
ICANN78 | AGM – ccNSO Strategic and Oper Planning Standing Comm, Council and WG Chairs
Saturday, October 21, 2023 – 1:15 to 2:30 HAM

KIMBERLY CARLSON: Hi everyone and welcome to the ccNSO SOPC and committee chairs workshop. My name is Kim and along with Bart we are the remote participation managers for this session. Please note that this session is being recorded and governed by the I can expect it standards of behavior.

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To ensure transparency of participation in ICANN's multi-stakeholder model we ask that you sign into Zoom using your full name. For example, first name and last name or surname. With that I'll hand the floor over to Andreas. Thank you.

ANDREAS MUSIELAK: Good morning everyone. Thank you for joining us for today's session. It's the kickoff of the FY25 budget and operation planning process.

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Welcome also to my home country and the city of Hamburg. You may know that this is the second time ICANN is hosting an ICANN meeting here in Germany. So the last one was in '99 in Berlin. At that point in time, so we discussed the budget of 5 million US dollars. So now we're talking about 150 US million dollars. And by that time we paid in Germany with Deutsche Mark. So now we have the Euro finally. Okay, just a short remarks. I think a short hello from my nice co-chair Irina.

IRENA DANELIA:

Hello everyone and thank you for coming. And we really appreciate you being here helping us to go through this exercise for today.

ANDREAS MUSIELAK:

Okay, thank you. So we have agenda points, we have six agenda points. So we're starting with a welcome and explaining why we seek your inputs as working group chairs and also councils. The second point is more about the planning horizon which SOPC, so we will show what are our plans for the next one and a half years. Of course it's based on the ICANN planning preparation and time frame. And third, we seek, this is the important part for you guys here in the room and also for the people attending remote, giving your inputs, what we should focus on for the next one and a half years. And then at point four I hand over to Irina, she will explain a possible working method and run us to the end of this session.

Okay, so let's start with agenda point one, we're already in there. The whole question is, so we discussed this in the last SOPC meetings that we have a lot of expertise within our SOPC groups. We always seek input

from others because in certain working groups we are not so deep in this, in the topics, so that's why we seek your inputs. And this is exactly the good timing to start with that because the, let's say the FY25 planning process is just ahead of us.

And I would like to start with the example for the PTI budget working method. How was the approach of the SOPC last year? And in the past the PTI budget was always part of the work from the SOPC, however we always had a strong focus on financial and operational processes. But PTI is more, they have many technical items. So last year what we did, so we approached the technical working group and asked them if we can work together. And this was a very good example and the achievements were really good. So what we did, we met in the Kuala Lumpur meeting on site with a subgroup of the technical working group and a subgroup of the SOPC. So we said what are the technical initiatives we should focus on and comment as SOPC together with the technical working group. So we met there, so we discussed the main topics in a meeting of one hour or so. Then basically the SOPC took over the main work and said okay, what, and described in the regular manner as we do normally. And we had I think two Zoom meetings, Irina, if I'm not wrong. And then we finalized the documents for the PTI budget. So after several years where we were very focused on this financial and operative things, we went really deep into the technical points and this was a very good example how this can work also for other working groups.

Okay, so I think we can go to agenda point two. I think we have a PDF, Kim. You don't need to look really into the details, but as you can see, we as SOPC we start now and we have a focus and this is the green line.

So we're starting now in October here at the ICANN meeting in Hamburg and we'll over the next one and a half years focus on different items. So we see the first, the second green line with the purple bubbles. So we will focus first of all on the FY25 budget and planning. And the challenge we as SOPC group have is always that it starts mid-December and the period ends where we can comment the budget is mid-February. You can bear in mind the end of year is for most of us a very challenging time in your own TLD or company wherever you work, which means this is the challenge we have, but normally we do that and that's why we want to kick off that year. And then the whole process runs through and towards the end of May the whole process is finalized, comments are out and the community is informed.

But we have the strategic cycle ahead of us with focus on the FY26 to 30, which means this is a process which we will be all involved the next one and a half years. And this kicks off also now, there will be different meetings and we will also support that. So which means if we talk today it's not only the FY25, it's also the strategic cycle. And then, go to the end of the PDF, and then basically the FY26 operative plan starts again. So this is basically the next one and a half year plans for the SOPC and most of you guys too.

Okay, let's go back to the agenda. Agenda point three. Any questions so far? No, it's clear I think. Okay so now as I mentioned, so agenda point three is where you need to be active and help us to see what should be the focus points from your point of view. And we prepared a Mentimeter. So please, if you're not in the Zoom room, please sign in now. Right Kim? Ah they can do it with the QR code, perfect. So we [want to] know what area is important to you as a working group chair or as a

council and get input from you. We wait a few more minutes to get the responses.

