
ICANN77 | PF – At-Large Policy Session 1: A User Perspective - The Next gTLD App Window
Monday, June 12 2023 – 13:45 to 15:00 DCA

YESIM SAGLAM:

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With that, I will hand the floor over to Hadia Elminiawi. Thank you.

HADIA ELMINIAWI:

Thank you, Yesim. Welcome, all, to the first At-Large Policy Session at ICANN 77. The title of the session is An End-User Perspective: The Next gTLD Application Window. In this session, At-Large's five RALOs will share with us their experiences from the first round of gTLDs, what went well and what will need to improve. Our focus will be on inclusion and diversity. We will discuss how the new gTLD program can bring new communities online, more diversity and new language communities to the Internet.

Joining us today are Board members Leon Sanchez and Avri Doria. Thank you, Leon and Avri, for being with us today. Leon and Avri will provide the Board's view on the topics discussed, and how they see the new application window bringing new communities online.

I will now give the floor to Maureen Hilyard to set the scene for us. Maureen, the floor is yours.

MAUREEN HILYARD:

Thank you very much, Hadia. What I would like to do (I think it's in light of the fact that one of the outcomes of this actual session) is to gather together any more ideas that I can actually take to the GGP,

which is the GNSO guidance process in relation to the new gTLD round. What I thought I might do is just give you a bit of a background on what the GGP is actually trying to achieve and what we've been able to achieve to date. So where we're at at the moment is we actually have a GGP session tomorrow, so this is very timely; that we will be able to get this feedback from you. I know that you've had other opportunities to do so, but this is sort of like a last-ditch effort for us. After this meeting that we have after the session that we have at this meeting, there will only be less than a half a dozen sessions that we will have afterwards because the independent review team, of course, will take over and it's already started its business, and so we have to get as much of the work done as possible with regards to the GGP to them, and then they will move on with that.

With regards to the GGP, we're near the end of our work in preparation for establishing that first draft of the guidance process, which is being presented to the GNSO Council this meeting, and we will be working on developing it further. I'm assuming at the moment it's a very high-level document that's actually going to the GNSO, but I'm assuming that over the next few meetings we're actually going to pad it up with a lot of the inputs that have actually come from the CPWG already and which we have presented to the working group. I know that it's been appreciated by the staff who are actually recording all this information, but I think that we just have to make sure that we get everything that we think is going to be valuable for us to support, like the new round, the applicants who apply and also basically targeting the applicants who will need support during the actual application process.

And I think that one of the things that we have brought to the CPWG when we've actually had our meetings is to try to keep everyone up to date with any developments that have happened and I hope we've been able to do that. And I know that, for example, there's been a few changes during the whole process. Tijani started off as the rep and then he had NomCom responsibilities, so I took over his role and since then, of course, in the last few weeks, Sarah, who was our alternate, has been captured by Org and has therefore, with Satish, actually, thankfully, been and being able to take over that role. So I think that's one of the advantages of our at-large community: everyone's fairly willing to take on these new responsibilities, and it's been very helpful to the role that we actually have with regards to the new round and how we can support the implementation review team, if we can actually provide some guidance for them as to how we, as the grassroots people working with the communities, can help to get that information out.

But what I just wanted to make sure of is that when you're actually making your contributions, we understand that a lot of the work has actually been done already by the SubPro Working Group. And so we were given tasks to do that were very constrained. There was nothing we could do about any policy changes or anything like that. So the guidance was actually already in the SubPro, so we've just made sure that it actually fits, that it's fit for purpose when it goes to the implementation review team. And so at this particular point in time, it's our last-ditch effort to gather together any further ideas that RALOs may have, getting it back down to the communities, and also some guidance on how we as a community, as an At-Large community, can support this new round of effort.

So that's setting the groundwork for our session today, but I think one of the things that's really important is that we get some understanding for ourselves about how the Board sees that our efforts might actually be of value to what they envisage would be successful new round of new gTLDs.

So I'll just let Leon and Avri fight over who's going to go first.

LEON SANCHEZ:

That was a very amicable fight. So I'm going to speak in Spanish since we have interpretation services, and it's worth promoting our diversity. As I was saying this morning during our opening session at ALAC at ICANN77, there are different parameters that will guide us to decide whether a next round will be successful or will not. And each parameter will depend on the point of view being analyzed. We have different stakeholders, and therefore there will be different success parameters for each of those stakeholders.

