
ICANN78 | AGM – How it Works ICANN Policy
Sunday, October 22, 2023 – 4:30 to 5:30 HAM

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you very much, and welcome, everyone, for the last session today planned for fellows and NextGen at ICANN program participants at ICANN 78. My name is Siranush Vardanyan, and I am the remote moderation manager also for this session. Please follow the expected standards of behavior, as I have noted since the morning.

We have talked yesterday about two important pillars of ICANN. So one is technical aspect, and the second one is policy aspect. And two pillars are equally important for the ICANN in general. We had the excellent presentation yesterday from our tech team, and they were talking about the IANA and technical activities implemented. Today, we have the pleasure to have my colleagues from policy team, Melissa Allgood, whom many of you already know since yesterday, and Ozan Sahin. They are supporting the policy community from the policy side as staff, as ICANN Org. And it's my pleasure to introduce them to you. Without further ado, I would like to give the floor to Ozan to start. Ozan, please.

OZAN SAHIN: Thank you very much, Siranush, and hello, everyone. So on the slide, actually, you saw my name and my colleague Carlos' name, but Carlos couldn't be here today with us. But I'm very glad that Melissa is with us, and I'm joined by her. So thank you, Melissa, again, at least for the first part of the meeting.

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.

Today, we would like to cover the policy development process at ICANN and also give you a good time for you to ask your questions about this process. We have a number of slides to cover the policy development process, advice development process, to give you some examples of the current policy development processes, and also to introduce the policy development support function to you a bit. We are most interested to give, I think, most of the time for your questions, actually. So please don't hesitate to ask your questions, and I'm planning to stop at the end of each section to see if there are any questions in the room.

So to start with the policy development in ICANN supporting organizations, I think it makes sense to, again, talk about the ICANN ecosystem. As you may know now, there are three components in the ICANN ecosystem. One is the ICANN community, which develops the ICANN policies and develops the advice on the policies being developed. And then ICANN board considers these policies that have been developed and the recommendations and makes a decision whether to adapt them. And then the ICANN organization implements the adapted policies. But you see there's also a line between organization and the community here. So we also support the policy development and advice development process of ICANN community, which we will focus on today. Three supporting organizations that we have at ICANN, one is the Address Supporting Organization, which works on the global internet protocol or IP address policy. There are five regional internet registries in the world and they each work on their regional policies. But once the same policy actually is approved by each of these RIRs, it may become a global IP address policy. And this can be recommended to ICANN board for adoption. The country code name

supporting organization consists of country code top-level domain managers or ccTLD managers that have agreed to be members of the ccNSO and also ccNSO council. And finally, we have the Generic Name Supporting Organization, which consists of the Contracted Parties House and the Noncontracted Parties House that I will explain further in a minute. And also the GNSO council.

So this infographic is a bit wordy. It is hard for you to read, I know. So I'll just drop the link in the Zoom room, so that if you'd like to, you can go ahead and review it yourself. But it does...

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: And the presentation, just to let you know, it's in the meeting schedule, so you can download as well.

OZAN SAHIN: Thank you. Right. And also it shows how the post-adoption process works in each of the three supporting organizations, the GNSO, ccNSO and ASO. So there are similarities and a few nuances between how policy is developed within these three supporting organizations. But today we will focus on the generic name supporting organization policy development process. And we will review it in detail.

So before going into that, the GNSO is responsible for developing policies on the generic top-level domains. Some of the examples of the generic top-level domains are .com, .org, .net or .movie, .shop or it can be .brand. And it is the GNSO Council which manages the gTLD policy development process.

So if you look at the composition of the GNSO Council, there are two houses and there are 18 members from two houses. And there are three additional members appointed by the ICANN's Nominating Committee or NomCom. And if you look at the composition, the contracted parties are the two boxes in the middle, Registry Stakeholder Group and the Registrar Stakeholder Group. And on the sides you have the non-contracted parties, the groups, the Commercial Stakeholder Group and the Non-Commercial Stakeholder Group. And underneath the Commercial Stakeholder Group you have the Business Constituency, Intellectual Property Constituency and Internet Service Providers And Connectivity Providers Constituency. And under Non-Commercial Stakeholder Groups you see the Non-Commercial Users Constituency and the Not-For-Profit Operational Concerns Constituency.

