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ICANN71 | Virtual Policy Forum – ccNSO: ccTLD-related Board Members Questions and Answer Session  
Tuesday, June 15, 2021 – 12:30 to 14:00 CEST

KIM CARLSON: Hi, everyone. Welcome to the Q&A with the ccNSO related board members. My name is Kim Carlson, and along with Kathy Schnitt, we are the remote participation managers today. Please note that this session is being recorded and follows the ICANN Expected Standards of Behavior.

During this session, questions and comments submitted in chat will only be read aloud if put in the proper format, as Kathy is noting in chat. If you would like to ask your question or make your comment verbally, please raise your hand. When called upon, kindly unmute your microphone and take the floor. Please state your name for the record and speak clearly at a reasonable pace. Mute your microphones when you are done speaking.

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And with that, I will hand the call over to our session moderator, Dr. Pablo Rodriguez, our vice chair of the ccNSO Council.

PABLO RODRIGUEZ: Thank you so much, Kim, and thank you all for participating with us this morning. It is such a pleasure to see our ccNSO Board of Directors as

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well as the Chair, Maarten. All of you, welcome. Welcome. It is great to see you all.

This morning we have several questions that we would like to put on the table and to have a friendly discussion regarding how do you guys see certain topics which are of interest. As a matter of fact, before we began this session, we were discussing about past ICANN meetings and future ICANN meetings. With that, I would like to put on the table the following question.

What are the biggest challenges you foresee with the concept of a hybrid meeting? Especially the risk of creating a meeting dominated by North American in-person participants in the Seattle venue for ICANN72. Any one of you are welcome to.

PATRICIO POBLETE:

If I may comment first, Pablo, the format of the coming meeting is something that the Board is going to think very carefully about and have to make a hard decision in July. We all know since we, board members, come from many different places in the world, the realities are very, very different. In the countries where the pandemic is almost over, while others it is worse at this very time.

I happen to live in a country that has a very high rate of vaccination, but still our numbers are very worrisome. So we'll have to take into account that all are different backgrounds and the backgrounds that the community comes from to try to make the best decision.

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First and foremost, for every one of us, the health and safety of everyone involved, all the community, all the staff that has to work and that's one of the first things that we have to consider.

But also, as you say, the equal opportunities of participating are also very important. We all miss face-to-face meetings, particularly because of the human interaction. Small talks and coffee breaks and going for drinks afterwards. That's where you really get to know the people and they change their views and get to understand how the other people think and feel. That, we're missing a lot of. That's why many of us are eager to go back to face-to-face format, but we'll have to consider everything before making that decision and decide what the format will be.

Nobody wants to be left out of where decisions are being made, for instance, and we have to be very aware of that when we make the decision. I think my colleagues will be able to add a lot more to what I just said.

PABLO RODRIGUEZ:

Thank you, Patricio. Yes. I would like to hear the voices of the others—Nigel, Maarten, Lito. Please, go ahead.

NIGEL ROBERTS:

First of all, I echo everything that Patricio says. Secondly, we do want to get back to face-to-face meetings as soon as it's safe to do so. But the counter balance to that is we will not go back to face-to-face meetings until it is safe to do so and the path probably is going to include hybrid

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meetings and that's going to present all sorts of interesting challenges that neither the Board nor the community will have thought of at this point in time. We will have to deal with those as we evolve towards eventually getting back to where we always want to be which is just normal business as usual.

PABLO RODRIGUEZ: Thank you, Nigel. Thank you. Anyone else, Maarten, Lito?

LITO IBARRA: Pablo, if I may.

PABLO RODRIGUEZ: Please.

LITO IBARRA: Thank you. I would also like to add to what my colleagues have stated, that there are new challenges. I'm referring to if we have an online meeting such as this one or a hybrid meeting, still the time zone will play a role. And besides the usual known challenges such as the language for us, for instance in Latin America and other parts of the world, the language barriers, there are also now time barriers in the sense that to participate in a session within an ICANN meeting, you have to stay awake or wake up early or whatever, depending on your time zone. That doesn't happen when we go face-to-face because we are all in the same time zone. Still, there is this challenge but not in the amount that we are facing it now.

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Also, things that have been mentioned, like the rules or the regulations that exist in the host country or even in our own countries when we come back from the meeting if we travel. For instance, quarantines or vaccination proofs or tests. Those are other challenges nowadays for our meetings.

PABLO RODRIGUEZ: Thank you so much, Lito. Please, Becky.

