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PIERRE DANDJINO:

-- how we are doing and what event you want to contribute. So we need to communicate more, of course, but we also need to be doing exactly what is in the strategy. This Africa space of today is going to concentrate on two issues. Subject, I would say, not issue per se. And one of them is provide you with information on the coalition for digital Africa, which is one of those initiative that ICANN could really help promote connectivity in Africa. And you have details on that.

And also second part is going to be a brief reporting or update on the DNS study that we are conducting. You the committee asked for an update on this document that was produced five years ago. Consultants are here and then they will also be providing briefing on this and where we are.

But who are those have been invited here and they are going to provide you with the few remarks. Most of them come in from ICANN. And we will be hearing from Baher Esmat. Baher, you know him certainly. Baher is managing director of ICANN's office in Istanbul. He will be providing what we could be expecting from Istanbul. As you know Istanbul is about Middle East and Africa. And as part of this ICANN functions also there. So that's where we are servicing Africa. And then we are going to also have Adiel Akplogan. I hope he is in line. Adiel is our Vice President in charge of the technical engagement in Africa. He

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also has staff in the field and that one also helping us do this technical revolution. You'll hear more from him on the project they have.

And we are also happy to have a Board member, one representative from the Board, who is, I mean, whom certainly you know. Going to provide his remarks and he knows about us, what we'll be doing. Because he's been in charge of AFRINIC. He knows about the environment. And certainly, he will relay a good word from ICANN Board. Sally will be also coming. Sally has promised to be there. So, Sally will be coming maybe probably before the end of this session. So without any further ado, I will like to give the floor to Baher to quickly have his welcome remarks to us.

BAHER ESMAT:

Thank you. Thank you, Pierre. This is Baher Esmat for the record. Welcome, everyone. Thank you for joining the session today. Those who are both in the room and remote. And as Pierre said, I had the regional office for Middle East and Africa. The offices in Istanbul, Turkey. The office was established almost 10 years ago in 2013. And the main purpose of the regional office in Istanbul is to serve the communities in both Africa and the Middle East to support our engagement activities in both regions.

The office has resources from multiple functions with ICANN org besides the engagement teams in both Africa and the Middle East. We have staff from different functions, from communications, security operations, technical engagement, global domain division, compliance, meetings team, policy support, HR, and so on. And we

continue to add more resources to support the increasing demand for engagement across both regions.

Just over the past year we've added three more staff in Istanbul, two under the communication and language services and one under security operations. Also in talking about the engagement in Africa, we realized that more needs to be done, more resources are required. So our focus is not only on the Istanbul Office, but we also have an engagement center in Nairobi, Kenya. And today if you have a look at the ICANN posted jobs online, you would see that there are three positions posted for the Nairobi office. Two, under global stakeholder engagement. One is particularly for the coalition for digital Africa. This is a key project. And you're going to hear more about it in detail. And the third position is under the office of the CTO and the technical engagement team.

So we continue to grow our teams to serve both regions. And perhaps one of the questions we often get is, why Middle East and Africa together? I think the simple answer is that because they do have things in common. I think part of Africa is called the Middle East, like Middle East and North Africa, the North African region. I come from Egypt and I consider myself African and also Middle Eastern. But also in terms of needs, in terms of the challenges and opportunities that we have in both regions, I think we have a lot in common. And therefore, it makes sense that the resources that we have could serve both regions.

So thank you again for the opportunity. I'll be happy to take any questions or talk more to you during or after the session. Thank you. Back to you, Pierre.

PIERRE DANDJINOU: Thank you. Thank you very much, Baher. Is Adiel Online? Adiel?

ADIEL AKPLOGAN: Yes, I am Pierre, online.

PIERRE DANDJINOU: Great. So we have Adiel. Please Adiel, it's for your remark, please.

ADIEL AKPLOGAN: Yes, thank you, Pierre. Thank you, Baher. I will quickly talk about technical engagement. So I'm Adiel Akplogan, the Vice President for Global Technical Engagements. My team work within the office of the CTO do to develop and build more bridges with the technical community globally. So we have team in other region as well, Latin America, North America, Africa, of course, Middle East and Africa, and Asia Pacific.

So we talk particularly about what we have been up to in African region, what we are planning in the coming days. And I'll be happy to answer any question related to engagements with the technical community in the regard. So as you know, the specific aspect of engaging the technical community in the region has been increased over the past few years, where we have increased our ability to support DNS operator in the region, focusing a little bit more particularly on the ccTLD, helping them, not only deploy the DNSSEC as it has been the case in the past, but also looking holistically at the way they operate their DNS

infrastructure and help them implement best practices in general, both for authoritative name server operator, but also for recursive. And that put solidly within the ISP community in general.

We have started having a different approach in the way we provide those capacity building, starting with a more a thorough analysis of how, for instance, authoritative server are implemented, configured working with those operators and giving them some precise guideline on what is broken in their operation and help them fix them one by one. And it has proven to be very, very productive. We have selected 12 random ccTLD six months ago, did that for each of them. We found about 285 issues, for instance, on those ccTLD DNS operation. And working with them, we are down from 285 to 85 only.