So what we can actually see on the slide is in the GNSO Council you see a wide representation of different interests from different stakeholder groups. And they work together to develop gTLD policies.

So let's look in detail how this policy development process works in the generic name supporting organization. It all starts with the identification of an issue. This can be the GNSO Council or the ICANN Board or an advisory committee who identifies an issue. And then the GNSO Council considers if this issue will result in a consensus policy or not. And if it does, then we move on to the scoping phase. And in this phase the GNSO Council requests a preliminary issue report. And the support staff publishes a preliminary issue report for public comment period. And you will notice an arrow there. So when you see an arrow on the slide, you see an arrow on the right of the slide and two arrows on the left of the slide. This is where you get community input into the

process. So when the preliminary issue report is published for public comment period, it is up for public comment from all other ICANN community groups or individuals. And then after receiving the input in this public comment period, there's a review of the comments received and finally the final issue report is submitted for the GNSO Council consideration.

And looking at the final issue report, GNSO Council decides whether to initiate a policy development process or not. And if it decides to develop a policy development process, then it adopts a charter for this policy development process working group. So there's a call for volunteers for the working group once it's initiated and that's the initiation period.

Moving on to the formation of the working group phase, the working group consults with the community and develops an initial report for public comment period and again you see an arrow there. So after the public input is received, the working group finally submits its final report to the GNSO Council. So there's a deliberation on the final report by the GNSO Council and after the review, the GNSO Council may adopt the final report. If that happens, then the GNSO Council submits the final report to the ICANN Board.

And in the final phase, which is the adoption of the final report and recommendations, this time you see again the Board consults the community and GAC, Governmental Advisory Committee. And this is also another opportunity for taking public input and then the Board finally takes a vote on the final report recommendations. So if the Board adopts these recommendations, then it becomes the policy.

All right, so does anyone have any questions about the supporting organization policy development process so far?

ABDULKARIM OLOYEDE: Hi, thank you very much, Ozan. If you go back to page 9 of your slide, it says it consults with the community and GAC. But to me that sounds like GAC is not part of the community. Can you just... It's on page 10, I think. Is GAC not part of the community?

OZAN SAHIN: It is part of the community, but there's a special definition in the bylaws that the GNSO Council should consult the ICANN community and the GAC. And there's a specific reference to GAC, that's why it is stated as community and the GAC. Thank you for the question.

PAULO MARCOS DREWIACKI: Could you comment something about the EPDP?

OZAN SAHIN: That's a great question, thank you. So EPDP stands for expedited policy development process. And this is, again, defined in the bylaws for the policy development process in certain cases. The ICANN Board may direct the GNSO Council to start an expedited process in urgent cases. So if that happens, there is an expedited policy development process in which some of these steps are not followed. So that makes it faster. And then, at the end of the process, the decision may be taken in a faster way. But still, this doesn't eliminate the public consultation part or public feedback part. So most recently, I think we saw a few examples

of that. One is the expedited policy development process on temporary specification for registration data. And this was done in response to the general data protection regulation. So in such cases, yes, the Board may direct, call for an expedited policy development process and then some of these steps are not followed to make the process faster.

MALICK ALASSANE: I would like to ask how long does the process to develop policies take? And is there a change on the time depending on the complexity of the topics?

OZAN SAHIN: Exactly. Thank you for the question, Malick. It may take several years for some of the policy development process. And as you just said, as the issue gets more complex, it takes more years. So I think recently there has been also some questions about how long this process would take. And in the end, when this policy development process results in Board adoption and consensus policies. So there have been efforts to put it in a more structured way, so that taking the project management approach and defining some potential deadlines, I think there have been efforts to put it in a more structured way recently. But again, based on the discussions, based on how hard it could get to arriving consensus, it may take several years still.

