
ICANN78 | AGM – ICANN78 Fellowship and NextGen@ICANN Progs Parts Meet and Greet
Saturday, October 21, 2023 – 9:00 to 10:00 HAM

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Hello, and welcome, everyone, to the meet and greet session with fellows and NextGeners. Today is a special day for all of us to meet each other. And for those who are here for the first time at ICANN meeting, a warm welcome. My name is Siranush Vardanyan, and I am the fellowship program manager at ICANN. But I also will be your remote participation manager for this session. Please note that this session is being recorded and is governed by the ICANN expected standards of behavior. During this session, questions and comments submitted in chat will only be read aloud and if put in a proper form. And I will note this shortly in the chat. I will read questions and comments aloud during the time set by the chair or moderator of this session.

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If you allow me, I would like to walk because I don't like to sit when I'm talking to all of you. I would like to welcome all NextGeners and fellows to ICANN 78, to Hamburg. I hope that your trip and flights to Hamburg were soft and easy, even they might take a couple of days. I hope that you will enjoy your stay being a fellow or a NextGen program participants. And today, the main idea for today's session is get to know each other. And I also would like to introduce some of my colleagues who will be here and who also will be around the entire week. So you have a chance to talk to them. And today, I would like also to thank them for being here with us. Our stakeholder engagement team members, my colleagues who are working in the regions, the people who are your key contacts in the region. But before going to introducing them, I would like to give the floor to the Vice President for Public Responsibility Support Engagement Operations Engagement Programs, the person who is managing all the programs like NextGen, fellows, ICANN Learn, Ergys Ramaj.

ERGYS RAMAJ:

Good morning, everyone. Thank you, Siranush. Welcome to Hamburg. So I was just walking this morning, and there were two longstanding community members and a former ICANN staffer. And they were having

a conversation about the fellowship program, and I just happened to be there. And the community members were saying, look, these people that come to these programs, they're really smart. And the former ICANN member says, well, what do you mean? And they're like, no, they're really smart. I've seen the applications. I've been on the committee. They're really smart. These are the kinds of people you need to pay attention to. So to me, that was obviously, as an organization, as a community, we do know the value of the fellowship program. But to hear it over and over again, I think, is validation. So thank you for what you bring to ICANN. I know that a lot of you, the overwhelming majority of the fellowship program cohort this year, and of course, the NextGen, are newcomers.

And this comes with a lot of question marks. What does this mean for me at ICANN? Who am I at ICANN? What are the opportunities for me at ICANN? And at the end of the day, you are the one who has to answer these questions. But you're not alone. Our role here as staff, as support staff in the regions, Siranush, and Deb, as program managers, is to support you in that quest. It's to support you in your journey. So the only advice I can give you is ask questions. Whatever your background is, there's a place for you at ICANN. If you don't really know where to start, that's what we're here for. You can work with one another. You can ask each other. You can ask your mentors. But you can ask us. You can ask the community. ICANN is a very flat organization. It's very horizontal. So you can absolutely just walk onto the hallways and talk to a board member, talk to the CEO. It's unlike any other structure that at least I've been involved in. So again, reach out, ask questions, and

we're here to support you. And with that, thank you, and welcome to Humber. Siranush.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Ergys. Thank you very much. For those who know me, they don't used to see me in red. So my apologies for today being in red. But I'm sure by the end of the week, I'll be in green in my usual way of hugging and welcoming and seeing all of you. Deborah, if I may give the floor, my colleague Deborah, who is managing the NextGen program, is here. Please.

DEBORAH ESCALERA: Hello, everybody, and welcome to ICANN '78. I'm thrilled to be meeting you all today for the first time. I know we had a virtual call with the NextGen. I'm excited to meet all of you new fellows and some of you returning fellows. Of course, we already know each other. Just looking forward to having an exciting and fabulous week this week. Of course, as Ergys said, if you have any questions or concerns, please let Siranush and I know. If you want to meet any community members, of course, we're here to make our introductions for you. But just look forward to a new experience this week. Any questions that you may have, let us know. Of course, you have your mandatory sessions that you are expected to attend. But look to the schedule and attend as many sessions as you possibly can this week. This is your week to experience. And we want you to experience as many sessions as you possibly can. Even if you might not think you might be interested in that particular topic, I encourage you to attend as many sessions as you possibly can.