So they have been able to fix almost 200 issue warning on their instances, which has proven to be very productive because we have reduced this by almost 70%. So that is very encouraging for us because we are able to work hand in hand with those operators, and we really thank them for their engagements. Some of them even went a bit far by signing their zone, which is very encouraging.

Now that has also to be put into the global context of an initiative that we have launched a few months ago, which is a KINDNS, which is an initiative that has a more global footprint to help operators to have best practices that they can relate to when deploying and operating their DNS to have them secure and resilient.

So KINDNS is a framework that operators that goes through this pilot program that we are talking about and also assess themselves against and join some KINDNS supportive organization. So even if you are not

part of those well, ccTLD that we have been working with actively, you can right now assess your practice against KINDNS framework, which actually include most of those practices we are working with, those ccTLDs, and see where you stand.

If you need any support, any help after going to the KINDNS self-assessment, feel free to engage with my team in the region. Right now, it is [00:12:24 -inaudible]. You all know him. We had two before. The second one was Paul, who we have lost and we are in the process to replace him as well. The position is still open. We have reopenings recently because of some of the requirements. For the location of the position has evolved a little bit. So this position is purely and exclusively right now based in Nairobi. So if you have an interest and you live in Nairobi, feel free to also submit your application.

So that is for KINDNS. We will like to see more African operators to join KINDNS. Right now, we have one from South Africa, [00:13:21 -inaudible]. I think I saw Mark somewhere. Congratulations, Mark, who is one of the African operator who has joined KINDNS. And we would like to see more operators to join. You don't have to run an authoritative server to join because KINDNS cover five categories of operators. So even if you are SP, you have a private company that's [00:13:54 -inaudible] you can also join KINDNS. Overall, we are also working very closely with Pierre within the framework of the CDA. And my team will continue to provide the technical support where needed for the implementation of the different technical initiative within CDA. Thanks.

PIERRE DANDJINO: Thank you. Thank you very much, Adiel. Now I'd like to hand over to Alan Barrett. Alan, thanks for coming from the Board. So please, Alan.

ALAN BARRETT: Thank you, Pierre. Hello, everyone. This is Alan Barrett. ICANN Board member and African. So the Board very much supports the efforts of the ICANN Africa team. And the coalition for digital Africa is an important project that started recently. And also know that ICANN has recently increased the presence of the L Root server in various African locations. So that's a root name server managed by ICANN.

And then another thing that's been on the Board's consideration for a long time is the next round of gTLDs. And there the use of internationalized domain names written in scripts other than ASCII, so including the languages used in Africa that have their own alphabet different from English alphabet. Email address internationalization and universal acceptance, these are all interrelated topics. And I'd like to urge everyone to embrace all these efforts for universal acceptance, which you'll often hear abbreviated as UA.

And email address internationalization. And part of the new gTLD program will include some level of priority for new internationalized domain names. So there will be an opportunity when the program is launched to apply for new top level domains that are written in non ASCII alphabet or character sets. And I would encourage people with relevant experience and interest to apply for these when program is launched. And we were not sure exactly when that will be. The Board's intending to make a decision in the next few days asking ICANN org to come up with a timeline. So thanks. That's all for me now.

PIERRE DANDJINOU:

Thanks very much, Alan. And I would like to hand over to Sally Costerton. As you know, Sally is our Interim CEO and President. It's an honor for us to have you, Sally. Sally is going to make her remarks, but I know that usually, you do have questions. And Sally has given us a few minutes because she's got so many of her meetings in the lineup for her. So please, you take the opportunity if you have any question. And she accepted to stay close to 10 minutes with us after her remarks, and you'll be able to put whatever question will have. So please, Sally, the floor is yours.

SALLY COSTERTON:

Thank you, Pierre. And it's so good to be back with you. And I've seen all of you so many times over the years in these meetings, although this is the first time obviously that I've been in this particular role. So as Pierre said, I'm happy to take a few questions if people would like to, as we always have done together in the past.

I really wanted to take this opportunity to reinforce what Alan said and what Pierre has said and Baher about the importance of Africa to ICANN. And never more so than now, we are probably investing more resources in Africa than we have done for many years. And I think, Goran said, and he was quite right. That this was overdue that he feels that we need to play catch up here in Africa to build up our staff, which you've heard a bit about already, and also this important coalition that is now quite well established.

And I wanted to reassure you in this role, in the Interim CEO role, I know how important the provision of resources is. And the resources here is two kinds of resources. It's people, headcount, staff support, and it's dollars, it's pounds, it's money to participate in particularly capacity building types of activities. And also things like the IMRS incidents that we have put into Nairobi, which is doing so successful. These things cost money and they come out of the ICANN budget.