MELISSA ALLGOOD: And Ozan, if I can just jump in and add to that. Since we're talking about the GNSO here, that exact issue has been of real focus. Because as you guys have learned about all of these policy efforts that have gone on,

historically we've had some that have taken years and years and years and years. So the GNSO Council specifically, as Ozan talked about on the previous slide, role in managing the policy development process, has taken very overt steps to try to make the policy work take less time. And so very narrowly scoped charters, which is what actually then allows a group to form, a working group to form, they've been very focused on that. The other thing we've seen the GNSO do a lot of in the past few years is use what we call the representative model. So many PDPs of the past had an open model where if you were interested, you could join and participate in the work. And those of you that were in our consensus session with me yesterday, we touched on this a bit. But we've seen an effort by the GNSO Council to, in formulating their working groups, be deliberate in the structure. So they'll assign a certain number of seats to various stakeholder groups and constituencies. And that was on a previous slide when Ozan was talking about the two houses of the GNSO. As well as, like we discussed in the consensus session yesterday, the GNSO Council has been very deliberate in trying to bring in the voices of the GAC and the voices of the ALAC and the SSAC and the RSSAC where appropriate and necessary to really try to get all of those various stakeholder voices at the table to make the best decisions possible, but limiting the number and the scope so it's a bit more streamlined. Does that answer your question?

THOBIAS MOURA:

I have a doubt about the formation of the working group. So how the policy development working group is composed. There are some diversity criteria or geographical criteria.

MELISSA ALLGOOD: Thank you for your question. I think the short answer is it depends. It depends on the topic and what it is they're talking about and what voices need what kind of balance. And so you can look at efforts like transfer policy, that effort that we're going to talk about a few slides down. That has really contracted party heavy voices at the table because those are the voices that need to be there. Now, other voices are still there. There's still an allotment of other seats, but that's a good example if you want to take a look at that one to see an effort that on its face might look like it's skewed towards the contracted parties. But really that's what made the most sense because of the problem that they're trying to solve. So council is very deliberate and thoughtful about that. Do you want to add anything?

OZAN SAHIN: Yeah, just a small addition. And this diversity does not need to be just geographically. Based on what the topic is, as Melissa said, it may be decided that the representation from other groups, supporting organizations, advisory committees may be helpful. So they may be also invited in the working groups if their representation is beneficial.

CHUMA AKANA: My question is on the next slide, slide 10, where it says if adopted, the GNSO council submits the final report. So if it's not adopted, what happens in that case? Do they send it back to the working committee? And do they also have to consult with the community all over again? And then finally to ICANN board votes on the final report, how does that

vote work? Is it a show of hands and is there a majority that needs to be met?

OZAN SAHIN:

Thank you for the question. So the details of the vote is defined in the bylaws. So there may be a super major vote needed to adopt another threshold may be needed. These are all defined in the bylaws. But going back to your point about what if a recommendation or final report is not adopted by the board. So the recommendations do not have to be approved or adopted as a whole. Like some of the recommendations may be adopted, some of them may not be adopted and may be sent back to the GNSO council for further discussion. In such cases, the board also notes why it's not being adopted. So GNSO council would know the reasons and also further deliberations will take place in the light of these reasons. Anything to add, Melissa?

MELISSA ALLGOOD:

I think you got it. Do we have any other questions before—I'm going to walk you through advice development briefly. And I do want to apologize. I have a double booking. I need to go actually talk to the ALAC, which we're going to talk about here in a moment. So I need to leave at the bottom of the hour. So please forgive my exit. But let's talk about advice development in the ICANN advisory committees.

So we have four advisory committees in our community. The ALAC, the GAC, the RSSAC, and the SSAC. That's all in acronym form. The ALAC is the At-Large Advisory Committee. And the ALAC itself voices the interests of the individual internet user. And it's composed of 15

members. Two from each of the RALOs. Those are the Regional At-Large Organizations. And then five are appointed by the ICANN Nominating Committee. And their structure is very decentralized. And this overall effort is supported by more than 200 At-Large structures, which we call ALSes.

We have the GAC, which is the governments. The Governmental Advisory Committee. And the GAC provides advice on policy issues. Particularly on the interactions with policies and national laws or international agreements. The RSSAC stands for the Root Server System Advisory Committee. And they advise the ICANN community and the board on the operation, administration, security, and the integrity of the internet's root server system.

Finally, we have the SSAC, which is the Security and Stability Advisory Committee. And they advise on matters related to the security and the integrity of the internet's naming and address allocation system. So we have these different organizations that are providing advice in different ways and in different spaces. Ozan, if I can have the next slide.

