
ICANN78 | AGM – ICANN Board Members Welcome Fellows and NextGen Program Participants
Thursday, October 26, 2023 – 1:15 to 2:30 HAM

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you. Hello, and welcome everyone to the Welcome Session with ICANN Board members and fellowship and NextGen at ICANN programs participants. My name is Siranush Vardanyan, and I am the remote participation manager for this session. Please note that this session is being recorded and is governed by the ICANN Standards of Behavior.

During this session, questions and comments submitted in the chat will only be read aloud if put in the proper form as I have noted in the chat space. I will read questions and comments allowed during the time set by the chair or moderator of this session. And please note that the questions will be accepted only from fellows and NextGen program participants because this is a dialogue and the welcome session especially for this target group.

Interpretation for this session will include English, Spanish, French, Arabic, Chinese, Russian and Portuguese. Click on the interpretation icon in Zoom and select the language you will listen to during the session. If you wish to speak, please raise your hand in the Zoom room. And once the session facilitator calls upon your name, kindly unmute your microphone and take the floor, or take the line here in front of two microphones. Please state your name for the record and the language you will speak, if speaking a language other than English. When speaking, be sure to mute all other devices and notifications. Please

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

Speak clearly and at a reasonable pace to allow for accurate interpretation.

This session includes automated real time transcription. Please note that the transcript is not official or authoritative. And to view the real time transcription, click on the closed caption button in the Zoom toolbar. To ensure transparency of participation in ICANN's multistakeholder model, we ask that you sign in the Zoom session using your full name. You may be removed from the session if you don't sign in using your full name.

With that, I would like to welcome our Board members here. It's my immense pleasure introducing you the Board chair, Tripti Sinha, Board vice-chair, Jevtovic. Fellowship program proud and a friend of us, Leon Sanchez, and Christian, my apologies. Welcome to our session for the first time, and we are looking forward to see you in our future sessions. And without further ado, Tripti, can I give the floor to you for welcoming our group here? Thank you.

TRIPTI SINHA:

Thank you so much. First, a very, very warm welcome to all of you who are ICANN Fellows and NextGen. This is a very important program for ICANN. And the crux of the program is we would like to invite new participants into our community. And this is an amazing opportunity where you come and imbibe the ICANN environment, understand what we do, work with that.

This is the last day of the conference, so I'm sure you're well acquainted with the mission by now, which is we are responsible for the security,

stability, and resilience of the Internet's unique identifier systems. And what does that mean? It typically translates to domain names and IP addresses and protocols and our management of those and policies surrounding it. And these are things that are enduring in time. The Internet was created and is growing day by day and serving billions of people in the world. And our hope is that it'll live beyond our lifetime, and the way we may ensure that these things live beyond our lifetime is we bring in the NextGeneration, and the NextGeneration is you.

So, it doesn't matter what part of society you're from, whether you're the technical community or policymakers or you've worked in government or you're simply an end user, you have a place at ICANN. And your voice is very important because when you construct policy, policies are broad in nature, and they have to be optimized to serve all of humanity, so it's very important that we get feedback from everyone. So, a very, very warm welcome to you, and I hope you've enjoyed the conference these past many days. And with that, I'll turn it back to you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you. Danko, please.

DANKO JEVTOVIC: Thank you, Siranush. Well, Tripti has said it all. I'm just happy to be here with you. I don't think this room actually is very ideal because the slides are shining into us, and you're sitting rather far away, but every congress center is sometimes difficult to organize these closer sitting sessions that we would like. But my point is we are there, we are happy

to answer your questions, and we are very supportive of the fellowship and NextGen processes.

By the way, I just reminded Siranush, I also once applied to do fellowship, but I wasn't accepted. If I remember correctly that year was actually that meeting was not in Europe, that is my region. So, maybe that was one of the reasons. But I've started rethinking about that, so I applied to the NomCom and ended up here. And then Leon also reflected about his experience. Leon?

LEON SANCHEZ:

Thank you, Danko. Yes. I was rejected two times before being accepted finally for the Prague meeting. So, the message is just keep trying, and you'll eventually get there. Well, it's always good to be with the fellows and the NextGen. And as we say, once a fellow, always a fellow, so I consider myself to continue to be a fellow, of course. And well, I'm happy to try to answer any questions you may have, to share my experience, to tell you a little bit of how I got here.

I started as a fellow in Prague in 2012. That was my first fellowship. Then I had my second fellowship for Beijing. And then by the time I applied for my third fellowship which was for Buenos Aires, I also applied through the NomCom for a leadership position in the ALAC for the Latin American and the Caribbean region. I got appointed by the NomCom. So, as Danko was also saying, there are different pathways for you to have access to active roles. More than leadership positions, I would call them active roles.

Because one thing that I've learned through these years is that it doesn't matter what the title you have on your head. It is not if you are a leader in the ALAC community, the GNSO, the Board itself, etc. What really matters is that you exercise that duty of contributing to ICANN's mission to work, to roll your sleeves up and say, okay, let's do this. Let's contribute to the different policy making processes, to the different working groups, etc.