Now, focusing ourselves on the topic as the at-large community and the advisory committee, the ALAC, I think there are different success indicators. One of them (the way I see it, I might be wrong, and please feel free to interrupt me and correct me if you think that I am wrong) would be to remove the barrier, the entrance barriers for the domain name space. And this is from the community perspective or community standpoint, because they have a huge number of Internet users and probably they are not part of this ecosystem, meaning to have a registry or a registrar. In this case, we are talking about a registry because we are talking about the next round of new gTLDs, and this has to do with registries mainly. I would like to see registries in Latin America, in the

Caribbean region. I would like to see registries in Africa. I would like to see even more registries in Asia and the Pacific area. I would like to see more registries in Europe and in North America. However, I think it is a good opportunity to support those regions that we know do not have registries or they do have a really low number of registries, unlike other regions.

And part of the things I was mentioning in the morning are [concerning] now because this has to do with the applicant support. As I said in the morning, many or most of the activities we were carrying out as the Boards were focused on analyzing and discussing the different recommendations that are now pending and that need to be approved by the Board. One of these recommendations has to do with the Applicant Support Program, and as I said before, there are different points of view. There are some Board members that do agree with the fact of making exceptions to or grants to the fees that they have to pay in the process, and there are some other Board members that are in favor of providing financial support. We are in favor of ICANN providing financial support in order to afford all the costs and fees to prepare the application and to file the application, the analysis stages that are required, the Applicant Guidebook, et cetera. So in this case, we have different points of view, as it is the case of any group of people that need to make a decision and that need to discuss the ideas. There are different standpoints. However, I feel there is a unity of criteria because we all recognize and we all understand that we need the applicant support. The way in which we are going to support the applicant, the nature of that support might be subject to some differences, but we are all on the same page when it comes to support.

Another topic that was discussed and that is related to what I consider should be a success indicator for the next round has to do with internationalized domain names. If we are provided that we are able to introduce or delegate more names or strings that are internationalized names, well, that would be a success indicator from the end user standpoint because we would be providing the resources for end users to be able to participate in the domain name space name using their own languages, their own alphabets, and their own scripts. So, that was one of the topics that was discussed, and I think that this would be (and I insist on this) a success indicator.

There are other indicators that might be more related to, not to the delegation, but of new extensions (perhaps they are not that related to the end-user) that do have to do with the program development—for example, auctions. Are we going to have auctions? Are we not going to have auctions? If that is the case, what is going to be the process? That process needs to be transparent, so we will have to see if we are going to have closed auctions, as it was the case in the previous round. That was something that was strongly questioned by many sectors in our community. So I believe that this is also a success indicator.

As Jonathan was saying this morning, we need to see not only the things we can get after the whole process is done just to determine what the next round is going to be like, but we also need to analyze what went wrong and to correct that. That is also a success indicator. We may be able to correct what was wrong in the previous round is important, and we need to be able to say, okay, everything that went wrong, everything that was an obstacle in our previous round, has now been improved. And we are now able to deliver a more fine-tuned, more streamlined,

less bureaucratic, more agile process, allowing us to give the Internet community these new domain name extensions.

I don't want to take the floor only myself. I would like to give the floor now to Avri for her to let us know her impressions because she was, leading the topic at the Board level because she has a relationship at the Board, with the Board and the GNSO and all the working groups together with Becky Burr. So they have both been our topic leaders in this regard, and they have much more experience and knowledge than me.

AVRI DORIA:

I'm Avri Doria, and I have to remember to speak slow enough. So yes, I've been lucky with Becky Burr to have been co-leading the SubPro caucus. So we have been following it for years. We've been meeting sometimes every week, sometimes every two weeks, sometimes every month (rarely, just that rarely) to talk to it, to follow it, to put in contributions, to write the Board comments to the PDP. And when I talk about the PDP, I don't talk about just the GNSO because I know how active many of you have been in that PDP. And so I'm really quite happy to see that the PDP has taken a lot of these issues, whether it's community, whether it's applicant support, whether it's IDNs, into support and they've put a lot of work into, how do we actually support those things in a next round?

And at the moment (and hopefully you'll forgive me), I'm the person who at this point with Becky has gotten more into the weeds of these recommendations. I'll try to stay away from those weeds But where we're at is, we've gotten advice from At Large and ALAC. I guess, At

Large has been through ALAC to become advice. But anyway, we have gotten that, and it's something that we've paid attention to all the way. We're constantly going back and saying, well, how does this work with the advice? When there's a recommendation and there's an advice, and do they match, do they not quite match? And in some of those cases, those are kind of the impetus for the questions that we've gone back to the GNSO with and said, you know, what about this issue? What about that issue?

Certainly, as was said, we're very committed to the notion of IDNs and have made IDNs and the support of those and the support of languages and the support of Scripps sort of paramount and something that really must be there for us to kick this off. Now it won't necessarily be in all languages in the world, but those of you that have been working on scripts and IDNs know that there's a fairly big group of languages that do get supported and can.

