
ICANN76 | CF – ICANN Board Members Welcome Fellows and NextGen Parts
Wednesday, March 15, 2023 – 13:15 to 14:30 CUN

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you. Hello, everyone, and welcome to the session with ICANN board members and the leadership. My name is Siranush Vardanyan, and I will be your remote manager for this session. Please note that this session is being recorded and is governed by the ICANN Expected Standards of Behavior. During the session, questions and comments submitted in the chat will be read aloud if put in a proper form as noted in the chat. For the benefit of other participants, please state your name for the record and speak at a reasonable pace.

It's my great pleasure to introduce today our guests, who, along with their hard schedule here, agreed to meet with ICANN76 fellowship and NextGen program participants. My great pleasure to introduce ICANN chair of the board, Tripti Sinha, and once a fellow, always a fellow, a good friend of the fellowship program, member of the board, Leon Sanchez. And without further ado, I would like to give the floor to our guests for their welcoming speech. Thank you.

TRIPTI SINHA: Thank you very much. First, a very, very warm welcome to all of you. This is both the fellows program as well as the NextGen is a very, very important program at ICANN. This is the venue that we use to reach out to the next generation. And as you know the internet plays a critical role in the lives of the global community. And we need the next generation

Note: The following is the output resulting from transcribing an audio file into a word/text document. Although the transcription is largely accurate, in some cases may be incomplete or inaccurate due to inaudible passages and grammatical corrections. It is posted as an aid to the original audio file, but should not be treated as an authoritative record.

to come in. We need people from different backgrounds in different countries and around the world to participate in ICANN. So I'm absolutely delighted to welcome you here, no matter what your background is. And my advice to you is spend as much time as you can talk to people, imbibing the atmosphere, attend many sessions because they run the gamut. There are all kinds of sessions that are technically focused, that are policy focused, and so on and so forth.

So I'm quite sure you probably know what ICANN is. But just to give you a brief update, it is the institution that manages the databases behind the scenes that operate names and numbers and protocols. And there's policies and procedures that manage those databases. And the policies for the generic TLDs are developed inside the ICANN ecosystem. And it's a multi-stakeholder model, which means that you have people from different walks of life, different constituencies that participate. And you've got the business constituency here, those who have contracts with ICANN. The governments are here. The end users are here. Because you need input from all these various spectrums, including the technical bodies.

So the technical bodies can come in two forms, those who are worried about the security, the stability of the unique identifier systems, and those who run the root server system. So there are various and sundry technical bodies who also participate and weigh in on policy. Because when you develop policy, you use those policies to create new businesses, to generate strings and to delegate strings. So you need to ensure that you have the right set of rules that are globally scalable and can address the needs of operating the internet soundly. So no matter what your background is here, you should find a home here. And no

matter what your skill set, what your motivation is, I encourage you to really thrive in this environment. Attend all the sessions. Get to know each other. Come and talk to people.

There is no bad question, wrong question. Don't feel shy. Reach out to anyone. This is a friendly organization. It's a vibrant organization. So we are absolutely delighted, because we need to bring in the next generation. Because 10, 15, 20 years from now, we turn this over to you, to the next generation to operate and run. So this is also a way to sustain leadership and a community that will continue to participate in what ICANN does and in supporting its mission. So once again, a very warm welcome. Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN:

Thank you, Tripti. Just to give an overview of this group, we have the group of 37 fellows from around the globe. And 33 are in person here, and four are virtual participants. And we have 12 next-geners. Eight of them are in person here, with four of them joining us virtually. So we are truly a hybrid group. But this is a real group of professionals from around the globe and the young students from Latin America and Caribbean. So thank you for your welcome. And Leon, if I may give the floor to you, please.

LEON SANCHEZ:

Thank you very much, Siranush. Thank you, everyone, for having me again here with the fellows. As Siranush said, once a fellow, you're always a fellow. And I'm happy and proud to say that I started in ICANN as a fellow. My first fellowship was in Prague back in 2012. And after

that, I went through my full journey as a fellow, completing three fellowship programs. And then I was selected by the NomCom to be an ALAC member for the Latin American and Caribbean region. And after that, I was very lucky to have people that mentored me and embraced me as part of the group, and guided me and taught me pretty much everything that was into becoming a solid ICANN participant and contributor in different processes.

And I think that the virtue that I have, and that I believe that I still have, is that I was someone who was keen of keeping teachable. I was keen to continue learning. I was happy to ask questions, because I have a firm belief that there are no dumb questions, but instead just dumb people who don't ask the questions that they might have. So feel free to ask any questions, even if you think that it's nothing relevant, even if you think that it's the simplest thing, and you might feel embarrassed of asking the question, because you might feel it's so simple, don't. Please raise your voice, ask questions, ask for guidance.

And I think another idea that you have to keep always in mind is that belonging to the ICANN community and working within the ICANN community to further ICANN's mission is an opportunity to serve a bigger world, a bigger auditorium. It's not just the people that work or are related to ICANN, but instead, again, a wider audience that goes beyond what we have in this meeting. We literally can impact millions and millions of people's everyday lives by even little steps that we take within this community. After I became an ALAC member, I was tasked with co-chairing what we knew as the CCWG. That was the Cross-Community Working Group on ICANN's accountability during the transition back in 2016.

For those of you who weren't around or are not familiar, the transition is what we call what happened when the contract between the NTIA and ICANN ended for its oversight. We used to have oversight by the NTIA, which is a US government agency. And then that contract lapsed, and it concluded the transition. But there were some conditions to that transition. And one of them was having robust mechanisms for accountability. So I was tasked, again, with two other colleagues from other constituencies to co-chair this Cross-Community Working Group. And from there, I was lucky enough to have the support from the ALAC and the At-Large community to be designated as board member coming in from the ALAC. And from there, well, I started my tenure as a board member in 2017.