So part of my role in this interim CEO role is to make sure as you heard me say in my opening comments this morning, if you were at the opening ceremony, that the Africa, the coalition for digital Africa is right on the top list of priorities for the organization as a whole. And that it stays there while we work through the next steps of delivering subsequent, the next round of gTLDs. As Alan has said, we're about hopefully to move through to the next phase of that process. But I wanted you to have reassurance from me that this is not a trade. These resources for Africa are not going to get pushed back down the queue of priorities.

Africa is also going to be incredibly important as we enter the next phase of raising awareness around a second round of top level domains. And part of our reason for wanting to start the coalition for digital Africa was to help ICANN to bring a broader group of stakeholders around the importance of bringing more Africans onto the internet. And it critically here, as Alan said, in ICANN's remit in the area of not just security protection capacity development, but also access. The access to the domain name system in the internet for Africans and others around the world who do not use ASCII.

And we're very aware and we've committed significant resource over the next couple of years. I think it will be probably something like that to build stakeholder engagement and awareness and communication campaigns and activity on the ground in many different African countries. As well as working in partnership with African institutions, NGOs, and pan Africa organizations. To do everything we can, we've already started softly, and now we are opening up these universal acceptance day events. This is a very good example of a very tactical piece, but very joined up, very connected global initiative. But lots of local implementation in lots of different countries in Africa as well as around the world to start to raise awareness.

It's a difficult one because there are so many stakeholders that need to be involved in universal acceptance who don't come to ICANN meetings, don't consider themselves to be part of the domain name system in the way that we understand it. But if we don't reach out and talk to them, we're not going to move the ball forward. And if we don't do that, we're not going to fulfill the potential of the next round, and we really, that's such an important priority.

And I've just been in a Board workshop with Alan and with our Board colleagues over the weekend talking about the different work streams, the different aspects of the work that we'll need to be done to get to the point where we can open a next round. And one of them is I feel I wanted to mention in this meeting is an applicant support program. And I'm sure that many of you are discussing this. And I've just come from another meeting where it came up very directly. And I wanted to reassure you that we are very well aware, the Board and the org, of the need to make decisions about when that should happen. What's the

right sequence? When should it be communicated? How much resource should be put into it?

Several people asked this morning in the executive Q&A session. Several people said, is \$2 million dollars enough. Maybe it should be more. So I know that many people in this region will feel we need help. It's all very well saying nice things. About opening a round that's targeted new African domain name holders, but they're going to need help and support to get to the point where they can apply and participate.

So we have to think through not just what are the resources we need now to raise awareness, but what are the resources we're going to need all the way through the process to make sure that that actually is successful? So keep talking to us as we go through these next few weeks and months. And as we partner with you to work through, what are we going to need and how do we do that most effectively, so that we're all on the same page about what to expect. And the way that I'm going to do that is through these guys. This is our team here and Adiel and his team. And all our staff that are involved in working with you and your constituents here in Africa, not here, well, here. This is virtually Africa in this room this afternoon.

As we've talked about new headcount coming into the team already. And as you will know, we are also involved in the implementation stage of the ICANN grant program. It used to be referred to as the auction proceeds. It's now the grant program. And as this comes online, you heard Xavier Calvez say earlier today, our hope is that it will open in about this time next year, give or take, that kind of time frame. And as I

said in my comments this morning, this is an enormous opportunity to do good.

And we will communicate with you, we will keep you updated through the staff, through all our staff including our communication channels as to how we're getting on, when to expect that process to open, how to apply, and what was of the criteria, how do you apply, and what how are we going to work through that process? So please, I will make sure that the team are regularly updated as Xavier's team moves in through the gates on implementation so that you know what to expect and how to engage with that.

And I think you've covered the progress on the next round, Alan. So I won't do that. So I'm here, if anybody would like to ask any specific questions. I have a few minutes, and then I'll need to go back, I'm afraid, to my other meeting. But please, if anybody would like to. You don't have to, but if you would like. Yes?

LUCKY MASILELA:

Thank you. Name is Lucky Masilela. I would like to ask your thoughts around the next round, what it means. It's not for me for the affordability of it because the last round it was 185000 per domain name. And now it looks like it will be 270000. In RENS, it's about RENS4.8 million. Wow, you could buy a lot of condominiums with that. But the most important thing for me around this is that in Africa we have 54 plus domain names, which is the number of countries plus dotAfrica, Joburg, Cape Town, etc.

Now one of the strategic things that was in the pipeline in acquiring the domain names, dotAfrica, was the igo.au, which has not yet been released. And there is no plan in place to release that name from this reserved name list. There has been a concession made that this name must go into this bucket, but there is no plan to put it out of this bucket or take it out of the bucket. And now we are talking of the next round before we have even ironed out all of these impediments as challenges we've had of the past. Does that even make sense for us to get excited about the next round when we have these issues unresolved? Thank you.