BECKY BURR: We also have the challenge of dogs squeaking toys in the background. That's one particular challenge this morning. I just want to say a couple of things. We have learned a lot over the past year and a half. I think that the translation and the transcript technology that's been put in place is one area where we've learned a lot and come a long way in terms of that.

So, when we do go, I think it's undoubtedly true that for a while the meetings will be hybrid, but they will be benefitted by the learnings that we've had.

And then just to finally say that the results of the poll are up and people are concerned about the difficulties for some folks to travel and the problem of one geography being benefitted, [it having ease.] People are concerned about that.

But on the whole, people are also anxious to get back to face-to-face meetings as well.

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PABLO RODRIGUEZ:

Thank you. Thank you very much. Indeed. And this is a very personal comment that I'm going to make. It is my opinion that the reality for all of us is that the uniqueness of our organization challenges us with a number of things that are difficult to manage, which is time zones, technology. Not everyone has access to the same technologies. Not everyone has the best connectivity. Online participation. It is a challenge, pandemic or not.

So, face-to-face meetings facilitate a number of transactional exchanges of information which are based on body language and we can see what concerns, what bothers, and so on. So, without a doubt it is important to come back and it is important to continue to find way to include as many people as we can. Any other comments?

PATRICIO POBLETE:

Pablo, if I may add something to what you are saying. Yeah. We've learned a lot and if we compare the situation to what we have at the beginning, it's way better. Even more, if we compared the situation to what we had before the pandemic because remote participation existed before. We tend to forget that. But it didn't really work for many people. People trying to participate remotely often felt left out. If they could squeeze one question read by the staff, that was great, but otherwise it was just a spectator sport.

When we go back to having some sort of face-to-face meetings, it will be hybrid, as you all say for a while. I think one of the changes that we

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should see is that remote participants should be first-class citizens. We should be able to keep track like we are doing now. When some of our colleagues are physically here, they are some place, but if some of us have to stay at home, then we should feel that at least in the sessions— I’m not talking about the coffee breaks and that, but at least in the sessions we should feel like we have every right to participate as everybody else.

PABLO RODRIGUEZ: Indeed. I agree. I’ve seen how people have evolved and become more familiar and have this new friendly attitude towards participating online. So I guess, yeah, we are going to see all of that taking place, absolutely. Are there any other comments regarding this question?

ALEJANDRA REYNOSO: I have one.

LITO IBARRA: I also have one.

PABLO RODRIGUEZ: Alejandra, go ahead.

ALEJANDRA REYNOSO: Thank you. Just a quick question that came up to my mind and I know that maybe it’s not something that you are thinking about, but just out

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of curiosity, are you considering any new tool or technology for these hybrid sessions? And if not, I understand. Thank you.

LITO IBARRA:

I would not go into answering Alejandra’s question because I really don’t know. I mean, we have all been trying new gadgets, new technologies, new tools. For instance, for interacting in brainstorming sessions, for instance, or when we were talking about strategic planning or update to a strategic plan. I’ve seen that effort carried out by several constituencies, several groups, including the Board to try new ways of engaging people.

But I wanted to refer to another topic also, which is in the question there is somehow an implicit concern about having many or more people from a specific region or a specific area interacting in a face-to-face way.

I would like to mention something that I have learned in LACNIC, our RIR for the region, for the Latin America and Caribbean region that maybe is food for thought when we talk about defining policies.

When LACNIC meets—and I think this applies to all RIRs—there is a discussion in the forum face-to-face about policies, but the final decision is not taken there. It is carried out and then there are some periods of time that the interaction goes through email, through the lists.

So, even though people are comfortable speaking in the face-to-face meetings, the final decision is taken later on after people that could not



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participate in the face-to-face meeting have a chance to express their opinion through other media, such as email or public consultation.

So, we do that, but somehow we will have to think about taking into consideration those contributions done in other media, not face-to-face. Maybe we have to think about that a little bit more. Thank you.

PATRICIO POBLETE: If I may add.

PABLO RODRIGUEZ: Please.

PATRICIO POBLETE: ICANN staff are always looking for newer and better ways for us to interact and we are already seeing that in some of the sessions. We could all be having and sitting in on the [immersive] room, for instance. I've seen that in other sessions. There are also other tools that could be considered.

Personally yesterday I had a meeting with my staff in NIC Chile in a Gather.town setup. We were all walking around in our university campus. One of the students made a very detailed plan, so we gathered there. There are many other tools like that that can be considered and we know that the supporting staff is very, very active in that area.