And I happened to be, I think, the first board member coming from the at-Large community that has been able to be confirmed for a third period. So that will make my tenure last nine years. And this is a first in the at-Large community. So again, I am very happy and very proud. And I think that the formula to that is to keep in mind that when you are in a leadership position, you are there to serve the community. It's a service position. It's something that you dedicate to the community and to, again, furthering ICANN's mission. As long as you have that clear in your mind and you embrace any leadership position, or even not a leadership position, but a position of contribution like any other person within the ICANN community, I am convinced that you will continue to give steps towards being a leader within our community, even if you don't have the title.

And this is something that I told Tripti recently. I truly believe that titles are things that are nice to have, but are definitely not essential to

accomplish your mission and your conviction of serving others. So yes, look for the title if you want it. But the underlying principle that you should be exercising is to serve the community. So with that, Siranush, I will remain for five or 10 minutes. And then I will need to leave.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Yes, thank you, Leon. And I completely agree here. And sometimes we are given numbers that this many fellows are serving in leadership positions, like we have currently ccNSO chair, GAC chair serving our former fellows. We have GNSO council members coming from NextGen and fellowship program. But there are so many who are doing a lot of work in their respective regions by coming here, getting the knowledge, and bringing back to their respective regions. So this is the power behind this. So I would like with this also to welcome our board members who came to join us. Danko Jevtovic is board vice chair, who is sitting next to me. I see Edmon Chung, the board member from Asia Pacific.

I really thank all of you who took this time to come and talk to us. This is an open Q&A session. So we are opening now for the interaction. Please raise your hands if you want to ask questions directly to Tripti, to Leon, to Danko. And I also encourage our virtual participant to pose their questions in the chat. So this is now the time for you to get this opportunity to interact directly with the board members. Who will be the first one to ask the question? Don't be shy, guys. We talked about this during our first day, that fellowship sessions and next-gen sessions are the unique opportunity when you see these people sitting in front of you. In other times, you always see them in other sessions and

running from one session to another. So this is the unique opportunity given to all of us. Yes, Namra, please go ahead.

NAMRA NASEER:

So thank you so much. I don't know if this is directly relevant, but this thought has really been with me for a while. It's about climate change and internet disruption. And we have seen some examples in Turkey, for example. There were earthquakes. There are some other climatic conditions in all around the world in different forms. And that affects internet infrastructure somehow. I don't know how much internet infrastructure is ICANN's concern, the physical part of it, but it does impact ICANN in a way. So is there, or maybe in the future, will there be a consideration, or is this on agenda, that how is climate change impacting internet and its success, its usage, maybe the digital divide also? And what will be ICANN probably doing about it?

TRIPTI SINHA:

So in terms of ICANN's work, does ICANN actually, is it physically involved in laying out the infrastructure of the internet? No, not really, not at all. But when responsible for managing the databases, which of course in the end live in databases and live on machines around the world. Green technologies is certainly a front of mind for just about every country, for every global community is painfully aware of what's happening with climate changes. So there is a concerted effort, I can tell you, in just about every governmental organization around the world, what is happening to the world. You see the ice is melting, temperatures are rising, there's earthquakes and floods, and of course,

that in turn impacts physical infrastructure, which in turn impacts the world.

So I will say this, that I think we are aware of being more green and reducing our carbon footprint. It's a collective global effort. There are, at least from my background, I can tell you that for sure every institution is looking to see what it can do. When you're standing up servers and so forth, you produce a lot of energy and heat, and how can you buy more green technologies? ICANN is also looking to see in its own, because we have -- ICANN has physical compute distributed around the world, and they are looking to see, looking at green technologies, how do we reduce that? Of course, you can reduce your carbon footprint by traveling less, but then everyone's just come out of COVID.

We're excited to be with each other, so there's a balance. But it is on the forefront of everyone's mind, and we just need a global strategy to get where we need to be. I hope that answers your question. By the way, what's your name and where are you from?

NAMRA NASEER:

I'm sorry, I'm Namra Naseer. I'm a second time fellow. I'm from Pakistan.

TRIPTI SINHA:

Okay, welcome.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Namra. And just to make this -- everyone can ask questions, feel that way, I would like to kick off another question for Tripti. Why you took this challenge? Why you become board of chair? And what are the challenges you are facing in your current position?

TRIPTI SINHA: Why did I run for chair? So I'm very committed to the mission of ICANN, and I am fundamentally a technologist and grew up as a technologist. And when you look at the history of humankind, this is probably one of the most enabling inventions in recent history. And as you can tell, without a shadow of doubt, it is bringing the world community together. It's uplifting society. It's making information accessible. And so I'm very committed to its mission. And when I got involved in ICANN, I was like, there's a difference I can make here. And I participated and eventually decided this was a good opportunity to pursue. And I hope I make a difference.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you. We have a question from a remote participant, next-gen participant, Shanelle McPherson. And she would like to ask her question. Shanelle, if you can unmute yourself and ask your question, please.

SHANELLE MCPHERSON: Hello, morning everybody. I hope that you're able to hear me.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Yes.

SHANELLE MCPHERSON: Okay great. My name is Shanelle McPherson. I'm calling in from Jamaica. Well, I have two questions, actually. My first question is that while I believe that the NextGen program is the best place to start to learn about ICANN, I would also like to know what is your recommendations on how it is that we can continue our growth within this organization?

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Sorry, Shanelle. What are the rules of continuing in this organization?

SHANELLE MCPHERSON: No, the question is I'd like to know what are the recommendations that you would consider for us to continue our growth process here at ICANN after or NextGen at ICANN76?

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: This is a great question. And we usually tell to fellows and NextGeners that there are a lot of ways of engagement within ICANN. And the best way to start is from the regional activities, starting to interact with global stakeholder engagement team members. And from there, you also can be a part of a policy development. You can be a part of any working group. You can sign up for the mailing list for different communities. This is based on your sector of interest. Also, there are ways of getting deeper into the community who is dealing with that

particular topic which is interest to you. But we always said one thing. The challenges you may face regionally are very important to us to know.

