
ICANN79 | CF – North America Space Work Session
Monday, March 4, 2024 – 1:15 to 2:30 SJU

MARILIA HIRANO: Hello and welcome to the North America Space work session. My name is Marilla Hirano and I am the remote participation manager for this session. Please note that this session is being recorded and is governed by the ICANN expected standards of behavior.

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With that, I will hand the floor over to Naela Sarras, Vice-President, Stakeholder Engagement for North America.

NAELA SARRAS: Thank you, Marilia, and welcome, everyone. It's so lovely to have everybody here for the North America Space session. This session is meant to be really a working session, you'll see. We'll go through some updates from the organization about what we're doing in terms of where the organization is at with the strategic planning that was

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discussed this morning in the welcome ceremony. We'll give an update about what the ICANN team has been doing for the North America region, and then we want to engage in a discussion with you.

These sessions happen at a number of the ICANN meetings. Every group will, every region, you'll see has its own space session, so please participate. Give us your input, tell us how things can be improved. I know the team here will introduce themselves, and please take that opportunity to meet them, to wave them down in the hallways and ask them questions. I unfortunately actually have to leave because we're a small, nimble team and so we have to double up a little bit.

So I'm going to take off and go to another session, but I will leave you in the capable hands of Joe Catapano, who will take you through today's session. Thank you.

JOE CATAPANO:

All right. Thank you. Well, it's always dangerous leaving it in my hands, but here we go.

So if we can go to the next slide. There we go. Wonderful. So here's a look at the North America team. You just heard from Naela here, who's the regional vice-president and leads. There's myself. I am the stakeholder engagement director for North America. I also manage the global academic portfolio for the organization. Naela is based in Los Angeles. I am based in Washington, DC. To my right on the slide, we have David Huberman, who's the technical engagement manager for North America. You will hear from him later in the presentation. He is also based in Washington, DC. We have Alex Dons, who is the

communications director for both North America and Latin America and the Caribbean. She's not in the room right now. And then we have Giose McGinty, who is right here. If you're in the room with me, she's to my right. She's the regional specialist for North America as well as Latin America, also based in Washington, DC. And then we have Felipe, who I saw here somewhere there (he's over in the back), who's new to our team. He's comms coordinator for the Americas and he's based in Montevideo, Uruguay.

And before we advance, I just want to see, there's a QR code here on the bottom of the slide. That is to sign up to the regional North America mailing list, which is a great way to stay informed about different activities we have going on in the region. You can stay connected with the conversation there, so I'll just give you a couple of seconds to scan it there. Also, these slides are posted on the session page. So for whatever reason, if we advance and you don't get a chance to take a shot of the QR code, you can do it afterward.

Next slide. So here's kind of a look at what we'll cover today. Welcome and introductions we just did. We have our friends from the strategic planning team for the organization. So the ICANN organization is going through its five-year strategic planning process right now. They will give us a sense of what's going on there. Then I will give us a look back at what we've done over the past four years. We still have one more year in this five-year cycle, which is why that says FY 21 to 24. David will give us an update from the Office of the Chief Technology Officer. Then you'll be back with me here for the look ahead for the strategic planning process for the region. We'll have a slide about some engagement

opportunities here in the near and not too distant future, and then we'll do kind of an open discussion and Q&A.

So I think the next slide is Naela, who we just heard from.

So with that, I think, if we advance two slides, then I'll turn it over to Becky.

BECKY NASH:

Great. Thank you very much, Joe. Good morning, good afternoon, good evening, everyone. This is Becky Nash from the ICANN Org planning team. And so I'm going to cover the process for the fiscal year 26 through 30 ICANN strategic plan development. First, I'd just like to acknowledge that I have colleagues that are both in the room, Margaret Benavides, and then also Victoria Yang, who is online. And together we support the Org, Board, and the community for the development of the next five-year strategic plan.

So if we go to the next slide, just as an introduction, I'd like to highlight that ICANN's bylaws mandate that we have a five-year strategic plan. So this is something that every five years, the Org, Board, and the community embark upon a process to develop a strategic plan for the next five years. As Joe indicated in his introduction, we are currently in the five-year period of FY 21 through FY 25. And just to note, ICANN has a fiscal year that starts from July 1 each year and runs through June 30 of the following year. So we are in the last year of the current strategic plan.

So now that we are embarking upon the process to develop the next five-year strategic plan, we just want to highlight that the deliverables

for this process is an adopted strategic plan and a five- year operating plan. And these two plans need to be in effect by July 1, 2025 in order to fulfill the bylaw mandate for FY 26 as the first year of the plan.

So the process and timeline that we've been following started back in our fiscal year 23. And the overall process is led by the Board of ICANN, supported by the organization, and with the support and engagement and contributions from the community.

So where we are today, after a tremendous amount of work within the community, Board and the Org, we completed what we call the environmental scan phase. And what that is is a landscape assessment where we asked all of the participants in ICANN to give us an indication using a certain framework, really to identify what our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats are over currently and through the next five to ten years. So it was a very forward-looking process. That information was then analyzed and has been presented both to the community and to the Board. And the Board is currently in the phase of developing strategies for the next five years. That is a process that does take several months. And following the development of the strategies, there'll be significant engagement with the community. And, in fact, there will be a public comment as well.