IRINA DANELIA:

I think we need to give people time to do it. So basically what we see is the new TLD round. I think this is one of the important ones. The last meetings when we had the discussion about the new TLD round was always three years from this ICANN meeting, but now I think we have a timing and this should be 2026 so far as I know. So there is already a date ahead of us and it's fixed so far. It's not three years ahead on each ICANN meeting.

Contingency reserve funds, I think this is something which we continue to discuss. Increasing headcount and budgets of course is also an important topic for the SOPC. We received 17 answers so let's wait for a few more. One more minute and then I would ask the people about their answers so probably they can give brief insights, what is really important about these areas. Okay, no more responses. Then I would like to start with the new—ah, we have capacity building. A last minute answer. Okay, go ahead.

IRINA DANELIA:

I believe you can keep submitting additional responses while we are asking.

ANDREAS MUSIELAK:

Okay, so I would start with the new TLD round. It was actually also on our agenda for today because it's an important part. Is there anybody

who wants to explain what is important, what should we focus as CC community on this new TLD round? Feel free. Okay, so I think as we could see from the last round, there was a lot of discussion ahead. So I think, and this is not really a SOPC point, but however it's an important part that let's say the process starts early so that we are ready in three years from now. And I know we need to hire and this is probably the question about increasing headcount. We are aware that the team who was responsible for the first NTLD round is somewhere in other departments so they need to rebuild. I think this is an important part and we need to take into consideration for the next budget rounds that headcount will increase because of NTLD. But I think we should challenge ICANN if this is the right number and in particular for our colleagues from the G world, we need to see if they are happy with the numbers of people, the headcount, that we can all manage this new NTLD round.

Okay, next point would be ever increasing headcount and budget. Is there any particular thing we need to take into consideration? Also this point, this is, as I mentioned, we always take this into consideration and we ask always ICANN on which base they want to increase the number of headcounts. That's what we're doing since several years.

Okay, there is a new point, involvement and capacity building. So we have this two times. Probably can somebody tell us what is the particular point we need to discuss about capacity building? Okay, but I think we have a clear picture. Outreach budget, that is a little bit unclear for me. Irina, you have any idea what this can be?

IRINA DANELIA: I would appreciate if the person who typed this can take a mic and further explore the idea. Don't be shy.

ANDREAS MUSIELAK: It's always difficult to keep the group active. Yeah, but I think outreach is also something which ICANN spend some money in the past years. We will also focus on that. A very interesting topic is the WSIS 20 and the impact on the multi-stakeholder approach. I think, I don't know if we can really do that by ourselves. That would be clearly a point.

BARRACK OTIENO: Thank you, Chair. With respect to the outreach budget, as we go to the new gTLD round, certainly there is an implication of expenditure from an outreach perspective. But going by the last round, are we likely to have the same impact that we had with the last round? Have we really taken advantage of the strings that were opened up in the last round? And I'm thinking that should determine how much should be allocated to the current season, because already there are attempts for outreach, trying to encourage the community to participate. And I think it shouldn't just be for the sake of it. It has to be an informed attempt.

ANDREAS MUSIELAK: Thank you very much. Okay. That's a good explanation. Okay, let's come to Irina.

IRINA DANELIA: May I react in a provocative manner, if you don't mind? In many cases, ccTLDs consider gTLDs as competitors. We are struggling for the part of

the market. So why do you want ICANN to be efficient in promoting new gTLD rounds in your country to create more competition?

BARRACK OTIENO:

Thank you very much. If I may respond, I think the lines between looking at it from a service perspective have collapsed and thinking of what exactly—looking at the definition of a ccTLD and looking at our countries, I believe there are other solutions within the ccTLD domain that may not necessarily fall under ISO 3166, but which the ccTLDs can take advantage of for sustainability. And that may squarely bring opportunities because we are in a situation, in an era where we are talking of the Internet of Things. That's why I think this conversation is actually relevant to ccTLDs as well. It's a personal opinion, though. Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

Thank you. And thank you for the question, Irina. I think that any kind of outreach and capacity building that you can do, especially in developing economies—I'm talking from the experience in Latin America, where I come from—it's always useful. Maybe it's a competition for ccTLDs, but as far as you educate the market in general, that benefits the whole community—the gTLDs, the ccTLDs. For us, let me tell you that we tried to explain to several companies and organizations that we think that could be interested in new gTLDs around, and it was extremely difficult to explain the concept. So as far as you can educate the market, I think it benefits the whole gTLD, ccTLD and people involved in ICANN community. Thank you.