Again, I encourage you to look at this slide on your own to see the distinctions and the nuance across these four organizations and how they do develop their advice. But for purposes of today, we're actually going to look at the ALAC. So the ALAC expresses the interest of the individual internet users. That end user view as part of the policy development. And in advice. So you see this organization, as we mentioned before, when we were talking about the GNSO PDP. We see At-Large voices in PDPs and in EPDPs. In that representative model that

I was talking about. But they also have the ability to develop advice themselves. So let's talk about what their advice process looks like.

So in the At-Large, any community member can bring an emerging issue to the ALAC. And the ALAC then discusses the issue to determine its impact on global end users and the scope. So they decide, is this an issue for us? Is this an issue for the interests that we represent? And if so, what do we want that scope to look like? As we were talking about policy development, one of the ways to get things done expeditiously is to really think about the narrow scope that addresses the needs of the issue itself.

The ALAC determines its key elements of its positions. And then they designate issue shepherds to participate in the policy development of this particular issue. These issue shepherds lead the drafting of their responses. The final step, and when we really get to the final product, the final advice product, is that the ALAC reviews and calls for consensus or for votes on a final statement. And if the organization ratifies it, they then send that advice to the ICANN board, to ICANN org, to the SOs and ACs, so the other supporting organizations and advisory committees, and other ICANN community members for consideration. So, I am going to leave you here in three minutes. So do we have any kind of advice-related questions? Or are you ready for Ozan to move on and talk about some active policy development? All right, Ozan, I think it's back to you.

OZAN SAHIN:

Thank you, Melissa. So let's now talk about some of the current policy development processes that you will hear about at ICANN 78. So I

picked three of them. All of them are GNSO policy development processes. Most of the policy development process working group sessions at ICANN, especially at the annual general meetings, happen on weekend, on Saturday, Sunday. So since you are having this last session on Sunday, most of the working group sessions for this policy development processes have already actually occurred.

But to name these policy development processes, we have the GNSO expedited policy development process on IDNs, or internationalized domain names. This working group began its work, and it does focus on two main areas. One is the definition of the gTLDs, or generic top-level domains, and the management of variant labels. And also the secondary area is how IDN implementation guidelines should be updated in the future. So what they're focusing on at ICANN 78 is finalizing its phase one final report. You know, remember, initial reports, final reports that we discussed during the policy development process in the previous slides. And if time permits, they may also discuss topics within the phase two of its charter, which cover issues about the second level IDN variant management. So the other EPDP, or expedited policy development process, is on the temporary specification, and this is in phase two. So this was formed as a small team, consisting GNSO council members, and also the temporary specification team members. The task of this team is analyzing the operational design assessment and provide the GNSO council feedback. And at ICANN 78, this small team is expected to continue its engagement with ICANN organization. And this is about the implementation of the registration data request service, RDRS, or in other... You can also name it, who is disclosure system formally.

And the final policy development process that we want to highlight today is the transfer policy review. This was launched, again, in two phases. And this is the consensus policy governing the transfers of domain names from one registrar to another registrar. And the deliberations of this working group are focused on the draft recommendations regarding the transfer dispute resolution policy and bulk transfers. Again, probably most of the work sessions of these working groups have completed over the weekend. But I think the GNSO EPDP Temp Spec phase two small team has an additional meeting tomorrow, if you're interested.

So, how would you participate in the policy development process? You see a few ways on the slide to contribute to policy development process. One is that you can join one of the communities that we mentioned, the supporting organizations, advisory committees, stakeholder groups, or constituencies. Or you can join a working group. We mentioned the GNSO working groups, and there was a question about diversity. So, different interests are represented within most of the working groups, and you can join this working group, observe their work, or make interventions to contribute. Again, in most cases, you will see mailing lists for these working groups. So, you can observe these mailing lists, attend the teleconferences. Of course, we are here meeting face-to-face today, but most of this work happens really online when there are no in-person meetings. So, to put it in a better way, most of the work happens between in-person meetings. So, there may be weekly or bi-weekly calls that you can attend, observe, or speak up.

And then, I mentioned the public comment processes during the policy development process. When an initial report, a final report, is up for

public comments, you can submit your comment, review the issue, and submit your comment, which will then be reviewed by the working group and addressed. Just checking the room to see if there are any questions. If not, moving on.