SALLY COSTERTON:

Lucky, it's nice to see you. Welcome to Cancún, and it's good to see you again? It's a really good question. And I hope we'll be pleased to know that that precise topic was the subject of a great deal of discussion at the Board. And Alan and I have been involved in lengthy discussions over the part, well, for a while actually, but including here in Cancún. And you make an extremely good point. And you are not the only one to make this point, which is we have a series of open issues and resolved issues, of which that is one. How do we decide when we're ready? How good is enough? Exactly the point you're making. Should we progress at all if we don't know the answer to some of these questions?

And where I think the discussion is heading on this, although the Board is not finalized the resolutions yet, we have another meeting this week, and then we have obviously a Board meeting on Thursday, which it will share the resolutions, of course. But the sense that I have and we discussed this over the weekend is that we will-- and we had discussed

it also with the SO/AC leader group yesterday morning, no, Saturday morning when we met them together. And we said, I can tell you exactly what we did. It's not a secret. We said, what is it going to take? How do we bring these things together? How do we sequence them in a way that we're all working on this together? Because that's what has to happen now. It has to be a kind of joined up process as you have already said.

And we have a lot of support in the community as a whole to recognize that we need to try and find ways to really support the community groups that are trying to resolve these issues. To try and do that, not too fast, but fast enough so that we can bring these together in a way that we feel comfortable that we're ready to move to the next stage and announce a date to open the cycle. So I want to reassure you that this is a really key part. And there are probably four areas of which this is one. This is well known that these are outstanding issues at the community. And it's only the community can decide on this. This is not something that the ICANN Board can say, do this, or the organization.

And so at the organization, with my CEO hat on, what I said to the community leaders on Saturday, and we said discussed again in the border we discussed again last night at a different dinner with the community leaders again is, okay, you are being tremendously positive and cooperative about recognizing this is a great opportunity to take these issues and resolve them.

But you're going to need a resource from the organization to help you to do that by which I mean organizing meetings, organizing calls, intensifying the amount of practical support that we provide to those

groups to get that work done. So this is where we are right now. We're right in the middle of this, in literally at this meeting, of this discussion. Did you want to add anything to that, Alan? Because I think it affects the Board as well. Okay, you can talk with that.

ALAN BARRETT:

Thanks, Sallie. Yes, I think you covered it pretty well. It's a kind of a problem that AU is reserved for all purposes. And my understanding is that it can be taken off the reserve list, but there's no easy process for an exception to be made to keep it reserved for most purposes. But release it for au dotAfrica. And there have been discussions around that, but I don't think there's a resolution yet.

LUCKY MASILELA:

If I may. Thank you. Thanks for that, Sally, and the warm welcome to Cancún, beautiful place. Indeed, others think it's a disco town. So the biggest concern was we are uncertain of the time. Is that it is now at least four years or five years into this matter. And there is no sight, no light inside on when this matter will be resolved. Shouldn't we think outside the box and address a specific issue with its own nuances differently because we don't have a process in place, shouldn't we make an exception to a specific case and come up with some kind of concession?

SALLY COSTERTON:

Well, I think that's a question. And I think that's the kind of dialogue we're encouraging the community to start having. Because you're

right, I think some of these things go on and on and on and they feel they don't resolve themselves and this is not the only one. And I think what we're trying to encourage now, and I say encourage, I mean, we're trying to support now, is a better word, is to provide the community with the facilities that it thinks that it needs in order to try to just come up with solutions. And that might be one. I think you might well be right. It's like any problem, isn't it?

Sometimes you'd have to try a different way and try and see, well, how are we going to get around this to get to the point we need to get to if we just keep doing the same thing over and over again and it doesn't work? Assuming that it's in our bylaws and we're not in breach of something, then I think you're right. I think we do need creative problem solving. And that requires a collaborative approach, a to shared sense of purpose, a discussion about, should we start to put some dates in the diary about when we might want to do things?

This is a discussion that's happening at this meeting, but I encourage this dialogue, Lucky. I really do. I wish I had a really nice easy solution for you, as Alan says, but that doesn't mean that one shouldn't or can't be found. But I think our multistakeholder the process has to be the way to do that. It is the only thing we have to do that. And being creative about how we do that, I think has to be the way forward. Would you mind if I go to the next question? Because I'm going to have to run away. Hadia?

HADIA ELMINIAMI:

Yes, thank you. This is Hadia for the record. Thank you, Sally, for being with us today. I wanted to ask about this new partnership between GSE

team and the RALOs that you did talk about. So in what sense of form is that partnership going to be new? Because we know that GSE team has been already engaging, has always been engaging with the RALOs. So what's the new form? That's one thing. And also the goals. Are those going to be identified through ICANN regional strategy? Yeah, thank you.

SALLY COSTERTON:

Thank you. Excellent question. One of my favorite subjects. You're absolutely right. Firstly, the ICANN engagement team has been working with the RALOs all the time I've been at ICANN. Very intensely. The RALOs members, the At-Large members are very big participants in our regional programs. And one of the reasons for that, as all of you probably know, ICANN need new blood, it needs new participants. But actually, finding homes for new participants in ICANN is quite limited. There are not many parts of the SO/AC structure where we can bring newcomers, but the At-Large is one of them. And it's certainly the most global. So it's not new.

