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ICANN79 | CF – How it Works: ICANN Policy  
Saturday, March 2, 2024 – 4:15 to 5:30 SJU

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Hello again, Fellows and NextGenners. Welcome back to the last session for today. This is another important session that we are going to talk about. We heard about the technical aspect of how the Internet works and how ICANN relates to this, and now we will speak about another important aspect, which is policy; so those two pillars: how it works, technical and the policy. Now we will speak about the policy during this session.

Questions and comments submitted in the chat will be read aloud if put in a proper way. Remember to state your name and the language you will speak in case you will be speaking a language other than English. Speak clearly at a reasonable pace to allow for accurate interpretation. And please make sure to mute all other devices when you are speaking. You may access all available features for this session in the Zoom toolbar.

And with that, it's my great pleasure to introduce my colleagues from the policy team, Carlos and Ozan. And I will give the floor to Carlos or Ozan. Who starts? Carlos, please.

CARLOS REYES: Thank you, Siranush, and thanks for including us again. Hi everyone, my name is Carlos Reyes and with my colleague Ozan, we are part of the

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policy team, which supports the ICANN community and its policy mission. I'll give Ozan an opportunity to introduce himself, but what we'd like to do is ask if you have any questions. So after Ozon introduces himself, we'll ask you if you have questions. That way we can keep those questions in mind as we go through our slides, and also that way we know to allocate our time accordingly so that we can address any questions you may have.

As I mentioned, my name is Carlos, I'm part of the policy team. I support various ICANN community groups and we can talk about that later in our session. And I've been with the policy team twelve years, and I work out of the Washington DC office.

OZAN SAHIN:

Hello everyone, this is Ozan Sahin. I'm based in [Aysegul, Turkiye], and part of the regional office in Istanbul, serving Africa and Middle east. And I've been with the post development support team for nine years.

CARLOS REYES:

Thanks, Ozan. So, before you arrived in San Juan, after you found out you were selected, I think there was some onboarding, and you participated in the prep week webinars, and obviously you've been listening in on sessions today. So what questions do you have at this point about policy or the ICANN community? Ozan and I will make a note of them, and that way we know we can address them during our time with you. So, yes, go ahead, introduce yourself and we'll write down your questions.

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**PRANAV TIWARI:** Greetings. I'm Pranav Tiwari. I'm an ICANN79 Fellow from India. For the record, I'm speaking on my own behalf. Whenever we work on any policy issues, irrespective of how we are aligned on our mission, it cannot be bereft of geopolitical considerations because we work in a global world. So how does the team maneuver these geopolitical considerations to ensure that they are aligning with the mission? And while I've often heard the response that we do not consider geopolitical considerations, what I've always felt is that you have to engage with them because they do impact the decision. So what I would really appreciate is what are the kind of concerns that you face and how do you actually try to stay away from them or manage them? Thank you.

**CARLOS REYES:** Thank you. Good question.

Let's go right behind there and then we'll go over to you. Thanks.

**JAHNAVI MUKUL:** Hi, my name is Jahnavi. I'm a NextGen Fellow and I'm from DC. My question is similar to the previous question that was asked, but it was also about incorporating different regions, since the community structure at ICANN tries to incorporate as many countries, as many diverse people as possible. So how does the policy development team sort of work on combining those ideas?

**CARLOS REYES:** Thank you. And behind you over there.

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**FILOMENO VAZQUEZ:** Filomeno Vazquez for the record, ICANN Fellow. I will be speaking on my behalf. But I am wondering in terms of emerging technology, in terms of the realistic future that we see maybe in the next 5,10, 15 years, I've noticed that there seems to be a common disregard for the actual technology that is being developed currently and how that would affect not only ICANN but also domains and the end user. I'm concerned about how the policy works within such a rigid system. Thank you.

**CARLOS REYES:** Thank you. Over there.

**HEIDY HERNANDEZ:** Heidy Hernandez. I'm an ICANN79 Fellow. I'm speaking on my own behalf for the record. I'm wondering how can I have a real input or help when sometimes it feels like the matters that ICANN is interested in are very forward and my country is still very far behind. We are in the beginnings of having a conversation about Internet governance, and I need the basics, the first steps, in a country that just has absolutely no laws around this matter. And I feel like the conversation sometimes is about three steps forward. than what we are standing on right now.

**CARLOS REYES:** Thank you. Let's go to this side over here.

**JAMES OLURUNDARE:** Thank you. My name is James Olurundare. I'm from Nigeria, an ICANN79 Fellow. I'm speaking in my own capacity. I wanted to ask what actually informs the beginning of a policy development process? How do you

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decide this particular thing is a policy? So what informs the beginning of the policy?