So, again, titles come and go. Titles are just temporary. And what I would encourage you is to look at these positions as opportunities to serve, to serve our community and to help ICANN further its mission and to contribute to continue building a stable, secure, and resilient Internet.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Leon. Thank you very much. Christian, if I can give you the floor for couple of words to welcome.

CHRISTIAN KAUFMANN: Well, I'm probably uniquely not the right person for that, so let's see. I was never on the fellowship. I never applied. So, to be honest, I never paid too much attention to it. And I'm new on the Board, so you've got to forgive me to that degree with the fellowship. I knew it existed, but I never knew exactly what it was about.

And then we have that interaction where we actually have fellowships and NextGen having dinner, for example, with some of the technical community, and I ended up there now twice, one was this Monday. And

when I actually figured out that I couldn't differentiate the NextGens from the fellowships exactly what the purpose of them was, I thought, mmm, I should learn that.

So, I'm mainly in the room, to be honest, on a very selfish mission to understand what we are doing here, and I guess that would be my story.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you very much, and welcome on board. So, we are looking forward to see you in many other sessions with our fellows and NextGeners. And just to give an overview of our group. We have 40 fellows selected for ICANN76, and out of them, 35 are complete newcomers to ICANN. And we have, out of this group, 5 joining us as virtual fellows. And the diversity also in place, we have 36 countries represented. And this is for the first time that we have 60% of females selected. Yes.

And we have 11 representatives of NextGen at ICANN program. Our bright students representing 8 countries in Europe, and the gender diversity is there. So, you have the huge bunch of talented professionals in this small group, but I'm sure they are happy to come up with nice and interesting questions and challenging questions to the Board members. So please, now I open the floor for questions. I am looking to the Zoom, and, yes, I see Houda. Please go ahead.

HOUDA CHIH: Hello, everyone. So, I want to introduce myself. So, my name is Houda Chih. I'm from Tunisia. I am a newcomer to fellowship program. I want

to start by thanking Siranush and all ICANN staff for opening doors, shared information, it was an amazing experience. My question is, is it possible to join two groups, for example, being active in one and observer another one? Thank you.

LEON SANCHEZ:

Thank you, Houda. Yes. I mean, you can join as many groups as you want. If I am understanding your question correctly, that means if you could, for example, join the At-Large community while also joining the GNSO or the RSSAC or the SSAC or any other community or any other constituency within ICANN. And the answer is yes, you can belong to as many as you want, but there's a catch. You can't vote in each of them. Right? I mean, if you are exercising a leadership position, then you need to decide in which of these constituencies you want to have a vote because otherwise, you would be conflicted. So, you either vote in one or another, but you cannot vote in both. But you can observe and participate and take part of discussion in as many groups and as many constituencies if you want.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN:

Thank you, Leon. Every group has membership rules, so you need to first learn about them and then try to join, but here we're multitasking, multi-languaging, multi-stakeholder model representing that model. Yes. We'll go to microphone one. Christina, please. Oh, Claudia.

CLAUDIA LEOPARDI:

My name is Claudia. My name is Claudia Leopardi for the record. I'm a NextGener. And I don't know if my question will be interesting as you asked, but I will start with the comment. In the NextGen, I was quite surprised by the amount of people that have a social sciences background like I do. I was expecting many more technical. And I think that really reflects the importance and the highlight that it has been given to geopolitical issues at the moment and the importance of ICANN in the technical community that it's having. And it's something.

WSIS+20, the GDC are things that have been talked about plenty of times at this meeting, but perhaps if I have a question, it would be what are the further engagements and strategies for these two very important processes that ICANN is having? I've read the blog by the CEO of ICANN, but also other organizations about how the GDC is undermining the power of the technical community. And yeah, I just want to maybe ask for a bit of feedback on that and ask what you are planning to do for those. Thank you.

TRIPTI SINHA:

Thank you for the question. We're getting organized to address it because it's extremely disturbing that they would relegate or even delete the technical community considering the kind of the Internet exists or it was created by that community. So, we're trying to call attention to the technical bodies in that we're coordinating to be a unified force and also shine light on exactly what our role is.

And we also elevated WSIS, our response to it. It's a high priority for the Board, and it's even on the CEO's annual goals. She has a unit called government engagement led by Vinnie, and he is deeply engaged in

that. And we had a delegation of close to 30 individuals who were at the IGF where we made a very strong push and statement and support for the multistakeholder model. And so, essentially, it's going to be all hands on deck, and we are going to push this as much as we can because it would be very foolish and shortsighted of anybody in the world to limit the participants and indeed remove the technical community who is responsible for this.

And to the first comment you made about how diverse this body is. Yes, it was technical protocols and standards that created the Internet, but don't forget the end users and policymakers are not necessarily technical. That's why we need all various and sundry voices at the table. Because when you use the Internet, it's anyone and everyone, so you don't have to be technical. So, everyone's opinions are respected, and they're channeled through our stakeholder bodies. Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: And Leon has follow-up point here.

