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ICANN71 | Virtual Policy Forum - Plenary Session: ICANN’s Multistakeholder Model within the Internet Governance Ecosystem  
Tuesday, June 15, 2021 - 14:30 to 16:00 CEST

BRENDA BREWER: This session will now begin. Please start the recording.

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BRENDA BREWER: Hello and welcome to ICANN71 Plenary Session, ICANN's Multistakeholder Model Within the Internet Governance Ecosystem. My name is Brenda Brewer, and I am the remote participation manager for this session.

[ Phone ringing ]

I apologize.

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And with that, I will turn the floor over to Olivier Crepin-Leblond.

Thank you.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Thank you very much, Brenda! And welcome, everyone, to this fantastic -- hopefully fantastic session that we'll have. My name is Olivier Crepin-Leblond. I'm with the At-Large community. And so we're going to be speaking today about Internet governance. We're going to be speaking about ICANN's multistakeholder model. We're going to be speaking about both. And it's not the first time that we speak about such topics within an ICANN circle.

We had, for quite some time, some face-to-face meetings with Brian Cate taking us through enhancing the multistakeholder model in ICANN.

There was also a Cross-Community Working Group that was, at some point, in place discussing Internet governance. And I would like to recognize especially today Rafik Dammak and Marilyn Cade. Rafik, you might be on the call. Well done. Congratulations

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on your Multistakeholder Excellence Award. And I guess Marilyn is probably watching us from there as well. So congratulations to both of you on that.

So today we're going to be not only looking at one of those two things, we're going to be looking at the two together. Internet governance is a landscape that is never static. It's continually evolving, and ICANN is evolving within that multistakeholder, within that overall ecosystem. And ICANN has to evolve as well.

We've seen that on cases such as the recent -- maybe not so recent GDPR, General Data Protection Regulation, regulation that was put together outside the walls of ICANN has had a deep effect on the way ICANN functions, on the way that ICANN had to work and to produce some changes to its processes and to its regulations and rules, internal rules and so on. And we're likely to see more regulation come our way at some point. We're likely to see some more evolution within ICANN.

So the question, of course, comes as to whether ICANN is ready for this type of challenge that is likely to happen. And not only that, we have seen a year that has exacerbated things because this year, we've now seen that we're not able to meet face to face, and that's a major, major change from the times when we were

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meeting three times a year and could actually beat the topics, discuss things face to face and find quick, fast solutions.

So today's session is going to be dealing with all of that. And I'd like to see -- do we have the slide deck?

Apparently there is a slide deck that we should be able to see.

I certainly can't see it.

There we go. So that's the one.

So we've got four parts to the discussion. I guess we're already deeply into Part 1. Part 1 is the introduction.

We're then going to have esteemed panelists join us from within the ICANN communities but also from outside the ICANN communities, because the view that we sometimes have within the community might not be the same as the view of ICANN and the ICANN community from outside.

We'll have the view from within the ICANN community: How can we do things better in Part 2. The ICANN community and the multistakeholder model. What can we improve? What challenges have we seen recently?

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Part 3, we'll see colleagues from outside our immediate community, some of whom have actually evolved within the community. So they know us pretty well. And we'll be speaking about ICANN within the overall Internet governance ecosystem.

And then the last part of our 90 minutes, we'll hopefully come up with some good conclusions. And we'll have the help from Nigel Hickson from the GAC who will be able to help us out on this one. And I hope that, Nigel, you're taking notes.

Now, joining us today -- let's go into the next slide, please.

Joining us today, we have Rinalia Abdul Rahim from the Internet Society. Rinalia was actually on the ICANN Board a few years ago, so she is pretty knowledgeable, although now considered, perhaps, as someone from outside the community.

James Bladel who needs no introduction. He is from the registrar -- Registrar Stakeholder Group. James, of course, was the chair of the GNSO Council for a number of years.

Jorge Cancio from the Government Advisory Committee, Swiss friend and colleague.

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Claire Craig from the Non-Commercial Users Constituency. And Claire also has years of knowledge and involvement in the GNSO.

Myself, okay. Fair enough.

Jovan Kurbalija from the Diplo Foundation. And Jovan has been extremely active outside of ICANN, perhaps not that active inside. So it will be interesting to gain his feedback and view from his perspective.

Paul McGrady from the Commercial Stakeholders Group. Again, Paul, years of experience on this and it will be interesting to see the perspective from a commercial side of things.

Marita Moll from the At-Large Advisory Committee, the end users in ICANN.

And finally, Jim Prendergast. And I'm sorry, Jim, you're last, but that's the alphabetical order that we have here. From the Registry Stakeholder Group, Jim Prendergast.

So welcome to you all of you for this.

And now we'll turn to the next slide, please, and that will be the - well, Part 1 is done, I guess. We can move swiftly to Part 2.

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Now, there is a thing, though. If you have questions for the panelists for comments, then please type them in the chat. There is also, I think, a Q&A pod, so questions and answers have to go into the Q&A pod, and the chat is for pretty much everything else.

We will only be taking the questions in the Q&A pod because, otherwise, with nearly 400 people on this call, it will be a little messy to have everything mixed together in one channel.

So let's go to the next slide, please, and we'll start with our first -- our first questions, which are somehow just guideline questions and not meant to be answered just as in yes or no or specifically, but more like to bring us towards that discussion that we're hoping to realize during this session today.

The first one is really about how the stakeholder group -- different stakeholder groups that we have here represented by our panelists, how the stakeholder groups participate in ICANN. Every stakeholder group has got its own reasons for participating, and they hope to achieve something that sometimes is aligned but sometimes has a different alignment with the other stakeholder groups. And this is why we meet, and we have discussions between ourselves.



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What are the ICANN's community's expectations of its multistakeholder model? For some its participation. For some its efficiency.

What are the major stumbling blocks? And what is working and what isn't, especially with this whole business of having to work now offline and having to do things fast when really sometimes things take a lot of time to discuss.

Let's start with a couple of people who have indicated they'd be interested in focusing specifically on this question.

And we'll start with Jorge Cancio. Jorge, what is your view from a GAC perspective on this?

JORGE CANCIO:

Okay. Thank you so much, Olivier. And happy to be here. I hope you hear me okay. I'm on my phone, so it's a bit small screen.

But, yeah, from the GAC point of view, although I am speaking in a personal and national capacity, of course, the interest of governments is to represent and feed in the public policy interests and also where there is an intersection with national or international or regional law.

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And as regards what are the stumbling blocks or what is working, what is not working so well, if you look at ICANN from a very high perspective, from 30,000 feet distance, as any rule-setting organization -- you touched upon that -- you have two aspects which are relevant.

On the one side you have the consent, the acceptance of the organization which links back to the idea of legitimacy and in our case of self-governance.

And the second aspect is, of course, the performance, meaning that the organization has to resolve the issues it has at stake in an effective, efficient, and timely manner. Both aspects, of course, are very interconnected.

On the consent or acceptance side, I think that with the ICANN transition and IANA transition and accountability reforms, we have a lot of good self-governing structures and powerful tools, checks and balances which are still being tested but overall give a solid base to the organization.

On the performance side, there are obviously the operations such as the IANA functions, which I think are working. That's undeniable. The DNS remains stable and resilient, as the pandemic has shown.

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However, at other levels -- and you also hinted at that -- especially in the policy layer, we encounter major stumbling blocks. Processes are often perceived and overly complex, slow, formalistic, and, in fact, quite inaccessible to those without the necessary resources in time, human power, money. This lack of accessibility is often more the case for those not represented in direct interests but who represent the public interest at-large, be it, for instance, government representatives or civil society people.