So enjoy yourself this week, and I look forward to getting to know all of you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Deb. Thank you. Just to give some statistics, we have 11 NextGeners at ICANN 78, and we have 40 fellows from 36 countries. So you can imagine what is the caliber of the representation of those two programs here. We have five fellows who were not able to travel due to visa issues, so they will be joining us virtually. So the fellowship program is indeed a hybrid meeting. So we have five fellows who are part of this group at ICANN 78. So please make sure that we treat them equally as they are here in person. That's why we ask for every session you join to the Zoom room and raise your hand, follow the instructions. And people who are joining us remotely also can see your participation, and they can be engaged following what you can see here.

During this three months, two months prior to coming to ICANN 78, many of you were asked to take ICANN Learn courses. I hope you enjoyed them. I hope they were very important for you to prepare. But I would like to introduce the person who is standing behind all of this. Elizabeth. Betsy, please.

BETSY ANDREWS: Thanks, Siranush, for that kind introduction. I'm Betsy Andrews, and among other tasks on the team with Argus and Deborah and Siranush, I run the ICANN Learn online learning platform. We have big plans for this online learning platform, and we also welcome your input. So if you have any ideas or questions, feel free to approach me. I am also

apologetically red this week or right now this week because I do not want to share this cold with you. Not COVID, just cold. But I'm really pleased that you're all here. 36 countries is amazing representation, and we're really fortunate to be in a place where we can get together from all over the world and talk about things of interest. So really glad you're here, and happy to help in any way that I can.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Betsy. Thank you, and thank you for the ICANN Learn support and the interesting courses you always bring to us. Before moving to my global stakeholder engagement team colleagues, I would like to ask fellowship and NextGen mentors to stand up. Shreedeeep, Jennifer, Denise. Who else? Who else? Yes, Lakshmi, you. Well, yeah, I know she is on her way. She got her visa, like, literally today. She's coming. She's on her way. Thank you for applause. I applaud to you, and I thank you for the hard job you did during the last two months. And I'm sure you will continue your important role.

Our mentors, for everyone here to know, they are assigned or nominated by the ICANN community. So all of them represent ICANN community, and I'm happy to tell that ICANN fellowship mentors are all coming through the fellowship program. So they are fellows, like many of you, and they know what does it mean to be a newcomer, because once they had been a fellow and came here for their first ICANN meeting, and believe me, they know what is the feeling of being newcomer. So once again, thank you very much for being here, and thank you for your hard work.

I would like to start with introducing the person who is the host from the host country. The vice president for stakeholder engagement team for Europe, unfortunately, is not today with us, but he will join us later today for the fellowship and NextGen social networking event. But I would like to give the floor to Adam Peake, as a representative from Europe, to welcome our participants.

ADAM PEAKE:

Indeed, good morning, everybody. I'm Adam Peake. As said, I work for the global stakeholder engagement team for the European region. Chris Mondini, the VP, is somewhere else, and I'm looking for Andrea Beccalli, who is not here yet, but he will be here. So there's three of us on site, and we're responsible for engagement across the European Union, which extends way, way over to the east, and I think probably ends in Ireland to the west. And our job is to engage with you. If you have questions about ICANN programs, then we're here to try and help you. If you're interested in understanding more about different constituencies and supporting organizations and advisory committees and all the different things that happen in ICANN, then please feel free to ask any of us, particularly, of course, if you're from the European region. We have other colleagues from other regions. I see Rodrigo de la Parra, I see a Yaovi, and I'm going blind because I can't see everybody who's in the team. Jia-Rong from Asia-Pacific. So you'll find representatives from all of the global stakeholder engagement regions, and we're here to help you. For Hamburg, we can't do anything about the weather. We did try. We've burnt a few beer bottles and sausages and various things. Didn't work. But the whole engagement program, please keep aware of what's happening in the evenings. There are social