And following the development of the new strategic plan and the strategies, it becomes a draft plan. But there is also the implementation strategies that will be developed at the same time. So the public comment, which we expect will be in the July time frame, will include both a draft strategic plan and a draft five-year operating plan. And then those two plans, after following public comment, will be updated as

needed based on the input from the community, and then they will be targeted to be considered for adoption in approximately the March 2025 time frame.

And the reason why we are expecting that to be done in March is these plans, in our bylaws, are subject to the Empowered Community process. So that is a process that must run after the adoption of the plans. And should there be no petitions raised through the Empowered Community process, then the plans would be available to go in effect at the beginning of the fiscal year for FY 26.

So this just highlights the key steps that we're following in order to meet the obligations of the Org, the Board, and the community to have a five-year strategic plan.

So if we go to the next slide, I would just like to highlight the approach that we're taking. I talked about several of these stages of the process, but it's just a good reminder on how a strategic plan is developed. So one key item we like to stress is that strategic planning is the process of strategic thinking. So it's really brainstorming, discussing, and learning from what we are doing now and enhancing it to plan where we go next.

And I talked about the first stage of this process, which is called the environmental scan. Some communities like to call this the landscape assessment, where we're taking a view of what are our external opportunities and challenges, what are our internal strengths and weaknesses. And it's a very forward-looking analysis. And many of us in the planning department and those of you in business would then call it a SWOT analysis as what comes out of that (so strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats).

Then we moved into currently where we are to develop the strategies. And the first thing that the Board Strategic Planning Committee, which is the committee of the ICANN Board that the Board has delegated this work to, [was to do was] to make a recommendation to the full Board. First, there was a view of what is our mission, and ICANN's mission is clearly outlined in the bylaws. So I would suggest, if you'd like to look at the mission, please look at article one in the bylaws.

And from that stage, then the Board discussed a draft vision statement. And the draft vision statement is something that the Board strategic planning committee has formulated and is using during the development of the strategic plan. It is a draft and could change as the strategies are developed. And this is also where there's a discussion about our current strategic plans, objectives, goals, and developing strategies for the next five years, contemplating strategic objectives and goals as well.

The next key stage is the development of the implementation strategies. So this is actually something that our executive team leads on behalf of the organization and reports back to the Board of ICANN. But this is really the plans on how to execute and carry out the strategies once they are delivered and developed. So that's where the workforce planning, the internal alignment, and integration to existing and future activities for these new strategic objectives are contemplated. And they're also accompanied by deliverables, measurable metrics, and timeline planning. And that is represented by the five-year operating plan. Then the final step is who must do what by when, which is to develop the detailed action plans. And that is really the detailed annual

operating plan and budget that would support specifically the first year of the five-year strategic plan.

So this is a summary of the approach that ICANN is following in these four key steps to deliver a five-year strategic plan and a five-year operating plan.

So if we go to the next slide, we'd just like to highlight as well that community participation throughout this process is crucial. And it's very important that ICANN uphold its commitment to transparency and exclusivity, along with inclusivity and communities' active participation. We are having a session here at ICANN 79 on Wednesday the 6th of March. It is at 14:30 UTC, and we welcome all of the community members that can attend this session. It is really important that we seek wide and diverse input. It's a great opportunity for the community to have an active role in this process and to contribute to the continued success and resilience of ICANN. And we want each of you to help shape ICANN's strategic direction for the next five years and beyond.

And another key aspect of this process is a formal public comment proceeding. And again, that is expected to happen over the July time frame later in this calendar year.

And so I'll just pause here and see if there are any questions from the community.

JOE CATAPANO:

Nothing virtually. All right.

[GIOSE MCGINTY]: No questions in the chat.

BECKY NASH: Great. Thank you, everyone.

JOE CATAPANO: Thank you, Becky. Let's move to the next slide, please. That's me. So what we're going to do now is kind of take a look at what we've achieved in the region over the past four years, since the implementation of the regional engagement plan, which spans fiscal year 2021 till fiscal year 2025. The data that I'm going to go through here is only up until the end of February, roughly. You ask, why not 2025? So at ICANN, our fiscal years run from July 1 to June 30. So fiscal year 2025 starts on July 1 of this year. So that's why there'll be some discrepancies in the numbers. But the plan that is currently in place runs through fiscal year 2025.

So I'm going to show some charts and some numbers on the following few slides. These are dashboards, which is what we call them, and they're kind of a visualization, an initial effort from the team here to show graphically our work in the region using the customer engagement system that the organization is using to track engagement, not just in North America, but in regions across the globe. This is not a perfect reflection of our engagement in the region, but it's a well-represented example of what we have been doing.

As for reference, the tool itself, the customer engagement system, has undergone a significant makeover in the past few years. There's been label changes, there's been some data transfers where necessary, there's been some data purges. So again, this is an initial effort. It's not

perfect, but going forward, we're looking forward to getting more accurate measurements, labels, data, et cetera, like that.

So if we can go ... You're already there. Wonderful. Sorry, can we go back one? Thank you. So here are the focal points that were in the North American engagement plan, the current iteration that we're under right now. So as you can see (I won't read the entire slide) kind of the four buckets here: security, ICANN's governance, unique identifier systems, and geopolitical issues. These buckets, if you will, are pulled directly from the ICANN strategic plan.