CARLOS REYES: Excellent. Thank you. Back there.

ABRAHAM SELBY: Hello, my name is Abraham Selby. For the record, I'm speaking in in my own capacity. What I want to ask is that policy development and how it works normally have to do with that there is extensive research in terms of that development. And we have most of the academic community, academic schools that have policy labs that develop some of the emerging technologies, these new things ICANN is doing research on. How do you involve them? Does ICANN also have maybe, like, a policy lab that they invite students, researchers or their academic researchers to be able to fit in to, to contribute to such policy development? Thank you.

CARLOS REYES: Thank you. Let's see, there's two back there, so let's start over there. Thanks. Hello.

KRISLIN GOULBOURNE-HARRY: Hello, my name is Krislin Golbourne-Harry, an ICANN79 Fellow. I'm from St. Vincent and the Grenadines. My question is relating to the Caribbean region. We have a large number of islands, and all the islands are different and we have different policies. So I want to understand how are policies made that suit all of the nation, considering that we

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are all at different levels of development and we are different people. So how does I can take that into consideration.

CARLOS REYES: Thank you. And your neighbor and then we'll come back to you.

PEDRO LANA: Pedro Lana, ICANN79 Fellow, speaking in my personal capacity. My question would be about that I think the major problem that Fellows and NextGens have when going into this policy process nowadays is the extensive backgrounds that has happened before that moment when the person joined. And although we do have the final reports or the ... I forgot the name, but the previous, the first initial reports, and we do have wikis, I don't know if we do have or there is a plan to start making it, making some summaries of contextualization of that specific issue, so someone that's getting in the process, while it already has like two years of development, can get on board and there is not such of an imbalance between people who are there in the beginning and people who are joining right now.

CARLOS REYES: Thank you. And this question here.

RASHEDUL HASAN: Hello, I'm Rashedul Hasan, and I'm an NextGen Fellow. So my question is that when we were talking about policies on past, it mostly depended on laws, regulations, and what type of predefined actions the policymakers would take. But given this era, in this era of AI, in this era

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of autonomous vehicles, there is a question of ethics is coming. So how is a policy being affected when it's being formed? I mean, what dynamic step is being taken for a policy decision?

CARLOS REYES: Thank you. Any other questions? These are nine very good questions. Yes?

ESAU TOPOU: Hello, Carlos and Ozan. I'm Esau Topou. I'm an ICANN Fellow, I'm speaking on my own capacity—

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Can I request to speak closer to the mic so interpreters can hear you well, please? Thank you. And you as well.

ESAU TOPOU: Sorry. Esau Topou, ICANN79 Fellow. I'm speaking in my own capacity. So when I look at the policy development, do you also address the issues with cybersecurity as well as cybercrime, human rights and all the other aspects for the policy or it's just for the general Internet governance and ICANN? Thank you.

OZAN SAHIN: Thank you. Give us 1 minute to consult each other.

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SIRANSUH VARDANYAN: I love the flexibility of my colleagues. I mean, they can go right away from starting whatever interest you have in whatever topic. They always impressed me.

CARLOS REYES: All right, thank you. So what we'll do is we'll move through our presentation and then whenever we have relevant information for one of your questions, we will point that out so that you can make that connection. One thing I'd like to do—

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Can you speak a bit louder? Thank you.

CARLOS REYES: Sure. I feel like I'm eating the microphone. One thing we can do before we get started is I think all of you participated in the ICANN Learn courses before showing up. How many supporting organizations do we have? Do we remember that information? Any guesses? I heard a number.

SIRANSUSH VARDANYAN: You have that PowerPoint presentation received. [Come on].

CARLOS REYES: How many? Three? Yeah. Good. Okay, what about advisory committees? Okay. Yes. Whoever said four, I heard it. Okay, thanks. So that's ... We'll get started. And I see there's a question in the chat, so I'll also add that to our list here. So Ozan is going to start with an overview

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of these community groups. And like I said, we will point out some of these answers to your questions as we go along. So thank you.

OZAN SAHIN:

So today we will start with the supporting organizations and the post development in the supporting organizations and then move to advisory committees. Since you have already taken the course, I think you all know that the ICANN ecosystem is composed of three components. There's the ICANN community that develops the Internet domain name system policies and advice. And then there's the ICANN Board that reviews the recommendations coming from the ICANN community and then decides whether to adopt these recommendations. And then if these policy recommendations are adopted, then the ICANN Board instructs the ICANN organization to implement those.

But on this graph you also see a line between the organization and the community. So the ICANN organization, in addition to implementing the adopted policies or recommendations, also supports the ICANN community in the development of the policy and advice. So as the policy development support team members, that's basically what we do.