So your question is, what is new? And what are the goals? Well, what is new is an intensified focus on a partnership between two people the RALO Chair and the Head of Engagement in the region. And that is instead of the existing work with At-Large, it's as well as. And the purpose of that partnership is to do two things. It's to be more joined up about the engagement activities to the plan so that we don't work in the silos. That isn't so that the engagement team can direct the RALO. That is not the goal. It's about partnering together. So that's the first thing. Why? Two reasons.

One because it is important generally. And Maureen certainly identified this with me and David at The Hague, which is where we first conceived with this idea. It is useful and important for the At-Large to be as outcome orientated as possible. So not just what shall we do, but why are we doing it? How will we know? What do we need?

And this is really in two areas. One is taking care of existing At-Large members in the region and also bringing new At-Large participants, and particularly, and this was very much the common goal, if you like, or a common shared aspiration. By when the RALO chairs got together, we could have this discussion is what I know in At-Large you refer to is in-reach. So going back into existing At-Large members who may be on a menu list but are not active.

What do we need to do differently to look for more participation engagement from the people we already know or we already have in our group, but they're kind of sleeping, they're kind of dormant. And that turns into a series of activities, which are going to be very different from region to region, hence the relationship at the regional level. Because what the Europeans want to do in EURALO may be very different to what the African AFRALO want to prioritize, or APRALO want. And that's completely fine.

Now the other thing that's new, and I don't hesitate to use the word new, I would say it's a sort of new focus, is to make sure through the engagement head, not the RALO chair, but once those goals were agreed and the events were agreed and the priorities were agreed, between them - understood as a better word - then empowering those regional vice presidents to go wherever they need to go inside ICANN

not just in the engagement team to find extra resources because that might be different kind. For example, you heard Adiel here, maybe he'd be much more joined out about thinking about where are we doing technical engagement, where are we doing different kinds of meetings? Are there training courses we can provide? Are there capacity to better?

So really thinking having that person sort of running around, if you like, inside the organization, to make sure that they've really got access so that we're maximizing the wide amount of different kinds of resources that are available. But it's not always obvious to the RALO exactly where they are and how to use them and how to deploy them in those regional plans.

So I hope that answers your question. But it's been a great experience so far. And I talked to Jonathan last night a bit more, and I know that he's very supportive of it. But I want to be very clear before I leave. This is not about the GSE team running the RALO. Because there has been a slight misconception about that. I'm looking at Sebastian here because he's been leading very effectively on this project with Chris Mondini, who's his opposite number in Europe and he they've been working very well together exactly in the spirit of this partnership. So he's a great role model. I think we had one more question. Yes, online. Yes, Madeline.

MADELINE:

It's a question in French from Olivier Kwame. Within the framework of the Coalition for Digital Africa, what will ICANN actually do in terms of connectivity? Will it set up exchange points for the Internet or will they set up new IMRSs as was done in Kenya recently.

SALLY COSTERTON: You'll take this.

PIERRE DANDJINO: Go ahead.

SALLY COSTERTON: You can take this. Or I can take it.

PIERRE DANDJINO: Okay. Thank you for the question. We are about to present the project. And the answer is quite simple. We will support activities that had already been studied, IXP's namely, but we have an agreement with ISAC on that. So the idea is to promote connectivity. But mostly with a number of infrastructures. For example, the DNS infrastructure many projects are set up for that. But the idea is not for ICANN to work alone. ICANN will be working in partnership. So yes, we will bring what we can to support connectivity in Africa, but ICANN cannot do everything alone. That's why we have partners. But we will give you a presentation a little bit later that will give you more details on that. Thank you.

Sorry, if I may. We do have a challenge here, okay. We need to actually quickly go through presentation of the coalition itself. And then you also have our consultant around who wanted to also provide a few details on where they are, where they stand for this. So bear with us, we don't have much time for. But if you do have time left, we'll certainly have more, I mean, take more questions. And sorry for that. And I know

those who used to come here know that in our Africa space sometime we do have issue of timing, especially. So please let's make sure that we respect to.

Yes, we are now going to go quickly through the slide deck. And if there are any questions feel free to come to me, to our team to have more details on it. So quickly, we may be in the five minutes, I'll do this. About the coalition for Digital Africa, which we call CDA. And one of the questions that we trying to solve, I mean, we are receiving right from the beginning of the session was, why Africa? And why now? You see, I'm not going to get into the background of the way ICANN engage with Africa for the last 10 years. We do have many things there. But we realize that there is some things special to do in Africa. Special support, let's say, and as Sally was alluding to that one.

The African landscape is what it is. You all know about it. 1.4 billion People. Most of them are young, and that's the great issue here. Languages, yeah, you know, it's even over 2000 languages actually. The youngest population in the world. Internet penetration is 43%, 2022. These are things now we need to know, and this is the background of it. We also noticed that a significant investment in the past few years trying to boost Internet infrastructure and broadband connectivity.

