff done in a much more economical and sane fashion. That I think is something that people need to remember. I mean, ICANN ultimately is a policy body, not an outreach body.

James Bladel: Very quick.

((Crosstalk))

Olivier Crépin-LeBlond: Yeah, Olivier speaking. For the record, the ALAC would support this.

James Bladel: Thank you. And next in the queue is Marilia.

Marilia Maciel: Thank you, James. Actually my question is not related to GNSO calendar, I'm just taking the opportunity of having Volker sitting in front of me and he's the most knowledgeable person on the schedule of Meeting B that I know. I just would like to take back to my constituency they asked me if there will be space and which kind of space will be meeting B with regards to the meetings that we normally hold in ICANN such as one on public interest, that is going to take

place on Monday, another one on the Cross Community Working Party on ICANN and Human Rights.

I mean, where are you envisioning that these kind of meetings could take place in the schedule, would there a preferable day that we could aim at? If you can just give me some guidance people in NCSG would appreciate, thanks.

Volker Greimann: Yes, thank you. And, Marika, correct me if I'm wrong but this time there is absolutely no space for such activities unless you hold them after seven o'clock in the evening over dinner or before eight o'clock in the morning over breakfast. Marika.

James Bladel: Marika.

Marika Konings: Yeah and if I can add to that. I said before the way I think the drafting team has defined policy development or focus on policy is those policies that are efforts that are chartered by SOs and ACs and we've noticed as well now and it creates a lot of conflict in the current schedule already that there are a lot of stakeholder group and constituency meetings that, you know, undoubtedly are very important and interesting topics but not necessarily related to work that has been chartered by SOs and ACs.

So with a four-day meeting I think the drafting team agreed that, you know, the focus should really be on policy topics that are actively under consideration or discussion through GNSO Council chartered initiatives.

James Bladel: Okay thank you. I'm going to go with…

Marilia Maciel: Quick follow up question. Just a quick follow up.

James Bladel: Very quick please.

Marilia Maciel: Okay thank you. So the cross community working groups which are chartered would have a space so we would have a meeting of the Cross Community

Working Group on Internet Governance, for instance. But one that is not chartered such as the cross community working party then would not be on the schedule, is that it? Did I understand?

Marika Konings: I think even – this is Marika. I think even the conversation could be had which cross community working groups are actually focusing on policy and how do we define policy. But again, my understanding is indeed it's for those efforts that have been chartered by SOs and ACs. But it would be for the community then to discuss which of those efforts need time for face to face interaction at a meeting which would benefit the most from it noting that there's limited time available.

Volker Greimann: Also, if you look at the schedule, I'm just following up on that. Could you go to Day 3 please? Day 3 is the only day that has, for the GNSO at least, specialized slots for PDP working group meetings. The others are prep sessions or reporting sessions on the other days. So you have these three slots where you can hold PDP working group meetings. Now considering that there is more than three PDP working groups going on at the same time and people may be in situations where they're on more than one of those working group meetings, that already creates conflicts.

But this is the time that has been allocated for the actual policy work in this schedule. The only time that has been available. So we're already working with a very limited time here. And these resources are already stretched thin as it is so I'm not sure how adding more to that would make even any sense to – if we want to have any meaningful work going on.

James Bladel: Donna.

Donna Austin: Thanks, James. Donna Austin. So this I was part of the Meeting Strategy Working Group. And I've have to say that the schedule that I'm looking at now doesn't necessarily reflect what we had in mind I think when we were doing our thinking around this. Just an observation, registries and registrars will be participating in the global domains division summit in Amsterdam between 17

and 19 May. I'm not sure this meeting will be in June – I'm not sure of the date. So within a month there would be Meeting B in whatever location.

I don't know that it's clear. We certainly haven't had a conversation within the Registry Stakeholder Group about what kind of participation we would have at Meeting B given that there's the GDD summit is, you know, maybe a month beforehand. So it is possible that representation from the Registry Stakeholder Group will be significantly less going into Meeting B because the focus is supposed to be on policy and I think there's a lot of people from both the Registry and Registrar side that attend these meetings that don't necessarily sit in these rooms associated with policy related issues.

So I think just an observation I'm not sure how it would work for the other groups as well but representation from those two groups might be less going into Meeting B.

James Bladel: Thanks, Donna. Klaus.

Klaus Stoll: Klaus Stoll, NPOC and NCSG. I would like to come back to outreach. I don't – we should avoid the concept of outreach as come to Jesus type events happening somewhere. Outreach is a process. Outreach is a long thing which then culminates in people we are reaching actually going to the ICANN meeting itself. I think really we should communicate to ICANN staff that we don't need single events in a region which basically also has no impact but we need a long term outreach effort in regions and globally and that we don't need to waste times and days in single events. Thank you.

James Bladel: Okay thank you, Klaus. And it looks like the queue is clear. So a spirited discussions on that. First of all, thank you, Volker. I know you put a lot of work into this only to watch it kind of start to unravel a little bit at the end or at least bump into more conflicts as we started to see what some of the other SOs and ACs and the board were planning for this meeting structure. And probably seemed like a simple task at the beginning but it certainly isn't turning out that way.

It seems like there's a good deal of concern here as well as in ALAC, Olivier, I don't mean to speak for your group, but that certainly seemed to be my takeaway from the discussion yesterday that this is – this is a very – working in this constraint is going to be a challenge.

So this is a discussion that we can have and continue with our session with the board but also I think as part of our outreach with other SOs and ACs as we go on to – on this topic. So but we have, as you noted, limited time.