So, since I mentioned the public comment process, I wanted to take a screenshot of an open public comment proceeding on ICANN's website and show you which pieces of information is available once this proceeding is open. So, the policy development support team also oversees the public comment process at ICANN, and we try to make sure the public comment input is received and also shared in a transparent way. And we also try to ensure a minimum public comment period during which you can submit your input.

So, for this one, for instance, it says 44 days remaining, so we try to ensure a minimum of 40 days for any public comment that opens, and also try to factor in any days during the ICANN public meetings or major public holidays. So, you have enough time to submit comments. If you create an ICANN.org account, you can easily go submit your comments. At the end of the comment period, you will be able to see all the comments submitted. There will be a report of the public comments, and you will have access to all of that. Do you have any questions about the public comment process? How that works?

Okay. So, if there are no questions, then I can briefly introduce the policy development support function and what we do. So, currently we have 38 employees all around the world supporting the work of the ICANN community and their policy development and policy advice development work. Not all of us necessarily are based in places where

ICANN offices are located. There are many remote workers, and we are covering a number of time zones, and we are located in really different places.

And I mentioned the teleconferences that happen between the meetings, or even here during in-person meetings, we do facilitate the work of ICANN community and their meetings. So, this includes creating their agendas and supporting the actual teleconferences or meetings, if needed, taking action items or doing summaries of the meetings, so trying to make it easier for the community to work and develop policies. Also, if you recall from the initial slides, policy development slides, there may be preliminary issue reports drafted, so that's also staff comes in to help draft such reports for the consideration of, in the case of these slides, GNSO Council. So, we do draft materials, like output of working groups would be documents, recommendations, final reports. We help the working groups doing these drafts, editings. So, we do support these communities in these ways. And as I said, in terms of managing processes, the policy development support function also oversees the setting up working groups, their mailing lists, also the public comment process at ICANN and provides secretariat services.

And then we also do communications to inform, regularly inform the ICANN community. So, before this meeting started, two weeks ago, there was the prep week, during which there were several webinars, and I'm sure many of you joined some of the webinars there, so policy team offers a policy webinar there. Also, the GNSO team offers a separate GNSO focused webinar. And then, along with this webinar, we also publish policy outlook reports to help, again, ICANN community to upcoming meetings. And also, after the meetings, we do publish

outcomes report, again, summarizing the decisions made during the meetings. So, we work on this communication materials to keep the ICANN community also informed.

And the most important part of the process is that it's a bottom-up and consensus-driven policy development process. That's why most times it takes time, sometimes so much time, and this is at the core of ICANN's mission. So, I think we have another opportunity for Q&A, questions and answer. Do we have any questions?

HANNAH FRANK:

I was wondering regarding all of this process, the role of the culture of all the multi-stakeholder, the culture, the backgrounds, different experience. On the one hand, I assume that it's remarkable that all the incomes, the solution or the consensus they reach have features of different cultures and backgrounds. But on the other hand, I see that could be a challenge. So, how does the community face this situation of having come from different cultures? Thank you.

OZAN SAHIN:

Thank you. Very good question, because as you said as you increase diversity and representation of different interests, it may get harder to achieve consensus and it may take longer time. But I think ICANN community, when you become part of the ICANN community, you get used to that, and also you get used to work with your colleagues or different people from different cultures. So, I think that is a habit that you get used to in time. And then also ICANN is working on various programs to develop leaders, like to show how they can aim to achieve

consensus in a group where there's wide diversity. So, one example is the ICANN leadership training program that happens before the community forum usually. The current leaders or incoming leaders may be invited and also trained about how to chair these working groups. So, if you have really skilled, good chairs, it really matters, you know. The work of the working group becomes more structured, so that also matters. So, ICANN organization works with the community to tackle any barriers that may result out of this diversity.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Just to add also, there are also ICANN learn courses available on facilitation skills, networking skills. So, those skills also supporting for incoming leaders to get into how to build that consensus. And actually, I like the term rough consensus, where you are not supposed to agree totally what's going on, but the majority are coming to the same point due to the building those capacity, like skills and relationship among participants. Yes, go ahead, please.