So your voice matters. Bring your voice to the global discussions. And the challenges you may face in Jamaica may not work for the challenges who people are facing from another part of the world. But the success stories which you can share with others can help other participants from other regions to get the solution of those challenges. So there are many ways of engagement after your NextGen participation. Many NextGeners actually are continuing through the fellowship because they are already capable of knowing about what is ICANN, what is ICANN mission. And they can provide the competitive application for the fellowship program, which is another competitive process and program within ICANN and globally, actually. So there are many ways of integration. Please talk to Deborah. Talk to me after this, we will provide more input on this.

SHANELLE MCPHERSON: Thank you, Siranush. I had another question.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Please go ahead.

SHANELLE MCPHERSON: YThank you for answering the first question. And yesterday, I did a presentation on the impact of cybersecurity on Jamaica's banking system through domain abuse. And one of the abuses that we're

realizing is the spoofing attacks that we are now facing here in Jamaica. I wanted to know, how can I collaborate with ICANN to ensure that our ISPs gets DNS deployed here in our region?

DANKO JEVTOVIC:

So thank you for the question. Danko speaking. So thank you for the question. I think it's very important to find the ways to work together to contain those challenges. I wasn't there for the presentation, but from spoofing attack, I understand what it is about. And the key to responding to those attacks is to have awareness of cybersecurity challenges and good ways to manage those cybersecurity challenges at the layer of banks that you mentioned and also the ISPs. And ICANN has a technical knowledge and a global engagement team that helps organizations with bringing the knowledge with cooperating. So if you look at a mission and remit of ICANN, it's in the identifiers.

In this case, identifiers were used to redirect the traffic. And this is something that goes very much into what we actually do as the system. And we have the knowledge that can help. So I think this is something that we should work together. And Siranush can always help with the proper contacts with the ICANN structures that can help bring this knowledge and maybe organize some sessions that will help the ISPs that you mentioned.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN:

Thank you, Danko. And we have actually here our vice president for Latin America and Caribbean region, Rodrigo De La Parra, who will continue. Please, Rodrigo.

RODRIGO DE LA PARRA: So thank you, Shanelle for the question. I don't want to take more time. Only congratulate you because we know that you have been very well engaged since the very early stages of the process of preparing for this meeting. And your presentations have been really impactful here. Thank you. And you're already very well engaged in this process. And of course, we will be in touch with you, our office of the CTO and my team in GSE. We can help you and provide training to help you to deploy this, Shanelle. Thanks again.

SHANELLE MCPHERSON: Thank you

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Shanelle. Yes, please. Pedro, go ahead.

PEDRO: I actually, something that I miss a bit about the ICANN when compared to other internet governance ecosystems is grassroots projects. So I do not find that many entry points besides NextGen and fellowships projects, which are great. And I also know that this is mostly ALAC work to do this part of engagement. But I would like to know if there's another current or future projects to better develop this engagement at a local level, some other ideas to start creating this possibility to more people engaged in the ICANN ecosystems besides the programs that we have already.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: So if I may take this question, there are several programs we are implementing now. And one of them we're just piloting. It's ICANN for Beginners. It's a virtual program. To help also after the pandemic, we found out that there is a gap in newcomers participation. So this program provides some encouragement for participation and help to understand more about ICANN ecosystem. But definitely there are more regional based events, which you will find out from your regional folks from global stakeholder engagement team, which are here actually. And you will be in touch with them soon. If you would like to add something about the youth activities, which you are doing in .Asia, that would be great as well. Edmon, please.

EDMON CHUNG: Edmon Chung here. So I think beyond the -- first of all, I'm really excited to let everyone know that our, besides serving on the board, I work with .Asia. And .Asia created the first NextGen program that got this started as well. And worked together with ICANN, and now a staple ICANN process. But beyond that, there are also other areas. Like for example, in Asia Pacific, the Asia Pacific ICANN APAC hub works with us and Internet Society on what is called APIGA, Asia Pacific Internet Governance Academy. And within it is actually a model ICANN meeting. They're to engage young people to participate.

And from there, a lot of these programs, actually APIGA is one of them. There are a number of other programs that ICANN org, and also ICANN community organizations are participating across Asia Pacific and other regions as well. From there, what happens usually, as you

understand, it funnels into the fellowship program. So a fellowship program. And then I think there's also one additional program that we're working on, ICANN is working on, which is from the fellowship to get engaged in policy discussion, policy development. That is called the policy pilot? Policy transition pilot. So I think you raise a really good point. And this is building up over the years. And to have a kind of funnel into real participation and contribution into the working groups that Siranush mentioned as well.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Edmon. Indeed. Carolina, please.

CAROLINA AGUERRE: Good afternoon. Thank you. My name is Carolina Aguerre. I'm an NextGen from Brazil. And I'm pursuing my master's degree at the University of Sao Paulo. And my research is focused on decision making process of ICANN. So how different agents are playing in this multi-stakeholder process. And one thing that really interests me is the composition of the working groups, so the representativity of these groups. So I was wondering if there are any research report, any documentation about the diversity of ICANN, not only the staff, but also working groups and advisory committee. I'm trying to figure out which part of ICANN doesn't have a representation, and which does. So in this case, where can we improve? So that's my question, actually. Thank you.

TRIPTI SINHA: So that's a very good question, because diversity of opinion is very important inside of the ICANN community. David Olive's group does capture those statistics. And so you should -- would David be the right person for her to? So I would say, perhaps you can connect her later on. So contact him, and he will get you the right information that you need for your research.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Absolutely. We'll provide you the contacts for the person you need to meet. Who else? Yes, please, Cindynea. I used to say Cinderella.

CINDYNEIA CANTANHEDE: Which is something that makes me really happy. So I'm Cindynea Cantanhede. I'm a fellow from Brazil, and I'm also a data protection lawyer. And I'm currently part of the Policy Transition Program. And something that integrates me about the policy transition is to understand, what are the main challenges to collaborate with ICANN and other institutions? So when it comes to policy, the influential national institutions, or people who are not yet represented at ICANN, how can policy change policy, try to broaden this understanding and try to make collaborative guidelines for that. Is there any priority of discussion on this issue? This is my question.