So here's some examples of some engagement activities that correlate with some of these things. So we, myself and David from the Technical Engagement team, did a presentation as part of a university program with the North American Network Operators group down in Montgomery, Alabama. David did kind of an overview of root servers and talked about other technical topics. And we did some partnership down there. There was also technical trainings in Grenada in collaboration with our Latin America/Caribbean team. As well, just this past week here in San Juan, I know some students participated in a technical training there as well. So that's an example on that side.

Under ICANN's governance, there are a whole host of activities that go under this particular bucket. It's arguably our most active one on the engagement side. Examples of that over the past few years have been ... I actually just saw a couple of members of our North America at large group join us here. So we worked with them on a training for universal acceptance back in 2022. So that's an example of kind of collaboration there. We work with other partners in the ecosystem, the Internet

Society, not just the global organization, but also the chapters: Puerto Rico, New York, some other ones.

We also work with other groups. I mentioned the Network Operators Group in North America. There's also the Regional Internet Registry, the American Registry for Internet Numbers (we work with them), Civil Society organizations that you might see in some of our reporting, the Center for Democracy and Technology, the Indigenous Connectivity Institute, the dot-CA Registry for Canada (we've done some things with them), as well as, of course, as I mentioned before, EDP University here in San Juan.

For the unique identifier systems, we had a few highlights here over the past few years. So we had a member of our Technical Engagement team speak on a panel about blockchain, DNS, and some emerging technologies. So we have done some engagement there. There was another panel on a similar topic as a side event at the ICANN 77 meeting in Washington, DC. That was, as I said, in 2023. There'll be over the course of the next year and change here that we have left (pardon me; in the next few months here) in the fiscal year for efforts around the next round of generic top-level domains, as well as efforts around universal Acceptance Day. Now, that started obviously for this region last year in 2023, but there'll also be some events in 2024 that we will be working with.

And then on geopolitical issues, in 2022, we had a virtual event with some of our friends from Canada to talk about Canadian legislation. We work regularly with folks on the ground with, again, some organizations I've mentioned before, like the Internet Society and CIRA, on kind of

monitoring what is coming out of Canadian parliament. We also have folks on the US side doing the same. And then we work with our folks on the Government and Intergovernmental Organization Engagement team at ICANN to do educational and awareness-raising efforts around any issues at the United Nations, the International Telecommunications Union, and things of that nature. So we've done panels for just a couple of highlights for the International Institute of Communications. We've spoken on a couple of panels there, as well as the North America School of Internet Governance. We've contributed there over the past few years or so.

Let's go to the next slide. So again, these charts. Again, this data is not perfect, but it gives you a little feel for our engagement in the region. You'll notice this data here, again for some of the folks that may have just joined us here in the last few minutes, is only pulling from fiscal year 21 through 24 because fiscal year 25 has not actually started yet. You'll see the header for the chart says fiscal year 2025. That's because this will be continually pulling data up through the end of that fiscal year.

And so, as you can see the slides shows kind of a market increase here in regional engagements as we emerged from the Covid-19 pandemic, with travel and public health restrictions gradually lifting. So you can see our kind of activities have moved along at a steady clip. And as I said, there's a few months left in fiscal year 2024, so that number will rise as well.

And the data reflected here on this slide is inclusive of events that were in the United States, including Puerto Rico and Canada. These include in-person, virtual, or hybrid engagements, and they include

engagements not only hosted by ICANN, but events that are co-hosted with other organizations, events that are spoken at by a North American Engagement team member or a technical engagement ... anybody from the organization sponsored by ICANN or otherwise attended by regional staff.

So we can go to the next slide. So this just kind of is a way of kind of graphically showing the breakdown. Now, again, as I mentioned before, this is not a perfect representation yet. It's going to take some tweaking. But this is kind of an example of what we will be able to do going forward. So you'll see the roughly 300 events here represented. You'll see the bulk of this has this kind of hyphen. So we need to work on the labeling for it. But basically this large chunk is multistakeholder events, which is what we call it in the system. That basically means that it is not an event that's dedicated to one stakeholder category. So an example of this could be the North America School of Internet Governance, right? You have representatives, or you're talking to audiences there, from business, civil society, academia, government, et cetera. Multiple. So that's kind of an example.

Another example would be either of the national or regional Internet governance initiatives in the US or Canada. Sometimes you'll hear the acronym NRI for some of our newcomers. That's what that means. Examples of that are the Internet Governance forum for the United States, as well as the Canadian Internet Governance Forum. So you can see it kind of broken down by category there. And then, as I said, we'll be able to refine this and make it better going forward.

And then the next slide. This is just a snapshot of calendar year 2022 versus 2023. Just gives you a little feel for kind of activity, kind of ramping up here in the region as we do more and also record more and feed more data into the system.

And then the next slide will have this, again broken down by category. Again, you'll see the bulk is kind of in that multistakeholder category. It depends on the message you're delivering. A lot of times it's more effective if you can reach across sectors. Now, sometimes you're going with a sector-specific message. Maybe you want to find an event that's targeting one particular audience, but to the extent we have multiple sectors represented in an event, that's wonderful.