So there are three supporting organizations. We have the Address Supporting Organization, or ASO, that manages the policy development process for the number resources, the IP addresses, Internet Protocol addresses, and there is an address council of the Address Supporting Organization, or ASO, which works on this policy

development process. It is composed of 15 volunteers or members coming from five regions.

And in one of the questions that we received, you referred to the regional diversity and the differences in the post development process. So to give you an example about the five different regional Internet registries, there's one for the North America region, ARIN, there's one for Latin America, LACNIC, and then we have RIPE NCC for Europe, Middle East and some of the Central Asia, and then AFRINIC for Africa region, and then APNIC for Asia and the Pacific Islands.

So these regional Internet registries develop policies for their own regions for number resources. But when there's a global policy development process about the number resources, each of the five regional intent registries follow the same procedures and accept the same policy, and as a result it becomes a global policy for number resources. But leaving that aside, each of the five regional intent registries also develop policies within their regions.

So that's how ASO works.

And then we have the ccNSO, or the Country Code Name Supporting organization, which develops policies for the country code top-level domains, and it does consist of the top-level domain managers who agree to be members of the ccNSO.

And then we have the Generic Name Supporting Organization, the third supporting organization here, which develops policies for the generic top-level domains. And within GNSO, different interests are represented. In the next slide I'll show you the GNSO Council, which

manages the post development process for GNSO, and how different groups and their interests are represented within the GNSO and GNSO Council.

So this is an infographic that shows the policy development process for each of the three supporting organizations. It's a bit hard to read, and I'll just put the link in the chat to the infographic so that you can zoom in and review yourself if you wish. So I'll just put the link in the chat.

We'll focus on the Generic Name Supporting Organization policy process today. There are similarities in how they develop policies, but based on how each of the three supporting organizations are structured, there are a few differences as well. And GNSO, as I said, is managing the policy process for the generic top-level domains such as dot-org, dot-net, dot-biz, dot-shop, or dot-movie.

And let's look at the GNSO Council structure. So GNSO Council is composed of 21 members. 18 members are coming from two different houses. We have two houses, one the Contracted Party House, one the Non-Contracted Party House. Under each house we have stakeholder groups. So under the Contracted Party House, we have the contracted parties that have contracts with ICANN. These are the two groups in the middle: the Registry Stakeholder Group and Registrar Stakeholder Group. And on the sides there are the Commercial and Non-Commercial Stakeholder Groups that make up the Non-Contracted Party House. Again, under the Non- Contracted Parties house, you have constituencies. These are listed at the bottom of this slide: the Business Constituency, Intellectual Property Constituency, Internal Service Providers and Connectivity Providers Constituency. So different

interests are represented within these constituencies and then in the GNSO Council level.

And if you look at the non-commercial stakeholder group, there are Non-Commercial Users as well as the Not-For-Profit Operational Concerns Constituency.

So if you again look at the middle in the slide, these stakeholder groups appoint members to the GNSO Council, and a total of 18 members are coming from these two houses. And then three members are appointed by the ICANN's nominating committee.

CARLOS REYES:

As Ozan is switching slides here, this actually helps us answer the last question from Fatou about how ICANN balances the different interests of different stakeholders. And you'll notice one of them is missing, at least from, from this list that Fatou provided, and that's governments. And we'll get to that later with the Governmental Advisory Committee. But the purpose of the GNSO, as Ozan outlined, is to develop policies for generic top-level domains. And there are structural elements to ensure that there's input from different types of stakeholders. And then the advisory committees also provide another layer of input from their own perspectives as well. So that's how structurally the ICANN community enables the input of different stakeholders.

And then, as you'll learn about the processes, there are steps in the process to ensure that everyone has provided input.

So that allows us to answer one question. Ten more to go.

OZAN SAHIN:

Thank you, Carlos. So if we look at the GNSO policy development process, it does start with the identification of the issue. This is the first phase. And you also notice some arrows on the sides of this slide. These arrows indicate the opportunities that outside input can be added to the process, as Carlos mentioned.

So if you look at the first step in the first phase (identification of the issue), not only the GNSO Council, but also the ICANN Board or an advisory committee can identify an issue to start this policy open process.

And then it is the GNSO Council that considers if this is an issue that will result in a consensus policy or not. If the GNSO Council thinks that it will result in a consensus policy, then we move on to the second phase. And this phase is the scoping phase. Then the GNSO Council requests a preliminary issue report. And the support staff publishes the preliminary issue report at the request of the GNSO Council for public comment.

And this is where you see the second arrow, because when you publish the report for public comment, all the ICANN community can review it and then provide their input to the process. And after the public comment period closes, then the input received is reviewed, and the final issue report is submitted accordingly to the GNSO Council for consideration. And that's the end of the second phase, which is the scoping phase.