ANDREAS MUSIELAK:

And I would also like to answer your question. You have to bear in mind that Germany is the third biggest market for new gTLDs in the world. So what we can see as DENIC, as representing DotDE, it's not really a competition. You can see really that they try. So we have Dot Hamburg, basically. This is more a regional focus. And you always can see, most of the registration, there's already an existing domain name under DotDE. So it's more a regional market. And also we have so-called geographic top-level domains in Germany. So they have a very local focus. And that makes sense. And also bear in mind that—and this is in favor for ICANN—you open for IDNs, for other scripts. So for regions where they probably don't use the Latin script. So that makes also sense. But I know competition probably makes you better. That's always give a little bit of pressure on your own TLD. Very good question. Thank you, Irina. Oh, we have another comment.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

It is just a comment rather than a question. Actually there are big difference. It is not a competition at all between ccTLDs and gTLDs. At the time that I wanted to keep the identity of my country to be existed online, so it's ccTLD. My government wanted to have all the data under the domain name related to the country. It's ccTLD. But for gTLDs, it's related to another landscape. It is international business, for example. It is not related to countries. It wanted to be [inaudible]. That is my comment. Thank you.

ANDREAS MUSIELAK: Okay. Thank you for the valuable comments. Irina, another provocative question?

IRINA DANELIA: Not really, but why I'm digging around that is because in less than two months, we will have a 300-page document in front of us which will be named ICANN operating plan and budget. And quite a big piece of it, of this document, will be related to the preparation to the next new gTLD round. So I'm trying actually to prepare, to understand how we should deal with this piece of the document, with which approach we should read it, and what we should pay our—we as SOPC should pay our attention to in this like 50 or 70 pages related to next new gTLD round. That's why I'm trying to get as more input as possible.

ANDREAS MUSIELAK: I think one point is, of course, the reserve funds. So we still have reserve funds from the first round of the new gTLDs. And very likely, there will be new funds coming if there will be the tenders coming out. So I think this is also a particular thing that we know what we do with these funds. So we should now take this into consideration now instead like in the past, first have all the new rounds finished and then discuss what we do with the money. So this time probably we can do it the other way around. Okay, so it's also mentioned there, IANA function. I think this is always an important point, but I don't know if somebody from a technical point of view can tell us how we should tackle this point. Is there anybody here who can tell us how the SOPC can support the budget process or the initiatives around the IANA function?

JORDAN CARTER: It's not from a technical point of view, it's just a business point of view. The IANA work is the most important work that ICANN does for most of us most of the time. And so to the extent that they're bidding for resources or if there's any competition for resources within the overall ICANN system, I guess it's the traditional perspective here that the IANA stuff should come first. And I was one of the people who wrote it somewhere, but I wasn't the only one, so that's what I was thinking.

ANDREAS MUSIELAK: Thank you, Jordan. Okay, I think we covered most of the points. I think if there would be something in addition, just send us a message and we take that. Oh, David.

DAVID MCCAULEY: Thank you, Andreas. David McAuley speaking, a member of the committee. The one thing I would add that I didn't put in Menti just because I was too slow to get into Menti is not conceptually at that level but just below it. And that is something that we encountered in our subgroup last year, and that is to be alert to telltale signs in the document as to how certain things are being handled. And I speak specifically about the example we had last year was the pilot holistic review. And what happened was the document was written in such a way that it appeared that that effort was moving forward unchanged despite the fact that relatively recently before that, there was a public comment period with some very strong public comments. And so we picked up on that. And I think we need to be alert to that this year to say

with respect to pilot holistic review, I know there's work going on on that. But other things, look what this document is telling us with respect to these kinds of initiatives and pick up on any signs. And we did, and there was a reasonable explanation forthcoming from ICANN, made sense. Okay, great. But we have to be alert to that. So I just thought I would add that. It's not at that level, but it's something that we in the work need to be paying attention to. Thank you.