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PABLO RODRIGUEZ:

Thank you, Patricio. I'd like to recognize some of the comments that Becky made in the chat regarding this is an ongoing discussion that will also take place in July, and of course there are a number of other individuals within ICANN Org who are continuously looking for new and improved ways to use remote participation. I remember when it was a new thing to see the surveys when we were doing Zoom. And as you mentioned, Patricio, the separate rooms where we could work together and then come back and so on.

So, in time technology will be catching up to all the new needs and more detailed needs that we have as we continue to participate online. That is great. Are there any other comments regarding Alejandra's question? Any of the other members of the panel?

MAARTEN BOTTERMAN:

I'm not a CC person but I see you invited me on the main screen. But just to remind you all that these developments we do hand in hand with community. Becky gave an example of the survey which is key, but Alejandra also notes the SO/AC leaders where the opinions of the communities come together as well, we have such discussions through and are brought in.

So, one thing for sure, it's not that the Board is going to sit in the top of a hotel somewhere and determine how it's going. It's really about how to serve best the community and how to drive that. I appreciate all the thoughtful comments made by my colleagues and by all [inaudible].

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PABLO RODRIGUEZ: Thanks, Maarten. And you're always welcome in the ccNSO's house. Are there any other comments?

Hearing none and seeing none, I'd like to move on to this other question which has to do with something that we left on the [ink well], in the past meeting in which we were talking about the issues of prioritization. I'd like to know has any progress been made since then? What about the ICANN ... Regarding what the ICANN community is experiencing, and if so, what? Perhaps let me rephrase that again. Has any progress been made on the question of the reviews overload the ICANN community is experiencing?

BECKY BURR: Patricio, are you going to start?

PATRICIO POBLETE: On the matter of prioritization, I'd prefer for you to have the first word.

BECKY BURR: Okay. Thank you for the question. The Board has a caucus on prioritization and planning and the caucus has been working very closely with the planning department that was set up as part of this. So Xavier has expanded his role to include that prioritization and planning.

Our first big important task is to figure out how to do prioritization within the budget, considering all of the recommendations that we have from the numerous reviews from CCT, from SSR2 that are now being considered from ATRT-3 and the like.

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There's a consultation with the community that's underway and I expect that you will hear very soon from Xavier and Becky Nash who is heading up this prioritization work to get input. Then, as part of the rollout of the budget, there will be essentially a pilot for the prioritization work that will be very community driven.

So, we need a bunch of processes and procedures to make sure that we've got community input and that we are prioritizing the budgeting and that the budgeting cycle processes are adjusted to take these things into account. And that will drive a lot of the work that will be done, but I think that as part of this next year fiscal 2022 budget planning we're going to see those rolled out within the community. Sorry, now we have barking dogs. I'm sure that is a Bingo entry.

In terms of the review overload, I think that's something fortunately that ATRT-3 took very seriously and they've given us some very concrete suggestions and the Board is working on that and we're looking for a pilot on the holistic review and hopefully that is going to cut down on the number of reviews and rationalize the review cycle so that we're all not running from one review to another but we have time to actually conduct thoughtful reviews of things that need to be reviewed at the current time and then we have the time to implement the changes that come out of those thoughtful reviews.

The one thing I want to say is it's not just the community who feels overwhelmed by these reviews. Believe me, the Board feels overwhelmed by them as well. This is a really important priority for us.

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PABLO RODRIGUEZ:

Thank you, Becky. Your comments are much appreciated. And as someone who is serving NomCom, I know firsthand all the work that board members do, perform. I understand that 24 hours is not enough in a day to do all the work that you guys do. Thank you for that. Let me take advantage to say that and thank you all for the work that you do.

Are there any other comments, anyone else who would like to comment on this?

DANKO JEVTOVIC:

I would like to add on this. So, thank you to Becky for explaining the prioritization and she leads our effort on that. But I would like to comment from a different point of view because there is work to be done, and we by prioritizing, finding out what has to be done first. But all this work that is on our plate of the Board community mostly has to be done and it's about the number of recommendations and all those community-led initiatives that are coming.

So we need to find a way not only to prioritize, to optimize, but also to increase ICANN's ability to do the work, meaning resources.

For example, since our March meeting, the Board has received SSR-2 recommendations. I believe it is 69 of them. Then we have SubPro. We started operational design phase of SubPro. We have SSAD to implement the GDPR and of course we also received the auction proceeds.

So, for all these major pieces of work, we have a question about funding, about money, but also about the work that needs to be done.