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Then comes the initiation of the policy development process phase. The GNSO Council considers the final issue report and decides whether to initiate a policy development process. And if they decide to initiate it, the GNSO Council develops or adopts a charter for a working group, a policy development process working group.

And then there will be a call for volunteers to form this working group. And this is where, again, you get input to the process outside of the GNSO, because other supporting organizations and advisory committees will be able to appoint members to this working group to, again, to follow the process to represent their interest in the policy development process.

CARLOS REYES:

So here's another opportunity to answer a question. There was a question about what informs the beginning of a PDP. And I think these steps are really critical to that question, because this is when a community member or the Board or one of the community structures identifies an issue. Whatever that issue is, ultimately it has to align with one of the remits of the supporting organizations. So whatever the issue is, there's discussion among the community members, and then they can inform the response to the issue report developed by staff. So basically, what staff does is we look at the landscape. What is available about this issue? What do we know about the issue? What questions exist about the issue? And we ask the community to say, are these the kind of questions you want the policy development process to answer?

So the scoping phase is very important because that's when the ICANN organization begins to plan how to allocate its staff resources to a policy

development process. And it's important to the community because that's how they start outlining the trajectory of their work.

So in terms of what goes into a PDP beginning, it's all of these steps. It's community dialogue, it's staff preparations. And ultimately, at the end you have a call for volunteers to begin a working group to address a specific issue.

So this is a little crazy, but I just thought of this and I think this will actually work. Think about each supporting organization, because it has a specific mission, like a specific restaurant. Like, let's say the GNSO makes pizza and the ccNSO makes hamburgers and the ASO makes sushi. So when you have an issue related to “I want to offer a new pizza on the menu. Everyone's tired of pepperoni. Let's talk about Hawaiian pizza with ham and cheese,” the GNSO members would say, “Oh, ok, well, we don't have that on the menu, so we need to discuss what we need. What is it going to take for us to provide a Hawaiian pizza on our menu?” You wouldn't go to the ASO for that because the ASO makes sushi. Maybe they will make a pizza, but it's probably awful and vice versa. Right? Like you wouldn't go to the GNSO to make sushi because they make pizza.

So I think keeping everything in those lines is helpful. That way, you know your issue or your menu item is relevant to that restaurant. So I'll try and continue that analogy and see if it works. But I think it at least helps make things a little clearer.

OZAN SAHIN:

And I'll continue with the—

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**SIRANUSH VARDANYAN:** Just to interrupt, we did today consensus-building training, and one of the group was planning to go to an Italia-Asian fusion restaurant. So it's all messed up at the end.

**CARLOS REYES:** Yeah, fusion restaurants kind of deflate my idea here, but ...

**OZAN SAHIN:** So I'll continue with the rest of the GNSO policy development process, but just recalling another question about the inclusion of the academics and academic research here, going back to the structure of the GNSO Council, you will see that based on the interest, there are members of these constituencies: the Business Constituency, Intellectual Property Constituency, the Internet Service Providers and Connectivity Providers. And on the righthand side, you also see the Non-Commercial Users Constituency. So this is where you see many academicians, and based on their expertise, they provide their input to the group and also the policy development processes. So in the policy development process, you also leverage the expertise from academia in this way, as the academics often tend to be members of these groups and provide their expertise.

And as we go along, you will also see other groups (advisory committees), where these kind of expertise can also be useful and they can become members of.

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So going back to the GNSO policy development process, we are done with the first three phases, the initiation of the policy development process. And where we left is the call for volunteers to form a working group.

So in the next phase, which is the formation of a working group (sorry, I'm coming one slide back), the working group, during its work, consults with the ICANN community and develops an initial report and puts it up for public comment again to receive input for the initial report. And based on the input received after this public comment period for the initial report, they review the input, make any necessary changes to their initial report, and then publish their final report to submit to the GNSO Council for adoption.

This takes us to the next phase, which is the deliberation on the final report. GNSO Council reviews the final report and considers whether to adopt it. And if it is adopted by the GNSO Council, then the GNSO Council submits this final report to the ICANN Board.

And then in the final phase (the vote by the ICANN Board), the ICANN Board consults the ICANN community and the Governmental Advisory Committee, and then votes on the final report recommendations. So if adopted by the ICANN Board, then these recommendations become the policy.

CARLOS REYES:

Thanks Ozan. So here I wanted to address the question about the ethics of a policy. I think you asked a question about ethics, right? Ultimately, for the group that develops the policy (in this case, the GNSO), there's a

checklist of things that they consider as part of the policy development, but the authority really is the ICANN Board, and the ICANN Board considers the overall public interest. ICANN is a not-for-profit organization in the public interest. So when the ICANN Board considers a policy that's been recommended by one of the supporting organizations, it tries to ensure that that policy is, one, in the interest of the public and, two, in the interest of ICANN. And if those two criteria are not met, then the policy will likely go back to the supporting organization. So ultimately it's the Board that takes that oversight role of ensuring that the policy is in the public interest.