Now the next effort in that is going to involve, okay, so how do we reach out and let people know? How do we make sure that it works? How do we make sure that people in different communities ... And so that stuff that ICANN staff and the organization itself is already starting to gear up on, how do they build programs that will do that outreach? So some of this has already started. In some cases, we're still working on: do we approve this recommendation? Does this recommendation perhaps need some tweaking in the view of advice, in the view of fiduciary responsibilities, in the view of other aspects like global public interest? And that's one of the places where you all in the conversation come through, because it's the advice and it's these discussions, and it's these that sort of give us the clues on the public interest, on the global public.

So there isn't any magic omen that we can go to or that can say “Yes, this is. That's not.” That's why we built the framework. That's why we're trying to use it: to try and help us get closer to having something that we not only feel, “Yes, I feel that that's in the public interest in my gut,” about but that we have a little bit of some (sorry, I keep hitting that, and I can tell I'm starting to speak faster) of that omen. And so therefore, we've built that framework, and we're testing it, and we're trying it, and hopefully improving it to sort of give us a framework from which we can sort of say, yes, the public interest is served here, insofar as we can tell.

On some issues (and I don't know for people that got to listen to a GNSO meeting), we're going back and forth with the GNSO. The SubPro caucus works with the Small Team, the Board meets with the council, talking about some of the issues where we've got a problem where we're not quite ready to approve, or we've got issues that make it difficult to approve. And I've described what the Board and the GNSO, and in a sense all the rest of you, are doing: sort of a dance where we're moving a little forward. We're saying, “Well, you know, how about if this was,” ... Well, does that mean I was talking too fast? It sounds like a really good alarm to tell someone they're talking too fast, even if it wasn't intentional. So, you know, we're having those conversations now on the pending issues on which can we approve, which can we approve as they are, which can we approve if they clarify some stuff, because when we read it, we read it as “Well, it could be interpreted this way. It could be interpreted that way. This way works well. This way is sort of discomfoting.” And so how do we bridge that?

On some of them, we have issues that sort of say, “As this is currently written,” either because it's too broad or because we don't think it quite

meets the fiduciary responsibility, or we're not quite sure we understand the public interest aspects of it well enough. We're going to have to do more talking and we're arranging more conversations. We go back, sharpen our pencils, and look at how we can improve our considerations. We ask them to go back and sharpen their pencils and see. And as we continue this, we hope we get closer and closer with a December deadline of when we've come to agreement on everything and we've approved or not.

So, and as I say, those are the weeds I'm living in, and I keep looking at Paul, who lives in those weeds with me. And I guess that's where I should stop.

HADIA ELMINIAWI: No, don't stop. Go ahead, but, yeah, we have limited time.

AVRI DORIA: No, I'm fine. I prattle on endlessly, so it's really good for someone to stop me.

HADIA ELMINIAWI: Okay. Thank you, Avri, and thank you, Leon. Just a quick question to Leon. It's good to know, actually, that the new application around is going to be able to get new communities online. So Leon, I have a question to you. So you mentioned removing the entry barriers to the domain namespace, and indeed this is very important if we actually want to bring new communities online. You also mentioned that you envision this happening through financial support, But are you talking

about the Applicant Support Program or are you talking about something else? Thank you.

LEON SANCHEZ:

Thank you, Hadia. Well, first let me be very careful in how I am conveying the message. What I thought I said was that during our discussions in the Board, the topic of applicant support, of course, surfaced. And there are those colleagues who think that applicant support should be based on discounts on fees or waiving fees during the process. And there are those of us, like myself, who think that additionally to that measure of providing discounts or waiving fees, there should be a limited pool of, or a limited amount of money, that could serve to provide additional support for those applicants in need for, for example, drafting applications, etc. etc. So that is the kind of applicant support that is being discussed. Again, this is just a discussion at the level of, how do we find better ways to provide this kind of support? It's not something that has been either agreed or designed to be taken into a next phase. It's just something that we are at the moment discussing whether the majority of the Board would feel would be feasible or if the majority of the Board considers that actually establishing a program like this is definitely out of bounds.

HADIA ELMINIAWI:

Thank you so much, Leon. So as I understand, it's something in addition, so keep on the discussion. It's a good one.

Maureen, the floor is yours.

MAUREEN HILYARD:

Thank you, everyone. I just wanted to just support what Leon has actually said. One of the things that actually has come up in the GGP of course is what is sort of like basically guaranteed with regards to the applicant's support: the provision of pro bono services for a start and the possibility of fee reduction or something like that. But anything to do with the fees is still in the hands of the Board, of course, and that's still to be resolved. But the pro bono services are the only thing that ... And I understand that the request has already gone out for anyone who's actually willing to offer their services for this particular program, but I know that the sorts of things that Leon has raised have been questions and queries that have actually come up in our GGP, and we've probably sort of like pushed the barriers a little bit and sort of says, you know, we think that this should happen, that should happen. And, I mean, we are also very much aware that we'll be very much constrained by whatever budget is provided for this particular service anyway.