In consequence, questions arise, in my opinion, on whether the processes are effectively inclusive of all interests and whether the outputs appropriately embody public interest considerations.

In addition, there are, of course, also implementation issues which add to the complexity. And at a different level, we have also sometimes witnessed excessively adversarial tones and discussion.

These shortcomings in the performance side, I think, affect the perception about the overall effectiveness of the model and also, to some extent, its acceptance. But this is also something I think we will discuss when seeing the outside perception of ICANN from people not really inside of the operations.

Thank you.

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OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Thanks for this, Jorge. What an opening statement! My goodness. I'm hoping it's going to generate a lot of feedback and discussion among our panelists and among people who are participating today.

You mentioned At-Large for a GAC member. I guess that's something that gets At-Large people to respond very quickly, so I was going to turn over to Marita on that.

The public interest, a lot of things being thrown here and the challenge that we have here with potential adversarial tones.

What do you make of this, Marita?

MARITA MOLL: Thank you, Olivier. Nice to see you twice in one day, and it's only 8:30 in the morning for me.

Yeah, that was a great high-level view from Jorge about ICANN and some of the issues about how we function, how we operate.

Yes, of course, there are adversarial issues, but it's a negotiation process. And that's going to mean adversarial -- that's going to mean different opinions are involved. So we have to learn how to

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compromise and how to negotiate, and that involves talking about trusting each other and not operating in silos and adjusting our culture so that we don't have the -- we don't have the overt adversarial things that, you know, can really tie us down.

I wanted to talk about one of -- the top question there: Why do At-Large members participate in this? And it's certainly not for financial interests. Quite the opposite actually. Usually costs us money. And it's not to extend our professional goals. It's the public interest that drives us. So that's why we're here for 4 billion Internet end users around the world who are affected by some of the things that happen at ICANN, whether they know it or not.

We don't try to represent 4 billion users, but we are talking about some activities that impact 4 billion users, and that's not an impossible task. So we're just being the eyes and ears of the end users. We have an extensive grassroots system for doing that. And we need to be able to talk to people, to receive their input, and then to bring that input to the table.

The end user part of this particular system is an essential part. I want to say that an ICANN multistakeholder system that doesn't include that is like a table without -- with a missing leg.

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So I think that's what I'm going to leave it at and let somebody else take it from there.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Thank you, Marita. And I see Jim Prendergast.

JIM PRENDERGAST: Yeah, thanks, Olivier. Jim Prendergast. I'm participating in the Registry Stakeholder Group, but I'm certainly not speaking on their behalf. But, I mean, I think the answer both for registries and registrars is very simple in why we participate. Even though ICANN doesn't refer to itself as a regulator, what happens at ICANN regulates the businesses of registries and registrars.

So as Marita pointed out, there is a financial interest for participation. I think it goes beyond that as well. I think registries and registrars do want to see a very productive ICANN. They do want to see a very productive multistakeholder model because the alternative, frankly, is a lot worse.

You know, having this experiment run into an ITU or U.N.-type system frankly wouldn't work and wouldn't produce the same kinds of outcomes.

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But, you know, I think -- you know, working together with the community so far, we've been able to chart a path that has led to some really good outcomes and really demonstrated to the world that the multistakeholder model itself can function and can do a good job.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Thanks, Jim. Next is James Bladel.

JAMES BLADEL: Thank you, Olivier, and good morning, everyone. And just to build on Jim's comments, registrars, like registries, are commercial interests, but, you know, I do want to maybe steer away from that a little bit and say that there may have been a time when participating in the DNS as a registry or registrar was like being born on top of a gold mine, but I think those days are past now, and we do now participate on behalf of -- of our customers in support of other business units, like hosting. Most registrars are in hosting or brand protection or business services.

So -- But I think that going to some of the previous comments, we also believe that we represent end users. Maybe it's a different type of end user, but it's a user that wants to express themselves, wants to establish a presence for themselves or their organization

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on the Internet using the DNS, and to participate in the DNS ecosystem.

So I think that, you know, whether we're talking public interest or end users or registrants, I think we're all kind of bringing a different slice or dimension of the perspective of the users of this ecosystem to ICANN.

And I completely agree with Jim, we need -- we need this model to work. We are pursuing our business interests and the interests of our customers, but I think the broader goal is we want to preserve the private sector management of the DNS and not have a patchwork of global regulations and laws. And one of the reasons I think you mentioned GDPR in your introductory remarks is that's been very disruptive and created a lot of uncertainty. It is kind of an opening salvo of national or domestic legislation that is having a ripple effect throughout the global regulatory environment. And, you know, I think it leaves all -- all commercial providers saying, well, what's next? What's coming next from the U.S. or from Canada or from China that we'll have to react to on a similar -- on a similar plane.

So we need this model to work. We need it to be effective. We need to provide some foundation of business certainty so that we can continue to serve our customers, continue to grow. And,



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frankly, to keep the DNS relevant. Technology doesn't wait around for bottlenecks; it works around them. And when we see policies and problems remaining stuck and unsolved, I think the concern and the pressures externally are, you know, what are we going to do to invent around ICANN? And that's something I think that we also fear.

So we also come to participate, I think, for commercial, but we need this model to work and be effective.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Yes, thanks, James. You mention, of course, that this is your bread and butter. This is -- for registrars and registries, this is work, and this is what you derive your livelihood from. You've had --

JAMES BLADEL: Can I --

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: -- disruptive factors. But you've had disruptive factors such as the GDPR, but you have the other disruptive factor which is the global pandemic that has completely changed the way that we work. I mean, can you expand on that? How has this affected

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you? And, you know, is the system still relevant? Is it still as reliable? Has it shown its resilience?

JAMES BLADEL:

Well, I know there are others in the queue, but just to respond. I don't know that I would consider ICANN bread and butter for registries and registrars. I consider it like the kitchen table, I think was the analogy previously, or maybe the kitchen stove. It's where we start to make the meal, but the meal is coming from other ingredients.

I think that the pandemic has been both a blessing and a curse. I mean, obviously we've been positioned very well to help the local economy, particularly small businesses, pivot -- whether it's restaurants or retail or whatever to pivot to an online model as quickly as possible. I think that trend was already, of course, under way, but the pandemic has accelerated it, no question. But we've also seen, I think, some stresses in, you know, how to get schools online, how to get (indiscernible) online. Do (indiscernible) reaching -- how to make -- and I think ICANN.

(Indiscernible) model probably transitions remotely more readily than most, but we're still seeing now the limitations of how far you can take that.

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So that's -- I think it's been a blessing and a curse, and I think that we're testing -- we are coping, we are not...

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: I think that we are -- yeah, I think we have a little problem with your connection.

JAMES BLADEL: Sorry.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Yeah, you dropped. The last sentence. Repeat your last sentence again, please, James. Sorry for this.

JAMES BLADEL: Sorry, I'm on a hotel Wi-Fi. It's a little flaky. I said I think we are coping but not thriving.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Okay. Thanks very much for this.

I'm going to turn to Paul McGrady, actually, to ask also that, you know, how this has really changed the way that you work. Has it been a difficulty? Because ultimately the business -- businesses work in offices and now they don't anymore, or at least in the past

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year they haven't. And so this has been disruptive. Has this really affected your work with ICANN?

PAUL McGRADY:

Thanks, Olivier. So, yes, this is Paul McGrady. And it's a great question, and it sort of is a great transition from the last question -- right? -- because what commercial users want out of all this is predictability. Predictability for businesses, predictability for the end users of those services, right? All businesses now really depend on this model working.