LEON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Siranush. Well, Tripti has stated very well ICANN's position. But I think it's also an opportunity for you as fellows that remember this is a multi-stakeholder process, and we wanted to remain that way. So, it is not only ICANN that needs to be in action and try to uphold these principles and to advocate for the multistakeholder model at the different fora that that have been discussed. But also, our participation as individuals in our home countries is very important.

So, I would encourage you that once you go back to your home countries, get in touch with those decision makers and let them know the importance of keeping the multistakeholder, model the way it has been for many years and to continue to be inclusive and to avoid any intense or any trends to exclude any of the current stakeholders. In this case, the technical community. So, I would definitely, again, encourage you to go back to your home countries and get in action and be in touch with the decision makers and make them understand the importance of continue to foster a healthy and diverse multistakeholder model.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Leon. And before we move forward, it's my pleasure to introduce also ICANN's interim president and CEO, Sally Costerton. Sally, please, with your two words of welcome of our group.

SALLY COSTERTON: Thank you. Thank you very much, Siranush. I apologize for being slightly delayed. It's the nature of the job of being the interim CEO of ICANN that you get all sorts of sudden meetings that happen in corridors. I'll put it at that. But very nice to see you all. And I just wanted to take this opportunity, I mean, I've been involved in this program. I've been at ICANN for 11 years, and we've always had the fellowship program. The NextGen program is a slightly more recent addition, but actually it's a long time now, isn't it? So, we've been together a long time.

I'm incredibly committed to these programs. They make an enormous difference, and it is so gratifying to see people coming through the

NextGen program, through the fellowship program, becoming successful ambassadors for the work we do at ICANN and for the multistakeholder process for technical Internet governance around the world. And I'm incredibly proud whenever I see that happening, and it's happening increasingly frequently. Because as the years pass, of course, we have more and more people that have gone through these programs.

And I want to thank you all also for the commitment that you give because we ask a lot of you. This is not an easy ride. You work hard. We ask you to do a lot to participate very actively. And I really want to thank you for that because you're passionate, energetic, and committed. You bring a lot of new thinking and a lot of new ideas to the table, which I know the ICANN Board and certainly the ICANN staff truly value. So, thank you very much.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN:

Thank you, Sally. And just to highlight for this AGM, we know that many new leaders are incoming, and we have several fellows coming, but the highlight is we have one fellow selected for the first time as a PTI board, and another fellow joining SSAC team, stability and security. So, this is a great proud of us. The person who ended up in SSAC, he came through the NextGen program and then come to fellow, and then now he's here. Thank you. And we will move to microphone 2. Paulo, please.

PAULO MARCOS DREWIACKI: Hi. Paulo Marcos Drewiacki, ICANN78 fellow, NIC.br, but speaking on my private capacity here. I have two questions, quick ones. Two topics, next gTLD round and naming collisions, I believe.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Just to keep in my two minutes option as we did for public forum. Thank you.

PAULO MARCOS DREWIACKI: No problem: First question, next gTLD round. I see lots of discussion about policy, about checking whether the next GLD round all of the policy aspects are covered, but I don't see too many discussions on the marketing aspect of the next gTLD round. I only see something focused on the CP summit, but not during the meetings. And I wonder if there will be some more discussion about the commercial aspect because I think it's one of the key aspects for the success of the next gTLD.

And second question. Yesterday, there was a discussion about the emerging identifier technologies. And from what I've seen, someone invented a problem, new gTLDs, created some new gTLDs and people are registering them. And how is that going to be addressed during the naming collisions process? Because I believe that from what I heard yesterday, the answers were like, well, there are some people using the extensions that were "created and delegated", and lots of people are already using them. So, there's a problem. ICANN has to clean house now. How is that going to happen? Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Paulo. Tripti, would you like to take the question?

TRIPTI SINHA: Actually, I want to delegate that to Sally since it's being managed by Org.

SALLY COSTERTON: Yeah. Thank you. Well, I'll take the first question, which was around the next round. So, I just want to clarify that ICANN doesn't do marketing, and my definition of that is demand generation. So, we're not selling demand if you see what I'm saying. And we have never done. Because it will be inappropriate, it will be outside our scope.

What we will do, and we are doing and we will do it increasingly actively and publicly as we get a little closer to the time is raise awareness and do awareness raising and engagement in many countries of the world as well as globally around the opportunity for the rent. So, why people might want to become an applicant, how they apply. So, it's both raising awareness for what it's like to have a top-level domain, what might you do with it, why is it a good thing. We need to be very clear on the universal acceptance aspects of it. We're leading with that actually. At the moment, we're doing a lot of awareness raising communications activities around the world around raising awareness on UA because as you probably know, that is an important part of getting the technical systems ready to take new gTLDs and IDNs.

And so, we will be doing a lot of that. I will be updating the community on that as we go, one of the things that I will be doing, not yet, but in a

few months as we get a bit closer, my team internally will be putting together programs that are at very detailed national outreach programs. Not in every country in the world, but in key countries where we think there is a real opportunity for applicants to come but may not be that active in ICANN.

So, I'm just looking at Siranush because we'll make sure that we talk to Siranush to make sure we are including the fellows, past and present, in that activity in those relevant countries as well as the existing current members of the ICANN community. So, I hope that's helpful.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Yes. And, Danko, please.