GIOVANNI CERBONI: Hello, good evening. Thank you for your presentation. I found extremely interesting what it has been said about public comments on the public forums online. However, I imagine that there must be or I wonder, is there any kind of formatting of it and how something that can be written in a number of ways actually becomes working materials. Because that's a big problem with direct democracy in a way that you have to find either standards or format them. And formatting often implies interpreting, changing, I mean, there can be a lot of things happening in the process and power structures can get in the way. So, I

was wondering how ICANN does this and how, let's say, rough raw materials of community members becomes working material. Thank you.

OZAN SAHIN:

Thank you for this question. Really very interesting. I think it is up to the working group that is seeking public comments. So, if this people or working group finds the substance of the public comment not very complex, they can just allow free form submissions. And you can just write, log into your ICANN org account, write a text, just submit it. Or you can write a text, convert it to PDF, submit it freely. But then if the working group finds the issue really complex and think of a situation where you are seeking public comments for like 34 different recommendations, then in these cases there are ways to get structured input. So, in such cases, rather than allowing free form text, the public comment seeker, the working group or person may request that the submitters respond to various questions. So, in such cases, they just put some questions and directly ask responses to these questions. So, it depends on the complexity of the issue.

TIDJANI MAHAMAT ADOUM:

We heard about consensus from the first person who spoke and I think we had a training on consensus yesterday. And we saw that in some cases we cannot reach consensus. So, my question would be if there is a policy that can help the development of the Internet or a policy that is going to be very beneficial to the Internet users and if there is a stakeholder who has interest and who unitarily is going to oppose that, what do we do in that case? I'm asking that question because we had

that in the governance in the forums of the Internet and we have some different interests, different governments with different interests. We have the commercial stakeholders that have some specific interests, commercial interests, and the government can say there is an issue with the security of the population. So, we have many issues, and in those cases, when we develop policies at ICANN, how do you deal with that if there is one party who opposes a policy? What do we do?

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: To this, Ozan, there is also a question from remote participants related to consensus process. So, can you please comment on consensus process? Is it well defined and is it successful? And are there any opportunities for improvement so it's the same process the question was asked if you can?

OZAN SAHIN: Yes, thank you for the question. So, the bylaws would define consensus as to the GNSO policy development process, and Siranush talked about rough consensus issue. So, when you talk about one party opposition, it depends on whether there is a significant opposition from a significant part of the work party or not. So, this one party is representing maybe broad views of the stakeholders or this one party may be one person just opposing where the working group is headed.

So, I think this is where the working group leadership comes into play and determines the divergence in consensus is significant or not. And it may be the case that if there are really strong differences in achieving consensus, the work party may not have an output, excuse me, the

working group may not have an output or it may be terminated at some point where it cannot advance its work. So not in all cases we get the output that the work party comes up with a final report and recommendations, especially when such divergence occurs in terms of achieving consensus.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you. [inaudible], please go ahead.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Good evening. This is [inaudible] Afghanistan. My question is regarding the GAC advisory committee specifically. Like, how does ICANN ensure the diversity and inclusivity in GAC committee, particularly in addressing the concern that many countries may not have representatives in the GAC committee? Like, the public policies may affect them, but they don't have GAC committee members. Thank you.

OZAN SAHIN: Thank you for this question. So, I am not particularly supporting the Governmental Advisory Committee myself, but as far as I know, the Governmental Advisory Committee has more than 180 members and observers. This number may not be necessarily true, but this is my recollection. And as far as I know, again, the Governmental Advisory Committee is open to all countries, states, and territories and economic identities in the world. So, they are just encouraging them to join the Governmental Advisory Committee to contribute. And as far as I know, if the states wanted to join the Governmental Advisory Committee, they are most welcome.

[PAULO GIOWACKI:] Going back to Giovanni's question, don't we have a policy writing course at ICANN Learn? Policy writing or writing for policy. Isn't there something available there?

PAULO DREWIACKI: There is a special course, yes, in ICANN Learn. And it was one of the recommended for fellows to take, yes. If you haven't taken it, please go and take it. I really recommend. Yes, please

PAULO GIOWACKI: Thank you for the great presentation. I was wondering, you were talking about that these processes can take up to years until they conclude. Now, the Internet is a very fast-paced environment and we have developments occurring every day. And so, I was wondering, where do you see room for improvement to speed these processes up? And do you think that they are fitted to the speed of the Internet? Yes.