And the next slide. So this is just some snapshots of some of the things we've done here we did in 2023. So a picture that's actually on the left is the technical training in Grenada. That was February of 2023. We had the policy forum in Washington, DC in June of 2023. So it's a nice shot there. And then toward the end of 2023, we did a week of engagement in Montreal. We had the ICANN Board Chair deliver the keynote to the Canadian Internet Governance Forum. We also had our vice president for technical engagement speak on a panel at the Quebec Internet Governance Forum. And then we had a booth at CIRA's kind of membership event, did some engagement there.

And then the next slide, please, is ... This is just last week. So these are some shots of the capacity development session that we supported and was hosted by EDP University. So wonderful to be down there. And we thank EDP University and all of our stakeholders here in Puerto Rico for helping make that happen and make it a success.

So the next section ... I'm going to go to David in a minute, but I just want to stop and see if there's any questions about my remarks there in the past few minutes.

In the room, yeah.

DANA CRAMER:

Thank you. My name is Dana. I am a NextGen participant speaking in my own capacity. I was curious about what the geopolitical context of talking about that. I'm from Canada, and I recognize Canada has had significant levels of legislation over the past year and a half come through, but have there also been conversations about international developments? One that I'm thinking of specifically is the new Internet protocol submission to the ITU, initially by Huawei and China, and how that's kind of continuously not gone away, specifically in the low-Earth orbit satellite system., and if that's being engaged at any of these more regional events, too, to have a better understanding about what's happening in that file. Thank you.

JOE CATAPANO:

It's a wonderful question. Thank you. So in terms of issues at the United Nations, the International Telecommunications Union, or any of those intergovernmental bodies, we have an (sister function is kind of an informal way of saying it) entire team dedicated to that, and they are continually engaging on any issues, both at the UN or whatever the intergovernmental body is, but also in the community. So I'll speak to kind of what we do in the US and Canada side. We support them as if they'll do briefings for diplomats. So as ICANN, we don't obviously

participate in any kind of ... It's a government forum. So to the extent we can help, we will do awareness-raising or educational sessions about. "Okay, well, here's how it works. And here's how proposal x will affect the Internet and the operations of it." So that's kind of one aspect of it.

There are two things I'll mention, and then since you did mention new IP, I'll offer a moment for David to see if he would like to chime in. We have a publication series. There are two sets of them. One is our government engagement team, which I just mentioned. So they have an entire kind of publication series that talks about a lot of these issues and gives really comprehensive analysis that we share not only with diplomats, but with the public and all stakeholders writ large. The technical team, the office of the CTO, also has a publication series that talks a lot about some of these more complex, nuanced technologies or emerging technologies, things of that nature. So that's something we offer, too.

I'm going to pause for a minute and see if David has any comments about new IP or anything like that, or any of our engagements on that.

DAVID HUBERMAN:

Thanks, Joe. Hi, everybody. I'm David Huberman from the Office of the Chief Technology Officer. On things like new IP, ICANN expends a lot of resources and similar technologies. We expend a lot of resources following these developments, following these discussions. And our general message is that we have to respect the open standards development processes. And for something like new IP, we're going to want to see something like this come out of the IETF, the Internet

Engineering Task Force, rather than somewhere perhaps like the ITUT, which is not an open development process forum and doesn't have the same rigor that we see in some of the others.

New IP is back. I see there are new proposals out there. So we'll continue to follow these and we'll continue to write our reports and inform the community of what we're seeing and what we think the impacts could be.

JOE CATAPANO:

Great. Thanks, David, and thank you for the question. Any other questions in the room?

I see one to my left and then we'll check on virtual.

LINDA FRAGA:

Hi, I'm Linda. I'm a NextGen participant. So my question is pretty simple. I just wanted to know how is this engagement measure; if it looks just at the reach or does it consider different levels of engagement.

JOE CATAPANO:

That's another good question. So as I said, we're working on the data and trying to make it better. Right now, we're able to track kind of where we are, what we've done and why we did it, and whether or not we kind of fulfilled the objective that we set out to do.

In terms of more kind of nuanced tracking as to did someone come to this event and then sign up for a newsletter or then take some action or

apply to a newcomer program or something like that, we're not there yet. We want to be there. There's a whole kind of host of challenges that we kind of need to navigate in terms of how we collect information, retain it, and that type of thing that we're trying to work through here. So again, we're in the beginning stages, but that's a place that I think we really would like to get to. Thank you.

Do we have anything in the Zoom?

[GIOSE MCGINTY]: Yes, we have two questions in the Zoom. The first one is from David Mackey. “Thanks for all the information, Joe. Lots of activity happening, which is good. Question is, in addition to tracking number of events, is it possible to track approximate participant numbers at the events and, for example, impact rather than just the activity?”

JOE CATAPANO: So along the lines of what I just said, we're not able to do that yet in a way that is meaningful, but we want to be there. It involves a lot of trying to, again ... We need to find the correct method to collect, retain, and track that information.

[GIOSE MCGINTY]: Okay, and the next question is from Zainab Mohammadi. And she says, “My name ...” Is Zainab Mohammadi in the room? Just checking because he’s said, “I am a NextGenner.” I'm not sure in the room, but ...

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: [inaudible]

[GIOSE MCGINTY]: She's online? Okay, good. "My question is about prioritization strategy and ICANN events for five-year strategic planning. Since we are living in a changing world, especially in technology and Internet, I am assuming that ICANN arranges meetings based on priorities instead of having a consistent schedule and planning."