DANKO JEVTOVIC: Yes. About the name collisions, I would like to say a few words. First, what are the name collisions for maybe less technically implied? In case in some organization company in local network uses some name as a top-level domain for internal use. Like, for example, dot local is very popular, but some others may pop up because people invent those names creatively. So, if this such a top-level domain name with the same name is delegated, it will have a problem because their network might stop working, or those local names can pop up in the global reservoirs.

So, this is something that we experienced earlier with the previous delegations, and it was a lot of discussions in the previous round of new gTLDs. But this is an important security and stability issue, and the

Security and Stability Advisory Committee is working on that, preparing an advisory that will be sent to the Board on this specific issue. And there are named collisions-- What's the name? NCAP, name collisions avoidance analysis or something. I can't remember the acronym right now. But there are projects that are looking into that, trying to understand the consequences, and trying to create preventive measures that will help us understand the possible collisions before delegations are done. So, we are aware of the problem, and we're working on that in order to safely and steadily increase the number of TLDs.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN:

Thank you. This is indeed like a public forum, and I am closing the line already because we really will not have time to go to all of you, so please bear with us as much as we can go. And I have the question from Nancy Wachira, ICANN78 fellow who is asking, thanks to the leadership team for the dedication. And the question is, can someone explain At-Large membership and how individual members can contribute in either NARALO or EURALO? And are there specific projects that individual members can participate? And I will ask Leon to respond to this question, please.

LEON SANCHEZ:

Thank you very much, Siranush. So, in a nutshell, the At-Large community is formed by 5 regional At-Large organizations, each for one of the regions in which ICANN is administratively or organizationally divided. If you want to contribute to either NARALO or EURALO. Is that correct the word that I heard? They both have individual user ALSs. So,

what you should do is to approach these individual user ALS and see what are the requirements so that you can become a member of that ALS, of that individual user ALS, and then you would be able to contribute to the works that they do.

But in the end, it's not necessary to be member of an ALS to contribute to the At-Large community discussions. I mean, you can join the mailing list, you can attend the calls, etcetera, etcetera. So, it's not something that is required to contribute to the work of the At-Large community. If you want to be a member of the individual ALS in any of the regions, then by all means, apply. But it's not a requirement for you to contribute to the works of the At-Large community.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Leon. And we'll go to microphone 1, please.

TIDJANI MAHAMAT ADOUN: Okay. Thank you, Siranush. I'm Tidjani from Chad. I'm going to ask you to take your helmet because I want to continue in French. Thanks to the ICANN team for enabling us to live this fantastic adventure. This was a day full of activities, full of information. I learnt a lot throughout this week. We've attending a number of different sessions. And during one of the GAC meetings, I heard about the issues in terms of managing ccTLDs geographical extensions. And these ccTLDs were managed by individuals, and some countries had issues with repatriating these ccTLDs, and they cannot manage these ccTLDs themselves. So, there's a lot to do in that regard.

We've talked about new challenges, and I believe one of these new challenges are the new gTLDs. What measures will ICANN adopt to avoid such issues? I believe that with these new gTLDs, we will have a new extension such as dot Hamburg, dot Coca Cola. So, you will have extensions that will pertain to city names, and these extensions will have to be the preserve of these municipalities. So, has the ICANN taken any steps to avoid the issues that happened in the past? Because some countries are still struggling to repatriate their extensions. Thank you very much.

DANKO JEVTOVIC:

Well, I can comment briefly on that. I'm NomCom member, but I was running for a few years .rs, the Serbian's country code registry. So, the country codes are assigned to use in the countries, in regions according to the ISO two letter code list, but they're giving it for the benefit fit of the local communities. And any change that should come-- possible change of the manager is coming to IANA but should include the consensus of the local Internet community, current manager, and the future operator on how that change will happen. So, this is the process that is working on the policies that are also created on this in the ccNSO area. So, I think this is the general process. And I don't know if Sally wants to add something.

SALLY COSTERTON:

Thank you, Danko. Yes. Of course, that's correct. Well, you talked about redelegation, I think it's the concept, and there is a process for that. The rules and arrangements for that are on our website. And I

know that Siranush and the program team will be able to direct you to make sure that you can see those.

When it comes to the next round of top-level domains, the question of the rules by which they're awarded will be very clear, as it was, as you would expect. So, as we get into the next stages of that, we will make those very visible so people are not confused, and they understand exactly the conditions and requirements to apply. So, I hope that's helpful.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you very much. And we'll go to Shita, microphone 2.

SHITA LAKSMI: Thank you very much, Siranush. My name Shita Laksmi. I'm a first time ICANN-- this is my first time at ICANN meeting, and also ICANN fellow. I would like also to thank you for the warm welcome because I never thought this will be this warm. Yeah? I think it will be a bit technical and a bit different.

There are two questions. The first one is, I like to know the process within the Board itself, because the ICANN is not working in a vacuum, and there are also geopolitical situations, and I think the government influence or GAC influence is getting more stronger. I would like to know the kind of discussions or the kind of approach that you have within the Board, if you may open to us the different approach or the different values that you face as the Board of ICANN. That's the first question.