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So, from the funding side, some of these things are simpler, just on the first level. For example, for auction proceeds, there is money in the auction proceeds fund, so this part of the work can be funded for that.

For SubPro, we have the idea of the SubPro is to be self-funded project but we have some money from the previous round that can be used to start the project and return back to this pool of money.

But project, for example, SSAD is significant. So, on one hand, there is money because, as you know, we had significant operation in savings. Some of that money we added to the reserve fund. As we spoke earlier, there was a decision and discussion with the whole community how to put some of the money in the reserve fund to offset the money that was used to implement the new gTLD program and there was a commitment by the ICANN Org to make yearly savings contributions to the reserve fund. So, contributions to the fund are well underway and they're implementing faster than it was originally expected.

Additionally, the Board has made the resolution to add from the current savings, \$10 million, to contribute to the reserve fund. So the current projected level of the reserve fund is \$150 million and that is above the minimum target that is planned costs for the next fiscal year.

But my point is there is money, but we need to find a way how to finance the community-led initiatives and one of the instruments to do that is something we call the SFICR, It's Supplementary Fund for Implementation of Community Recommendations and we plan to put some money in that and to fund from that fund significant initiatives by

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the community—for example, SSAD I see could fit in that role—that are multi-year. But this is about the funding.

But the next question that is incoming and we started early discussions on the Board, with Org, and in our oversight role is who will do the work. So, we will have to see the increase in resources that will be incoming to increase the ability of the ICANN Org to do all the work that is needed. So, in my opinion this is something that is very significant and something that I wanted to bring the attention of the ccNSO that you as the community should be, first of all, well aware but should be very carefully monitoring us, the Board, and the Org how we are doing the work that is coming from the community. So we are doing that in the most transparent and accountable way, but thank you for keeping your eye on us.

PABLO RODRIGUEZ:

Thank you. It is always a pleasure to see you and to be able to have this discussion with you and the rest of all of you. I really appreciate this time to have those discussions.

I possibly misled ... I can see that there is a close relationship between the progress that the Board has made and the issue of prioritization and also regarding the reviews overload. I would like to explore that a little bit further.

How do you see—you, Danko, or any others—how do you see this playing out in the near future and down the line?

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DANKO JEVTOVIC: Well, is your question specific to the reviews or generally about the whole workload?

PABLO RODRIGUEZ: More like on the areas of the reviews overload, and in addition also to the information and ... Reviews overload as well as issues of prioritization. I know those two questions seems to be interrelated. Feel free to go in one direction or the other.

DANKO JEVTOVIC: Well, those questions are of course related but it's mostly about the implementation of the ATRT-3 recommendations and these are the major work because this review has the mandate to look at the whole structure and everything we are doing at the ICANN level.

So, by implementing these recommendations, the idea is that whole systems of reviews will be reengineered and create a process of continuous improvement from the way how organizational reviews have been done.

In my opinion, this is very good initiative because I believe that the system we have so far has helped ICANN mature but it also needs to be adjusted to the current situation.

So, we are working with the ICANN Org to find the best way how to implement them, and of course the challenge is that there are a lot of interconnects with the other areas, like Becky spoke about—the caucus group she leads about prioritization and to find a way how to



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implement the ATRT-3 recommendations and the prioritization. And then to holistically understand the word “holistic”. So, it is a work in progress. I don’t know if anymore ... I see Becky’s hand, maybe.

BECKY BARR:

Yeah. I just want to mention that, working towards that, we have decided to postpone the GNSO review in order to kick off this ATRT-3 work. So, the wheels are turning towards getting the ATRT-3 recommendations fully rolled out already, so we’re not rushing into the review void. We’re really trying to look at how to implement ATRT-3 and that’s where our focus will be.

PABLO RODRIGUEZ:

Thank you, Becky. And it is evident that all of these initiatives need to go hand in hand with a budget that backs it up, so I know that it takes a while to get that alignment of financial budget to back up these initiatives and to see what we are, given the limited resources that the organization has.

Over and over, we continue to see how the organization continues to grow, ICANN continues to grow, and the users—the Internet users—continue to grow and the pandemic has made the use of the Internet more relevant. It’s not just a matter of, well, I like it, it’s like a hobby. And we continue to see the important role that ICANN continues to play and the ccTLDs continue to play.

I would like to ask how do you foresee the work that the various ccTLDs and the relationship with ICANN is going to affect all of these different

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users—Internet users—in the next coming billion users as we continue to be told for 2025? Anyone would like to jump at that?