You can't -- you know, it's hard to imagine buying an airline ticket or, you know, interacting with your bank or renting a car or even just having email or the Zoom interactions -- right? -- that have become -- you know, email's basic and Zoom in the last year and a half, and all of its different competitors in the last year and a half basically have allowed the economy to keep going for folks who can do their work from home, that simply the pandemic reaction ten years ago would have been completely different and I think very disruptive for the economy.

So it could not be more important what -- what goes on within the ICANN model. And so that's sort of what -- the perspective that I'm coming at it. But as I look at how specifically the pandemic has affected the multistakeholder model, you know, I've been --

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I've been very happily surprised to see that the work continues. You know, we have PDPs that are getting across the finish line. We have public comments coming in from all quarters on those PDPs. The work's getting done. Things are going to the Board. New PDPs coming through.

And so my initial fear when people started shutting down and moving away is that we would get a bunch of calls to request that we extend all these deadlines for years, the multistakeholder model would slow down even further, and we would basically not be getting done what we need to. But I think it's sort of been the opposite in terms of that. In some respects it's streamlined.

And, frankly, you know, not being quite as exhausted traveling around the globe, you know, and traveling is great. We can meet in the corridors; we can solve problems. We hear that a lot; I say that a lot. But to a certain extent, a year of repose is not necessarily such a bad thing. And maybe that will help us get past the issue that Jorge raised in terms of the tone.

We can certainly have different positions. I think we should have different positions. I don't believe in group think. I believe in university, you know. I believe that this far-flung connection of people, first of all, is amazing just at a personal level and a

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professional level, but the solutions we can bring to the table with all the different point of views are very important.

The one thing that I think we can all work on is our tone. I think we can -- we can negotiate these things out very positively. And perhaps maybe, you know, being -- being remote and not having to face that person, you know, down at the bar in the evening at the conference hotel is making us a little edgier, and maybe we should dial that back a little bit. So good comments from Jorge on that.

But resiliency, I see it. I think that the ICANN multistakeholder model has held up pretty well the last 14, 15 months.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: And you think it's resilient both face to face and online?

PAUL McGRADY: I think -- well, I think face to face has obviously certain advantages, right? It's just easier, when you've disagreed with somebody politely around the table, when you step out in the hallway to really dig in on what their issue is. Because sometimes we talk past each other, but really listening to what everybody this morning has said so far is that everybody has the same goals. Whether it's called public policy, whether it's called

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predictability, whether it's called protecting end users, whether it's called making sure the industry is sane and makes sense for contracted parties, we're all talking about being in the same boat, rowing the same way, right? And so sometimes it's easier to recognize that in person than maybe remotely. But I will say that even though some of those things may be easier in person, they've not broken down entirely. In fact, I think that they've barely broken down, and maybe in some PDPs or some quarters they've improved by being remote.

So I think that, yeah, I'll love it when we can all get back together, don't get me wrong, but I think for what it is and compared to how this would have operated ten years ago, what an amazing time to show the resilience of the technology, the staff, and the volunteers. I think it's been a very -- it's been a silver lining on a very big cloud.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Thank you, Paul.

Jim Prendergast.

JIM PRENDERGAST: Yeah, Olivier, just two quick points. This whole last 18 months or so has given me a new appreciation. I've been fortunate to be

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able to attend ICANN meetings in person for -- over the last ten years, and now where we're all thrust into being remote participants, so to speak, I now have a better understanding of the challenges that people face when they are trying to remote participate. And I think what we need to do as a community going forward is remember those lessons that we've learned and keep them in the front of the mind when we do move to either a hybrid or a, if you will, full in-person meeting, which will never be fully in person. I think it will always be a hybrid going forward because we're always going to have a need to have remote participation.

You know, one of the things that I've seen at the conferences that I've been at is because you're not traveling, you know, you're getting people participating who otherwise wouldn't have been able to, and it's bringing a much, you know, better mix of people to the table, a higher quality of people to the table than if it was just in person, we wouldn't necessarily have -- we wouldn't be able to get.

And, secondly, I've heard this from others that, again, it's something to keep in mind, is that when I used to go to an ICANN meeting it was easy for me to tell my boss, "I'm at an ICANN meeting; leave me alone," but when you're at home and you're doing your day job and you're supposed to be doing your ICANN job, that's two jobs in one and that's a real challenge. And I think



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that's something we do need to note going forward and try to make accommodations on that, whether it be time zones or whatever. But those are two things I think we need to take forward and keep in the front of the mind.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Thanks, Jim.

Jorge.

JORGE CANCIO: Yeah, Thank you, Olivier. Perhaps also related to what Jim was saying now, that we are moving slowly back to a hybrid or to even face-to-face meetings in the midst future, it's important to think about participation, because participation, in the end, is the -- perhaps the highest good in a community like ICANN. Community work, especially policy work, can only happen if there are high degrees of participation. And when do you get participation? When people feel ownership, when they feel they have an impact on what they are doing.

And I fear that the huge complexity of all the processes we have, the lengths of these processes require a set of resources, both financial, in time, in knowledge that is not at the -- at the hands of everybody in the community who would have a stake.

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So I think we have to rethink this really properly and deeply and rethink the complexity of the community processes. It has a lot to do with the complexity of the policy we work out. I think we sometimes try to work out every implementation detail, even in the policy. You just have to compare the 2008 or 2007 gTLD principles with what we have now from the sub pro recommendations, and you will see the huge difference.

And I think on policy, we should really try to keep it simple, lean, and future-proof. Stay at the principal level. And this would also simplify things for those who can participate at that level and have a discussion which really decides upon the really important things.

So that's, I think, one aspect we have to rethink, especially if we want, really, to honor participation levels as a basis for our community work. And of course ICANN, in the end, is only as good as the quality of the participation of the community is.

So I hope we can work on this, especially now that we are shifting to hybrid formats, and leverage the learnings we have from this COVID-19 phase and also from the huge policy developments, like sub pro, we had in the last five years.

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OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Thanks for this, Jorge. And you mentioned participation. I'm going to open the floor for all participants to be able to take part and ask their questions and queue up.

There is only one question in the Q&A at the moment. That probably will be moved to the next part.

But before that, I'll give the floor to Marita Moll.

MARITA MOLL: Thanks. Thanks, Olivier.

I did want to say something about participation and how it's -- how this whole situation with the pandemic has and will probably impact us.

I mean, I think we've done amazingly. We have -- We've basically soldiered through this thing. We have worked around our homes, we've worked around our families and our work, and we're working very, very hard. Things haven't really slowed down. One thing, though, that I think we can't forget is we're losing time in recruiting new members. And this whole year and a half, this is our fourth virtual meeting, all of those people who might have come to the meetings in person, we're not getting them. And I do

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believe that if we have to carry on with this for too long, the social capital that we have built in our face-to-face meetings is going to be eroded.

We -- Many of us know each other now because we've been working here, but to come into this new in an online system, that's a pretty high barrier. So we have to consider that. That's going to be the final impact to the pandemic.

Hopefully we can get together again, soon.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Thanks, Marita.

And so now we'll open the floor to everyone. And I see here a question in the chat from Marc Trachtenberg: Was icann.org's changes to the DNS in response to the GDPR including the temp spec the opening of Pandora's box where ICANN now arguably must comply with any regulations from any country that address the DNS, even if harmful to the DNS or multistakeholder process? If not, when does ICANN pick and choose between which laws it complies with?

Wow. Do we have another hour for this? I'm not sure. This is a big question.

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Who wishes to try and grapple this and grab this? Maybe James?

James Bladel.

JAMES BLADEL:

Yeah, I can take a chance, if you can hear me.

I think it's a good question, Marc, and I think that's the fear is that ICANN will be chasing regulations around the globe.