Avri?

AVRI DORIA:

Yeah, if I can just add one thing. I know that, and I can understand why, Leon is still very much advocating for the distribution of funds in some way or other. I know that we went back to the GNSO saying that we saw a large fiduciary problem with doing, that we don't quite see our [inaudible] at the moment. So it is an interesting discussion, but it's one, and I just wanted to make sure that there wasn't sort of mixed messages coming up because I know that yesterday, I went to the GNSO and said, we really can't do that. And so, if there is a way to do it, we

need still to discover what it is that it wouldn't enable such a thing. Coming up with any number of creative ways to help that don't involve distribution of money, whether open-ended or fixed sums, is something that a majority of us are saying we need to follow through on. So, none of the decisions we've made are at all final, but they're all (I know, I'll stop in a second) still re-workable, but they're tentatively moving towards a decision basis.

MAUREN HILYARD:

And thank you, thank you, Avri. And I just wanted to sort of add too, that I guess it's a preconception that people, when they're hearing about applicant support, think that there's actually money being exchanged. There is no funding that is actually given to an applicant. It's all basically in-kind. And so this is just to make people aware that, you know, in the Applicant Support Program itself, no one actually gets any money. The cost of everything is what ICANN will be covering.

HADIA ELMINIAWI:

So we need now to move to the RALOs and start getting they're ... Sebastien, I did see your hand and we will start with you. So, yes, we will start with you. I will start with your RALO. So I'm starting with you. So the first question is actually in relation to the previous round and, in your opinion, why couldn't any of the applicants succeed in getting the applicant support that was available in the previous round for applicants in need of financial support? So Sebastien, you start and you can also comment on the previous as well. I did see your hand was up.

SEBASTIEN BACHOLLET: Thank you very much. I'm going to speak in French. So I'm not the best one to start this debate because during the round in 2012, I was a Board member. So the first question will go to Avri. So today, if we have some issues, fiduciary issues, that means that in 2010, 2011 in Singapore when we started the new gTLD program, the ICANN Board didn't do its duties, its fiduciary duties. So I'm quite surprised by that.

I also was a representative of the Board regarding support for applicants and candidates. And I'd like to bring your attention to the pro bono services. It's a very good idea because some people can work without spending money, but if we arrive at a situation (and we might get there) where candidates from Latin America and Africa will only get pro bono services from American lawyers, are we going to get a lot out of that? Are we going to really make sure that we have an infrastructure that we have some structures in those countries, in Latin America and Africa, or is it going to be U.S. lawyers that are going to help them? The strongest country may only be represented. So that's an issue I see, and we have to be careful.

And maybe it's a joke, but finally, in 2012, those that were right, were they in Africa, in Latin America? They have very few extensions, and instead of having a lot of domain names that are not being used, maybe that was the best not to have so many.

So, let's see where success is. Is it the number of gTLDs that's maybe in the U.S.? What about the quality? Maybe .Africa is the big winner? So, let's see what we want and what we need. And you can stop me whenever you want, But the fact is that today, we have ... Let me finish my sentence. No issue. No problem. We are in a situation where we had

many extensions that are not being used, and as final users, We need community, we need IDNs, International Domain Names, and that's really what matters for us. Thank you.

HADIA ELMINIAWI: Thank you so much, Sebastien. Do you expect a reply from Avri?

No? You're fine. Okay, great.

AVRI DORIA: I certainly don't mind giving a reply if I can make it brief enough, but if you don't want me to, I'm fine not giving one also.

HADIA ELMINIAWI: Yeah, can we keep it till the end, until all five RALOs speak?

AVRI DORIA: Sure.

HADIA ELMINIAWI: Thank you. Okay, so next RALO, APRALO.

AMRITA CHOUDHURY: Thanks, Hadia. And I would try, since there's positive time, try to respond to all the five queries which you had. Since the query came to us quite towards the end, before most of the people started travelling, and our RALO didn't get that much of time to kind of deliberate ... But we do have some comments which have come in. So I will try to be precise and we have a few members in the room, they can add to it.

In terms of applicant support, what was actually suggested was there should be a balance between the norms for application support program with the ability for applicants to apply and qualify in order to avoid the 2012 situation of only three applicants and just one applicant qualifying. While there are concerns about gaming, which is legitimate, it must not be restrictive for the program's effectiveness too and then there were comments that it should be easy for people to understand perhaps have it in multiple languages of support (not all languages but at least the critical ones), and the funding should be for genuine and needy applicants who need support. There were suggestions that it could be in three steps: a pre-application which could have outreach information propagations and FAQs, applications which need support for each stage of the application, and post-application which is continuing to engage with the applicant to resolve any post-application issues with the application.