JOE CATAPANO: So following David's section, we're going to talk a little bit more about future planning for the next five years. So I guess the short answer is yes, such that the strategic goals and objectives for the organization get set and then everybody's regional engagement plan kind of cascades down from that. So we don't want to have the organization as a whole going in one direction and then the region going in another. So we want to make sure we're in sync on all of our activities. So that's what's going to kind of drive it. And when I get down to the section after David's, we'll take a look at kind of what some of our ideas are. And then the community will be able to give us feedback about kind of where they think that sits.

Okay. If there's nothing else, why don't David, you take it away here with your section.

DAVID HUBERMAN:

Great. Thanks so much, Joe. Okay, so everyone, hi again. I'm David Huberman. I'm the technical engagement manager for North America, coming to you today from Washington, DC.

Next slide, please. I'd like to give you just a short update about activities happening since our last meeting here in the Office of the Chief Technology Officer, which is led by our CTO, John Crain. There's 22 of us, and we concentrate on essentially four things. We have a group of very senior technologists and DNS, world-class experts who are doing research and measurements about how Internet infrastructure works, about developments that we are seeing, and we are able to publish papers based on all of these measurements that we hope are topical and informative.

I'm part of the Technical Engagement team. There are seven of us around the globe who work on engaging with our local technical communities: ISPs, Civil Society, governments. We work and support many other teams here at ICANN to ensure that we are both presenting the important and topical technical topics, but also that we're ingesting some of the newest technology that we're on the cutting edge in our industry. To ensure we're aware of what's going on, we're evaluating what's going on, we're seeing its potential future impacts into ICANN.

We have a Security, Stability and Resilience team, commonly referred to as our SSR team. This is a group of PhDs who all sit there and try and make the world a better place through things like machine learning and AI, all while trying to find ways to help lower things like DNS, abuse and then we have an entire operations department which is supporting those of us in the Office of the CTO doing this work.

I wanted to put our mission statement on this slide just so you know what it is we're actually doing, because this mission statement is fairly old and it's still completely germane and 100% true today, we think. We're constantly trying to improve the knowledge about the identifiers we work with and disseminate this information to communities to improve the technical operation of both the Internet's systems of unique identifiers and to improve the ICANN ecosystem's technological stature.

Okay, next slide, please. So, some of the things we've been working on. Our researchers, Roy Arends, Paul Hoffman, and Edward Lewis. I told you, these are some world class DNS experts: Roy Paul and Ed. They've been doing this for 30 and 40 years, as long as DNS has been around. And so they're working right now, this year, in 2024, with one of the working groups called DNSOP in the IETF, and they're creating an all new resource record type in the DNS called DELEG. And DELEG is a new method and it's a better method for an authoritative name server to tell any recursive resolver that connects to it about some of its capabilities.

Now, that's a vague statement. Yes, I can point information to you as the cursor resolver about what I can do. What does that information contain? Well, we don't know yet, because first thing we're doing is developing how to signal. And then once we do how to signal, we're hoping that opens up all new types of ways to use the DNS to make it faster and better and more secure. Okay, I say that in the second bullet point. I got ahead of myself there. There are a lot of future use cases, but current thoughts are about glue records and delegation points. And really, I can tell you, hey, I can handle DNS-over-TLS I can handle DNS-

over-HTTPS. I can handle whatever the technology is. I can handle it. And what this nicely does is it gives the DNS operator control of some of the things that they haven't always had full control.

So that's what's going on at the IETF. It's pretty exciting, it's pretty geeky, but we're hoping that it helps evolve DNS into some of the new capabilities of tomorrow.

All right, the next slide, please. Our SSR team. I told you these were three PhDs. These are all three absolutely brilliant people. Samaneh, Carlos, and Sion. And they've published two papers in our Octo document series since our last meeting. The first meeting is a relatively lengthy paper that talks about how we and how this team specifically evaluates RBLs, Reputation Block Lists. RBLs are super important in terms of evaluating sources of abuse, but not all RBLs are created equal, so we had to develop a methodology to evaluate when we want to consider adding an RBL into our data feeds, but also a methodology to evaluate the ones we have already added in the past and see if they're still meeting the needs that we have today, as opposed to the needs we had yesterday. So we did this work, we created this methodology, and then we published it so that others can benefit by it.

The second one is about an old friend of ours, spam, or as we're calling it in the paper, unsolicited e-mail. And unsolicited e-mail we're defining as anything that's an unwelcome e-mail or a malicious e-mail. But there's a lot of nuance in that. If you work with e-mail, if you work with spam feeds, you know there's a lot more to it than just those simple overarching concepts. So using machine learning and using some of the best data analysis tools that we have, we've created a new

methodology to separate spam, to be able to classify it so we know what it is when it's being used as a delivery mechanism for other types of malicious content.

Both of these papers are actually pretty readable for the layperson, and I find them quite interesting, especially if you work with in DNS abuse sphere, if you're law enforcement, if you're an operator, if you're an antispam crusader. We've written these papers to try and help everybody, but one of the things I like is that they're very accessible to the lay reader as well.