There are newer considerations. For example, after the IANA stewardship transition in 2016, there are requirements in the bylaws now for human rights considerations as well.

So again, this is something that the ICANN Board is tasked with. The ICANN community groups can also consider all of these issues in the development of the policy, but ultimately, it's the ICANN Board that balances those issues at the end when it's considering a recommendation, a policy recommendation.

But I think what's most important to keep in mind is that every member of the ICANN community can bring in those perspectives to the working group level. So when we have volunteers from across the GNSO community, if there is a human rights specialist in one of the working groups, that's excellent, because that person can inform the discussions about a particular policy. So it really happens at all levels of the PDP. But that ultimate step when the ICANN Board is considering a

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policy is where there's that final opportunity to ensure that it's in the public interest.

OZAN SAHIN:

So before discussing the advice development process, you may also think about a situation where the recommendations are submitted to the Board, and the Board partially adopts some of the recommendations, and does not adopt some of them. I'd like to provide you an example from the discussions that have taken place at ICANN public meetings and are taking place at ICANN79, this meeting.

So we listed three policy development processes that we have discussions in this meeting about, and if you look at the second one (the New gTLD Subsequent Procedures), this working group began its work in 2016, and then they finally submitted their final report and the outputs to the ICANN Board. Many outputs and recommendations were accepted by the ICANN Board, but 38 of them were not accepted and they were in a pending status.

So what happened afterwards was that GNSO Council set up a small team in order to understand the reasons why the ICANN Board did not accept those pending recommendations. And what's happening at ICANN 79 is that this GNSO Small Team is considering some modifications to the recommendations. And this way, there will be a potential update of these recommendations and discussions related to that at ICANN79.

So let's continue with the advisory committees. And as we discussed, there are four of them. One is the At-Large Advisory Committee, or

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ALAC. It is the voice of the end users. And there are Regional At-Large Organizations. Again, going back to the question about the different regional interests or differences, there are five regional at large organizations, again based on the continents. And these regional at-large organizations appoint three members to the At-Large Advisory Committee, and then five members are appointed by the ICANN Nominating Committee. So the At-Large Advisory Committee can manage the advice development process.

Also, there are At-Large Structures. That's the smallest group that you can find at large in the regional at-large organizations. So again, you may see many academics represented in these at-large organizations, providing their expertise to at-large structures and regional at-large organizations and eventually to ALAC.

The Governmental Advisory Committee is the advisory committee that provides advice on public policy issues. So the Governmental Advisory Committee is where you would find the representatives from governments. And again, if there are any geopolitical disputes that are relating to the Internet domain name system policy development process, this can be discussed in the Governmental Advisory Committee, and then the Governmental Advisory Committee provides advice to the ICANN community and ICANN Board on the policy development processes that are being developed by the supporting organizations that we have just reviewed.

The Root Server System Advisory Committee is the third advisory committee that we have. It's composed of representatives from root server operators. There are twelve of them running 13 root servers. And

it does provide advice to the ICANN Board and community on the operation and administration and security and integrity of the Internet's root server system.

And finally, we have the Security and Stability Advisory Committee, or SSAC. It does provide advice on the issues relating to the security and integrity of the Internet's naming and address allocation systems.

So again, we have an infographic explaining how each of these four advisory committees would develop their advice. I'll just put the link in the chat. Again, you can review yourself by zooming in. And I see Carlos already did it. Thank you Carlos.

So let's focus on the At-Large Advisory Committee advice development process. Again, this process starts with the identification of the issue. Any at-large community member can bring up an issue to the ALAC, which is the advisory committee that reviews those.

And then in the scoping phase, the ALAC discusses these issues and their impact on individual end users. And then the ALAC determines the elements of its position on the issue that's being discussed.

And then how at-large members would participate in this advice development process is that the ALAC designates a shepherd to participate in the policy development, and then these issue shepherds lead the drafting of the At-Large Advisory Committee responses.

And finally, the production of the advice: ALAC reviews and calls for consensus or votes on the final statement. And if ratified by the ALAC, then ALAC sends the advice to the ICANN Board, ICANN organization

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and supporting organizations and advisory committees. And then the Board reviews this advice, of course.