In terms of IDNs and UA, what was suggested was that the next round should ensure that the policy for IDNs at the top level also enables IDN variant labels for the relevant scripts, keeping in mind the needs of language and script communities. And universal acceptance gaps should be closed in order to ensure the IDNs e-mail IDs behave exactly like legacy EAs for all purposes. There were suggestions that it should be more inclusive to the IDN and UA users in terms of providing domain extensions, which reflect the native language character scripts.

In terms of community applications, we believe that At-Large has a special role as a part of its commitment to the global public interest: to ensure that communities around the world are aware of their rights to apply under the community application process.

In terms of promoting the new round we believe that at large an APRALO can play a role just like we did for universal acceptance. We could communicate with the GSE team in all these perspectives. This could be in terms of information about the new opportunities, the requirements, helping provide the applicants to make their submissions, and FAQs and whom to contact because this we feel is very critical, people don't know whom to go to.

And in terms of support which we think we need is the information, proper training so that we can, our ALSes know what it is because they work in the community and they can be our mouthpiece out there, (ICANN's mouthpiece, rather), and customize the promotional material because not every region needs the same kind of things. The same material can be put in different ways. Financial support to run such initiatives—for example if someone wants to do it at some place that kind of support needs to come ... And by this I would like to raise that, for example, in the Universal Acceptance Day, there were limitations: one country, one application, one support. Unfortunately for example, if I take India, which has 22 scripts, and you just support one industry association and the ALSes do not get support, that becomes a shame. It's ineffectiveness, I would say. So perhaps that needs to be looked at.

There are many more things but we're just trying to get the information. We would be really eager to be participating actively in this role. And yes I think these are certain things which we could think of.

Sorry, Hadia, I think I stuck to my time. There are others in the room, but I'm sure, you know, since you have positive time, we'll leave it at this.

HADIA ELMINIAWI:

Thank you, Amrita.

So, which RALO wants to go next?

LACRALO, please go ahead.

CLAIRE CRAIG:

LACRALO, as Amrita said, did not really have enough time to caucus with our members, but I do have a couple of comments just so that we contribute something. And one of the things that was said was that it is that what is expected that ... Well, what happened in the last round was that the assessment of the neediness tend to stifle the enthusiasm of the would-be beneficiaries. So how you went about assessing them caused them not to be as enthusiastic about the program as they should have been. They also felt to some extent that we need to ensure that the fitness of this version of the applicant guidebook that At-Large must advocate for more applicant-friendly criteria and transparent eligibility process.

Another view was that there is no proof that the latest round of the new gTLDs is going to do us any good. Like, they're not sure that the last rung did much good and they're not sure what good this round is going to do. And it's as if we never really understood what the risk was and we need to assess that before we move forward with this new round.

So those were just some of the general ... I know they seem fairly negative, but again, this is from a region where there was very low support and low applicant engagement and they're just providing

reasons why it was that way. So thank you for this opportunity to share that.

HADIA ELMINIAWI:

Thank you, Claire. And actually we do not want really to focus on the negative things that happened in the last round. We want to look ahead and see how we can make it better next time.

I see Seun's hand up. Seun, do you want to respond for AFRALO? Okay, thank you.

SEUN OJEDEJI:

Hello, everyone. I think a lot has been said and I think some of the feedback given by Amrita and Claire, as well, resonates with some of our experiences at AFRALO as well.

But I just want to also mention that it's good that Leon said diversity will be something of interest in this next round, but I think that it needs to be clear from the onset how to measure whether there was actually diversity in the long run by the time the next round starts. It needs to be clear what does that mean in practice. Does it mean that, as in the case of the ICANN Board, once we have one person from each region, then we have diversity on the ICANN Board? Is that what it's going to mean when it comes to the new gTLD round as well. I think the amount of application from each region ... I mean, if there are few applications in the region, it should be an advantage. It shouldn't be the other way around, as we experienced from the previous rounds. The aspect of awareness should not be underestimated. I think awareness is very, very important, especially for regions like Africa, Latin America, and the

other underserved regions. It is very important that the process is clear, precise, and it is very, very realistic, especially with regards to meeting the basic requirements for application. It needs to be very realistic, and when there's the process for the applicant support, when it comes out, if there's going to be anything like that, it needs to be accessible. It shouldn't be something that is going to be too difficult.

I would also like to remind us about the Africa DNS study, which was done, and I think there were some challenges in there. It should be good that ICANN is also looking at how much of those challenges they could support with and they could help address even before the next round comes up, because we need to face it. The reality is that for my region, Africa, and some other regions, like Latin America, the number of registrars are actually just very low, and if we want people to actually participate in the next round, then we need to also ensure that we are contributing towards addressing the challenges that are happening in those regions.