LITO IBARRA: I can try to answer that.

PABLO RODRIGUEZ: Please, Lito.

LITO IBARRA: But I will start with a comment that I was going to make before, and it is that somehow we are getting more and more tasks or actions to carry out. Of course, the all new budget, they [all need] to be financed. But what I'm talking about is the large, if you will, or the number of recommendations that come out from the reviews that have been made so far. We have those in line, as well as we have coming from other sources, such as WS2—the work stream 2—still from the transition. We need to take ... And we have restarted, if you will, that work with the community.

Also, we are facing in the near future operational design phases, ODPs for SSAD and also SubPro which is the next round.

So, what I am trying to say is we have a lot of work in front of us. Us, as Org, Board, and community of course. And all of those pending actions, if you will, require new ways of approaching them.

So, that is why, for instance, Danko was mentioning the SFICR, which is a new tool—finance tool—that we as a whole have developed to face this new requirements that come. Some of them, like WS2, they have been there for a while and we haven't been able to fully address them until now.

So, that is why the importance of the prioritization work is huge at this point. We need to prioritize all these incoming requirements from different reviews from different community work—cross-community work. And there are more. There will be more because we are, at the same time, working new schemes, new models—governance models. For instance, we all know we are trying to enhance our multi-stakeholder model and we are working on the root server governance model and so on.

So, there are many issues that are claiming to our attention. So, going to what you were asking, Pablo, I think we need that—all constituencies need to be aware of all that work that is in front of us. It is not just for Org or just for the Board, but for everybody in the community to be aware of this.

And for some of them, of course if one of us could participate more productively. But in any case, we all need to be aware of all the changes or recommendations that need to be studied and need to be started if there are changes or actions involved. And that brings us to the prioritization, financing, and discussing with the community all the best outcomes. Thank you.

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PABLO RODRIGUEZ: Thank you so much, Lito.

MAARTEN BOTTERMAN: I'll add a little bit to it. It's basically stepping back a little bit further, right? I mean, we've come into a cadence where there's recommendations coming from the community, more recommendations coming from reviews from policies and we have our processes that took time.

What we see is that we are in a time where change is faster and faster. So, whereas there may have been a time—I don't remember—where it's okay to use a year to plan and start for execution.

All these things feed up the whole SSAD. It's a clear example where we are trying to address GDPR and our legislations coming on. Should we wait until this is ready? No, because new legislation will come on. So we need to address [points] fundamentally. And this is where we need to say and whereas we had processes for community to come with points for action, in the past, in the design, it wasn't so much like, "Well, this one we don't need to do anymore." So that's just the point as well, where we're working on when can we put things to bed that haven't been done but actually we don't need it anymore.

Again, a very good discussion. Appreciate it.

PABLO RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. We appreciate your comments. I'd like to acknowledge Becky's comment, that ICANN Org hasn't grown materially in terms of

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headcount or budget in the past four years and that is a great testament to the kind of work that the organization has been performing in terms of doing more with less personnel and becoming more efficient and effective. So those are exciting news and we all continue to strive to reach those levels of efficiency, so thank you. Thank you very much.

Are there other concerns or ideas that you would like to share with us regarding ongoing work? I'll leave that for all of you. Please, Danko.

DANKO JEVTOVIC:

If I may add briefly just on Becky's comment in the chat. You are recognizing the efficiencies. One of the Board's primary roles is oversight of the corporations and we, of course, take that extremely seriously. But we, at the Board level, really do recognize the efficiencies that have been found in the ICANN. It's on numerous levels.

One of the examples is the IT systems, the number of IT systems that we had four years ago is significantly reduced now, creating substantial savings. We have important and big projects like ITI, the Information Transparency Platform it will be called when it starts. It will enable all of us to have efficient site, multi-language site and to be able to find all these documents.

So, for years, without spending more money, with the headcount, it was not increasing but almost every year a bit below projection for that year, we saw more and more work that has been done. So this is something that the process is something that we really should recognize and thank you, Pablo, for seeing that.

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And that very much connects those next steps that are happening, the prioritization, the new structures for the incoming work and putting that.

So, if you look from the Board's perspective, number of recommendations, number of things that are happening is now larger than ever before. So this is something that is creating those needs to find the [optimum way forward]. So, as I said, thank you for seeing that.

PABLO RODRIGUEZ: Thank you, Danko.