ANDREAS MUSIELAK:

Thank you, David. I think we can go to the next Mentimeter. And if somebody needs help with Mentimeter, please ask your neighbor for help so we get as much input as possible. So the next question at Mentimeter, it should be there in a minute. So we have, you know, in the last FY24, so the last budget round, ICANN presented 11 operating initiatives. Before it was 15, by the way. They reduced to 11. So and we would like, and some of the points were already mentioned in the previous Mentimeter question, but we didn't want to be too focused. We wanted to be open. So this is a clear focus on the 11 operating initiatives, which we expect to be also in the FY25 budget. So please rank which one you see as the most important. And we have three answers possible or more than that. So the three most important operating initiatives you would like us to focus on. And by the way, so the numbers are here, so you see, because we couldn't shorten really the statement. So one stands for support the evolution and strengthening of the root server system, and 11 is the ICANN reserve. So just type in the number and the corresponding number is there. Thank you. If there won't be no answer for one of the operating initiatives, it doesn't mean that we will not focus on it, but we will probably put less

focus on this initiative. So it's number three with 11. So I think it will remain the top position, which is evolve and strengthen the multi-stakeholder model to facilitate diverse and inclusive participation in policymaking. And I do think this will remain also one of the strategic points also for the next strategic cycle. So I fully agree with the group here that we should put focus on that. Okay, then second is facilitate the domain name system, DNS ecosystem improvements. Of course, that is our main purpose of, or one of the main purpose of the ICANN meetings. If there is somebody who wants to comment on his response, why they think it's important, please raise your hand and we're happy to take into consideration your comment. Okay, then we have three items with seven responses, which is one, four and seven. Okay. And six, sorry, sorry. Good. Promote and develop the DNS through open and... Okay. And we see three still increasing. Okay. It gives us a good idea on what we will focus. Thank you very much. If there is no comment, I think I would hand over to you, Irina. So starting with the possible working group methods. Thank you very much for that.

IRINA DANELIA:

So is anybody willing to comment or ask questions on this? If not, then can we move forward? So I'm going now to explain our working method, because later we will have another request to you. So since the document are quite big, we use this... All previous years we used the small working group methods, which means that we split the work between usually three groups, and each SOPC member is part of one of the groups. Group has a leader, and each group works on its piece. And then all these groups deliver their submission, which is consolidated and becomes the final document of all SOPC.

So how is it split? We give certain topics to each group, like operating initiatives, this or this, or functional activities, this or this. And what is new for this year. We also will have a list of open issues from previous year. And if we go to the next slide, I will explain what these open issues are.

So what we started to do a year ago, we started to track how SOPC comments are actually taken into account by ICANN.org. So when we submit our comments, we then receive the report from ICANN.org on these comments, and then we see the adjusted document, which goes for board approval, I mean operating plan and budget. And comparing this document, we can see which of our comments were actually responded, which were taken into account and the plan was adjusted, and which by some reason were not addressed or were addressed partially, not in the manner that we expect. And we have this list of open topics. And the examples of such topics could be, for example, pilot holistic review, which David already mentioned, or universal accepted activities, or engagement under the geopolitical monitoring and mitigation operating initiatives. So these are specific issues we are going to put our eyes on in reviewing next operating plan and budget, and check whether there is a progress, whether there are changes, whether there are improvements, and whether our concerns are addressed in this or other way.

So with that, each of our small working group will have a piece of operating plan or budget, and some related open questions. And as was already mentioned, the time to start this work will be starting from December 13, when we expect operating plan and budgets to be published, and till mid-February, when we are supposed to submit our

submission, actually, our comments, when SOPC is supposed to submit its comments on behalf of ccNSO.

So with that, and one more specific of this year planning process, which I want to mention, that for the first time, we have PTI and ICANN plans and budgets coming together. All years before, we had PTI budget for review in September, and then ICANN budget in December. But recent changes in the PTI, recent adjustments in PTI bylaws, resulted in that we have these two processes coming together, which makes perfect sense, but which also means that we have to keep more eyes on this piece of the operating plan. So with that, you? No, you can continue.

ANDREAS MUSIELAK:

But I think the important part is, I think there's one clear question to the whole working groups. If you need our support, so we are here now for the next, until Thursday at least, myself, please contact us. And if you have, you see already now, a window where we can work together, please contact us and we will do the same thing like for the PTI budget. So we are here and willing to help you and to support you. So if there are anything we can do for you, feel free to contact us.

IRINA DANELIA:

And in the same time, if, and I'm mostly addressing working group, ccNSO working group, members, chairs, and vice chairs, if you have expertise in your group on the certain subjects, if you are ready to share your expertise, if you are ready to assist SOPC in the work and dealing with one or two particular topics, particular items, please help us. We will be happy to arrange our work, to coordinate our work efficiently

and let you small piece which we are willing you to look at and maybe provide us for additional opinion and additional expertise on what you think about the suggested plan and what in your eyes can be improved there. So please reach us if you feel that your group is ready to assist and we will be very grateful as SOPC and we will find a way to organize our communication so that it will not be really heavy burden on the working group members. But it will be a very reasonable and valuable input. Thank you.

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