And of course, AFRALO, just like other RALOs have said, will be happy to be part of this awareness. We'll be happy to participate in it like we did in the UA, the Universal Acceptance. But of course, we also like the necessary capacity to do so, to be provided by ICANN in a very, very expedited manner so that we can actually participate actively.

I think I'll stop here and then hand it back to Hadia. Thank you.

HADIA ELMINIAWI:

Thank you, Seun.

And I would like now to give the floor to NARALO. Greg, please go ahead.

GREG SHATAN:

Thank you. I've been mulling this over and asked for some comments from our group. I think I'll follow Amrita's lead and kind of go through some of the thoughts that we had.

In terms of the prior round, I think the end user experience, other than end users who are involved in ICANN, was a complete non-event and may still be seen as a non-event, even after the dust has settled. I think there's still a lot of fairly low level of awareness and buy-in. And that's even though I would say a vast majority of the new gTLDs were in English. So, I think there's still a question of, what is the positive impact? And I think that while we have Anglophone end users in North America, of course, we also have Francophones, Spanish speakers, and an incredible number of diaspora speakers of other languages. So in that case, we're as big a part of the IDN question. It's just that obviously our one million Urdu speakers sounds like a lot but it pales next to the number of Urdu speakers in the rest of the world we have. But that is I think part of what would be hopefully seen in the next round will be more IDNs and maybe even some marketing in the diaspora for second level domains ultimately. But I think there still needs to be more awareness.

And in terms of applicant support, I've often thought that an incubator model for applicant support would make good sense and provide a suite of services for them, with the idea that they're not going to be able to stand up on day one. And view them as startups. I think it may also

mean that we should view gTLDs generally in a way as startups. And so the failure rate of 80% of all gTLDs ... I don't know if that's a real number. I just made it up. But that wouldn't be a number that's out of the question for all startups. It's not out of the question. Even of restaurants in New York City, 50% close in the first year, and that's non-pandemic. Okay, so failure is always an option and sometimes it's the most likely option. So maybe we shouldn't be so hard on the failed TLDs. I think that it would be good if there were more TLDs that were intended to improve the end user experience and fewer that seem to be by default or even by design havens for abuse, scams, malware, and other malarkey, as our president likes to say.

I think that universal acceptance is an issue, and that's something that needs to be worked out. It really is a barrier to entry and acceptance of the new TLDs. Generally, even something like .gallery for an email address won't work on a number of commercial websites if you're setting up an account.

So I think one of the most important things (and I'll try to wrap up here) is education. On the question about promoting the new round, I just said we're not in the business of promoting the new round, especially not the end users. We are in the business of promoting education, information, and awareness so that people will know what's going on so that they can comment critically in a meaningful way on things when they do find out about it from us, and end users generally should understand how this is changing the Internet landscape. So I think that there really needs to be a significant education component. I would say that At-Large should be integrally involved in that sense. And obviously we're all happy to help ICANN learn and all other parts of ICANN to

better fashion information for end users and also to push it out beyond those who already know how to find ICANN.

So I think that'll kind of cover it for the moment. I could go on and on, but I won't. Thank you.

HADIA ELMINIAWI:

Thank you, Greg. So, you actually mentioned a new idea: incubators, an incubator model for applicant support. So, how do you envision this happening? Is it through ICANN? Is it through the support program? How do you envision this taking place?

GREG SHATAN:

Just briefly, I think it would mean first to identify the various types of incubator resources that need to be available, including potentially office space. And I think ICANN really should coordinate it. I think the idea is to get beyond the usual suspects in terms of gTLD owners. And I think that the outreach and the support really needs to be coordinated by ICANN. I would hope that the contracted parties and the service providers would participate in a meaningful way in making that happen and even contribute some resources toward it and maybe even pro bono services from US lawyers, as Sebastien noted, which could come in handy as well. But I think that ICANN really needs to be the facilitator at the very least.

HADIA ELMINIAWI:

Thank you, Greg. And actually the second comment was actually based on Sebastien's intervention when he said that services will mainly be

provided by American lawyers and facilitators. And I'm wondering why. Why does it need to be provided through American lawyers? And I will give the floor first to Sébastien. Thank you.

SEBASTIEN BACHOLLET: I am not saying I thought that it needs to be, but you will see the results. When you are in a developing country, I guess (and you know better than me), it's more difficult to find a job, and therefore you have less time to give free. Therefore, at the end of the day, it's why I am saying that, we have to be really careful on that. I really feel that we need to find a way to have something meaningful. If the lawyer is at the other side of the world, it will not be very easy for the applicant. That's something to think about. But it's nothing to say that they can't do it from North America, but I think they will be more willing to do it.

HADIA ELMINIAWI: Thank you. And my second question would be, do you see disadvantages to that?

But I will give the floor to Jonathan first.