MAARTEN BOTTERMAN: If I can, other concerns I think in general, we have a strategic plan for a reason. We see that things are changing and that we need to continue to address those changes to be able to continue to fulfill our mission. And in general, I think we're following very careful both how the world out there is moving in terms of new legislative initiatives that in different ways and forms may or may not even affect ccTLDs that [inaudible] legislation like the NIS2 discussion. This is not in our hands, but it's important for us to follow those.

Also, that not everybody in the world understands ICANN and how it works, may also have misconceptions of the role of CCs and all that is subject for paying close attention to going forward.

For us to be able to continue to fulfill our mission successfully together, we will need to continue to be seen as good stewards of this space and

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that is key where we all come together. So a lot of work on that and great to see the ccNSO close ranks as much as we can in the full understanding that you don't ... Well, that ccTLDs are different. So, I think if that's a point that you're probably on yourself as well.

PABLO RODRIGUEZ:

Absolutely. That plays a major role. As we continue to explore this subject of prioritization and efforts and efficiencies, I would like to ask, I would like to get some type of reaction regarding the criteria that the Board uses to determine priorities level of efforts against impact.

For example, we use a model that we call the [inaudible] and it has to do with that relationship that goes within your strength and opportunities and what are the results and the aspirations that we are trying to achieve and how much effort and does it involve and how many people are going to be impacted by it. And how do you level that against also urgencies, for example?

LITO IBARRA:

Pablo, if I may. Within the Board caucus on prioritization, we have received several reports from Org and maybe you are all aware that we went into a restructuring org, so we now have, under the same [head]—Xavier Calvez—the planning, budgeting, and risks oversight within the organization, which is good, because we have in the same place with different, under one [head] all these areas which pertain to the prioritization, budgeting, financing, and so on.

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So, I think that, as Becky was mentioning, without having changed the total headcount, I think we have become more effective in the organization due to these changes.

For instance, this group that is working on the prioritization and trying to answer your question, they are looking at, for instance, scope, six areas, like scope which is one of the things that needs to be prioritized, the participants, who will be the participants coming from the community that will take a role in this prioritization process, the frequency that we will be using on prioritizing, how many times—maybe once a year, twice a year, I don't know—this process has to be run.

They have also been looking to techniques, several techniques like the one you mentioned that they are studying and that will be included in the public consultation that is coming out to find out the best scientific or academic or practical, pragmatical way to prioritize the things we have in front of us. They have also been looking at systems and tools for doing this.

And finally, they will run a pilot to test all of these findings or proposals to see what fits better to what we need to do in ICANN.

So, I wanted to mention this because it's very important within our prioritization and finances, processes. Thank you.

PABLO RODRIGUEZ:

Much appreciated, Lito. Thank you so much. Anyone else that would like to share regarding that subject?



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BECKY BURR: I was just going to mention one of the other exercises—and there are many and I know Patricio has some in mind. But one of the other exercises that the Board is using to think more carefully about these issues is the operational design phase process, where we are actually getting—hoping, we just kicked off one—really important information about implementation and the implications of that and feasibility and all of that before we make decisions on policy.

So, the Board is developing new disciplines with respect to its decision making.

PABLO RODRIGUEZ: Thanks. Thank you. Patricio, please.

PATRICIO POBLETO: I wanted to mention something else, because besides the prioritization that we are all working on—community, Org, and Board for the whole of the work that’s being done—the Board itself has to think about its own work and we do that in our workshops. We just had a workshop where we went through the exercise led by Leon, thinking about the Board operational priorities and there we identified five blogs. One has to do with oversight over policy development and cross-community initiatives. Another one has to do with the oversight of ICANN Org. The third blog has to do with strategic and forward thinking. The fourth, with governments and fiduciary responsibilities of the Board. And the fifth and final one has to do with the community engagement and

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external relationships. So, that's another work that I just wanted to mention that has to do more with how the work organizes itself and the work that it has to do.

PABLO RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. I am aware that this is a very intensive process, and unfortunately like Maarten mentioned, we don't have the luxury of time. It's not on our side. So we no longer have those days like decades ago where people—organizations—had years to prepare and coordinate things. Now the pipeline doesn't stop. It's like one thing after the other after the other and it's never enough. So, indeed, we all are under that pressure.

So, what about are there any other topics that you would like to bring to share with us.

PATRICIO POBLETE: Well, there's one thing in my mind, Pablo.

PABLO RODRIGUEZ: Please.

PATRICIO POBLTE: That has to do with my feeling that we could be making a lot better use of all the know-how or all the experiences that we have in the ccTLD community.