The second question is also as far as I know now, there are several standard setting organizations in Internet governance, IETF, ITU, ICANN, and maybe IGF as a process. As a Board of ICANN, do you think with the emerging technologies and all these issues coming in and how the Internet and the digital technology becoming part of our life so deeply, will there be any more standard setting organizations needed to govern that? Thank you very much.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Please, Tripti.

TRIPTI SINHA: I think you had 3 or 4 questions embedded in that. And if I understood your first question, you were asking how we operate, the Board operates. Is that correct? Pardon me? Okay. So, in terms of our values or principles, ICANN is based on transparency and accountability. And the approach that we have to the way ICANN operate is that it's a bottom-up, multistakeholder process.

So, what that means is that we have the bottom is made of different constituencies, multistakeholders. And right now, we have a total of 7, 4 plus 3, I believe, supporting organizations and advisory committees. And policies are made by the GNSO, and you typically have cross-community working groups and PDPs—these are acronyms that you will learn over time—where you come together and they begin to construct policy and opinions are brought to bear into these policies from the various constituencies, and they bubble up to the top to the Board.

The bylaws, essentially tell us how we are to be managed, how we operate within this infrastructure. And when the policies come to the Board for ratification, there's a clause in the bylaws that says that we have to consider any advice that the GAC gives us. And the GAC, as you know, it constitutes the governments who are members of the GAC in ICANN, and they typically shepherd public policy. So, as they issue advice on a potential PDP, which is in creating a policy, the Board has a mandate that we have to consider the intersection of their concerns with what this PDP will ratify. So, we do it back and forth, and ultimately, that's how things get approved.

And to your second question, you said there are many standards bodies. ICANN is not a standards body. Yeah. So, we are responsible for the security and stability of the unique identifier systems. The standards bodies are like IETF, IEEE, there are many different, ITU. They're standards bodies. We are not a standard body. We implement policy and are responsible for the management of the unique identifier systems. So just to make the distinction there.

And the third point is how do we keep in touch with the emerging technologies? Inside the corporation org, there is a group called OCTO which is the Office of the Chief Technology Officer, and they keep their eyes on the horizon on emerging technologies. The entire ecosystem, ICANN ecosystem, many of us are technologists, so we're just aware of what's emerging. It's very hard not to be aware. And then you bring to bear certain things that might be of concern or something that we should keep our eyes on. For example, right now, AI is big because there were major developments late in 2022, and its impact is quite broad. We don't know yet how, but there are many, many applications of it,

and it is bound to impact the DNS industry as well. So, I hope that answers your questions.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you very much. Microphone 1. Paulo, please.

PAULO GLOWACKI: Yes. Hello, I will try to be a bit slower today. I'm Paolo Glowacki. I'm a member of the NextGen at ICANN program, and I'm actually from Hamburg. So, moin, and welcome to Hamburg once again. I have a question that's a bit connected to the other Paulo's question about the emerging identifier technologies and how that is related to PDP.

So, those technologies in a way for me showcase how the Internet is evolving faster and faster every day and how the globe is evolving faster and faster every day. And my question would be apart from EPDPs, how does the Board make sure that PDPs and policy development in general stays up to the pace of today's internet? How do we make sure, or do you guys have ideas maybe on how to improve these processes so that ICANN does not fall back and has the potential to actually be on those technologies at the forefront? Thank you.

TRIPTI SINHA: I don't know if you were here on Monday when I gave my opening address. That is indeed one of the concerns is that the rate of innovation is so, so incredibly rapid that we have to keep up with our policy development and ensure that we embrace these evolving technologies and that they feed into our policies.

Now what are we doing? We're having a lot of internal discussions on how the community has to come together, and we have to make our processes move faster. The PDPs in particular, some of them take many, many years. You'll be left behind. Other events will take over. So, they're looking to scope them to be more manageable, to be smaller, and give them hard timelines so that they can be accomplished quicker sooner. So, we're having those exact discussions. Thank you for the question.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Number 2, Giovanni, please go ahead.

GIOVANNI CERBONI: Hello. Good afternoon. It's a great pleasure to be here. My name is Giovanni. I am NextGen from Italy. My background is in philosophy and politics, and I think my question will sound perhaps a bit nasty, but we're trained to go to the core of things and sometimes that gets nasty. So, ICANN is committed to defend multistakeholderism over state-led multilateralism. And I agree with the mission, but especially as a newcomer, I'm struggling to get a deep understanding of the reasons for multistakeholderism given that we are already delegating to states and to international dialogue pretty much everything that concerns our life. Right? So, I wanted to ask you why multistakeholderism? I agree, but I need to get the core of it. Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Interesting question. Tripti?

TRIPTI SINHA:

So, when it comes to governance, there are various models, right? If you look at Europe. You said you're a political scientist, so I don't need to let you know but there have been various models that have evolved over human history. And the prevailing model that states use is multilateralism, where governments essentially manage the caretaking of their nations and their citizens and so on and so forth.