events. And as I said, if you see someone that says ICANN.org, ask us questions, because we'll be here to try and help you. So welcome to Hamburg, welcome to Europe, and welcome to ICANN. Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Adam. Thank you very much. And our next session will be with the person whose documents and information you already received before. But I would like just to give the floor to my colleague, Melissa Allgood, to say hello.

MELISSA ALLGOOD: Hello. I'm Melissa Allgood. Fellows, you've had to sit through a painful video of me talking to my computer, so thank you for doing that. I am on the policy team. And I actually run a program called the Policy Development Accelerator, which I'll tell you about maybe a little bit at the wrap. But I also do conflict resolution and consensus work. So I look forward to seeing you all next session.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you. Thank you, Melissa. So let's move to another region. And I see my colleagues from Latin America and Caribbean. Rodrigo de la Parra, Vice President for Latin America and Caribbean region, please.

RODRIGO DE LA PARRA: Thank you, Siranush. And good morning, everybody. It's great to have you all here. Welcome to ICANN. And I think congratulations is in order. You made it through a very competitive process, so welcome again and congratulations. So I am the Vice President for Stakeholder

Engagement in Latin America and the Caribbean. I also head one of our regional offices in Montevideo in Uruguay. And well, can you identify, guys, you from Latin America and the Caribbean? Where's the Latin mafia? OK, I can see some familiar faces, some new faces. So great to have you here. Do we have interpretation? I'm going to switch to Spanish. I want to encourage you to don't be shy. Speak. We have fantastic interpreters. So you can feel free to communicate in your native language.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Please take the headsets from over there. This is good testing for them to know. If you enter to any room, just pick up interpretation headsets from there, OK? This will help you during the entire session not to run back and forth and be ready for such—to start speak in other language than English.

RODRIGO DE LA PARRA: Sure. I'll carry on in English just for you. It's a warning. So here in the Global Stakeholder Engagement Team, we are here to help you consider us as a resource, not only for this meeting, but for your entire journey at ICANN. So you might be starting now as a fellow or as a NextGen. But then we are here to help you as a guide you in all the regional activities that happen throughout the year. And we will then consider you a resource. So there's a long relationship that we establish with our fellows. Actually, I am a fellow. I was a fellow in the first generation in 2007, and I'm still around. So this is what we say. Once a fellow, you are always a fellow. And with that, let me introduce you with my colleague, Albert Daniels, who happens to be also a fellow. He takes

care of the Caribbean region. And Albert, thank you very much. And thank you, everybody. Welcome.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: And before giving the floor to Albert, I would like to tell you that when I also came as a fellow, Albert was my mentor. So please go ahead.

ALBERT DANIELS: Thank you very much, Rodrigo. Thank you very much, Siranush. Good morning to the fellows and the NextGeners. You have already heard from Ergys that you are really smart. What I will add to that is that you are really lucky to be members of these two programs. As Rodrigo already mentioned, I was a fellow in the meeting in San Juan in 2007, which was the beginning of the Fellowship Program. And what I learned there is that the Fellowship Program is the most precious program in the entire ICANN system. It is a place where you can learn about ICANN and keep learning. When you are in this room, the leaders from all of the other parts of ICANN come to you because they recognize that you are experts in your own countries. They will answer any question that you have. No question is too silly. So don't feel that you should not get up and speak. Make the best of every opportunity. Now, Siranush will ask you to be on time. And there are certain meetings that are mandatory. I would urge you to take that guidance very seriously, because by following that guidance, you will get best value for your participation in the Fellowship Program. As Rodrigo said, it is very competitive. You were selected. Make the most of it.