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We often tend to think of the gTLD world as very separate from the ccTLD world because they work independently, but since we come all together in this place called ICANN, I think that one way to look at what the ccTLDs bring to the table is what could call genetic diversity.

Each of us is thinking about how to do our work in their own ccTLDs and how to solve the various issues that come up, which often are the same issues that come up at the global level for gTLDs.

I think, for instance, that in the coming ... If and when we have a next round of gTLDs, we'll probably see a much stronger focus on non-ASCII TLDs and that has immediately brings up the issue of universal acceptance, how to make sure that those brand-new TLDs work perfectly for everyone and they will be accepted by email software and whatnot.

Well, there are a number of ccTLDs—IDN ccTLDs that have existed for a number of years and I think it would be useful if they could tell us about their experience with their users and try to make best use of the domains that are registered under their IDN ccTLDs.

There is also the matter of DNS abuse which, in the ICANN community, we're talking a lot about and thinking about. Well, in each of our own ccTLDs, we have to deal with the DNS abuse and we could bring our experiences and share it with everyone. Some of that might be actually useful.

And even when we think about the SSAD will be implemented, which we know it's going to be a huge project. Well, many of our colleagues,

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particularly in Europe, have had to be working under GDPR since its beginning and have had to find ways of letting authorized parties access to non-public data. Well, they could share that experience with us, too. A lot of that might be useful for the whole of the community.

PABLO RODRIGUEZ: Thank you, Patricio. I will definitely circle back and follow-up on some questions and comments, but I would like to acknowledge and recognize Stephen who has been patiently waiting to participate. Stephen, please go ahead.

STEPHEN DEERHAKE: Thank you, Pablo. My question to all the Board members assembled this morning, because the sun has just come up where I am after a long night, how are you guys doing as a Board not seeing each other, not having meetings together, not having breakfast together, not having lunches together to discuss things informally and dinners together to discuss things informally?

Maarten, maybe it's for you as chair to take that one. I don't know. But yeah, I'm curious. I mean, I'm concerned but I'm also hopeful. Thank you.

MAARTEN BOTTERMAN: Thanks for the question, Stephen. Actually, it's after one-and-a-half years, so by now you should see in our actions whether we still manage to keep together and do things that make sense.

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So, I think I am very proud of all the things we can get done together with the community who is facing similar issues, the organization and the Board, and indeed it is a challenge like the community. We are also looking forward to that opportunity where we can meet in one location—one geographic location—and where we can have the side conversations, where we can have the body language signals that somebody is not getting it, or we can ask our colleague, “What was that about again?” without having to go online and things like that.

I think overall we’ve coped quite well and we’ve done extra things. I think we spend more time on ICANN than we have done in previous years. I think we are more flexible in our time.

When we do a workshop, we don’t have three full days but we take about half of that and the other half is happening at different times, so it conflicts with work agendas, day job agendas. Board members have day jobs, too, most of us. It’s in different time zones, which some of you have experienced very vividly this morning, and fortunately my colleague, Akinori, this time has an okay time because it’s not even midnight for him. So, all that is happening.

We’ve had specific social calls every week, now every other week, where some of us come together to have a coffee, to talk about things that matter but not so much about ICANN, about life, getting to know each other better, getting to talk about things. So, how do you deal with that? And things like that.

We’ve had sessions where we focus how do we work best together? How do we get the best possible interaction between us? And even add

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some guidelines that we bottom-up developed in the Board and brace to follow, to help us, to come through this period.

Yes. One of the things we need to learn is don't jump to conclusions, but if you think something is wrong, ask first and make sure it is wrong before you conclude that it's wrong. Things like that. Little things like that. So, we've all learned a lot and I hope we take the things we learned along and of course we take the things we learned along to a new phase where we may have [phases] where at some point we can meet with a large part of the Board but not everybody.

And obviously hoping for that time where, like with the community, everybody is free to join again, because this will help us to do very quick shifts and changes and check-ins. And it will also help us deal better in combining it with our day jobs. So, prioritizing this is an ICANN week, rather than this here is ICANN and other things at the same time.

So, I'm sure any of my colleagues can complement on that from their own experience. But I think you'll recognize a lot of that. And yes, it's been extra work—hard work. We've put in more time than in other years and we've been more flexible and being present at meetings than ever before. So, I hope that gives a little bit of an impression of how we deal with it.

STEPHEN DEERHAKE:

Thank you, Maarten. I appreciate that.