The Internet, in particular, the reason why the approach of multistakeholderism makes sense, and I'm trying to think of a metaphor to better identify or help you understand why multistakeholderism works here is that there's the underpinnings of the infrastructure, which is global in nature. It spans the entire world, and its infrastructure comes in various media, right, from cables to air to other systems that transmit the signals, and you've got protocols and standards that put the infrastructure together. And there's this technical underpinning which was developed and understood and managed by technical individuals.

If you were to turn over decisions pertaining to this infrastructure to entities that don't understand how it works, and those who benefit the most from this infrastructure are end users. And typically, systems are built to bring value to end users. So, if you turn that over to a government, you're resting care and management of that infrastructure to an entity that may not necessarily be speaking for you at all times. Correct? I'm trying to think of a metaphor that might help you understand.

Imagine governments making decisions about the engines inside of cars, and you don't have the engineer there to tell them how it works. The system would begin to break because you don't have all the experts at the table. So, I hope that it elucidates it to a certain extent. Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Yes, please, Danko.

DANKO JEVTOVIC: If I may add. So, I think English have this nice saying, the proof is in the pudding. So, Internet works, and it works on the multistakeholder system. And if we go back to the beginnings, the idea of the Internet came from the idea of freedom of connection and playing with computers, connecting one to each other. And those techies, so that in order to increase the networks and to build the networks, they need to bring also other participants to discuss what are the user needs, then the governments obviously financed some part of that, businesses came out and all that.

So, the Internet was not created by some agreement of governments at the UN level to build common network worldwide. It started from bottom up, and it grew for the [inaudible 00:45:00]. And look where it brought us. It's fantastic. So, this works, and we think this is the way how it should continue to work and to evolve because it is.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you very much. I think our gentleman here that will not argue if I give the floor to Vania, one of our NextGeners who came here with the real Next Generation representative. Vania, if you come close and ask your question. I know you are struggling to stay in line, but please come. And thank you guys.

VANIA DE OLIVEIRA: Hello, everyone. My name is Vania Oliveira. I am NextGen. I'm a student in Portugal in pharmaceutical science. And I noted there are more and more attacks in the health sector all over the world, especially in developed countries, and developing countries also do suffer a lot from those attacks. They don't have enough resources to involve in a better cybersecurity. Cybersecurity is a real issue for us. And what do you do for improving cybersecurity in developing countries, especially regarding health care? Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Vania, for your question. Who would like to take? It's very hard question actually.

SALLY COSTERTON: Yes. Big question. Thank you very much for your question. And thank you very much for bringing the latest NextGener with you. Fantastic. I'm so happy. Well, I can tell you from the organization, from the staff standpoint we do a great deal of capacity development and training. We're in many different countries, all over the world actually, with different stakeholder groups on broad areas of security. Some of that

is educational, and you will cover some of it in your NextGen work. Some of it is teaching people skills like DNSSEC putting in DNS security protocols in their digital environments. And we do a lot of outreach and training to many stakeholders.

So, what I would suggest is if you have a particular group in mind in your sector in Portugal or even in your organization, let Siranush know, and we can make those trainings and capacity development aware, you can make them aware of them. And then it would help-- I think we that will show you what's available from ICANN to know more, to understand more, and to become more skilled and more aware of the areas that are within ICANN scope. So, I hope that helps. Thank you for the question.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you very much, and thank you, Vania. We'll go to Chuma. Chuma, please.

CHUMA AKANA: Thank you very much. My name is Chuma Akana, by the way, from American University, and I'm speaking on my own personal capacity. So, my question is your advice for first time ICANN fellows how to navigate through the maze of the ICAN community. And I say this, I would like to also have it from kind of like a personal experience perspective because I've spoken to a lot of people and heard a lot of different perspectives. So, one person said he spent the first year understanding how ICANN works and spend the second year confused about what he understood, and by the third year, he had start to catch up again. So, my question is how important, for instance, is it? Is

community engagement compared to delving straight into a working group and then trying to make your voice heard?

So, the second question is a more nuanced one which is, what is ICANN's stance on cyber or domain takeover, like it happened between Russia or Ukraine? What's is ICANN's position on that? Thanks.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Leon, if you may take the first question.

LEON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Siranush. So, by 12th year, you'll realize that you haven't learned enough, and you'll start over, so don't be frightened about it. No. I mean, as fellows and as NextGens, you have the huge advantage to be guided by an excellent group of mentors that literally take you by the hand introduce you to different communities. But in my own experience as a fellow, I think the best thing you can do to get involved with the community to learn about what the ICANN community does and how it works is to literally dive into as many sessions as you can during a meeting, even if those sessions don't appeal to you.

Like, for example, if your background is technical, go and listen to the lawyers. If you are a lawyer, go and listen to the techies, and so on and so forth. You would be surprised how some groups that you wouldn't have imagined that would be of interest to you might end up interesting and pulling you in. So having that diversity of views and experiences I think would feed into your process or your learning process about ICANN.