TRIPTI SINHA: ICANN policy is developed inside the ICANN ecosystem and we've got SOAC, these are different supporting organizations and advisory committees of different constituencies within ICANN and it's a fairly

broad scope of individuals and when policy is developed there's typically representation from all these different entities and if I understand your question correctly you said there's possibly other entities outside of the ecosystem and the best way to do is to pull them or encourage them to come and participate in ICANN, they will find a place to land and then participate in the policy development process but I will turn it over to my colleagues if you'd like to add some more color to this.

DANKO JEVTOVIC:

Danko Jevtovic for the record. So I think it's actually a great question. We used to say this all the time but it is because I think it goes also to the history of ICANN and what I wanted to say also to you fellows and you NextGen, if you look back at how internet started to be, in the beginning it was a technological expression of the idea of freedom, freedom to connect. So technology provided opportunity to computers to connect and some guys in LA invited a method with this packet switching network to connect different computers and they created those protocols and those protocols were the heart of this idea of freedom because they were publicly available, designed to be very simple, designed for everyone to be able to connect.

So that's how the process started and internet exploded out of that because businesses, people, everyone wanted to connect to the internet. So now we have this situation we do have today and we are very passionate about it and thank you for all of you for coming to share that passion with us and bringing it back to the world. But we are coordinating the internet domain system, meaning these IP addresses

and of course domains, so the address book and in a logical sense it's the infrastructure of the internet. And we developed in our ecosystem those bottom-up policies that are applied. But nowadays internet is so important that also governments and the other actors are also very much concerned with the internet.

So we try and we invite them to participate in these processes. But also in a way some of these regulatory things are happening outside of our ecosystem because for example government, they have been elected in most of the countries by their citizen with a remit to take care about the people in their countries. And internet is so important and security is important and everything is connected to that. So the role of the ICANN is this is to continue to support the one internet for this one world we live in, but also to help the others understand these deep technical issues that are enabling internet to work. So we cannot, for example, dictate regulatory policies to specific governments, but we can help them understand the technical consequences and the importance of the internet.

I am coming from a small developing country in Europe and for small countries the internet is the key to the world. Otherwise, we will be under some sort of a digital iron curtain separated from whatever is happening. So it is not only a project for freedom, but also very much a project for us living together on this planet and a project to connect us all. So in that way it is very important that you can go back, share your policy knowledge, your legal knowledge, your understanding of the importance of the internet, work with institutions in your regions, in your countries and help them understand the importance, bring also your issues back to us and so we can all work together. So when we say

this ICANN ecosystem we don't only think about this nice meeting in this, well, a bit windy weather today, but we also think about all those organizations that connect to the internet and work with us together. Thanks.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Danko. I would like to let that ICANN interim president and CEO Sally Costerton joined us here, so if you have questions to Sally, feel free to ask. And meanwhile there was a question from Malut Califf who is ICANN fellow alumni who is asking Tripti probably the question to you. The board has set up a committee to search for a new CEO and president for ICANN org. Is the priority given to candidates from inside or outside of the ICANN community and or internet governance space? Thank you.

TRIPTI SINHA: We have assigned no priority. When the job description is ready anyone in the world who believes they fit the qualifications can apply for the job. This is a worldwide global search and it will go through a process of being evaluated. So let me start from the beginning. So the committee has been established. We are holding a series of listening sessions. Yesterday was the first listening session. The last listening session will commence sometime around ICANN77. Between that there will be numerous listening sessions and there will be a modality to submit any input you would like to provide through a website. The website I believe has been stood up or is being stood up as I speak. And please send in your feedback.

Sometime in the summertime a job description will be ready and it will be posted. We will be hiring a search firm and this is going to be a global search. So there is no priority assigned. The only priority assigned is that you should be a good fit for the job description and then you apply and you will go through a search process. Essentially what a search process does is it winnows down the candidate pool to a viable set of candidates which will then be forwarded to the full board. You go through your vetting process and at the end you come out with someone who will be declared the next CEO of ICANN.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: So when to expect the decision to be made?

TRIPTI SINHA: We're hoping that the decision will be made towards the end of this year, maybe early 2024 depending on how things go.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you very much. And Sally Costerton being the leading the global stakeholder engagement team and leading PRS, public support responsibility support team, where those programs are fit into, so the fellowship and negation are there, she is a continued supporter of those programs. Sally, if you would like to say a couple of words.

SALLY COSTERTON: Thank you, Siranush. And welcome everybody and I hope you are enjoying this meeting. Some of you I know are here not for the first

time, the fellows. Some of you are here, many of you are here for the first time. It's wonderful to see so many of you with us from all over the world. It's exciting. Yes, I've run the stakeholder engagement team at ICANN for many years and worked with Siranush and Deborah and Ergys, who many of you know, specifically on these newcomer programs. And they are a very important part of the work we do at ICANN. And I'm sure my colleagues on the board have probably already said to you, and I'm sorry to join you a bit late for this session, the board has been incredibly supportive of these programs in terms of the kind of resourcing that we need, the funding, but also to help us with the review when we reviewed the fellowship program.

The board was very engaged. The senior staff of ICANN are very engaged. So I want you to know that you're, I was going to say you're very important. You are very important. I don't want you to think that nobody else at ICANN is important, because one of the things that I hope you're learning as you go through these programs is that we use our multi-stakeholder model at ICANN. This is a big learning for you on these programs. It can be a very odd thing, the multi-stakeholder model. It's not -- at ICANN you hear people use this term all the time. We use the multi-stakeholder process, the bottom-up process, the multi-stakeholder model, like it's obvious. I came from the private sector. I spent most of my career in the private sector.

The private sector in my experience is top-down, and it is not particularly multi-stakeholder, I've got to be honest with you. Governments often aren't. So we don't come into ICANN, and it's obvious how this works. And that's before you get into the subject matter of ICANN, the technical remit and the internet governance

issues, how do we bring new, the top-level, the next round of top-level domains. How do all these things fit together? When you're coming to them for the first time, they can seem very strange and alien. So I want to make sure, is that better? I want to make sure that I know that you're learning so much on these programs about these issues, and we will be very committed to supporting you through these programs and into the future.