So going to the sessions, we are here in Latin America and the Caribbean as GSE and all of the other GSE staff to support you, to answer your questions, to help you understand ICANN better, and also to help you organize ICANN-related events in your own country. So reach out to us. If we don't know the answer, we will find the answer for you. Connect with people at ICANN meetings, others that you have not known. If you're like me and you're very shy, step out of that box and go up to somebody who you don't know and introduce yourself. Tell them about your country. Tell them about what you do. This is very important, because you work hard during the ICANN sessions. But one thing we do at ICANN is we also play hard. So go to the socials, meet people at breakfast, and make the best use of it. So thank you very much, and we are here to support you with GSE for Latin America and the Caribbean.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Albert. Thank you very much. Just how Albert became my mentor by the time when I was a fellow, it was the third fellowship. So Rodrigo and Albert were fellows at the first ICANN fellowship program at ICANN 29, and I was a fellow at ICANN 31. And when I came, there was no mentoring process in place. So I didn't know why I'm here, what I'm doing, what I'm supposed to do. And Albert was the only person whose name I could pronounce without mistake. So I reached him and said, seems like you are a clever guy, can you explain why I'm here? So that's how it worked. Okay, from the European region, I have also my colleague who represents and supports Eastern Europe. Misha, if I can give you the floor.

MIKHAIL ANISIMOV: Thank you so much, Siranush. I'm Mikhail Anisimov, and I'm supporting Eastern Europe and Central Asia. I'm doing engagement activities with all types of stakeholders-- the government, the industry, the law enforcement, the civil society. I'm also a fellow of 2018. So once again, congratulations for being here. And there's not so much to add to what has already been told, but I want to emphasize once again that ICANN meetings is a barrierless space. You can reach whatever person, whatever level of seniority they are. They will answer your questions. They will reply to you. They will support you. So please reach out, and we will help whatever we can. Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Misha. Thank you. Let's move to Africa, and I see Pierre is here. Pierre, if you can start, and then we'll go to Yaovi.

PIERRE DANDJINOU: Thank you very much. Let me just pick one of the African languages. No, sorry, I'm not doing this, because we do have plenty of them, so I don't want issues here. So I'm Pierre Dandjinou. I'm the vice president in charge of Africa in terms of engagement, and we've been working with different countries and institutions. We already have all the pieces of advice to cope with ICANN once you are here, so I'm not going to get into that one. But what I know is that we do have so many acronyms. So when you come here, that also can be a challenge. But that's a good thing to go through, and you know about it, so don't be afraid of that. Maybe what I will say here is about networking. Getting to know each

other is quite important, and that's something that I notice as far as ICANN is concerned. Most of the Africans, for instance, that come here, we notice that it's good for them to be here, because you may not understand, but people don't really see each other in Africa, especially when they are professionals like you. So this sort of platform, as ICANN, provides this sort of opportunity for you to be networking with the like-minded person. So basically, I would just say that we are here to support, as my colleagues said. We are running all over Africa to make sure that not only the word about ICANN is spread there, but also we are involved in specific projects that aim to provide some connectivity, and also get you to know more about some of the things that we call the DNS. You know about all of this. And you'll be certainly seeing us in your places. And what we ask is that you also, once now you are introduced to ICANN, that you are able to kind of collaborate or partner with us on our specific projects. So thank you, and have a very good meeting here.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Pierre. Thank you. And let me introduce Yaovi, who is also a fellow, started his ICANN journey with the fellowship program.

YAOVI ATOHOUN: [Speaking French]

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Yaovi. Let me move to EMEA region and introduce you, head of our Istanbul office and vice president for EMEA region.