And it's common to feel overwhelmed when you first come to an ICANN meeting. And it's natural to continue to feel that way for the following 2, 3, 5, 6, or even 10 meetings after you've been here. But once you find that niche in which you can fit into and you start contributing, then you'll feel like everything is starting to flow favorably. So, again, don't put barriers on what you think you can contribute to. Dive into as many topics, sessions, groups as you can, and eventually you'll find yours to fit in.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN:

And just in addition to this. That's the reason behind the process for the fellowship program, why the opportunity is given three times. And the idea is first time you come complete newcomer, you learn. You are in the process of learning. Give the time to you to digest whatever you have seen here, go back, listen to the recording for the sessions. Participate in different community sessions, which was the task for Tuesday as a constituency day. And then, with having more background and knowledge, you can apply for the next time and for the third time, but there are tons of ways of also engaging remotely and through different working groups and communities. Yes, Leon.

LEON SANCHEZ:

Actually, if you look at the biggest part of the work that is undergone within ICANN, that work doesn't take place in the face-to-face meetings. It takes all year round through the many remote calls and mailing lists, etc. So, it requires a lot of work, yes, but if you are passionate about ICANN's mission, you will eventually again find that spot in which you are interested and able to contribute.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: And that was exactly the words I told today during wrap up. That ICANN meet only three times a year for one week, but the entire work is done in between. And the second question, Danko, if you can take.

DANKO JEVTOVIC: If I may just briefly on the first question. I think this all proves that your friend was right. So, you need to keep on coming and understanding the system. And after Siranush, in the first year, it gets easier with time, not that much easier, but. And just one more small point on that. We are here as the Board members, and it is true that we have a lot of sessions during these meetings, we are busy when we have to go to them, but we are always happy to hear questions, to meet the fellow and the NextGen, to answer your questions and just to talk to you to listen to your viewpoints whenever you can catch us somewhere. So, please do that. This is well near the end of the meeting, but for the next time.

On the second question. I didn't fully understand it, but I think it relates to the request we had at the beginning of the war in Ukraine. And we received a request from the government to basically take out the Russian ccTLD out of the root zone. And this is not something that is aligned with our bylaws with our mission, with our values. We are here for one Internet for the one world, and we are here to support and coordinate the technical level of the Internet to be able to provide Internet access for all users, individuals, and businesses worldwide. So, there was no, in that sense, takeover of the domain, and we are

supporting and trying to always do what's best to have to enable the access.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you. There is a remote question as from Jason Nathan. What criteria will ICANN use for approving new gTLDs in future and how will it balance market demand with the need of a stable and secure domain name system? Sally, probably it goes to you.

SALLY COSTERTON: I just want to make sure I've got the question right because there's quite a lot there. What criteria will ICANN use to improve in the future, and how will it balance the need for a stable and secure domain name system? Yeah? That's the question.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Yes.

SALLY COSTERTON: Well, that's a very good question for the ICANN community, I think, it is what I would say to that. I mean, that is a sort of big existential question that the Internet faces and that ICANN faces. And I'm not trying to avoid answering the question, but I think it is something that we all engage in to make sure that-- We talked a lot at this meeting about how do we ensure that the WSIS+20 activities and activities at United Nations are secured in a positive way for the future of the multistakeholder process.

And I would certainly say that is probably the biggest thing we can focus on at the moment in terms of improving the conditions for the future. That we ensure that we have the same tools available to us. As I said in my opening my opening comments at the beginning of this meeting, we have to raise awareness urgently with people who don't understand what we do, but who are affected by what we do. That the way we do it using the multistakeholder process is the reason that it is successful. And that if you change that and you try and take it away, you will change the Internet completely. And that we cannot take for granted that we continue to enjoy the benefits that the world enjoys from the Internet without the framework on the technical underpinnings and the governance model that we've had since for the last 25 years.

So, I would say from our perspective, that is the most important thing we can do to give ourselves the right tools to deal with the other challenges that will come in the future for the domain name system, most important we can do at ICANN at the moment. I hope that that helps.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you. And Danko? Yes, please.

DANKO JEVTOMIC: Thank you, Sally, for this answer to the very complex question. But just from the Board's perspective, the answer is factually quite short. We will follow the policy that is developed by our bottom-up multistakeholder process and the policy developed by the community,

being people like you, is deciding on that. We'll just do that. Sally will just do that, and we will oversee.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: We only have literally one minute to go. So, Bibek, please go ahead.

BIBEK SILWAL: Thank you, Siranush. My name is Bibek Silwal, and I'm from Nepal, a first-time fellow and a former NextGen. So, my question is regarding the next round gTLD. So, in the previous round, there were 1,913 applications where 15% from Asia Pacific, 35% from Europe, 47% --

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Can you slow down so we understand what you mean and what question you ask, please?

BIBEK SILWAL: 47% from North America, less than 1% from Africa, and little more than 1% from South America. So, with these stats, we can see that the very less number of applications were from the region with the largest number of users, either due to the gap between the applicants or many constraint in the process. And also, the initiative Applicant Support Program wasn't quite successful for its intent because there were only three applicants, and one was only successful.