And the final thing that I would ask, and I know that Siranush and Deborah will have mentioned this, but I will reinforce it. We have engagement teams in each of the regions. We have eight regional engagement heads around the world, and they work in very close coordination with the other partners in our technical ecosystem at a regional level, like the regional internet registries, for example. And you'll meet many of these people at this meeting, but wherever you live in the world, one of those regional engagement teams is available to you.

And I would encourage you strongly, after you leave the program, to reach out to those teams, and Siranush and Deborah can tell you exactly how to do it, and start participating in our work where you live in your regions with your other colleagues in other groups, because that is such an important part of the program. We want, having made this effort with you to bring you online and to involve you, we want you to fulfill your potential on this journey with us. So please do that, and if you have any challenges with that, let Siranush and Deborah know, and we will resolve them for you. Thank you so much for having me, and I'm very happy to take any questions.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Sally. And there is a question actually to you. Setonji, an ICANN76 fellow, he is from France, and his question is for CEO. During the lockdown, we needed to have information on COVID and to continue working remotely, grace the internet. We discovered the head of the World Health Organization, but nothing from ICANN, which plays a significant role. Why?

SALLY COSTERTON: I'm not sure I understand the question. What did we not hear from ICANN?

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: So the question was, like, continue working remotely, grace the internet. I'm not sure if Setonji [ph], if you may provide more clarity, Setonji, on this in English, please. I know it's...

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: I can try to speak English.

SALLY COSTERTON: In French if it's easier.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: I will speak in French slowly. [Foreign language 00:42:29]

SALLY COSTERTON:

We don't have interpretation here. So I'm going to say what I think you said in English, and then you can tell me if I'm right. Let's try that. It's a test. So this is quite a general question. What you're really saying is ICANN was quite quiet about its point of view, its strategy, if you like, about how to work together during the pandemic. Oh, God, my French is better than I thought. So this is a very interesting question. I don't think we really thought we should say anything. I'll be honest with you. I don't think we necessarily thought it was our role. Now, what we did do, and maybe we should have done more open communication, it's good feedback, was we invested a lot of time and money in changing our remote participation tools.

And I think reflecting on what you say, we did that. We told our community we were doing that. Our community used those tools, are still using those tools, and will go on using those tools. But we could perhaps have done more in our communication to tell a more of a story about our opinion. This is a little bit what you're saying. What is our strategy? So thank you for that feedback. When we talk about our tools, thinking about it, we tend to talk about it quite tactically. We talk about it, we're going to this meeting, use this tool, here's the Zoom room. But you're right, I think there's an opportunity to say something that's more philosophical, more long-term. And I'll tell you what we do think, even if we didn't do it before, I'll tell you now.

So we are going to stay hybrid forever. Well, we're not going back to 2019. It's never going to be like that again. And I personally, in this situation, I celebrate that. I tell you why. It has been extremely good for ICANN participation. This might sound strange, but if you don't know, we, on the website, we have an area where we share data about

ICANN participation in meetings. Who comes? Who comes from what country? Are they remote? Are they online? We have a lot of data, and we can share the link with you, and we publish it after every meeting. And after the pandemic, we did a piece of analysis specifically looking at the shift in participation online versus offline, which is what you're talking about, remote tools.

And what we saw, which was surprising but great, is that in some parts of the world, particularly Africa, actually, but not just Africa, we saw an increase in remote participation. And when we explored this, we said, we are getting people coming to our ICANN meetings remotely who never came in person. What is that about? And I just came from the AFRALO meeting, and they were discussing this exact point. They were talking about visas. They said to me, Sally, how can you help us make sure we can get visas to go to Washington? Because the queue for the American visa appointments in many countries is very, very long. But when you go remotely and you participate remotely, you don't have to worry.

I'm not saying nobody should come to ICANN meetings, but there were people coming, many people coming to ICANN meetings, and we still, this meeting, I'm sure you have noticed, you go into the meeting rooms, not in this program, but in many other meetings. We had a panel this morning on the future WSIS+20. Half the presenters were dialing in remotely from all over the world. And it was brilliant. Big screen, great sound. Everybody could hear them. They could be heard. We have translation running automatically. So this meeting, we have 600, 700 people participating remotely, and really well. So thank you for raising

the question, because it's such an important issue about access. People need to be heard.

And as I said in my opening speech, if we don't give people the tools to be heard, they can't be heard. So thank you. And please keep giving us feedback as to how you are finding this process, because when you go back to your countries, you will participate remotely some of the time. So I hope that you will find those tools work for you. Thank you. Thank you for the question.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you. And we actually also have virtual fellows and next-geners for ICANN76. So they are participating with us in all the sessions. Santiago, we'll go to you with the next question.

SANTIAGO FERNÁNDEZ RUIZ: Hello, everyone. Thanks for being here. I'm Santiago from Argentina. I work as head of communications at LACTLD. So I have a two-part question, in a way. First, in previous talks, you have talked about strengthening interdisciplinary work within the organization. And I'm wanting to know what do you guys think communications will play a role in that goal. And the other question, I think you shed some light right now. It was in terms of external communication. If I didn't understand wrong, in one of the sessions, there was a goal of raising awareness or more awareness about ICANN in general beyond the ecosystem. So if you could tell us some of the initiatives you're planning or maybe the works you should be or could be getting in terms of communication, it would be very, very good. Thank you.

SALLY COSTERTON:

Thank you for the question. Well, you're in my comfort zone. That's my specialist subject. I spent many years in communications before I came to ICANN, which there's no reason why you should know that, but I did. So I'm very passionate about it. Answer to your first one. That's an organizational question. So with my interim CEO hat on, I'll answer it with that. You have a communication person as interim CEO. It would be crazy not to take this opportunity to really make our communications functions and our ability to communicate as good as it can possibly be. And in order to do that, we have to be very connected.

I know for many years being like you in communications, doing very much your kind of job, you will tell me, I'm sure, don't bring us in too late. Don't put us in a silo. These are the two risks of treating communications like a kind of separate function that we bring in right at the end of a process and we say, "Hey, can you just go and tell the world that we did this thing?"