So the issue also is that trying to make Internet more affordable across the continent. So I mean, conclusion is that Africa is rapidly advancing in digital adoption. And the young and growing educated societies are thirsty for more online services that address local needs. Of course, this growth brings many challenge, which Africa is facing today in its quest for digital transformation.

Next slide, please. We think that is the right time of ICANN to join forces of our regional and global players who are committed to advancing the Internet in Africa. So that's the rationale behind the whole thing. So the coalition bring together organization united in their commitment to expand access to the Internet in Africa, and support the development of Africa's digital economy.

We believe that by working together as a coalition, participant, will be able to achieve greater result and impact. Most of the time you all know that what's happening today is that each partner will just come with its project, goodwill, but kind of lack of amortization of all of these. And we are not seeing really the great impact. So we believe that coalition should be making this impact. And at the same time, we see within the limit of ICANN.

Next slide, please. So I will say that the tree cornerstone of this coalition is a kind of robust DNS infrastructure in Africa, meaningful connectivity and capacity development. These are the trees kind of keywords that we'll keep when it comes to this coalition. Let me go quickly for what we've achieved in the projects. So far, the coalition that was launched during IGF in Addis Ababa, 1st of December, had kind of 10 sort of partners that really sign what we call the guiding principles of this project. Those are the institutions or companies that, okay, understand the project and agreed to join forces in joining it. So they did it and you'll find all the details on the website of the coalition.

Next please. So we already started actually implementing the CDA. Earlier Sally spoke about the IMRS cluster that we actually implemented in Kenya. It was November 2022. And the objective was to increase the

resiliency and the security and speed of the Internet in Africa. And by installing two ICANN managed root service cluster in Africa. So one in Nairobi, second one, we are working on it and location will be announced hopefully in the coming, maybe this month, or maybe four to six months, we'll be hearing more about the second location.

But what exactly that this IMRS cluster is doing. And we saw it in Nairobi when we launched it. Look at those maps. Those maps tell us what the traffic was in Africa before we place those IMRS cluster there. Concentration, [00:47:36 -inaudible] of Africa. Now look at what is like today when we actually implemented that IMRS.

Next slide, please. By the time we have this IMRS cluster installed in I will say somewhere there in Nairobi, because we don't disclose where it is, traffic has become, you know, has changed it, meaning that most of the pattern that we did have that your connectivity, I mean, your data or traffic should go up and then down to Africa is being controlled here. And that's something quite important. And if we were to have say five to six of those cluster spread all over Africa, you'll see that your connectivity is going to be within Africa, but which is also in terms of latency is going to reduce this. So this is again.

Let's continue, please. We also wanted to conduct in-depth study of the African DNS landscape. We already launched this and the consultant are here to provide you with kind of status report of this. But the final report is due in July 2023. And we'll be introducing this to you, especially during our Africa engagement forum that's going to happen in July. You have more information on that. It is going to be in Accra, West Africa.

The other project we have and jointly with ISOC is we want to enhance five existing Internet exchange points to improve Internet access and by making it faster and more affordable. It is an existing project by ISOC. But what we are here to do is we provide means for ISOC to really beef up the project and kind of enhance those who are already there. So details are there. I'll be providing them. They have criteria for selecting those and we do have KPIs also.

Next, please. The other project is about capacity development for ccTLD. Selected ccTLDs registries in Africa to do a few things. You all know how the ccTLDs are doing today in Africa. From the information we know, I mean, we are really yet to build sort of awareness to, I will say not management for some of them, but we selected 10 of them that we know are having issue in terms of management. Can be about technical aspects or even business aspect of it, marketing aspect. So we're kind of conducting needs assessment to plan how to deliver and tailor some capacity development support to them, to the ccTLDs.

Next slide, please. And then we do have this universal acceptance. I mean, this morning, you heard about it. The importance of inclusion and having an inclusive connectivity. And you will really help us do this. So it's all about developing local scripts, local languages and make sure that they are assessable on the net. But basically, we are now concentrating our effort with higher education institutions. So we enter a kind of MOU with the association of African universities. And we've base in Accra, we are going to launch these projects with them. It's about UA readiness. And they'll be conducting this now in 200 sort of universities so that they make their system at par, we felt. And it's quite important project. And we are thrilled to be down there in Accra and

see what the result could be. But that's only for the research center because another project that we are planning is going to be with the business components, ISPs and all of them.

Next slide, please. Yes, the DNSSEC, but that's about security. And with that also is going to start one of the partner, the initial partners with African Telecommunication Union and ICANN. It's about organizing workshops (Deployathons) and in a few places that we already earmarked in the budget for this. And you can also hear about those kind of details and the criteria of selecting those also.