I think that there was a time, perhaps, when ICANN could maybe synthesize the least common denominator and develop policies that would maybe, if the regulations were the floor, that would stand maybe six inches above the floor and cover all providers and all jurisdictions. But I think the GDPR was probably the opening salvo of a change in that dynamic where we now feel that there are regulations that follow not where the company or the service is being provided but where the user can access the services. And so it forces companies that may be aren't -- you know, aren't normally subject to regulations in a particular jurisdiction to try and chase that.

And then how does ICANN stitch all those together into something that makes sense, particularly when they starting to in different directions? We start to get conflicts of laws all over the place,

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particularly with privacy, but I think you can also see it with things like when we get into conversations about the abuse or spam or cybersecurity type regulations.

So I think that's the challenge, and I think it's what you've -- what you put out here is just the fundamental existential question of ICANN for the next ten years, is can it continue to thread the needle between all these competing jurisdictions and all these different regulations or is it eventually going to just hit a dead-end.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Thank you for this, James.

Any other panelists wishes to mention -- to grapple with this?

I see Paul. Paul McGrady.

PAUL McGRADY: Thanks. Paul McGrady here.

So I think the challenge is not so much trying to pick and choose what laws you'll comply with, that doesn't sound like a good strategy for success, but, rather, getting out ahead of those laws so they're good laws when they happen.

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GDPR, whether you love it or whether you hate it, really could have used one more clause which said, and, oh, by the way, domain name registrant information should be accessible for the following reasons and it should be behind this kind of mechanism to make sure it's not publicly published, whatever the good outcome would have been that the ICANN community is trying to get to in spite of the law, right?

So I don't think it's so much being worried about a bunch of laws coming at you and having to pivot constantly to find some middle ground but rather the real challenge for the multistakeholder community, and to a certain extent ICANN senior staff, and I see ICANN senior staff doing this more and more, which is trying to get out ahead of things. Trying to see what's coming down the pike. Trying to understand it. Trying to help regulators understand the business so that good laws come down that make sense and protect end users from being phished and frauded, but also don't disrupt the domain name registry and registrar industry any more than necessary.

So that, to me, seems like the bigger challenge. It's no easier than pivoting and trying to not get in trouble, but certainly I think long haul will have better outcomes.

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And, you know, the GAC, they're our friends, right? So maybe the GAC, this is an area where they can help with dealing with their own regulators and explaining the industry.

So we have -- we have all elements to bake the cake properly. We just have to decide if, you know, if we're going to go down that path or if we're going to be constantly pivoting. But I'm with James. Constantly pivoting and trying to find the lowest common denominator, that's very 2010 (laughing). You know, I think that being proactive in this space is the future.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: You mentioned the GAC, their friends, they can fix it. It sounds like, "I have a friend in the GAC, and they will fix it." (laughing) No, just kidding. I mean, it's great that we're able to speak and work together in this environment in the way that we do.

There was a hand up earlier from Sebastien Bachollet, but I think something might have happened. He put his hand down. Sebastien, if you wish to speak, maybe staff can promote you. You have to put your hand up. Somehow the magic has to happen.

In the meantime, while this gets worked out, there are some questions in the Q&A pod.



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There is one about how -- well, does big tech participate in the multistakeholder model? And I think I can answer this one. I don't know what you mean -- well, I know what you mean by "big tech." Indeed, I have seen the GAFAs take an active part IN ICANN processes. GAFAs being the Google, Apple -- maybe not Apple, but certainly Google, Facebook have been on many ICANN meetings and are actually part of some of the constituencies of the GNSO.

And then there's a question here to strengthen the ICANN PDP processes based on the multistakeholder model ecosystem, ICANN needs to raise awareness about the ICANN programs within the global community, as global community is one of the prime stakeholders in this ecosystem.

I think we'll keep that question for the second part because that's where we'll see if ICANN is doing enough to reach out, out there. So that's what we'll have.

Now, let's have a look. Sebastien has his hand up again. You have the floor, Sebastien Bachollet.

SEBASTIEN BACHOLLET: Hello, this is Sebastien. I am going to speak in French. Thank you very much.

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Sebastien Bachollet speaking. We heard James talking earlier, and I remember an anecdote 20 years ago when I arrived at the first ICANN meeting, I went to, I met the representative from my ccTLD who explained to me: What do you do here? I represent the end users. And I met a representative from government who said: What are you doing here? And I said I represent the end users and so on and so on, so forth.

I think that everybody should find his own spot, be at his own place. There is a voice for the end user. This is At-Large. This is ALAC. There is something at GNSO. We are all users. But the end users I want to say -- frankly, the end users is At-Large, EURALO in Europe, and ALAC.

Secondly, the debate we heard wants me to emphasize what I have said often these days. In the third review for accountability, ATRT3, for transparency, we have a recommendation to have a holistic review of ICANN. I think that everything we talked about is something that will come into play in a holistic review, holistic review of ICANN.

It was 20 years ago when we did the last global review of ICANN. Thank you very much, Olivier, for organizing this.

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OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Thank you, Sebastien.

This is where the questions get asked. I saw a few answers in the chat and, but thankfully, people came to their senses and moved them over to the main -- to the main Q&A pod. And you can up or down a question on this.

Some of them are being answered live. One of the questions that has been asked was with the delay that is introduced by all the -- by having to work remotely and so on .

James, you did answer this quickly. It was a question from Mason Cole. Do you want to share this with us?

JAMES BLADEL:

Just that I agree with Mason, that we are accumulating a backlog of policies and recommendations that are kind of in a holding pattern or in a pause state.

When Paul and I, for example, were on the council I thought I had a pretty good understanding of how things worked. They went through a PDP. They went to the council for recommendations. They went to the Board for approval.

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And now they kind of seem to get stuck along the way or fall through a crack where then they come back to the council and they go back to the PDP. I didn't even know they could go in reverse.

But I think we're seeing a number of work products that are on hold and some of which -- and I think that's what Mason is alluding to -- have been on hold for so long you have to question whether they're still relevant, if the problem that they were seeking to resolve still exists, or if they are even potentially in conflict with new work that's been started or undertaken.

And so I think this is one of the concerns, you know, I think you hear of contracted parties but just generally on the GNSO about the reluctance to take on new PDPs at this time, just knowing that there's this existing slate of work that is both consuming all existing volunteer resources and also is not really making a lot of progress down the pipeline.

I think that we should probably step out of it a little bit. I'll be blunt here. I promised Olivier, by the way, that I would not get into airing of grievances.

But I do feel like as a community we have fallen in love with process sometimes and we have taken our eye off the ball of

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outcomes. Even imperfect outcomes are better than kind of the status quo and just being in Purgatory.

And with that said, I think that we should take a look at all of these projects and prioritize what needs to be moved through. If something is 90% complete but obsolete and something is 70% complete but pressing need, then maybe we should flip them over and get the volunteer attention on the things that are relevant and meaningful.

And I think also probably put a moratorium on new work until we at least clear some of the backlog.

So that's a personal feeling. I don't know how much support that has amongst registrars or contracted parties. But I do think that we are hitting a point of inflection where we just can't take on any new work and we need to get some of these -- to Paul's point, we need to get more of these over the finish line.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Jeff Neuman in the Q&A asks about incentives to compromise in the multistakeholder model. What are each of one of your incentives to this?

Marita? And then James. But first, Marita Moll.

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MARITA MOLL: Yeah, thank you for that.

I don't think it's a question of naming your incentives. I think if your goal is to make a system work, then you work with your colleagues to find a way to resolve your problems and your incentive is to make the system work.

You don't have a particular incentive. Obviously, you want to do no harm. But I wouldn't say that you have a particular incentive to push this or that particular suggestion. You have to be open-minded certainly and be willing to accept other people's positions. I think that's the key point.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Thanks.