BAHER ESMAT:

Good morning, everyone. I'm Baher Esmat. I'm the head of stakeholder engagement in the Middle East. I know that regions at ICANN may be a little confusing. So Middle Eastern part is in the Asia-Pacific region, and in part is in the Africa region. So we basically cover a little more than 20 countries, including all Arab-speaking countries, plus Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. I'm not a fellow myself, so I feel unlucky. But I didn't quite miss the fellowship train, because I witnessed the emergence of the fellowship program back in 2007. I was new at ICANN back then, but I was part of a small team that contributed to the sort of setup and the launch of the fellowship program. And obviously, after so many years and with so many people that have been through this program and continued to contribute to ICANN in so many different ways, I think we all agree that it's one of the greatest initiatives that ICANN has implemented. So welcome to ICANN. And as my colleague said, we're here to help and support. Siranush will be and will know how to reach us if you need any help, not only during this week, but also during your journey with ICANN in the future. So welcome again. And I'd like to introduce my colleague, Seher, also to say a few words.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN:

Thanks, Seher, for being here.

SEHER SAGIROGLU:

Thank you very much. Good morning, everyone. I'm based in Istanbul and working with Middle East and Africa global stakeholder engagement teams. I'm so happy to meet you all and looking forward to hear your fresh insights, because every time fellowship program is a great opportunity for us to meet new people, looking from different

angles, and help us to innovate new ways to engage with different people. So I'm so excited to meet you and looking forward to have in-person interaction in the cocktail today.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you. And now I would like to introduce the region which I came from initially, so Asia-Pacific region. Please, Jia-Rong, Vice President for Asia-Pacific region. Thanks for being here.

JIA-RONG LOW: Thank you. Good morning, everybody. My name is Jia-Rong. I look after the Asia-Pacific office, which is based in Singapore. And I'm the Vice President for Stakeholder Engagement for Asia. Now, it's very confusing, because Asia-Pacific as a region for the ICANN community starts somewhere around-- actually, around Armenia and all the way to the Pacific Islands, which is very big. So you realize that actually, for us from the stakeholder engagement team, we further break it down into sub-regions. And it's not that you are not from Asia-Pacific. It's just that the region is too big, so we cover it by subdivisions. So you don't have to have an identity crisis, like, oh, yeah, I think I'm from Middle East. Maybe I'm from Africa or something. Don't worry. If it's defined by ICANN as Asia-Pacific, you're from the Asia-Pacific region, and we welcome you, and we want to really be in touch with you. So we thought to make that point very clear.

Now, the other point, really, for coming to ICANN meeting is it's all about people, about people, about building a network. And take this opportunity to get to know people. And again, you have a Fellows tag.

Everyone will be very friendly. They will talk to you, answer any questions you may have. And I also like to invite all of you to attend one of the sessions we have. It's on Monday at 4:30. So this Monday at 4:30, it's called APAC Space. It's literally a space for our community members to come together and to talk about what's being discussed at the ICANN meeting. But we also factor in half an hour just for networking. So you get to spend time to meet people, and I will be the facilitator. So when you are there and you look like you're very lost, don't worry, I will bring you to somebody who is a regular, who's been in the ICANN community for a long time, and introduce you to them. So please join us, 4.30 on Monday for APAC Space. Now with that, I would also like to introduce my colleague, Samiran Gupta. Can I introduce him as well? So I mentioned we have sub-regions. So for Asia-Pacific, Samiran will look after the South Asia region, because also it's very big. So I'll let him talk a bit more about it. Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Welcome back, Samiran.

SAMIRAN GUPTA: Thank you, Jia-Rong, thank you, Siranush, and all colleagues who spoke before I did. So I share some attributes with all of you. No, I'm not a fellow, and I'm not a NextGen, but I am a returning ICANN staff member. So I was gone very briefly, but obviously, I am back here now. So I live and work out of New Delhi, but the region that I look after in that sense starts from, I would say, India, Nepal, Bhutan, and going down to Sri Lanka, and then across to Bangladesh. It's a complex region. It's very interesting. There's a lot going on over there, and I'm not sure how

many of you this time have not had a chance to look at the fellowship applications, and who's from that region, but if you are, and even if you're not, please feel free to look me up, and I'm very happy to chat with you, and answer any questions that you might have.