Next slide, please. Okay, with that, I mean, I arrived to the kind of end of this project that we already started. And we are yet to also launch some of them. But we are ready to also be working with you, with whoever is interested it to come up with new sort of projects. And ICANN is funding this project for three years. And in the process, we would like to be building some sort of sustainability in the whole project. But that will depends on how best new partners also collaborate on this. This high level timeline gives you an idea on where we are? Where we are heading in different projects? What are the deadlines? Where are the deliverables? When are they going to come? I'm not going to get into those details. They are all available on the website and the staff also is here to provide more information.

So because of time constraint, I would like to stop here and give an opportunity to a consultant to provide updates on this DNS study. So thank you for your attention. Mark, please see if you can go through this quickly in five minutes so that we do have time for one or two questions. Thank you.

MARK ELKINS:

We start number 1. Okay, my name is Mark Elkins. I'm one of the consultants on this particular project. Then I'll go through my copy of the slides. Okay, next slide, please. So we did this particular study back in 2016. That took 18 months. ICANN this time once the whole study done a lot, lot quicker. So that's what we're going to be trying to do. The tender was initially awarded on the 13th of December. So those data 2022, most of the work is going to be obviously in 2023. There's been some significant changes. For example, the number looking at AFRANIC numbers, the numbers have increased by around about 50%. The numbers of RIRs, etc., and end users has increased by about 50% in the last six or so years. Other things that have changed, back then dotAfrica never existed. So now that dotAfrica does exist, we've changed the name of the study from dnsafrica.study to dnsstudy.africa.

Next slide, please. We have a particular set of milestones so that we can start, finish the project, etc., on time. That is as on the screen. Thank you. Next. So what's new? A lot of the software has been updated. In seven years, things like PHP, etc., etc., has changed dramatically. But on the questionnaire, on the system itself, we've added the data center questionnaire, and we've also added both Spanish and Swahili languages to all the various questions. There are a bunch of questions themselves that have been updated in the process as well.

Next slide, please. The front end for people answering the questionnaires is exactly the same. So if you go to dnsstudy.africa, you as a registrar or registrant can easily sign up with your own email address and a password just for this particular system. And it will take

you through and it will allow you to answer the questions very easily. Next. We do have one small problem. One of the objectives that we've changed since last time is to try and look at having one country leader per country. And we've done relatively well with that. We've done training over the last several weeks. Literally have seven or so people still to do. The 14 in brackets was were seven countries that were unassigned, did not have country leaders. That number has changed from seven down to six. Yet despite the fact that we don't have country leaders for some countries, other country leaders have been so proactive. Some countries are complete, and that is really good from just getting those questionnaires answered.

So this is going to be a bit of a plea. Because this is the first meeting that we had been able to sit at and talk to Africans and ask for help from the community. So we've got a bunch of countries up on the screen at the moment. Chad has now been assigned to a person. So we still have six countries up there. So if you are from any of those countries or you know the people, the active people in the internet community who are in these countries then we're looking for volunteers.

Next. What does a country leader do? Very, very briefly. They assist in enrolling people into the questionnaires to fill the questionnaires. Certain categories of questionnaires need extra authority. For example, the registry itself or the ISP data center or the regulator, only those can be done by those particular people. And therefore, the country leader would know who they are. It's a handful of people and would allow them permission to do those questionnaires. We also need a collection of registry information, which is just the domain start date and the registrant's country code. Then to look at an African DNS observatory,

we're looking at trying to get zone transfers from people so that we've got up to date information on our side about growth, of what's happening, what progress is being made, and do it as such in lifetime. And then there's also a country leader report as well.

Next. So just on the observatory side, there's a separate sign up system at this particular URL where ccTLD people can sign up and effectively, they will get an extra secondary name server. My excitement on this is the secondary name server will be situated at Teraco in Johannesburg. But if things go well, this secondary name server could become an Anycast name server. And in a similar manner to say the AFRINIC, Anycast name server could potentially be hosted in exchange points around Africa. So Africa itself having an Anycast system dedicated to ccTLDs, a second one. And the only thing better than having one Anycast name server is having two of them.

Next slide. And just as an idea of the sort of information that one can get, I, myself, look after the EDU.ZA, which is tertiary education, not universities. And it's a small domain. There's only 180 domains. They are in working order. And there's a couple of other stats there. The software itself looks at how many websites there are, how many people using IPv6 for named servers. There's one IDN domain in the system as well. And how many of them are DNSSEC enabled.

Next slide. And then this can be used to draw pretty graphs which gives a much better and easier way of seeing how things happen. So this would be the growth. These are real figures. The growth of the EDU.ZA since 2010 until present. And that is everything. So there's an email address up there. There's William Stucke's name up there as well. He

was also very involved in this last time as he is this time. And Rodney is sitting somewhere behind me. And he's going to wave, isn't he? Yeah, he waved. Okay, thank you very much for your attention.

PIERRE DANDJINOU:

Thank you very much, Mark. And with that, I don't know, we're just going to, if there's any urgent questions, we'll be happy to take quickly one or two. Because we already over time. And then, yes. So this side. The two of you. Okay, go ahead. Please, if you could be brief on your question.