CARLOS REYES:

Let me pause here because I think we can tackle some other questions. Ozan covered some of the different perspectives that inform the membership of the advisory committees. There was a question about cybersecurity issues. For example, we have a lot of cybersecurity experts who are part of the Security and Stability Advisory Committee, so that would be where they consider those issues specifically. But I think the remit of ICANN is to ensure stable and resilient DNS. So everyone thinks about the stability and resilience of the Internet, but the Security and Stability Advisory Committee is that specific group.

There was also a question about geopolitical considerations, and I think that's a big topic. In fact, we have a whole session dedicated to geopolitics on Thursday. The GAC specifically looks at the interaction between the ICANN mission and public policy. So public policy is the policies that are developed by governments and their legislatures. And whenever there's an interaction between ICANN policy and public policy, the GAC is really the vehicle to raise the issue with the ICANN community and the ICANN Board. I think increasingly you're seeing legislation and regulation around the world that impacts the domain name system, that impacts how end users can access and participate in the Internet, but also Internet infrastructure. And because of these trends, more and more you're seeing the ICANN community groups think about geopolitics and engage earlier with the GAC and participate

in GAC discussions as well, and invite the GAC to join them in working groups.

So there's a lot of back and forth when it comes to the intersection between ICANN and public policy, but I think overall it is something that ICANN as a whole is still evolving its approach to because public policy issues keep evolving. I mean, as long as society keeps evolving, public policy issues will keep evolving. And ICANN has to evolve with that.

Ozan, we talked about the PDPs, so maybe let's go on after the PDPs. Thanks. There was a question about the extensive background needed to contribute to policy development, and that is, I think, an understatement. I think that's one of the challenges we have here at ICANN and a lot of our work. It's highly technical, it's fairly niche and incredibly esoteric, right? There's a small universe of people who really follow ICANN policy at the end of the day, right? If there's 8 billion people in the world, there's probably 3,000 people in the world who really follow ICANN policy closely. And you have an interest in the Internet broadly and ICANN's role in that. So you're never going to know everything about ICANN.

But I think what's important is we are trying to develop resources that are accessible, especially as it relates to ongoing policy development processes. So actually our team is developing primers about specific topics to introduce newcomers to working groups. It does require reading and participating in some of the working groups, but you have to start somewhere.

And what's good to keep in mind is that every working group is supported by Ozan, myself, or other colleagues on the policy

development team, and you can always ask them questions. My colleagues will always respond and they will direct you to the appropriate resources at your level. So it can be intimidating to contribute to a working group, but the policy team and ICANN staff in general are always available to help you in your commitment to that working group. So don't hesitate to reach out. We either have resources or can find the resources with you, other colleagues, et cetera. So it is intimidating, but like I said, reach out to your policy team member and we can always help you through that.

And most likely than not, we're probably learning along with you because we are not all experts in everything ICANN policy. So oftentimes if people ask me something about the ccNSO, I know at a high level what the CCNSO work is, but I'm also kind of interested and I'll probably research it with you. So feel free to reach out to ICANN staff at any point. But like I said, we are working on developing primers and ICANN Learn courses about specific areas.

Ozan, why don't you tell us about how to participate, which I think will help us answer the question about providing real input.

OZAN SAHIN:

Thank you, Carlos. So if you would like to contribute to this process, you may consider joining one of the groups that we have just mentioned. You have seen the supporting organizations, some of the stakeholder groups, constituencies. Based on your expertise and interest, you may consider joining one of these groups and start contributing. Or when there's a call for volunteers, when a working group is formed, you may

also think about joining this working group and start following their activities and start contributing to their work.

Usually it starts with observing a mailing list to come up to speed and understand what's going on. What's the issue that's being discussed? What are the different perspectives on this issue? So you can join this mailing list and start observing and then start contributing to the discussion.

And then we also mentioned several opportunities for public comments in the policy development process. So when an initial report or a final report is out for public comments, you can also submit your view, your ideas, and contribute to process this way again.

So there is another slide about the public comment process. This is actually a screenshot from the ICANN public comment page so that you can see what a public comment proceeding looks like. Our team also manages the public comment at ICANN and works with the teams that are seeking to get input from the ICANN community. So what we try to do is to do is actually try to make sure that there are some guidelines in place so that it will be more convenient for you to submit public comment.

There was a question about having limited time to contribute, and one of the things that we try to ensure in the public comment process is that a minimum of 40 days is followed to have this public comment proceeding open so that you have some time to consider what's being out for your consideration and then submit your comment. We take into consideration the days of the ICANN public meetings or major holidays recognized by ICANN and add on top of this a minimum of 40

days when a public comment is open. And then after the proceeding is closed, you can note on the box on the side that there will be a report of the public comments.

So this process is transparent. You are able to see all the comments submitted to a particular proceeding, and then a report is published after the proceeding is closed. So that's a summary of all of the comments that have been submitted, and then you can also read this report after the proceeding is closed.