So while I'm part of GSC, I'm also part of another team called Government and Intergovernmental Engagement, or G&IGO. I have a colleague from that team with me, Angela, who's also based in the APAC region. Angela's in Singapore. Please feel free to reach out to her. Angela, do you want to stand up and just identify yourself so that people know that you're here?

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN:

Thank you, Samiran. It's so great to see you back. Thank you. Unfortunately, we don't have our North America Global Stakeholder Engagement Team representatives at this session, because Vice President for North America has to go to another session, but she's around, Naela Sarras. So thank you. Thank you, my colleagues from Stakeholder Engagement Team from the regions. Thank you for being here. It is very important for fellows and NextGeners to know you in person. And thank you for taking your time during this very, very tight meeting. I know everybody has full schedules to go to different meetings, but thank you for being here. As Samiran, Jia-Rong mentioned, there will be regional space sessions. There will be Latin America and Caribbean space. There will be Asia Pacific space. There will be Europe space. There will be Africa space. And North America, if I'm not sure, North America space, but—There will be no North America. But if you are interested to know more about North America, and if you

are from North America, feel free to join Latin America and Caribbean regions because there are so many interrelated activities there. So please make sure that you take those sessions and put in your agenda, do not miss. They are listed in your fellowship slide deck as recommended, but these are for you to start from the proper place with the proper people. These are the sessions to go. So please make sure you go there.

I think we will not have time to go through each and every person to introduce yourselves, but we today in the evening after the [hard] sessions and the start of the first day at 5:30, we have fellowship and NextGen social networking hour. All my colleagues and ICANN org representatives, ICANN community members are invited to come there, but this is also the opportunity for you to interact with each other. Don't shy. The first thing for us to know how to help is you ask us. Bring the questions to us. Stop people you know now, the key people from your region or people who are dealing with different regions, so you know them in person. Stop them and ask them the questions. We will give you further today the name tags in addition to this as NextGens and fellows, right? They are not with me now, but I'll bring it for our next session. So any questions? Yes, please. –

HOUDA CHIH:

Hello, everyone. Thank you so much for this great introduction. My name is Houda Chihi, I'm ICANN 78 fellow. I work as chief engineer with Tunisia Telecom operator. I have question I want to be more engaged with ICANN, but I learned many courses, but at the end I feel sometimes

confused because there is so many groups. Could you advise me how to remember about all of them? Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN:

Great question. And you are not alone. You are not alone. This is my first response because indeed there are a lot of information. This is your first ICANN meeting, and my first suggestion will be just to open your mind for learning. I have planned this time a lot of sessions get to know the ICANN community and get to know how ICANN works. So take the time to participate in those sessions, digest the information. Tuesday is the constituency day, which I put no mandatory sessions for fellows, but you to go and start learning about the ICANN community. This is the place where you don't need to stuck in one community. Go to different sessions. Just try to understand what they are talking and which one is close to you. By the end of the week, you will have an idea, the initial idea where do you want to go. So relax, enjoy, have fun, and be open for learning. That's how it works. Don't feel frustrated. This is the key to be engaged. But I want to introduce today also the person who will be coming later to the session with ICANN NextGen and fellows. The person who is actually the key in understanding how ICANN works technically, from technical side. So John Crain is here with us, and I would like to give the floor to John to introduce him.

JOHN CRAIN:

Well, thank you. I also was not a fellow. So you don't have to be a fellow to come work at ICANN. We also accept NextGen. I was just noticing a pattern there that you guys seem to be hiring all the fellows. So I'm ICANN's chief technology officer. I do dorky, geeky stuff. So if any of you