We must bring communications in early because they must be allowed to shape not just what we say, but how we say it, who we say it to, what kind of outcome are we looking for? How will we know? And we need to connect inside the organization, everybody that's involved in talking to our external stakeholders with the same tools at the same time. So I'm very committed to doing as much as we can. And it's an ongoing process because we have a global communications function.

So we have a sort of a matrix in the way that we organize those resources internally. And we must also, the other thing we have under

our communications lead, who confusingly is also called Sally. We are two different people. I give you a clue. She's American. So if you hear us speak, we don't look as otherwise people confuse us. Literally, we get each other's emails, but she has language services reporting to her.

This is another critical point to answer your earlier question about access. We worked with Zoom directly to build in new capability to have the instant translation that you see in Zoom. This is like a magic trick when we first did this. We've been trying for nearly 10 years to do that, and we couldn't do it. And suddenly we could do it because the technology companies had a reason to do it. So communication is not just about the message, although it is, it's not just about the channel. It's also about making sure we have the right tools that people can use in different languages so that we use it.

Now, second question, external communications. Well, my engagement team, I'm going to put my other hat on. This is the I'm going to call this the Siranish hat, the day job hat. That's all about talking to stakeholders, not just inside our community. We have two focuses in the team, the ones I was talking about in the regions, and they have a global coordination role and with the comms team, but they have a specific regional role. Support our existing community. And in that sense, this is people like you.

How do we make sure that, for example, you get joined up to the right, you're with Rodrigo De La Parra, you're in Argentina. How do I make sure that we make sure that you come off this program and I give you into the arms of Rodrigo so that you go forth and you do great things with us? Nico, who is our new GAC chair, who comes from Paraguay, is

a very good example of somebody who we worked with. And he was a GAC member, but he was in the community quite early on. And we worked....

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: He was a fellow.

SALLY COSTERTON: He was a fellow. Thank you. I thought he was, but I wasn't going to say that in case he wasn't, but he was. And this is a great example. We worked from the beginning with him. I met him many years ago in Asuncion when he was a community member very early on. And here now he is as the GAC chair. But we've held hands the whole way through that journey. And Rodrigo has been critical with Nico to help him on that journey. But we also have to find new friends. And we do that for good reasons, as in proactive. We need new partnerships. The internet is growing very fast. As I said in my opening speech, we really need to make sure that internet users around the world and governments understand what we do and how our work affects them and that they can come here to help to make the rules by which this part of the internet is governed.

But also, it can represent risk. So we need new friends because sometimes the regulation that might be being made that might threaten ICANN's ability to deliver its mandate, it's not being done at ICANN. It's being done in rooms, meeting rooms and meetings in different parts of the world. And they're not here. They're not part of the naming space. They don't come to ICANN meetings. So we have to

go to them. So there are regional outreach programs to do that. And a lot of that is done by the same team. So Rodrigo, for example, has a comprehensive program, which if you join his community group, you'll probably get involved in that. We'll probably ask you, how can we do this together? So Leon, I think is in here. Is Leon still here? Leon is there.

So Leon, for example, who was also a fellow, as is now on the board. Leon and Rodrigo worked together a great deal with Patricio on exactly this kind of work, don't we? You're very generous with your time. We often ask you if you can go and speak at a big meeting. It might be a telecoms meeting. It might be a web development meeting. It's the point is we need to go out and build that network and keep sharing the message about our model, why it works, why the multi-stakeholder process is the right model for internet governance to help people to understand what maybe the next round of top level domains might mean for their country or for their industry. So I hope that's, it's a long answer, but it's a big question. So thank you for that.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you very much. We have a question from community mentor who is assigned to work with the fellows this round. Afifa, please go ahead.

AFIFA ABBAS: Thank you, Sirainush. So my question would be for Sally. My name is Afifa. I'm a community mentor from Bangladesh, but currently I'm residing in Canada for my studies. So I haven't really interacted with

many female CEOs because there are not many, but this would be a little off topic. That is, I would like to ask that what are the qualities women need to have in order to become a CEO in a male dominated industry?

SALLY COSTERTON:

Firstly, I would also like Tripti to answer that question because I know she has very clear views about this and she is also, she's the board chair, but she is a female CEO. You may not know that, but I can tell you that. So I'm going to ask her to give you an answer as well, if that's okay. But yes, I think it's such a good question. It's such an important question. And I would answer it in two different ways. One is things that everybody else says, if you like. So what really matters in my -- I'll ask her in one way. I think that we can only take a view on this from our own experience. Well, this is my opinion. I think unless you've actually done it we read a lot about it. There was a lot written in the press about it.

And depending on where you are, it focuses on different issues. So people will say there aren't enough women candidates for CEO roles. Why is that? That's probably the most central question. My perspective on that is honestly, there's a kind of formal reason, maybe a less formal reason, an obvious reason or less obvious reason. Childcare is an issue. There's no point in pretending it isn't. We have the babies. Until men can have children physically, that is an imbalance. You can't ignore it. It is a fact. So looking at things that allow, for example, we have a childcare program, support program now at ICANN meetings. We didn't used to, we do now. We have a mother's nursing room at every ICANN

meeting. We try to encourage, I know it's not easy to bring a baby to an ICANN meeting or a small child. I get that.

Remote participation tools, by the way, are a big breakthrough in encouraging more women to participate in organizations like this, which has historically been very male dominated. But actually, if you look around this room and you walk around the corridors at ICANN, I feel in the last 10 years, there are far more women at ICANN generally. There are certainly more senior women. We've got women in the two most senior jobs. We've got many women in leadership roles in the community at the moment. Our ccNSO chair is a woman. We do have, we had a woman GAC chair for five and a half years. So I think that ICANN is setting a good example because the second thing is that we do need to see female role models. I get that. And so I have always felt, because I've been a CEO before doing this interim job, not at ICANN, but in another life.