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PABLO RODRIGUEZ:

Absolutely. Thank you so much. Indeed, it does give us a picture—an image—of what’s happening behind the scenes. It’s also an important experience that we are also leaving and finding ways of working cohesively and making sense of everything that has come at us so quickly with the pandemic.

Are there any other questions in the chat that I may have not seen?

LITO IBARRA:

Pablo, while we go into that, I would like to add a little bit to what Maarten had said. We also have a channel—a Skype channel or several Skype channels but I’m referring to one now which is very light and open and we share many personal issues there. I mean, personal, family, cooking, [inaudible]—just like you do with close friends or relatives. We take part on those as we wish and as we have the time to do it. So, that’s another way of team building among us because we build trust in each other. We build knowledge of each other’s sentiments, emotions, because as I said, we share also news from the family or whatever happens. Of course, it’s not an obligation. It’s nothing mandatory there. It’s just that we like to do that as we feel. So, that along with the social calls, and from time to time also within our workshop going into what Alejandra was asking before, using these methodologies or techniques we get to go into separate rooms, sometimes one on one or sometimes groups of four or something like that. So, there are smaller groups within the Board, some of them randomly, so you get with your colleagues. Maybe the final goal is to discuss a serious topic, something that is relevant, but in the meantime

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while we wait for the other colleagues, maybe we can start to talk, to chit-chat about other issues that are not work-related.

So, all of those dynamics, which I'm sure you carry out also in ccNSO, in the Council and all the private meetings because it's natural—it's human. We need to know each other, to share with each other some relevant news, especially the happy ones but also sad ones, we have to share those, and that will get us closer, I think, because we are all human. We all learn that regardless in what part of the world you live or what culture you come from or what language you speak, we all share many, many human nature aspects.

So, that has brought us closer, I will say, during this time. It's true, as Maarten was saying, that we have to devote more time than before the pandemic to ICANN still from your home or maybe your office in your country, but more time. But I think it's worth it because that provides us and that helps us to do a better job in favor of ICANN and ICANN's mission and remit. Thank you.

PABLO RODRIGUEZ:

Thank you, Lito. So, so true what you're mentioning. Our heart goes heavy each time we heard that a particular country that the pandemic was getting more and more difficult to handle, the loss of loved ones. Personally, I have not seen my mother in a year and she lives in New York. It is difficult. It is difficult. Now that some parts of the world are starting to relax a little bit, we will be able to travel but not everyone will be able to do that. And yes, we continue to share that and we continue to experience all of these emotions online.



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I would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge a comment that Javier was making regarding the efforts that are being made in the ccNSO. Thank you to our leaders, our fearless leader Alejandra, who has helped us by developing a few channels—several channels through WhatsApp in order to keep us more aware of what needs to be done, to be on top of things and to be able to share information in a more efficient manner. Thank you for that, because it has made a difference. It certainly has helped me and I am confident it has helped so many others as well.

And that’s the type of thing that we have in common and we know each other for so many years. We transcend beyond a mere working relationship to a more family type of relationship and that is so important.

I see so many faces here, that we’ve known each other 15, 17 years and it seems that it happened yesterday. So, it is a great honor. It is a privilege to be part of this thing called ICANN and this thing called the ccNSO and everything else that happens around it.

Are there any other hands up that I have not seen? Can secretariat or Ali help me out with the chat? Any questions that I have not acknowledged?

ALEJANDRA REYNOSO: Not that I can see so far.

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PABLO RODRIGUEZ: Okay. I see that there are a few recipes are being shared and so on. Please do. It is a real honor, a pleasure, and a privilege to be with all of you here. If there aren't any other questions, I'll be happy to share back some of that time that we all cherish so much now. Is there anything else that you would like to share, any other comments?

NIGEL ROBERTS: I've just got one final thing, Pablo.

PABLO RODRIGUEZ: Please, please, Nigel.

NIGEL ROBERTS: I think other people have said this, but I'm just looking forward and hoping that in some way, shape, or form we shall be meeting in person sooner rather than later. But however long it takes, stay well and stay healthy.

PABLO RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. So much appreciated. And I'm looking forward to seeing you in San Juan hopefully next year. ICANN73. We'll have many, many discussions over mojitos and Cuba libres and pina coladas by the beach and we'll do everything in our power to make sure that you are all well taken care of. You know you're all loved and welcome in Puerto Rico.

That being said, if there aren't any other questions, I will be happy to give some time back to you guys.

MAARTEN BOTTERMAN: Thank you so much.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Take care, everyone.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Have a good one.

**[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]**