JONATHAN ZUCK: Thanks. I guess I want to jump off of both things Sebastien said and Greg because I think that it behooves us to think more creatively about the role At-Large can play in the next round for a number of reasons. One completely cynical reason is that we have a lot we want out of the organization and this is a priority of the organization. And the extent to which we're part of the organizational priorities, we might be more

likely to get some of the things that we want in terms of resources, ITI, some of those other things, if we're part of the program, so to speak.

But beyond that, and more idealistically, because I understand where you're coming from, Greg, that it's not our responsibility to promote the new round, it is possible that it could be our responsibility to bounce off of Sebastien's comment to help identify pro bono resources that might be available in different regions at a regional level. It might be opportunities for us to identify communities that aren't aware that might want to get engaged in the program itself. It might be a good responsibility to help at a regional level play watchdog for some of the applications that happen for strings for which we might want to facilitate contention, so that the next dot Amazon or something like that becomes a conversation that happens much earlier because we've caught it at a regional level, we've got things we're aware of and we're paying attention when they aren't.

So it seems to me that there's a lot of possibility for the role of at large generally and for the RALOs in particular to play in this next round that's very pro-end user and that doesn't involve the sort of just basic promotion of it as a round. But making the best of the round, if that makes sense, could be a very important role for us to play. Just something to put out there to consider.

HADIA ELMINIAWI:

Thank you, Jonathan. Very good points indeed. Bill, please go ahead.

BILL JOURIS: I feel like I'm stating the obvious, but I will anyway. The reason that we would expect to have US lawyers involved is very simply that any successful applicant is going to end up signing a contract with ICANN and the contracts are written to be executed under US law. So you need somebody with that expertise if you're going to enter into a contract. Thank you.

HADIA ELMINIAWI: Okay, thank you, Bill. I do differ with you, but I give the floor to Amrita.

AMRITA CHOUDHURY: Thank you, Hadia. Amrita. I think it goes two ways, Bill. I beg to differ from you slightly out here. Yes, there may be collaborations between lawyers in the US or any other part of the world, and lawyers do have collaborations, and there are law firms who work that way. One looks at one jurisdiction and the other looks at the other. So perhaps another thing is that many lawyers in other nations are not aware of the opportunities available to support in these kinds of programs, and perhaps that is something which we can spread within the lawyer community. "Look, this is the opportunity." And I think that's also a role which we could play in passing on the information to relevant people just in case they are interested. And definitely having a lawyer in your jurisdiction helps you to get the information faster, in a more accessible way, and there could be handshakes between different lawyers too.

HADIA ELMINIAWI: Yeah, Naela?

NAELA SARRAS: Just a point of clarification. The pro bono that was put out is not really just for lawyer services. It's really asking about a number of things. If you are an organization who has experience with providing back-end registry services or advising on building together, putting together an application, sort of like what Jonathan was saying, there's different points of that. So if you want to volunteer your time and your expertise as an organization that has expertise in this, please put up your hand now. And that's really what the pro bono is trying to do. It really, I feel like we're focusing a lot on lawyer services here, but that's really not what the pro bono is asking. And I'm sorry, I'm not here to create ... I just wanted to clarify that.

HADIA ELMINIAMI: Sebastien, go ahead.

SEBASTIEN BACHOLLET: Maybe it's a problem of translation, but I am sure that they have done a great job, but I say, I take an example, yes. I know what a pro bono program is, and I know that there are many, many different issues. But I think with the case of the lawyer, I could have taken a back-end registry. Where is the back-end registry today? And we can take other examples. At the end of the game, it's the same problem. We will face a lot of things coming from the rich country, to be short, and for all the pro bono things. But I agree with Amrita, we can do a good job in trying to find organizations, people in all the regions of the world to be part of the program. It could be a good way to be engaged. Thank you.

HADIA ELMINIAWI: Thank you, Sébastien. Indeed, it doesn't have to be, as you say, from only from rich countries.

I have Jonathan and then I have Greg. Jonathan, please go ahead.

JONATHAN ZUCK: I just want to note that it isn't rocket science. Jim Prendergast, who's just sitting back there, built his house on the last round consulting with people and he's not that smart. So, I mean, I think that we can find people in every region that are capable of providing consulting services and helping potential applicants.

HADIA ELMINIAWI: Greg, please take the floor. Thanks. First, I'm sorry to hear that Jim had to build his own house rather than getting any help to do that. I will say that, just to run with the example, through the International Trademark Association, I'm aware that there are lawyers in many, many countries who work in the domain name space, and we could work with the IPC and INTA to find local people to work in incubators. I think the incubators would need to be globalized and localized. They should be where people will find them. You can't do them in every possible language in the world, but you can certainly locate them in major centers, and even for that matter, you could provide a bit of a hub and spoke where lawyers who are in perhaps areas where it's underserved could seek advice from more experienced lawyers and then turn it out to those. So there is a model, a hub and spoke model, that can be built

here. You know, the bottom line is we want to give opportunities beyond the ones that everybody already has.