James, then Jovan, and then I'm going to take one question that will take us to the next part.

So James Bladel.

JAMES BLADEL: Yeah. I agree with Marita. I think that negotiation is a tricky dance, but you have to enter into it understanding that -- with a

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commitment to an outcome that maybe is less than ideal but is better than the status quo.

And I think it's important just going into any of these discussions to know that there are some things that are -- some things that are open to discussion and some things that maybe aren't yours to give or aren't yours to concede.

And I think understanding where everyone is coming from, where their red lines are, where their flexibility is and then trying to find those areas of overlap and acknowledging sometimes that maybe aren't there -- maybe -- if I want to have ice cream and somebody else wants to go swimming, well, we can't take ice cream under water in the pool. Sometimes it doesn't work, and maybe that's a scoping issue more than a failure of negotiation. That just means that we kind of didn't start it off with a set of shared framework for expectations.

But I think registries and registrars -- I don't want to speak for registries. Sorry, Jim.

Registrars in particular want this to be a fair, competitive space that has some certainty and then is open to innovation and doesn't kind of squash the ability to develop new products and

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services, particularly given that margins on domain names are so small as to be nonexistent.

So I think that's where they want to see kind of the playing field established.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Jovan Kurbalija.

JOVAN KURBALIJA: Thank you, Olivier. It's great to be today here. I'm just connecting from Geneva where compromise may have the new meaning tomorrow during the Summit between Biden and Putin. And it is regaining some value.

You know that compromise is not particularly popular worldwide for wrong reasons. But what was always amazing, at least for me as an outside observer, that ICANN created some element, some healthy spaces for compromise. I'm sure you will find critical points that it's not always the case, but at least looking from the outside.

And here is the key value-add element for the compromise. It's a question of trade-off. What we learned during the pandemic is a



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constant trade-off, trade-off between closing economy, health measures, all of you -- all of us went through that dynamics.

For that trade-off between different political interests, scientific insights, technical interests, economic interests, you need two things. You need open channel of communication, which is crucial, and respect and space for different opinions, avoiding cancellation culture, which is basically polluting all political and policy spaces. Space for different opinions should be cherished and protected.

I know that ICANN is working a lot on it, but those would be three points: New era for compromise, trade-off as a key aspect of compromising, new understanding of trade-off, and the need to have a channel of communication and protection for different opinions by organization.

Over to you, Olivier.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Thank you, Jovan. And that takes us firmly into part three of this discussion. And that's, of course, looking at ICANN from outside, and there's also a question bridging into this that's currently in the Q&A pod from Fabricio Vayra which asks: How do we evolve the multistakeholder model to build consensus that addresses all

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stakeholders and doesn't advantage what we would call ICANN insiders -- so we have ICANN outsiders; there are insiders. Some say the insiders get their way and outsiders don't -- evolve in a way that breaks the status quo and represents the public interest.

I was going to turn to someone who was an insider and who is now an outsider, I guess, and that's Rinalia.

We've got the questions for part three which says: How does -- how is ICANN multistakeholder model perceived outside of the ICANN community? What role should the ICANN community, Board, and Org play globally with respect to promoting the DNS and its evolution?

And also, what are the downsides and opportunities in ICANN's involvement in the wider multistakeholder model?

So all of these are there. And I think, Rinalia, you've been in, you're out there. You must have an answer to this.

RINALIA ABDUL RAHIM: I have some answers, not all of it.

Thank you, Olivier. Hello, everyone. Rinalia Abdul Rahim speaking. I was reminded to say my name again.

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So it is a pleasure to be back in ICANN space. It has been a while, about -- slightly over three years.

So, first, just a little bit of context on someone from The Internet Society would speak about the multistakeholder model. The Internet Society promotes the multistakeholder approach in general because it is considered to be the best way to make decisions related to the Internet, which as we all know has a very complex ecosystem of actors that include ICANN, ISOC, and other organizations.

What is ideal about the multistakeholder approach is that it fosters the participation of different actors who are fulfilling their respective roles, which is touted by WSIS process, and in particular collaboration among the actors for collective good in relation to the Internet.

So I can see from all the papers that have been shared and prepared for this session that ICANN has made considerable effort to review its multistakeholder model to be more effective.

I haven't fully caught up on all the changes made, but I would be interested to know the lessons learned on what it takes to make the model more effective because I can imagine it would not be easy and it comes, as Jovan said before, with trade-offs.

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I would imagine that quite a number of people outside of ICANN would benefit from knowing this and also would also be interested in the information.

So people who make the effort to understand the ICANN model can see that its multistakeholder approach compared to others is clearly structured. Its processes are open, transparent, and well-mapped out. So to my mind, what is important to people outside of ICANN about its multistakeholder model are three things.

First, that the model enables ICANN to carry out its mission effectively and in a timely manner. And in the earlier session, Jorge had touched on this in terms of performance.

Second, in terms of what's important about the model is that the ICANN model is open and robust in terms of diversity and inclusion. And there's been quite a bit discussion. There are still issues in the system I can see from discussion earlier. And this is where global representation, effective participation despite challenging time zones. And that's really hard, particularly during the pandemic because everyone is participating remotely and you can really feel the pain, you can really share it. And also where transparency and accountability really matter.

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Third thing that's really important for the model is that there are effective mechanisms for addressing capture by specific interests. So if you are from the outside, you're concerned about: Is the model delivering on performance? Is ICANN doing what it's supposed to be doing? And is it timely? And it is more robust in terms of diversity and inclusion?

The worry points for the model are generally the length of time that it takes to reach consensus or make decisions. The process that you have, whether expedited or not, may not be quick enough to react effectively to external pressure points that affect ICANN's remit. And also the second worry point is that you have to trust that the process will yield the right results. This is also about performance.

And for this to happen, you need, as you know, inclusive participation, sufficient level of knowledge across the range of participants, and a fair process. And these variables are not always fully within control.

And the third worry point, the sustainability of the time investment required of global participants and the level of learning that is needed for volunteers to weigh in effectively on each issue on the policy or decision-making agenda. I saw in the chat Goran was flagging there are about 200 or 300

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recommendations from the review process that ICANN is dealing with right now on top of everything else that you are doing. And, you know, how do you deal with that? I'm sure you have been grappling with that for a long time.

So just to cut it short, in sum, I think the ICANN model is perceived as a strong variation of the multistakeholder approach because of its transparency and process and role clarity. But there are performance worry points and expectations about the model that need to be addressed and communicated outside of ICANN to reinforce confidence in the model.

And to answer the question that you had raised, Olivier, earlier in terms of outsider versus insider, what's important is openness and making sure that new people are welcomed and there are sufficient capacity-building initiatives that ease their transition into the ICANN system so that they don't have to be an insider to be able to navigate the system well.

I'll pause there and I'll come back again on the point of what are the adjustments necessary if ICANN was to have a continuing role within the Internet governance ecosystem.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Okay. Thank you, Rinalia. We will come back to you.

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In the meantime, there is a question for you in the chat about the relationship between ICANN and ISOC. So I invite you to quickly type a response on that.

Now, next is Claire who's going to be speaking to us on the same topic, Claire Craig.

CLAIRE CRAIG:

Hi. Hello, good morning, everyone. Well, good morning, good afternoon, good evening, wherever you are. It is still morning here in Trinidad and Tobago.

I am Claire Craig, and I am happy to be here. I agree with everything that Rinalia has said.

But just let me just make a quick comment here about the participation because most likely had this not been a remote virtual session, I may not have been participating today. So the whole -- so we look at some of the disadvantages of the pandemic but, you know, there are some advantages that especially for persons in the --

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Have we lost Claire?

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CLAIRE CRAIG: -- representing -- sorry?