are engineers, come talk to me. I am also responsible for a part of the organization called the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority, or IANA. We are the overlords of acronyms. So I'm an SVP and CTO, and I run a group called IROS, which comprises of the OCTO and the IANA. And we will give a presentation on that later this week, I believe, with some of my staff. I think you've all got good advice here. Talk to people. That's the main thing. You're here to network. You will learn a lot. You will probably be a little more confused when you leave than when you came, because it is a confusing environment. There are hundreds of hours of sessions. Relax. Don't worry about it. You will eventually find the places where you belong. You will find your own community. You will form your own community, because the fellows and the NextGen tend to really stick together. It's a little clique, and then they all come and seek jobs, apparently, at ICANN. Okay. I did not know that half of these staff members were fellows, by the way. So just enjoy yourself. Like I said, you see somebody with ICANN.org, it doesn't matter if they're the tech guys, the SVPs, or the CEO, or board members. Just go up and talk to them. Ask questions. They'll be happy to. And we are going to have something at the end of the week which is bizarre and unique to ICANN. It's called the public forum. You will be told this multiple times over the week. If you have a question, don't be shy. You can go and ask the questions publicly of the board and the staff. We also have an executive discussion. I think that's tomorrow. I have to look at my agenda, but look out for that. And that's where-- it's Monday, apparently. You can come and ask the executives any question you want. So just get involved and have a good time. Enjoy yourselves. ICANN can be a lot of fun. I've been here about, I guess, close to 25 years

now. So there's no escape. And even if you do escape, as you have heard, some of us come back. So thank you, everybody.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you. Thank you, John. And we're looking forward to your session to talk about the technical aspect of ICANN. And in that, John, remind me that we are at the unique ICANN meeting to some point. We are celebrating 25th anniversary of ICANN. And you are making history now and will make the history in future for ICANN. So one more time, welcome to ICANN. There is a question, actually, from our fellow, Abdulrahim. He is asking, what best he can take out from the fellowship program, from the fellowship experience? And Albert, if I can come to you to give some tips.

ALBERT DANIELS: As you've heard, it can get very complex at times. One of the best pieces of advice ICANN give is to eat the elephant with small bites, one small bite at a time. Take it easy. Start chewing. Digest the one small part. And then move on from there. I say this because the first time I went to an ICANN session, this is what I heard. The ccNSO is considering a PDP on IDNs, and they need to discuss it with the GAC and the SSAC. I immediately went back to the door, and I picked up the interpretation equipment because I was certain that they were speaking a different language. It turns out that they were speaking English, which I thought I understood. But there is a lot to learn. But similarly, there is a lot of opportunity to develop relationships. Take advantage of every coffee break, every trip down the escalator, every trip in the elevator. I'm sitting next to my Trinidadian colleague. He's from the Caribbean, and

already he's fearful of what to expect. Have no fear. It will all be fine. And at the end, you will each become ambassadors for your own country in taking information from ICANN and bringing back to your own country. So small bites, understand what you are taking in, and then see how much you can take back to your own country. Thank you, Siranush.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Albert. And as the question was from the virtual fellow, I would add here that, yes, ICANN meetings are hybrid, and you can participate to any sessions. Unfortunately, you will miss the networking opportunity, being in person. It's different than joining virtually. The social events are not online, so we don't have them. You cannot see them, actually, online and cannot join them. But all the sessions are open, so please take the advantage of virtual participation. Betsy would like to add something.

BETSY ANDREWS: A couple of things I wanted to add, speaking about what Albert said about taking advantage of the opportunities to network when you're around people and the questions that you can ask. We have an engagement booth that I'm sure you'll be hearing all about, where you can go and ask questions. And next to the engagement booth, there is a beautiful banner celebrating ICANN Learn. And it's set up for you to color in. There are markers. It's set up like a coloring page. So you can go there and have a chat, speak with people. It's designed to be a selfie board. So once you have it all colored in beautiful, we'll have Polaroids, and you can take pictures of yourself there. And for our virtual

participants, we are very happy to send you an image of it once it's colored in. And you can use it to take a virtual selfie and send it back with us. But be sure, when you're participating online, whether you're here in person or if you're at home, use the tools. Because ICANN has invested a lot in making sure that the meeting is accessible to people who participate remotely. And there are a lot of opportunities to engage. So ensure that you're using the tools that are provided for you. And you are a part of this meeting. So thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Betsy. Thank you. This is very important. And I see also my colleague from Europe, Andrea Beccalli, joined us. Andrea, if I can give the mic to you for introduction.