OZAN SAHIN: That's a great question. And that's why I alluded to some of the pushback from the community on how much this work may take up some time. And as my colleague, Melissa, said before she left, there has been efforts, really tremendous efforts, especially within GNSO, to put a more structured way in how these working groups are run, to take this project management approach. And they are now really working hard. The working group chairs and leadership reporting regularly to GNSO Council on the status of their working groups. And the GNSO Council is

regularly tracking their progress. So, I think we have already started seeing improvement in how much this process will take. But, again, at the core of ICANN mission, you have the multi-stakeholder process and the bottom-up approach. So, again, it's inevitable that with the representation of different interests, it will take time. No matter what.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: So, we have only seven minutes to go. Malick, Bibek, and then we'll sum up. Thank you.

MALICK ALASSANE: Okay. My question links with the context of the policy development work. When you agreed on a policy and when you implement it, what if there are some people that are against it? What happens if the policy is already agreed? For example, if I take the example of the COVID period, there were some infrastructure on the Internet that were impacted because not everyone could not work. And there were lots of limitations. Were there some policies that were impacted directly or indirectly? How do you do inside of ICANN to take into account all these considerations?

OZAN SAHIN: Thank you for the question, Malick. Yes, I think the expectation is that most of these concerns would be raised during the policy development process, right? So, if there are different ideas, they would be raised. And the idea of having a working group is not having a place to raise your concerns. The working group is also expected to address these concerns. If they are not following a view that is mentioned, then they

should provide the reasoning behind it why they are not following it. But, of course, there could still be different ideas, although the rationale is provided. Once it takes the form of a final report and once it has been adopted by the ICANN board, it becomes a consensus policy. So, that means people must adhere to it. But that doesn't mean that this policy cannot be reviewed again in the future. So, our friend has just talked about how paced the environment is when we talk about the Internet and Internet policies. So, if it happens to be that the policy that you develop does not really answer your needs two years from now, it is still open for further deliberations. If that still results in issues, somebody will come up with issue identification and a new policy development process would start.

BIBEK SILWAL:

Thank you. So, my question is regarding the GNSO PDP. So, in the policy development process itself, there are three public comments during different phases and there are multiple times where the working groups are working on implementing the comments. And even after that, there have been many instances where ICANN board has rejected the policy recommendation from the GNSO. So, I wanted to know, even though with all this community work, why those policies are rejected in terms of favor of the public good and what happens after the board rejects the policy recommendation. Thank you.

OZAN SAHIN:

Thank you. Again, as I said, the way it really happens in reality is once a working group submits like 8, 10, 15 recommendations, as you said, there's a lot of work put in it. There are a lot of public input

opportunities. So, you are already submitting a final report that after receiving so many views and input and such. But again, if there are still issues with some of the recommendations, the board may pass the recommendations that you have consensus and agreements on, at least rough consensus. But if the board, again, may see some significant issues with the passing of some of the recommendations, then in these cases, these recommendations may not be necessarily for the good of the Internet in the view of the board at that time. So, the board also could—these specific recommendations could be sent back to GNSO Council for further deliberation. So, that means the board is not completely comfortable with passing it. So either it can be sent back to the working group or a new working group could be formed. And then after further deliberations, there may be a broader consensus in the end and can be re-sent to the board for adoption.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN:

Thank you very much. I don't see any questions. I don't see any hand raised in the Zoom chat as well. I would like to thank Ozan for being with us today and explaining how the process works from policy perspective and how you can be also part of policy development in ICANN. I would encourage you indeed go to take the course on policy development processes, get a closer look at how it works here, how you can be part of public comments, etc. So, make your voice heard. This is what ICANN needs and ICANN needs your voices here. Ozan, thank you very much. I would like also to thank our technical team who was supporting the entire day today and our interpreters, amazing job behind the scene for the entire day. Our applause is to all the support team from fellows and NextGeners. This is our last meeting for today. Looking forward to

seeing all of you tomorrow at the welcome ceremony. And with that, the meeting is adjourned. Thank you very much.

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