Next slide, please. We have more papers in the pipeline that are ready to be published in the coming months. Roy Arends is working on an upcoming RFC at the IETF on DNS error reporting, where a resolver can give more information about an answer other than just NX domain and doesn't tell you anything. It can tell you why it doesn't know such certain things. Ed Lewis is working on a paper that studies the consolidation, or perhaps we'll call it centralization, among TLD registries. Alain Durand is working on a paper studying RPKI, which is a way of helping secure routing against accidental misconfigurations and malicious hijacks, and how it does apply and how it could apply to some of the critical DNS infrastructure. We all care very much.

And then again, back to Ed Lewis, Ed has a thought piece coming out that he's been working on for a long time now, and it looks at why some technologies like DNSSEC for example, lack deployment. And his hypothesis is, is it because operators don't care about those technologies? Well, that's a very thought-provoking question. That's a very provocative question. And so Ed is working on publishing his piece

on that so that hopefully we can address these types of challenges head on.

So that is the brief update about what's happened between ICANN 78 and ICANN 79 and what we hope to publish leading up to ICANN 80 and ICANN 81. That's it for me. Thank you.

JOE CATAPANO:

Thank you, David. And if we can move to the next slide, we've heard from the overall organization at the top of the session about the strategic planning process for fiscal year 26 through 2030. And so now we're going to take a look at the same for the North America region. I'll move through these rather briskly because I know the more important part is about beginning, like getting input, like the first throes again. So the planning process for the region focuses on our efforts to strengthen engagement and participation at ICANN. I also mentioned before that anything we develop at the North America level is going to be cascading from the overall organizational strategic plan. And as with the previous iterations, we're going to work with the community on identifying the goals and objectives and eventually measurements, et cetera.

Next slide, please. So these are just ideas. Nothing is set. These are ideas for areas of focus for fiscal years 26 through 30. It's not an exhaustive list. It will change via community input, via whatever. At the end of the day, the strategic plan is for the organization. But these are some things that at least we can see on the horizon, coming to ICANN meetings and seeing some of these sessions, some of these things.

So it's these kind of three buckets I offered here. One is enhancing the multilingual Internet, which encompasses a lot of our work around universal acceptance, internationalized domain names, and eventually the next round of generic top-level domains when that begins. The second is supporting and promoting the efficacy of the multistakeholder process. That can encompass a whole host of things. Some of these things on the international level that we were discussing before, whether that is the... (when you see WSIS, that stands for World Summit on the information Society, which was a U.N. convening 20 years ago.; WSIS+20 is the kind of 20-year review of that; and then it can also encompass those NRIs that I spoke of before) the grant program, which I know everybody's going to hear about later in the week here at ICANN 79, which is going to be a big deal, certainly for communities across the globe, North America included, and then obviously, our ongoing engagements in the region that we tend to do throughout the year, and then supporting a secure, stable, and resilient Internet, again, implications here for the next round of gTLDs. And also there's an acronym here that I'll spell out for free: IMRS (ICANN-Managed Root Server). So we manage one of the authoritative root servers and we work with entities in the region to host instances of those. So that's kind of another kind of piece of engagement there.

Next slide, please. And then we'll come back to that one when we do the kind of general discussion. So here's the rough timeline for developing the plan. Again, things may shift a little bit, but here's kind of a general idea. So we're hoping to have an initial draft plan at ICANN 81, which is this October. That meeting is in Istanbul.

And then roughly from November of 2024 to March of 2025, there'll be community consultations. There'll be revisions to the plan based on those discussions and other activities. And then the idea is to have the final draft at ICANN 82 in March of 2025, which also happens to be in North America. It'll be in Seattle. And then roughly that period between March and June of 2025, there'll be a period of public comment. So I'm sure our newcomers are kind of getting familiar with the idea of public comment and that part of the process. If you haven't already, I'm sure you will be. So in addition to ICANN's policies going out for public comment, where anybody, any stakeholder, can submit a public comment to it, these regional engagement plans also go out for public comment. So it'll be a period of time there where it'll be open for that.

And then hopefully, all systems are go in June of 2025 at ICANN 83. Finalize the plan. The overall ICANN strategic plan will be ready to go by that point, we hope, as well. And then July 1, 2025, we will be on our way.

The next two slides are going to be informational, but I just want to do them now to make sure I do them and then we can go back and talk about some of the other stuff. So there is a geopolitical session in ICANN 79. It's Thursday afternoon, so it is later in the conference. It's after the public forum. That is 1:15 p.m. Local time in Ballroom A, which is on the third floor. And this will talk a lot about kind of efforts around like we were talking about before, engagements on the government engagement intergovernmental organization side.

And then the next slide. So this is information on. These are opportunities for engagement at different levels. So the grant program

is one of them. So there'll be more details about that at the session later in the week here at ICANN 79. Obviously, we'll also be, all of our communications vehicles will be disseminating information about the grant program as we go along here. We expect to begin accepting applications toward the end of this month, and that window will remain open till roughly the end of May. And then the first grantees will be announced in January of 2025.

That link there is the link to the main grant program page, which has a lot of information on that. You can also, of course, feel free to catch me, Giose, or other members of the team, and we can get you more information on it as needed.

There is a current public comment period open. It's proposed language for draft sections of the next round applicant guidebook. That closes in little over two weeks. The applicant guidebook is obviously a very important part of the New gTLD program, the next round of new gTLDs. So have a look at that if that's an area of interest for you.

I don't know if engagement may be a little strong with this next one, but we are generating a new DNS cryptographic key, which is scheduled to be the 26 April 2024. And so there'll be information on that on the website.