And I've always felt the importance of they use this expression, reach behind you. that's a -- bring people with you. And I've done a lot of mentoring and a lot of coaching of women, particularly women going into sort of senior leadership roles at ICANN, but also in my former life. And I know from that experience that you need to show people practical reality of what does it look like. And the final thing I'd say, and this is a very personal comment, but I think women bring something different to leadership roles. And that's also a role model thing. You bring a woman into, not every woman, people are different. It's not just a gender thing. But I think we often do things differently. If you put a room full of women together, if they don't know each other at all, and they come from lots of different parts of the world, they will

immediately go, how do we get this thing done? I don't know why they do. They just do.

And there you see everybody's nodding. All the women in the room. I understand that. It's just a thing. It's just the way it is. So at ICANN, for example, and in other organizations, this idea of coalition building, the multi-stakeholder model is an it's a giant sort of coalition. So those natural skills of how do we get together around a problem? How do we fix it? How do we use time and resources efficiently? This is, in my experience as a female CEO, this is a natural instinct. And the more we role model those behaviors, particularly places like this, which really need those skills, whether they're by men or women, the more we encourage more women to see, I could do that too. And I mean, that would be my perspective, but I think I hope that's helpful. Tripti of course has a totally different background to me. So we've compared notes. We've both been women CEOs in very male-orientated worlds, but coming from completely different backgrounds, Tripti.

TRIPTI SINHA:

Thank you, Sally. So really it comes down to perseverance. And don't give up. Keep stay the course. Keep doing what you're doing. And as Sally said, the principles regardless of what your background is. Sally has a communications background. I have a technology background. Very male dominated. But the principles of success remain the same. It's perseverance, hard work, be prepared, don't be afraid. You will get bumps and bruises along the way. Pick yourself up and keep going. And I will say, when I look back early on in my career, in the end it was always men who helped me get to the next step now, you could argue that they

did that because that's who was there. There weren't too many women to help you. But what I will say about women is I've noticed, maybe not in the current generation, but the generation that Sally and I came from. We were perhaps not as cohesive as we could have been.

And that probably is because we fought so hard to get to where you are. It's like, well, I fought tooth and nail to get where I am, so let me enjoy this moment. But I think that needs to change. We really need to support each other. And at the same time, let's not alienate the men either. Because we're all in this together, we all have to support each other. So, and don't be afraid, don't be afraid. And if you're feeling downtrodden or left behind or overlooked, just keep persevering, ultimately doors open. And take a lesson from all the bruises you've got and make sure you don't inflict that same wound on someone else. At least that's one of my principles is just stay the course and keep your confidence.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you very much, Afifa, for your question. There are so many people who would like to ask questions, but I would like to go with the queue I have. So Bukola, Bukola Oronti, just for all of us to know, she is the recipient of Tarek Kamel Fellowship Recognition Award for this round of ICANN76 Fellows. So congratulations, Bukola, and the floor is yours.

BUKOLA ORONTI: Thank you very much for the honor. Once again, my name is Bukola Oronti, ICANN Fellow from Nigeria. I've been, like I always say, I found

a community in ICANN. And it's something I'm so proud of. And my question now is based on the programs coming up within the fellowship that I've benefited from. The first one being the consensus playbook that was organized at a time in the fellowship and it's going on. I want to encourage the program to continue with it. Then the second one that I recently engaged in is a policy transition program, the PTP. And I think my set is the first set on it. And the thing I want to say about it is one, when I first came to ICANN, I was lost, like I didn't know where to go. I didn't know where to start from.

So I just had to kind of, I was determined, like Tripti said, I was determined to remain in the community and I began to find my footing. But then I was so much interested in the policy part of it, because I believe that is exactly where the work is. And then the policy transition program came up. But my question now is, being the first set, what is the next thing? Is the organization going to continue with it? Or is it that they just want to test and then let it die? So I just want to know what is the future for that program. Thank you.

TRIPTI SINHA:

So the question is, firstly, congratulations. And Tarek Kamel, for anybody who did -- did anybody in the room know Tarek? No, yes. Oh, yes. You did as well. Tarek is a very, very special man. So I'm going to change the subject or I'm going to get emotional. And he would be so happy to be in this room today, because he embodied the spirit of ICANN, really, in my view. And so being the recipient of this award is really meaningful. It's not just a label. This is about the spirit of how we treat each other and how we behave. He was a passionate advocate for

the multi-stakeholder process. He was the father, really, or a father of internet governance in Africa. So you are, I'm so happy and proud for you. So the question is, is the pilot program going to continue? This is a great question.

And the answer is, I'm working with, I don't think David Oliver is in the room with me at the moment. Melissa is. And Melissa, there you go, Melissa. So the answer is we're reviewing, this is the first time. You're completely right. So immediately after this meeting, we will review the pilot. But there's been a lot of interest in it. And you found it useful. So you're encouraging us to take a closer look at making it permanent. That's great feedback. Melissa is hearing it in the room. And I'm a great believer in a pilot. So let's try. Let's see, whether it's this or anything else, as we see a need for something, to use our organizational resources to try something. It's a good engineering principle. Try something on a small basis, see if it works, and then work out how we can expand it. So thank you so much for the question.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN:

And in addition, together with Melissa, for each round of fellows, we are doing consensus playbook training. So Bukola, I just would like to assure you that, yes, we will continue with this training. And Melissa is always with us and supportive to run this for fellows and next-geners. So thank you for your feedback. I would like to give the floor to Harish. I know Harish was waiting too long to ask his question. Please go ahead, Harish.

HARISH CHOWDHARY: Hello.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Setonji, if you can turn off your mic, please.

HARISH CHOWDHARY: I hope I'm audible. Harish Chowdhary for the record. I'm ICANN fellow from India. So I have two questions. First one is that recently some Indian ISPs have blocked access to three major domain name registrars. So it is on 12th of March. And the move comes as a part of a long-running dispute over cybersquatting. Indian courts acted in response to that because registrars were not responding to their takedown notices. So what is the role of ICANN in this scenario to ensure to avoid these kind of situations? The second one is to Edmon.