ANDREA BECCALLI: There is no way you can hide from Siranush. And that works for our staff, but it works actually for you fellows. So even during your sleep, Siranus knows if you're sleeping or not. Anyway, so I'm Andrea Beccalli. I'm the stakeholder engagement director for Europe, and based in Lisbon. I cover southern Europe. And I'm not a fellow, but I always love the fellow. And I love to interact with you. And I can see already some familiar faces. So it's a pleasure for me to see people that I met in my engagement work. And then they became a fellow. And the other way around, once you finish your fellowship experience, you may go on with other work or interest, or maybe join ICANN. But you will always be part of this network and environment. And so I'm sure that I'll be meeting you in those activities around internet, internet governance, regulations. In Europe, this is now a very fancy topic. And so your

knowledge from here, but also the knowledge that you have from outside, for us is very helpful. And I will be very glad to learn from you as much as you can learn from here. And about the ICANN meeting, I think they have said it all. It's a big, complex, sometimes messy, but it can be very fun. It can be fun. And there is plenty of social events. And even if the weather is not the most enjoyable, you will see you wouldn't mind about the weather. You will have lots of opportunities to meet. And the week flies by like this. I don't know what happens at ICANN meetings. The time warps. So today is Saturday. And next time, you realize it's Thursday. So if there is someone that you want to meet, some session that you wanted to go, do it now. Don't wait and say, okay, I'll meet this person tomorrow. Because he may be gone tomorrow. It's suddenly, time really flies here. And so enjoy and congratulations again for making it to this program. Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Andrea. And not only time, but also people are used to disappear very quickly and run from one session to another. So whenever you see that person, just catch him. And I would like to introduce also my colleague who joined recently as ICANN staff from the fellowship program as well. My colleague, June Okal who is now working in Africa. June, please.

JUNE OKAL: Thank you, Siranush. Good morning, everyone. This is proof that ICANN not only has fellows, but NextGen as well. Because I started out as a NextGen in ICANN 55. Congratulations. This is such a good opportunity. Please take full advantage of it. Leverage on the opportunity to connect

with everyone. My one piece of advice is have your fellows tag. Because in my opinion, that's the most powerful tag of them all. So I always make sure I have one. Because it gives you access to everyone, as John said. So well done. Please reach out. Talk to anyone. Feel free and make the most of the week. Thanks.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN:

Thank you, June. Thank you. And yes, indeed. The impression is that all ICANN fellows now work in ICANN as staff. That's not the truth. But we have 15 ICANN fellows and NextGeners who are now work in ICANN as staff. ICANN has more than 400 staff members. And only 15 are from those programs. So there's still space for many people to join. So please come.

There was one question also from our fellow who participate virtually, how the mentors are nominated. And I want to come to that question. Just briefly say that mentors are nominated now by ICANN community. So if you are active member of your community, your community discuss, has the process in place, do the selection or election, and nominate a person who serves for three meetings in a row as a mentor for the fellowship program, and I assume the same process is for NextGen mentors. So if you want to be a mentor for next gen or fellowship program, then you should be a part of the ICANN community. And that specific community nominates you to serve as a mentor. I hope I responded to that question. If there is any more questions online? No. Thank you. Okay. With that, I also would like to say one more time, welcome. As Andrea said, it's fun. There's a lot of fun here, and as many of my colleagues mentioned here, we work hard, but we also play hard.

So enjoy the entire week. Me, my colleague Deborah are here and will be with you during this entire week. Our mentors are here to support you, and our staff is here to support you. ICANN community is warm, is welcoming, and please enjoy your first time in ICANN, second time in ICANN, your first experience as NextGeners and first experience as fellows. With that, I would like to say bon voyage for the ICANN 78, and this meeting is adjourned. See you for the next session.

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