And David, is that something that is kind of one of our live-streamed events that you know of?

DAVID HUBERMAN:

Yeah, that's part of our regular key ceremonies that we have four times a year, and that is broadcast live on YouTube. It is not at all exciting, but

it's super important if you are into those things. There is a crowd. They do talk, they do hang out on the YouTube channel. But yeah, that's a very important milestone for us. We'll be signing a new key-signing key and distributing it to our various hardware security modules, starting that process off. We'll also be changing our hardware security modules to a new vendor and new technology moving forward.

So if you're into cryptography and if you're into helping the root ensure it is fully secure (those keys that sign the routes are secure) join us on the 26 April.

JOE CATAPANO:

Excellent. Thank you. If it's something you're even tangentially interested in (you don't have to stay for the whole time; it's a live stream) dip in, dip out, go about your day. It's interesting stuff.

When's the next ICANN meeting? That's always the question on everybody's mind. Here are the next three. So we have the policy form in middle of June, which will be in Kigali. For those that are newcomers, the policy form is a shorter meeting. There's less of the kind know, pomp and circumstance, if you will. There's no welcome ceremony, public forum, things like that. It's much more like kind of “roll up the sleeves, do the work” meeting. There's the annual general meeting in November, which will be in Istanbul, and then at the beginning of March will be in Seattle.

Now this is the last bullet I want to just emphasize before we just have a general discussion for roughly 15 minutes. This is the engagement calendar for the organization. This is relatively new; a couple of months,

maybe. This is where you will know where we are. So again, the CES, the engagement system that we're using to kind of track where we are, we're still refining, fine tuning, but we've gotten to the point where we're capturing most of where we are, what events we're at region by region, on this engagement calendar. So wherever you are, (if you're like, "I'm in Ottawa. Is ICANN in Ottawa this month?") go there. That'll tell you. And we try to be as comprehensive as possible with that. So I want to make sure I point that out.

And so the next slide is basically open discussion and questions. We can talk about fiscal year 26 through 30 and ideas for that. This is the North America Space work session. So now it's kind of in your hands, and I'll open it up. And if we have to bounce around slides, we can do that.

Nobody's jumping up in the room. So anything virtually?

[GIOSE MCGINTY]:

Yes. We have a question from David Mackey. "The global and regional Technical Engagement teams have a range of tasks, including education, but a limited number of resources. Does it make sense in the upcoming strategic planning processes to add the goal of identifying and building strategic partnerships with educational institutions to expand channels, reach and impact without significant cost to ICANN?"

JOE CATAPANO:

Thanks, dude. That's a good question. We have the luxury here of my having not only the North America hat, but now the global academic hat as well. So what's kind of going on in tandem here, at the same time, is working on developing an academic engagement plan for the

organization right now. This is not a new function. This is not a new department. It is more at this point in time a kind of coordination role and kind of seeing what we can make happen with what we currently have in the regions.

So the short answer is yes; universities, whether that is not just students, of course, but faculty staff forming those relationships and making sure that ... because we know that there are academics in the field that are working on either ICANN subject matter specifically or ICANN-adjacent subject matters, things that might mention us or our mission that may not be at the meeting. So how do we kind of stay involved or connect with them and then have them kind of be involved in kind of what we're doing? That is something that we're kind of in the earlier stages looking at. The hope is to have at prep week for the next ICANN meeting (ICANN 80; the prep week is virtual, so it's not in person) a session there where we can talk a little bit more about academic engagement on a global level in anticipation of, hopefully at the annual general meeting, having an actual full session like this about it.

So I don't know if that fully answers your question, but I hope it gives you a little bit of feel regionally. At the end of the day, academia is one of the stakeholder groups here. So to the extent that the community is highly interested in folding that into whatever we do, I think that's something we should discuss and do.

I welcome back Naela to the [inaudible].

I have Alfredo.

ALFREDO CALDERON:

Yes, thank you. So, through one of our ALS in North America, we have what's called the Hispanic Educational Technology Service Consortia, which is a group of universities, although they have sort of a criteria to be included in the consortium, which is having at least 20% to 25% of their students being Hispanic. It doesn't mean that we haven't engaged with them.

So we are actually trying to get those 30 some universities, including the ones in the states, in Puerto Rico and Latin America, involved in some kind of an academia track where we can start educating them. Actually, with the North American School of Internet Governance, we're reaching out to universities precisely to get them involved and sort of initiate that process of getting them aware of what Internet governance is all about, having faculty participate so that they can integrate that into their curriculum and reaching out to other groups within the academia sector.

We actually did last year, an event that we talked about ICANN in, and we were talking actually about accessibility, which is something that ICANN is also involved with when we want to reach out to those that aren't like you that are newcomers trying to get involved in Internet governance, but you don't have a sense of where you can be more useful or have your voice heard.

So we're actually working on that. And with Naela and Joe, we're trying to develop that curriculum, reaching out to universities and other ALSs, which are the at-large organized structures that we have in the region. So I hope that helps as well.

JOE CATAPANO: It's excellent. Thank you.

Anything virtual right now? Okay, let's go in the room. I don't know who was first.