Is there anything else you'd like to add about the public comment process, Carlos?

So it's now time to talk about our policy development support function a bit.

CARLOS REYES:

So before we get to that, there are two questions that I think we haven't addressed yet, and I want to get to the questions before we get to the team here. There was a question about how do we account for the different development stage of a country and their community in terms of participating at ICANN. And I like the question because I think it actually has a very simple answer. And one of the benefits of ICANN, or one of the features of ICANN, I should say, is that we do have input from all types of community members and all types of interests and stakeholders and governments, et cetera. And because the Internet is available and accessible to everyone, so, in theory, is ICANN available and accessible to everyone. So it doesn't really matter what stage of

development your national economy is in, or your government, your type of government, things like that.

That being said, of course you'll notice that more mature economies or more mature forms of government, depending on your perspective, participate. But that's just because they have more people involved. So I think the fact that you're here representing your own background, your own self, your own aspirations, is a step in the right direction, because ultimately you'll inspire other people to do the same. So you'll go back home, whether it's DC or India or Chile, wherever you're from, and you'll talk to your friends about your experience with ICANN and the ICANN meeting and the ICANN community, and the ICANN Fellows and ICANN NextGen. And I think ultimately that's how we share with the world what ICANN is and how there is a community behind the Internet.

With the Internet, if you think about it from its inception in the 1970s as largely a research network funded by the US government and some US universities, it's really quite remarkable that it's been online since then, right? And it just keeps growing and growing and growing. Every device nowadays ... I mean, people have refrigerators that are connected to the Internet now. And it continues to grow and it hasn't gone down. It hasn't shut down. So that's a pretty incredible feat of technology when you think about the ability of the Internet to scale with us as our human experience changes.

So just go back, talk to your friends, talk to your family. Maybe your grandparents won't care and that's okay. But you can tell them a little bit about how Internet governance is working and how you hope to

contribute. And then over time, more and more people will be interested.

It's funny because if you talk to someone like Ozan or me or anyone else on staff, a lot of our families have no idea what we do. And they're like, why do you keep traveling? Or why are you speaking at this conference? Or what are you doing? And it's kind of funny when you explain it because it is different for everyone, and everyone interacts with the Internet differently. And some people just care about it more than others. And that's fine. For some people, they just want to make sure that they can open their favorite social media app and that's okay. And other people are interested in operating the infrastructure, and that's great because we all need that. So don't worry about your background or your experience or your resources. Just get involved and encourage others to get involved. So that's my message there.

And then I did want to address the question about emerging technology. This is something, sort of like geopolitics, that ICANN continues to evolve. And part of that is there's a lot of emerging technology issues that come and go.

I'll give you an example. The last time we were here in Puerto Rico, the sexy technology topic was blockchain. And there was a blockchain conference across the street at the Condado hotel. And I remember I was getting off the ICANN shuttle and they were leaving to go to some gala, and it was just a lot of people who were interested about blockchain. And here was ICANN in our shuttle, and I was like, oh, is this like old technology and new technology? But the answer is, really, we do think about emerging technology, and you may not see it featured in

the sessions, but that's just because there isn't a policy development process or an issue or a working group that is currently meeting here. That doesn't mean we're not thinking about it or working about, or working on it. The Security and Stability Advisory Committee, for example, published an advisory about blockchain. They're also looking at alternate namespaces. They published something about emojis. So there's a lot of forward thinking here. Just because you don't see it on the schedule or you don't hear about it doesn't mean it's not happening.

So if you have an interest in some of these new areas ... I think someone mentioned AI, artificial intelligence. Everyone is thinking about that right now, right? And some of you may use ChatGPT in your daily life or whatever the tools are. We as staff also think about these questions. So as long as the issues are happening in the community, over time you'll see them reflected at ICANN. But ICANN and our work is, I think, deliberately .... Some people will say it's slow, but I think the better word is “deliberate.” And that's because when you think about what the Internet is, it's the platform for the global economy now. Any changes that happen on the Internet have to be incredibly thoughtful, and they have to be planned very well, because if something breaks or someone cannot connect or something happens, it can have very negative consequences very quickly. Think about the pandemic. If the Internet failed or was overwhelmed, we couldn't go to school, we couldn't communicate with our families to make sure everyone was healthy. We wouldn't be able to get the information we needed about the situation in our cities and our countries. So because the Internet is so important, we have to make sure that policies for the stability and resilience of the

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Internet are thoughtful and that they're methodically planned. So it takes time. But I think there's value in that as well.

That being said, I think it's also important to have end goals in mind so that we are working toward resolutions.

So we have about twelve minutes left and I want to give everyone the opportunity to ask any other questions now that we've been speaking with you for about an hour.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Filomeno, please.