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Claire, sorry, you were breaking up.

CLAIRE CRAIG: Okay. I'm seeing my Internet seems to be unstable.

Let me also -- I'll speak a little slower as well. That tends to help sometimes.

Let me also say that I am supposed to be representing the NCUC, but I am speaking on my own behalf and particularly as someone from the Caribbean and someone from the Global South.

Now, for us, ICANN has done a lot for us in the Caribbean. We have seen especially during the pandemic that there are still opportunities for reaching out and getting -- bringing in, seeking to bring new stakeholders into the model. There has been some capacity-building, particularly with some of the organizations in the region, CaribNOG region that I am a member of, the Caribbean Telecommunications Union which represents the government stakeholders. There have been all kinds of outreach initiatives, Ticanto (phonetic) who deal specifically with businesses. And



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ICANN has been making representation with the regional organizations such as CARICOM and the OECS, which is the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States.

We also have representation on the GAC, although there are two Caribbean countries, Bahamas and Cuba, where they are not represented.

In addition, in the Caribbean, unlike any other region, we have two Internet registries that participate. So we have ARIN and LACNIC. And ICANN has been very much involved in those meetings.

More specifically, ICANN has done the LAC-i Roadshow, which is an ICANN event in the Caribbean, as well as there is a Caribbean working group which engages Caribbean persons who are active in the ICANN multistakeholder environment.

So you can see from that that there has been some support, especially at the national IGF meetings, both financial and direct participation. However, that -- there are specific concerns when it comes to governments in our region, especially, and governments in un- and underdeveloped nations. And some of these issues concern things like we have really small economies. In the Caribbean there are about 43 million persons, 17 countries.

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The cost of travel is high. There's a high cost of telecommunication connectivity. Most of our technology is important.

So there are opportunities for ICANN in this -- in this scenario. And particularly reaching out to our governments, because our governments have specific challenges at this time that they are dealing with. So, therefore, what we would want to recommend is that there may be a need for more closer collaboration with Caribbean government stakeholders at the leadership levels.

And we're not speaking -- We know this is done using the multistakeholder -- or stakeholder engagement managers, but we are speaking more specifically meeting with our prime ministers, meeting with our ministers, permanent secretaries of - - who deal specifically with the digital economy.

So I think that is one of the recommendations that we need and the opportunity for -- for the leadership -- this is where ICANN's leadership can play a major role moving forward.

I have more to say, but I'll leave it at that for now. Thank you very much.

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OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: And just, Claire, because you kind of really touched on the question 2 on this section, which is the role that the community, the Board, and ICANN org should play, which, for you -- when you mention ICANN has to do this, has to reach out, is it the Board? The community? ICANN org? Which one?

CLAIRE CRAIG: The ICANN -- Not the community. The community -- Our community is too small in the Caribbean. We have a really small ICANN community here, so we need to really grow our ICANN community in this region. And I'm sure that holds as well for other un- and underdeveloped nations. So I think it's ICANN org as well as the board that needs to do more work, particularly when it comes to capacity building, particularly when it comes to how do I spend my money.

You know, there are fellowship programs and one of the things, I was going to talk about this later, is equality does not necessarily mean equity. So some of the things that you may want to give to the Caribbean and other underdeveloped nations cannot be the same as what you may want to give to the Global North. It will not work, and we need to look specifically at these areas when we're speaking about this whole multistakeholder model and engaging multistakeholder representatives in an equitable way.

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Thank you.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Thanks for this, Claire. Very insightful. And I certainly see in the chat a lot of positive feedback on what you're saying.

Jovan, we're speaking here about ICANN org, ICANN Board, ICANN community. Of course, we are insiders, so we know the difference.

From outside, what does this look like? How is the multistakeholder model perceived? It's very different from what's in Geneva with civil society, private sector, and government.

JOVAN KURBALIJA: Olivier, you are putting me a lot of trouble that I can get things wrong because I can see people are into nitty-gritties of discussions, and I am from the safe distance that I can be tolerated for all mistakes. But let me tell you how I see ICANN or how I have been seeing ICANN: As an organization which is in analog space to centers of political power, of getting close enough to get the warm but not to get burned. And as we know in the history, ICANN was getting very close to political issues and controversies.

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On the other side of, let's say, that analog space, is to be par far enough definitely not to be burned but you may get cold in the sense that you may not influence political processes or, at least, understand what's going on. And I'm afraid that in this potential matter, ICANN moved more towards this, let's say, cold -- cold part, which was advisable in the context and other issue. But what has been happening recently, especially during the pandemic, is huge shift in the space. And I will be now very specific and concrete.

Harari, who is a big name in the intellectual circles worldwide with "Homo Deus," "Homo Sapiens" and other books, you can find him at many bookshelves, in his interview for Financial Times, he said, literally, one major development during pandemic for him was the success of digital infrastructure. It carried the traffic. It provided, as with a sort of resilience.

If I were in the ICANN side and the ICANN community, I would have invited Harari and with him quite a bit of following to explain what he meant with that. And it is basically, hey, ICANN and all provider of infrastructure, you succeeded. You help us to work, to continue with the work, with the education and with all other aspects. Linked to that is another major shift. Governments got much more powerful during pandemics, governments and tech companies. Governments can decide whether you can travel or

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not travel, what are the zones. They can switch off and on society, basically, as we have been following over the last months. And they got some sort of, I think, justifiable new energy and new dynamism, and they started watching much more closely on digital space. Therefore, governments are back, if they were ever, ever, ever away.

Now, in this context, one government is obviously very important for ICANN. It is U.S. government. If you analyze carefully G7 declaration and the latest documents of last few days, you will see one issue, two basically key messages: One is values, and secondly is public good. ICANN is a provider of public good. And I don't see it enough and in communication of ICANN. By saying, hey, we are providers of public good, through the complex system of registries, registrars, but we are providing the public -- public good. That could resonate with this change in the rhetoric's.

Now, with governments back, with tech companies wanting more regulation because they want to codify their position in the economy, this is a no-brainer in the political economy, they will be pushed for more regulation. It is happening already. With taxation, with data, with eCommerce negotiation, WHO, health, you name it and you have it. I'm afraid that ICANN -- if ICANN is too far on the scale away from the political dynamics, it may lose

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on this development. And the question is how ICANN can get, without getting burned or close to being burned.

One natural space for ICANN, where ICANN invested financially, intellectually, is IGF. And IGF, as you know, that discussion has been going on, has to be reformed either to -- or to go into political irrelevance or to become the place, multistakeholder place which can become, in the loose terms, digital home for humanity. The space which will be multistakeholder where people can address their concerns, which would be inclusive, which will be transparent and informed.

During my work at the panel, in the U.N. High-Level Panel, I was a bit surprised by, let's say, ICANN stance, sometimes they call it, or ICANN community not realizing potentials of securing that outer rim, political rim through the space where ICANN has a say, understanding, and which reflects ICANN philosophy of multistakeholder approach and inclusion. And that was -- that's -- that whole swept of IGF Plus, of strengthen the IGF, more visibility, more inclusion, and as a way to address this inevitable push, which will be coming from governments, tech companies, and others for more policies, norms, and regulation, it's writing on the wall. How to buffer that and to avoid some processes which are not necessarily conducive to the Internet, which are very, very highly intergovernmental. Intergovernmental

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processes will be needed. Let's be -- let's be not naive in that. But for many issues, there is a space to develop this IGF Plus multistakeholder approach.

And the last point, ICANN has to invest in training of so-called boundary spanners. People who can understand different communities, who can translate, to reduce loss in translation, not only from acronyms but also in the way how people conceptualize the political policy, technical issues.