In addition to fellow, my day-to-day job is I'm a faculty of internet governance. And I have started a diploma course on internet governance of one year at National Forensic Sciences University. So how APGIA and ICANN help so that my students of this program can contribute actively to the ICANN activities and the possibilities of ICANN accreditation to this program? Is there any mechanism of accreditation or recognition of academic programs for the universities by ICANN so that standards could be maintained? So these two questions. Thank you.

TRIPTI SINHA: Thank you. Did you say the second question was for Edmund?

HARISH CHOWDHARY: Yes.

TRIPTI SINHA: So I'll answer, I will tell you the high-level answer. The answer is it's the ICANN compliance function, team's function. Sorry, start again. The ICANN compliance function's role overall to address what you're describing, which is the dynamic of domain name challenges, disputes, this area. I mean, not alone. I mean without going into the internal movements, we have a sophisticated group of mechanism inside our legal team, our domain name team, our regional engagement team. So for example, Nitin Wali, who's our India engagement head, who you may know, he is very involved in what's going on in India specifically. So he will alert, so we trigger a mechanism internally if things like this happen. And they do from time to time. Because of course ICANN isn't controlling the Indian government.

But what we are doing is enforcing the contracts. So what we are able to do through our compliance function is to make sure that is to intervene where we think there are breaches of the contract, and that's how we use, and the terms and conditions of the contract by which those domain names are actually operated. But inevitably, and this is not the first time in India, and it's not the first time globally, and it will keep on happening, unfortunately, there are disputes, which is what you're describing, between what a government wants and their opinion and what actually happens on the ground. And we of course, we had a major issue last year in India on this topic, which we won't go into now.

So I'm happy to talk to you offline separately about this. But just so the rest of the room knows that that's how ICANN actually operationally deals with issues like this. And they do vary from time to time. And they're all different. So we have to be able to put a team around what's going on the ground, which has the right combination of skills in, to make sure that we can do our piece. And I'm going to let Edmon come to the mic now to take the other question.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: I requested Edmund to take this question during after the break. So during the break, please, Harish, because I would like to give the floor and opportunity to ask our virtual next-gen participant, Rómulo, if you can unmute your mic and ask your question, please.

RÓMULO CHACÍN: Yes. Thank you, Siranush. Can you hear me?

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Yes. Clear and loud.

RÓMULO CHACÍN: Thanks. First of all, thank you for the program. It's a real pleasure to be participating in this meeting and in the next-gen program. I'm from Venezuela. And my question is, how do you imagine the future and evolution of the Internet, and how do you think we can better adapt and respond to new changes and challenges? Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Yes, Tripti will take the question.

TRIPTI SINHA: So how do I envision the future of the Internet? Well, first I'll start with the way the Internet looks today. It will continue to grow and grow in all its various different modalities. From a physical infrastructure place, I think we're moving increasingly, as into a mobile world. So that will continue to grow more and more devices are Internet-enabled. So you've got consumer devices, you've got devices in the industries, scientific instruments are all Internet-enabled. So we will capture more and more data and just provide accessibility to just about every entity you could think of globally. Now in terms of evolutionary growth, there are lots of technologies that are percolating on the horizon.

One of them you've probably heard about is the quantum networking that is likely to evolve in the next 10 to 15 years. It's still got a few years ahead of it. But that will complement the current Internet and its promises to provide secure communications and also the capability. There's also something called quantum computing, which will provide the capability to do some boutique computing, solve some complex problems in climate studies and personalized medicine, precision medicine, and so forth. So stay tuned. I think it's a very exciting moment. And of course, security will continue to play a stronger role in how we secure our communications and our data. Did you say something? I hope if anyone else would like to add, please feel free. Hope that answers your question. Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Rómulo, for your question. And we only have one minute to go, and I just give the opportunity for the last question for Hannah. Hannah, where? Oh please. Go ahead.

HANNAH FRANK: Thank you so much. I am Hannah Frank from Argentina. I want to ask you regarding those programs, NextGen and Fellowship, if you are planning to release another program or if you have some plans regarding this, because Fellowship, you can be in ICANN for some, I have seen but I know some people who have been in ICANN, involved in ICANN for some years, and then they apply to be a Fellow, because it's, the doors are open with Fellows and NextGen. So I am, that's my question. I will be brief.

SALLY COSTERTON: So the question is, are we going to continue with the programs?

HANNAH FRANK: Yeah, a new program, if you are planning to release a new program.

SALLY COSTERTON: Oh, a new program. Well, we always keep looking at this. Now, what I would say is that we've been established now for, when did we start the NextGen? We've done it for about seven years. Fourteen years. No. 2014. I was going to say, definitely not 14 years. Okay, 2014. So, nine years. So, these are very established programs, and as I said earlier in my comments we are very committed to them. And I don't see that

changing. I mean they've been incredibly successful, and look at you all here in the room, I think you're absolutely evidence of that. Your question is, would we expand and add new newcomer programs? That's the question. It's a great question. I think we have to keep that, absolutely, we do keep it under review.

And so, August here, who leads this function, and I and the team, we explore these on a regular basis, and I think a good time to look at this again is when we do our strategic plan review, and our overall sort of five-year look, what do we do for the next five years? And we will start to do that in the not-too-distant future. Probably, I think, Matthew would know, but I think it's the beginning of next year, isn't it? We start sort of re-discussing the next chapter of the strategic planning process. So, I'll ask Mr. Anoush to keep you posted on that, because I think what would be very useful if we're going to look at different kinds of newcomer programs is not to change what we have, but to say, well, what are the new problems we need to solve?

Is it a geographical problem? Do we need them to be in different parts of the world? Or is it about types of people that we want to bring to ICANN, that we need to do things slightly differently? So, I'm very open to discussing it, and I think we should just discuss it as part of a bigger conversation in the community than just in a small niche, because it's important. And these programs make a big difference, but I'm afraid I have to go, because I have to go to another meeting. I do apologize.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: And Hannah probably was not in the room when I was telling that. We just piloted the ICANN for Beginners virtual program. So, there are a lot

of programs coming, and we need your feedback. With that, I would like to thank you, Tripti, thank you, Sally, thank you, Leon, and thank you, board members, to be with us. And thank you, everyone, for active participation. With that, our meeting is adjourned.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]