FILOMENO VAZQUEZ: Filomeno for the record, ICANN79 Fellow. I hear when it comes down to emerging technology, various streams of thoughts that you discuss, and I think it's great. My concern is that, yes, blockchain was a thing and it's still a thing, but especially in the grand scheme of things, like you were saying, geopolitically, it also has something to do with it. When I brought up my NextGen presentation about neuro-implants and possible protocols that we need to brainstorm in order to understand the ramifications of brain-computers interfaces and how the Internet is going to play a part, IANA had a wonderful answer which was “We can't do anything until the technology is developed and there's a pressing issue.” My concern is that we don't really start doing anything about the issue until it's there, which is understandable. But I'm wondering, just like we saw AI and how it's disrupting right now, we had around 15 years to educate civilians on the realities of how AI was going to impact geopolitically and socially the whole schema of their lives. Is there a

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possibility that ICANN will indeed create these committees before, so that way we don't have the same situation happening with AI now?

CARLOS REYES:

I think ultimately it comes back to our mission, and ICANN considers emerging technology issues or emerging geopolitical issues as they relate to our mission. And our mission specifically scoped around the domain name system. So you mentioned marrow transplants, right? Is that what you said?

FILOMENO VAZQUEZ::

So on the issue, when it comes down to neurotechnology, brain computer interfaces, and the Internet, what I was trying to explain or try to figure out with ICANN or anybody is the factor that, when the situation is presented, are we going to keep the same protocols that we have currently? ICANN does definitely have an interest there. Or are we brainstorming how that's going to look like in the future?

CARLOS REYES:

So I think the answer from the IANA team was interesting in that, once the technology is developed and there are protocols and standards around it, it may have its own community of people who develop standards for that specific technology.

A good example (or not a good example, but an example) is you should look up sana.org. S-A-N-A. I think it's S-A-N-A. There's a space authority for ... There's basically an IANA for space, and they're looking at the

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issue of the Internet in space. At one point, ICANN may have to interact with that community.

But I think what you can take from this experience is to learn how the ICANN community works, learn how multistakeholderism works, and if there's another technology out there, apply those principles there and organize that community, because ICANN is limited by its bylaws and its mission, which is the DNS. If at some point that technology has to interact with the DNS, then there's an opportunity there. But for now, ICANN can't really just take up every technology issue. Does that make sense?

FILOMENO VAZQUEZ: Yes. Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Any last question? Yes, I see there is a hand.

DAPHNE EPKE: Hi. Daphne Ekpe, NextGen participant. So thank you for the detailed presentation. But my question is, you've mentioned that the Board is very important at the top level of deciding on the policy, and then they have to consider ICANN's interest and public interest. But are there any parameters that define or that guides the Board when they make this decision whether to approve or disapprove of the policy?

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CARLOS REYES:

Good question. The Board ultimately has duty of care and duty of ... What are the three duties? Duty of care, duty of loyalty, and fiduciary duty to ICANN. But it does have certain frameworks for how it considers policy recommendations. And a few years ago, as part of the IANA stewardship transition, one of the recommendations from that second work stream related to ICANN accountability proposed a framework, for example, for human rights. And ultimately that leads to how the Board considers issues related to human rights in approving a policy.

So Ozan and I work and interact with the Board in specific areas, but how the Board considers a policy is really a question I think you should ask the Board. You can do that at the public forum or if you see a Board member, because there are a lot of things that they consider. They consider, like I said, human rights. They consider the impact on our contracted parties if it's a policy that is directed at the contracted parties. They will consider the resources of the ICANN organization to implement the policy and then administer the policy. So there's a lot of factors that go into it, and I think that is dependent on every single policy, if not the same for every single policy.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN:

Thank you very much. I know we only have five minutes to go, but the PowerPoint presentation is available for you all to download. In five minutes, this group is going to meet with the community for the networking hour. So I would like to thank you both for a very interactive and very interesting session. Every time I'm learning more from you guys. So thank you very much. And we also graciously invite you for our networking event. So please come and have some drinks with us.

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Thank you. I think round of applause for Carlos and Ozan. Thank you very much.

A couple of announcements. Tomorrow we meet at 8:45 here. So our upstander training starts at 8:45, which means the latest bus which you will take will be 8:30 the maximum. And it may take some time to get here. So please consider this to have breakfast and then come here. Tomorrow we will have a really long day. Almost all the communities except At-Large, whom you met today, will come tomorrow to see us. So every 30 minutes of our sessions will be devoted to a particular community. So I need your energy, I need your smile, I need your efficiency by the end of the day.

And for today, the meeting is adjourned. Thank you very much.

**[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]**