BRAM:

Yes, very straight to the point. Bram, for the records, for the transcription purposes. I wanted to go back to the coalition for digital Africa initiative, but specifically just asking the question of whether we have exhausted the possibilities of-- I've seen the names of the partners currently. And I'm looking at the African Union digital transformation strategy. Two of the objectives in the strategy is to promote the standards and interoperability of cross border data. But also I think the second one among many is the promotion and management and use of the country code domains. I'm wondering whether the absence of Africa union in the partnerships or in the strategic partners is something that we would want to explore, to bring them on Board. And the reason is we don't want to duplicate efforts. African Union could be focusing on the same initiatives. And maybe ICANN could actually complements or work together for the bigger picture than to work on a smaller piece of effort. Thank you.

PIERRE DANDJINOU: Thank you for the question. No, definitely, of course, the coalition actually work with this African strategy. And we've been in touch with African Union. I would say for the last six to eight months. So just to tell you that, yes, we really know that we need to have them within this. And we are working on that. And hopefully in the coming maybe weeks, it will be inside there. Because you have to sign what we call the guiding principles before you are a member. But yes, definitely we are considering this. Thank you for the question. I have one here. And the one there, please.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Yes, thank you very much. So I will be quick as you asked. There is the question of scaling up all of these projects in the presentations. There is an impression that we are at a pilot phase for a certain number of projects that were presented, the coalition for digital Africa, for example. I don't know if some thought has been given to perhaps anticipating scaling up. But I wanted to recommend perhaps that we might think about those different projects as part of other existing projects at the level of institutions, for example. I'm not going to name them, but how can we perhaps optimize the cost of scaling up. Because these are things that we need to think about, I think, currently. Thank you very much.

PIERRE DANDJINOU: Thank you very much for the question. And thank you to the translators who have given us extra time. We have two minutes left now. Thank

you for the question. The CDA, the project has a secretariat. It will soon be set up in Nairobi. And we will discuss that matter. But the secretariat will precisely do that work with the partners. It is actually not an ICANN project specifically. We have about 10 partners, so we have planned meetings with those partners, to harmonize, to set up a steering committee that will manage the different results and projects.

And the idea is not that each one bring their current project. It's not an ICANN project specifically. That's something that you need to understand. ICANN provides resources to launch the initiative. We have about 10 partners. We will work with them. We will probably have them all meet over the next six months in order to harmonize things. So it's an excellent question that you have, but we do have the beginning of an answer to your question. Ask one please.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER:

Good afternoon. Thank you so much, Pierre. So I totally understand ICANN's mission. But I want to quote a specific word that Sally mentioned about growing the next generation of leaders and [01:07:46 -inaudible] above things that should within Africa be done. I also know that ICANN support with staff that help with schools on internet governance. However, the major concern that I have is that the support also on the financial side that is given to schools on internal governance is done at the regional and the continental level.

But there is no funding support for national schools on Internet governance, specifically schools on internet governance that are being run by the national IGF, which are institutional and recognized for this.

So is ICANN going to support in the coming days? And what commitment can we extract from them?

PIERRE DANDJINOU:

Thank you for this question. And yes, as you know, we've been supporting different organizations, IGF and the School of Internal Governance. And I have to be frank. Question is, could we really go into 54 African countries and support individual project. That's the issue we have. That's why we've been concentrating our support on the regional level. Now of course, there are times where we might be able to eventually support either by having any, if I can't remember, any consultant there to assist. That we managed to do. But the rationale for us is also about the resources that we have.

Now, from what you just said, quoting, Sally, yes, we would do whatever we can, but I cannot just tell you today that, yes, we are going to get into the local internet governance in those schools. We can't. I mean, we can't cover 54 countries in that. With that, I think, no problem. We can always contact us and if there's any specific question, any expression of interest for the acquisition, feel free. Yes, please, Mariana.

MARIANA:

Adiel has his hand up.

PIERRE DANDJINOU:

Adiel has his hand up over there, but we are already closing here. Adiel, sorry. One or two seconds, please.

ADIEL AKPLOGAN:

No, no. It's fine. I just wanted to point out on the question that was asked originally about how the CDA is supporting access. So I want to highlight in the exchange point program that we have joined and also the work that we are doing with ISPs on their resolver side. It's DNS, but because the ISPs provide access in the region, the fact that we are helping them to optimize the way they deploy and implement the resolver or contribute to improving access as well. So that's all.

PIERRE DANDJINO:

Thank you. Thank you very much, Adiel, for this contribution. Yes, and then I would like to bring this to a close. And thank you very much for your attention. We didn't have much time, but we know that you still have questions. We are available for those questions either on-site, but also we do have the Coalition website. So we do have our email address from Nairobi. So please feel free to be in touch with you. And with that, a good ICANN meeting for all. And see you next time. Bye for now.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]