HADIA ELMINIAWI:

Thank you, Greg. So one last question.

And so, among the things that we all agreed on, all RALOs actually mentioned promotion and advertising the new program as well as the Applicant Support Program. And my question to all five RALOs that would be, how do you envision promoting the new round and the applicant support? And more importantly, what do you need in order to do this promotion? and what kind of materials do you need to do the required promotion for the success of the program? So, we could start in alphabetical order. AFRALO. Seun, are you here?

SEUN OJEDEJI:

Yes, I'm here.

HADIA ELMINIAWI:

One minute, please, Sean.

SEUN OJEDEJI:

Thank you. Yes, so I'm going to use even less than one. I think we've covered some of that in the previous intervention. With regards to awareness, with regards to the importance of having the RALO participating in awareness and the fact that capacity building of our ALSes from the ICANN Org needs to be taken seriously, so that our ALSes would also be able to engage in a more informed manner to contribute to the awareness efforts ... Yes, that's all I can say for now. Thank you.

HADIA ELMINIAWI: Thank you, Sean.

Amrita?

AMIRA CHOUDHURY: Thank you, Hadia. In terms of support, one, there's information—complete information about the process, timelines, etc. If there are marketing material available, I'm sure ICANN would have it in terms of promotional material which can be used. Three, planning with the GSE team in terms of having outreach activities in various areas. Four, helping in the agreed promotional activities or wherever we want to have the awareness campaigns, the kind of financial support; you know, we get it. And more information about who's applying, et cetera, so that if there is input which is required, like Jonathan was mentioning, we can be soundboards in terms of informing, look, this is what is happening. These are primarily on top of the hat which comes to me.

HADIA ELMINIAWI: Thank you, Amrita.

Sebastien. EURALO.

SEBASTIEN BACHOLLET: Plus one, Amrita. And you know there are already plenty of organizations of people who are campaigning to find clients about new gTLD programs. Therefore we will have less to do maybe.

HADIA ELMINIAWI:

Thank you, Sebastien.

And now, LACRALO. Claire or Laura, go ahead.

CLAIRE CRAIG:

Thank you. I would like to add to all what you already said, that we could have ambassadors of the new GLTD program ambassador in each ... Well, I won't say each country because maybe you will look at me kind of bad, but maybe for the regions, like for example the program of Universal Acceptance, who has ambassadors. I think we should have something like that and we could avoid what Sebastien said of having people requesting funding or something like that, that they don't really need, and people knowing each market will be something valuable. Thank you.

HADIA ELMINIAWI:

Thank you so much.

And now, NARALO. Greg, do you want to respond in relation to the materials that you need for promotion? Or you already mentioned that.

GREG SHATAN:

I think I've said enough.

HADIA ELMINIAWI:

Okay, thank you so much.

So, I would like to get final words from Leon and Avri before we wrap up.

LEON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Hadia. Well, of course, there is a lot of work still to do in regard to the next gTLD round. And us in the Board are working along with a huge crowd of people to make this happen as soon as possible, but again our vision is to make it right rather than you know fast. So that is where we are focusing our efforts.

HADIA ELMINIAWI: Avir? Yeah, keep it short.

AVRI DORIA: Thank you. Okay, there's so many things that I could and should respond to. One I do want to respond to is in terms of fiduciary responsibilities. There was no criticism meant on what happened last time. They assigned a block of money that was then utilized. They did not give out cash. They did not give out checks for lawyers or checks for writing services, and that's what we're saying. We have a fiduciary problem explaining the way they did an assignment. So it's a different thing. Certainly there was no intent to insult you as a Board member of the past.

I think there's an immense number of really good points that came out that I've written down that we're going to have to go through. I think you've come up with so many different possibilities of what pro bono could do. I think many of them are things that really should be talked to with ICANN and staff about how those things could be put together, how those things could be funded, because those are the kinds of things that don't have the fiduciary responsibility problems that I was talking

about before. I come out of an ALS. I was a member of an ALS. I used to sit in NARALO meetings a long time since, and I very much support the inclusion of the ALS and the power that you all have because of your global scope. So I'm really hoping to get you involved in helping make this happen in the right way, in the way that supports the applicants from your areas, that the applicants support from your areas, et cetera. I think that's necessary. I think it's got to happen. Thanks.

HADIA ELMINIAWI:

Thank you, Avri.

And so we actually did hear new ideas today. We heard the incubators idea. We heard the ambassadors idea. We actually, for the first time, I think, discussed having diverse providers for pro bono services.

So thank you all for your participation and for contributing to this session. And see you in our further discussions. Thank you.

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