I'll give you the last example. At our courses, many people are asking us, especially after the last cyber crisis, where my traffic is passing by? Is this Zoom connection between you, Olivier, I don't know if you're in France, is it going via Frankfurt? People are asking these questions.

I asked a few friends from technical community to give us, for our course, advice, and I have to admit I was shocked that there is no simple tool that can animate, let's say, communication between five of us, where is it passing. People are asking for it. They're asking it for various reasons, but they're realizing that it is not any more abstract Wi-Fi communication.

By providing these type of answers and creating boundary spanner logic, ICANN can reassure its position, become



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constructive contributor to global debates, and invest in more informed and solid global digital policy-making.

Back to you.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Thanks for this, Jovan. And, my goodness, you've -- that's not just a small thing. You've set us a large package of things to deal with.

It sounds like Jovan has to speak to Goran because Goran has responded in the chat. Goran Marby, of course, responded. For the record, the ICANN does interact, of course, with many governments, and among other evidence you can have a look at the papers that are now produced by the relevant department in ICANN that deal -- that speak about what's happening at the U.N. and the work in different countries. So there is a lot of work going on.

I'm a bit concerned of the time, so because we spoke about governments, we'll have, for short intervention, Jorge Cancio, and then Rinalia Abdul Rahim.

So, Jorge, you have the floor.

JORGE CANCIO:

Thank you, Olivier. And I'll try to be brief. And allow me to speak also from my experience in the wider Internet governance world since 2003. At that time the elephant in the room was ICANN in every and each international discussion about Internet governance. Nowadays, it's no longer -- no longer the case. And I think that's good for ICANN, that's good for us. But ICANN is still an important player in the wider Internet governance field. It's a beacon in multistakeholder decision-making. And of course it has a strategic and operational role for the security and the stability of the DNS.

But in addition, some problems related with the behavior on the Internet trickle down to the ICANN layer when they are not resolved elsewhere. Sometimes this is handy and efficient, like with the GDPR and the protection of trademarks; sometimes it is tricky because it is not so easy to identify the best layer where an intervention has to happen. And we could talk about DNS abuse, for instance. Sometimes some issues discussed in ICANN are at the same time discussed elsewhere because they are multifaceted, like geographic names as top-level domains.

So ICANN has an interest to having its mission and mandate understood very well in other fora and organizations, which may

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take decisions that directly or indirectly affect the DNS layer so that they really know whether ICANN is the best place to do that.

Second, ICANN has also an interest in building and maintaining good collaboration links with those fora and organizations with overlapping portfolios such as WIPO or the ITU and many other places.

And thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, I think that ICANN, because of this trickling down effect, has a general interest in the well functioning of an open, free and stable Internet, which is interoperable and based on the multistakeholder approach where you have efficient and productive multistakeholder fora which deal with these issues before they trickle down to ICANN. Hence, I think it has an important interest in continuing to support such fora and processes which embody an approach -- such approaches, especially, as Jovan said, of course the IGF, and also the Roadmap for Digital Cooperation process which the U.N. Secretary General started last year.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Thank you, Jorge. Next is Rinalia Abdul Rahim.

RINALIA ABDUL RAHIM: Thank you, Olivier. Rinalia speaking.

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So I just wanted to connect with what Claire said earlier about capacity building and what Jovan mentioned about boundary spanners. That's quite interesting. And I want to touch on it in the context of you know what -- what is necessary if ICANN was to have a continuing role within the Internet governance ecosystem. So what I'm about to say actually applies to all parts of the Internet community and not just ICANN.

To have a continuing role in the Internet governance ecosystem, I believe every Internet organization needs to be effective in what it is supposed to be doing based on its respective mission, and there needs to be a continuous effort by all Internet organizations to empower people from all around the world, across technical and policy areas, and this covers the boundary spanners that Jovan was talking about, to contribute to the development of the Internet so that it remains open, interoperable, globally connected, secure, and trustworthy.

As part of the empowerment effort, we have to remember that it's really quite critical to ensure that the next generation of Internet advocates are equipped to champion the Internet, and the Internet Society will collaborate with ICANN in all parts of the Internet community to support the empowerment and capacity-building the of Internet advocates around the world.

Thank you very much.

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OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Thank you, Rinalia. And what you mentioned here actually goes with some of the questions and comments that we've seen in the Q&A pod. There's one from Wisdom Donkor that spoke, of course, about the effect of the pandemic to the participation from the developing world in the ICANN processes. And that, of course, has decreased the participation from the developing world.

There's also one from Syed Iftikhar Shah speaking about the ICANN model to strengthen the ICANN -- the PDP processes based on the multistakeholder ecosystem. ICANN needs to raise awareness about the ICANN programs with the global community.

Now, of course, there's a lot of this going on. But with the lack of travel these days, that might have now suffered somehow at least in some parts of the world because there is no ICANN meeting close to you.

And the question there: What are the ICANN key awareness programs to enhance global community participation in the ICANN PDP process?

Could I perhaps ask staff to respond to this and provide some of the details about the fellowship programs and the various

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programs that are there, including ICANN Learn which is important.

There was also points made about the participation in the Caribbean. Claire, I know that you've been following this. The last time an ICANN CEO was in the Caribbean was quite some time ago. But I guess that the current travel is -- the current pandemic has stopped any ICANN CEO or, indeed, any member of staff from traveling anywhere.

CLAIRE CRAIG:

Sure. But as we said, there are -- we've had global -- we've had virtual meetings, so it's still very possible for the ICANN leadership to participate. And this is what we're asking for, more participation at that level.

Since I have the floor, I just wanted to add one more comment since we're close to -- time is of the essence. And that is the viewpoint of some of the commercial interests in the ICANN multistakeholder model.

What ICANN -- and this is what the entire organization needs to recognize, is that for under and undeveloped nations, volunteering may be very difficult.

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For the Global North, there are persons who are volunteers, but they are actually paid to do that policy work. And for some of us, that is not an option.

So this is an area that we believe that ICANN needs to really assess the positions of some of these volunteers and support the un- and underdeveloped nations in ensuring that we can have more -- again, a more equitable type of representation in the multistakeholder organization. Thanks much.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Thanks very much for this, Claire.

So I'm looking through some of the questions that are still in the pod. They're still coming in fast. Unfortunately, I don't think we'll be able to take all of them.

There's a question here about the recent cyber-attack, cybercriminals, and how can ICANN play a role in countering cyber-attacks. And it speaks about proxy services. Of course, some of this is infrastructure and has nothing to do with the DNS as such.

But there is a lot of work going on about DNS abuse at the moment. Would anyone care to say a few words about this?

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Perhaps a registrar or registry? Have I caught anyone? I can't even see hands. I see James Bladel.

JAMES BLADEL:

Yeah, I can weigh in on that, although perhaps not very usefully. I do think that a lot of that topic of cyber-attacks, cybersecurity generally is outside of the scope of ICANN except as it might intersect with attacks on or originating from -- you know, from DNS. I think there were some examples of attacks that were using algorithmically-generated domain names we've seen in the past that could have been maybe mitigated by blocking or getting out in front of some of the -- some of those algorithms. So that's one potential intersection.

Most of the rest of the question regarding abuse starts to drift into the area of content, which is -- you know, ostensibly outside of the mission of ICANN. However a lot of the participants in ICANN are active in this space. I know my company, for example, has been very active in addressing a lot of the fraud and scams and things like that associated with the pandemic and with some of the political and commercial misinformation that was going on around there.

So it's adjacent -- it's ICANN-adjacent sometimes, it's DNS-adjacent, but it's not at the heart of the policies that we develop.



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But that doesn't necessarily mean we shouldn't have a conversation about understanding what our different roles are and what can be done.