So, with this, I have two questions to the Board. With the upcoming next round, how ICANN Board and org plan to share the information to larger community with any specific initiatives like success case studies or a

larger outreach of a business model. For example, from where I belong, the companies are capable, but they will not apply for the next round because of sustainability or tech issues.

My second question is regarding the Applicant Support Program. What kind of revision is being made to the previous approach to make it more successful so we can reach the audience that actually needs the support, like the grant and the pro bono services? And will there be any specific considerations for the internationalized domain names? Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Bibek. Sally, please.

SALLY COSTERTON: Thank you. Well, those are all very good questions. If you allow me, I will summarize as it's really being about one bigger question, which is what are we going to do to maximize the amount of applications for the next round that come from countries that need the Internet, are not big players in the top-level domain space at the moment. How can we make sure that we overcome barriers? So, you talked about the Applicant Support Program.

In my earlier comment to somebody else's question, I talked about the awareness raising program. That's a big part of it. And that's why we're putting together resources at a country level as well as at a global level to make sure we're having conversations with all stakeholders in certain countries to do exactly that. So, we want to understand where

do you think the biggest opportunity is in your country for applicants? What kind of barriers do you think they have? Where can we be most helpful? What about can we look at things like scripts, different languages to make sure that we are maximizing the ability of the citizens of your country or any other similar country who wants to participate?

We learned a lot from the last round. We learned a lot. And my team inside the organization has worked hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of hours to answer those questions. And we have put together a very comprehensive resources which, if you want to, the plan, implementation plan has been published, and you can read it on our website. And I'm very happy to talk separately to you as the NextGen team about exactly what we're doing to give you more information as we go forward. But I really wanted to acknowledge the importance of your question because you've said it very well, and you've really touched on all the key issues that we have to consider in order to make sure that as many people as possible, in that kind of situation are applying for the next round. So, thank you for raising it.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN:

Thank you very much. As we are already running out of time, we will not be able to accept more questions. But to make sure that the questions which you are interested in to know the answers, you can send it to me, and I will make sure we get the responses. Thank you. And just 10 seconds to each of our panelists, a call to action to this beautiful group. From Tripti.

TRIPTI SINHA: Once again, welcome to ICANN, and I urge you to attend as many sessions as you can. Go to our website, learn about it, try to understand what mission is. Read our bylaws. It's a long document, but it'll serve you well. Scan all the web pages, attend our meetings, and soak it in and just become active, and you will enjoy it. Trust me.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Tripti. Sally?

SALLY COSTERTON: What Tripti said, but also, this might sound a bit surprising to make, make friends. This is an amazing community. One of the questioners earlier said how she was her first time visit and she said how warm she'd found the community. Honestly, in my 11 years, I have found I said in my speech I thought ICANN was about technology, and it's about trust. And that plays out as each of us trusting each other individually, and that means we get to know each other.

Leon said it very well. He said you find your niche. Well, what a lot of people find here is that once they found their niche, they find that they're t people. And those become incredibly powerful groups and they're not just Interesting and fun from all over the world, which they often and frequently are. But this is actually where the work gets done. So don't think that it has to be all about. It's both. You need to understand what's going on, you need to keep yourself well briefed, but also it's a great place to meet incredibly interesting people and do really great work together. Thank you all for participating.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you. Leon?

LEON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Siranush. So, it's hard to add to what Tripti and Sally just said. But if you remember, in one of our past sessions, Sally was also saying that ICANN is about trust. And the only way you can build trust is by making friends exactly. So, seize the moment, seize the opportunity as fellows, as NextGens, and build those relationships, build that trust. That is the only thing that can allow us to move forward. When we are working remotely and we don't see each other, trusting the person on the other side of the computer is what makes us build consensus. So, foster those relationships and take advantage of being a fellow and a NextGen.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Leon. Danko, please.

DANKO JEVTOVIC: Yes. Well, it is about trust, but it's also about fun. So, the more you know and the more people you know, you're expanding your network, and you have more fun. This is ICANN. Thank you for being here.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you very much. And on behalf of our two groups, I would like to thank you-- Yeah. Christian, you said "I'm an observer". That's why I didn't give you the floor, but please.

CHRISTIAN KAUFMANN: Well, the observer can come to a conclusion after an hour. So, what I did not realize about the fellowship and NextGen program is that it is actually a direct way and a very relatively easy way into this world. I came from the ASO, and I participated as a regular participant, so it took me way longer to figure out what the acronyms are and who is who and how the whole thing works. That's probably why I ignored the fellowship program so long.

What I also realized that that it can be a way into leadership positions, which I didn't realize before. And as we now have today, even if you haven't been successful with the fellowship, you still might end up here on the stage, so watch out.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Christian. And also, I would like to take this opportunity to thank my colleagues who are here. Deborah Escalera who is managing NextGen Program and ICANN Learn program guru, Betsy Andrew. Thank you for being here with me, and thank you everyone for your time to be taken during this AGM. I know it's a very hard schedule. And thank you all NexGeners and fellows. See you at the official Board meeting tonight, today later in the evening, and see you next time in ICANN meeting. Thank you. This meeting is adjourned. Please stop the recording.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]