But I think that where -- when we say, "DNS abuse," and I think going back to some of my earlier comments, it's very, very important for us to put some very tight definitions around what we mean by that. I think everyone sees DNS abuse a little differently.

And so -- and I think we've heard previously that launching a PDP of any kind to examine the issue of DNS abuse probably feels premature until we can kind of at least develop a shared vernacular on what we mean when we say, "DNS abuse" and a shared understanding of what the problem is. And I think cyber-attacks, particularly state-sponsored cyber-attacks, probably fall outside the scope of any PDP. Thanks.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Thanks, James.

And I see still Paul and Jovan. I'm going to ask you, gentlemen, to answer very quickly because we still need a two- or three-minutes summary from Nigel after this. So Paul McGrady.

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PAUL McGRADY: Thanks, Olivier. Paul McGrady here.

Real quickly, yes, definitions are very important. But I wanted to bring us back to one thought we had earlier on which is everybody said that they're in it for the end user, right? And so when we talk about DNS abuse, sometimes it may be -- the question is: Was that, in fact, abusive? Did grandma get phished, right? Did somebody get hacked? And is there anything we can do it within the ICANN structure to either mitigate it, keep it from happening, or at least being able to figure out what happened, figure out who did it, and then future proof against it.

So I'm less concerned about always getting bogged down on what DNS abuse is and more looking to -- forward to us basically rallying around what we've already said, which is end users' matter. Thanks.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Thanks, Paul.

Finally, we'll have Jovan Kurbalija. And you've also got a question Anupam Agrawal. If you can answer that in one minute, that would be great.

JOVAN KURBALIJA:

It's moving very fast. But in brief, ICANN's position in cybercrime-related areas on the users' level, people will be asking more and more questions for help. Therefore, somebody has sponsored this question. It's not necessarily ICANN. It's police in the countries. But some of these questions may come to ICANN. And ICANN can introduce and develop its importance in public good organizations.

Second point, one of the areas where most likely Putin and Biden will have some agreement is on cybercrime issues. Therefore, we can expect -- at least based on the negotiating rooms here in Geneva, we can expect some sort of new dynamics on cybercrime issues, whether through the Budapest or through New York or Vienna where the new conventions will be negotiated.

I will just put it on the radar. It will be, I would say, an important development ahead of us.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Thanks, Jovan. You mentioned earlier trade-off is during the pandemic. And the question is: What is the trade-off for ICANN?

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JOVAN KURBALIJA: The trade-off, you have many single trade-offs with the business interests, with the public interests. But ultimate trade-off is trade-off between functionality, fairness, and serving public interests Internet-wide.

It doesn't need to exclude each other. We may have win-win solutions in many of these issues. But there will also be zero-sum discussions as we had experienced in the case of, let's say, .AMAZON. Because don't forget, you are dealing with the most controversial issue of modern era, which is identity. And once you tackle identity, you open a can of worms.

I'm very happy that ICANN stayed away from these controversies. Congratulations to Goran, Board, and everybody else. But it is something which is waiting around sooner or later. And for that one, it's to develop trade-off mechanisms between serving functionally to Internet robustness and also question of public interest and also question of identity.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Thank you, Jovan.

It's, I guess, the end of this session, although we need to wrap up. But I think that Sally Costerton wanted to intervene quickly

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answering one of the points that were made. Sally? We can't hear her.

SALLY COSTERTON: Can you hear me now?

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Now we can hear you.

SALLY COSTERTON: Is that better?

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Welcome.

SALLY COSTERTON: Hi, everybody. Yes. Thank you so much for the great discussion about engagement. And I was very happy to answer here about how effectively the Caribbean engagement has been working for you. And thank you very much for your observations and comments there. Incredibly helpful feedback.

I just wanted to mention that we have -- as Olivier mentioned, for all ICANN community members, whether they are newcomers or not, you have access to ICANN Learn, which is our online

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university. And if you want to go to our Web page or you want to email me, we'll give you instructions about how to sign yourself up, get an ICANN account which you needed to register for this meeting. It's the same account.

And there are now really a wide range of courses, it's in a variety of different languages, right from complete beginners to people who've been in the community for a long time and are learning about new subjects.

So if you have time to do that and participate, we are having fantastic take up. And there are new courses being launched all the time. And I would really -- it's a great form of online capacity-building, and it's been extremely popular.

We have Fellowship programs, which I think most of you are aware of. And we have Fellows here at ICANN71. And also NextGeners, which is the regional program. So NextGeners come from the region where the meeting is happening, and Fellowship is a global program.

These have been amazingly popular, even though the virtual meetings. And I just want to congratulate any newcomers who are on this call because joining a meeting for the first time when

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you can't meet them face-to-face is tough. But there's been tremendous take up and interest.

And I would really encourage community members who are more experienced to reach out, say hi, and welcome these newcomers to our community and think about how you might encourage their interest in areas where you might be looking for new volunteers and new participants.

And if you are -- if you do have volunteer gaps and are looking for extra help, always please feel like you can contact me. And I can put you in touch with part of my team to help you to see where those new potential volunteers and interested parties are, if they're not obvious to you.

So I really just wanted to make that point, Olivier. I hope it's helpful in terms of that crystal point about making sure we don't lose traction with newcomers, which came up earlier in the session, which is so valid. We have to really work hard to make sure we don't do that.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Thank you very much for this, Sally. Very helpful and certainly very complete.

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Now, unfortunately we're running over time already. I've asked Nigel Hickson who is going to summarize on this to take one minute instead of five. Can you do it in one minute, Nigel?

NIGEL HICKSON:

Good afternoon. Of course we can do it in one minute.

So this was the session put together by the ALAC and the GAC. And I think it's shown that the multistakeholder model has to be legitimate, it has to be effective, it has to be inclusive, and it has to be non-adversarial. I can never say that word.

And the good news is that much work has been taken place to make sure that it is effective, that it is legitimate, that it is inclusive. The pandemic enhances the problems and the capacities and the challenges, but ICANN is working through them, through the ICANN community, to ensure that it's inclusive.

We have to make sure that we have the inside and the outside, that we include everyone because hybrid is the model of the future as many people have talked about. We have to be inside the tent and outside the tent. We have to be new and old together.



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This model, if it's effective, if it's legitimate, will be seen from the outside as being something that is inclusive and something to take note of. ICANN will enhance its reputation as part of the technical community, as part of capacity-building if its model is seen to be effective.

We need to get close to the sun, people said, but not too close. And as we go forward together, we can, indeed, take a rightful and a legitimate part in the Internet ecosystem. Thank you, Olivier.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Thank you very much, Nigel.

And you should really go, seriously, into poetry because this just sounded amazing.

Anyway, thank you, everyone. Thanks to all of our panelists. Really, I hope interesting for everyone. I certainly have enjoyed it.

I would like to also thank our interpreters and ICANN staff for having spent the extra five minutes with us and, of course, for having done such a great job today.

And also the program participants -- sorry, the program organizers, the planning team from the GAC and from the rest of

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the community, from the GNSO, the different communities that have taken part in this. They started work over a month ago and now have arrived at the very last minute. So thanks to all of them.

I hope you have all enjoyed this. And, well, although we're a little bit late, I see there's still a lot of people on the call. So have a very good morning, afternoon, evening, or night, wherever you are. But keep on discussing things, and I can see the chat is going crazy. So obviously there's a lot more to discuss with this.

MARITA MOLL: Thanks, Olivier. Thanks for your hosting. That was wonderful.

JORGE CANCIO: Thank you. Bye-bye.

CLAIRE CRAIG: Thanks, everyone, bye. Nice meeting all of you.

Recording stopped.

[ END OF TRANSCRIPT ]