WAQAR AHMAD: Thank you. Waqar Ahmad, ICANN Fellow. Speaking in my own personal capacity, I have a question. What kind of initiatives and steps in ICANN are taking place in the North America region to reduce and combat DNS abuse and spamming?

And there is another. Like David mentioned, there are some researchers, PhD researchers, that are working on different research topics, like RPKI, DNS abuse, and authority servers. So how are they working with all of these topics, and what is the role of RSSAC in making policies with them?

JOE CATAPANO: I notice that I have two people who are very steeped in RSSAC, more so than me: Naela and David. So I might hand off that one also on the RPKI side.

As far as DNS abuse is concerned, that's something that's kind of an ongoing discussion within the ICANN community. We've had several sessions on it. The community is coming together to try to solve the problem. And I don't know, I'm not quite sure what kind of the particulars of it [inaudible]

WAQAR AHMAD: Yes, but what are the exact platforms that the North America community is working on on this specific issue?

NAELA SARRAS: Hello, Waqar, and sorry I had to leave, but my session ended early. Waqar, I think a good place for you to check out is some of the information that's coming out of the office of the CTO, the OCTO team. And I believe there was a link shared to the publications that the OCTO team makes. The OCTO team does a lot of research. There's a lot of researchers that are working on this in terms of DNS abuse and they support other efforts within the organization where we have a steering group that's looking at DNS abuse, and then some of that already has made its way into the work that has been going on with the community in terms of the contracted parties. And there has been amendments to the registry agreements with regards to the DNS abuse, and it's going into the implementation phase now.

So I'd encourage you to look into those areas and ICANN, and I can point you to that.

Another thing. The reason why I mentioned the Office of the CTO is there's a new project that's being released right now from the Office of CTO called Metrica, which is also, I think, looking at some of that data. So Metrica is another good place to look. So let's connect on some of the research that's coming out of OCTO within ICANN.

I'm going to switch to the RSSAC because I noticed there was a question about RSSAC. RSSAC isn't looking at DNS abuse, per se. RSSAC is made up of root server operators. So you have twelve organizations

operating 13 identities for root servers, A through J, I believe. I might be off on the letters or whatever; from A to something that adds up to 13.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: L.

NAELA SARRAS: L and beyond.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: [Just] L.

NAELA SARRAS: Yeah. So RSSAC is made up of two representatives from each of the twelve organizations that make up RSSAC. So that's all that is. It's the Root Server System Advisory Committee. And they really work on root server operations issues, root server security issues. That's really their mandate.

Now from RSSAC, there's also a group called RSSAC Caucus that works together with the RSSAC. And from my experience on RSSAC, RSSAC appoints research topics or where they need ... It's kind of like the research, another technical arm of RSSAC that could do some RSSAC work or RSSAC-related topics. That's the RSSAC Caucus.

And I would encourage you to look into that. And I know we talked about that previously. I would encourage you to look into what the RSSAC Caucus is working on and if any of those topics seem interesting. And there is an application to get admitted into RSSAC Caucus that is

then reviewed by the RSSAC itself. But I'm happy to point you in that direction because frankly, this is what the community asks us to do as the engagement people is: we need more people involved in things like RSSAC and GNSO and ccNSO. And so it is our job to help point you in those directions once you come in the door and vice versa. If there's things that we can do for you, please let us know as well.

JOE CATAPANO:

Sorry, this is Joe. Silvia just reminded me that the North America regional at-large group is having a roundtable tomorrow at 4:15 in the afternoon on DNS and domain abuse in the digital economy. So that's something you'd be sure to check out. And I see Greg reaching for the microphone, so maybe he's got some more on that.

GREG SHATAN:

In addition, today at 3:00 we have the NARALO town hall. Roundtable is tomorrow. Town hall is today, where we'll be going over some of the issues that NARALO deals with, including outreach and engagement planning, with a focus, obviously, on North America. So I invite you to come down to the at large room today at 3:00 for that meeting as well.

JOE CATAPANO:

Thank you. I want to be conscious of time. I know we had one more question over here and then maybe we'll close. And I know we had a stakeholder that wanted to just give a quick little pop for the NomCom nominating committee. So, Kathleen, I think you had a question.

KATHLEEN SCOGGIN:

Hi. I'll be quick. Kathleen Scoggin, ICANN 79 Fellow. I had a question about how the North American region would approach something like the marketing and product for universal acceptance. North America is unique in that many people speak English as a first language, and they do not view the issue or are impacted by the issue in the same way. So my question is, how is North America adapting to that in their events and your approach to UA policy generally?

JOE CATAPANO:

I'll start and then, Naela, if you have any commentary, please jump in. You're right. So that is an excellent point. Even though English is the first language probably for both of the countries in the region, that does not negate the fact that both countries are quite diverse. So we have a province in Canada that is mainly French, and then of course, we have Puerto Rico, as well as other territories in the United States and states in the United States where there are just high concentrations of populations, where English is neither the first language and in some cases not spoken. So it is a different challenge.

So talking about these topics in different regions requires a degree of finesse for wherever you are. And North America is certainly kind of a complex situation, trying to take that and present it in a way that is accessible (I know that's kind of a buzzword that we've been using a lot, but more just kind of small-A accessible) to the audience of, "Well, what does this mean for you? How can you use a domain name in a non-Latin script for your community organization or your small business or something?"

I don't know if we have the exact answer yet, but it's something we're kind of working and honing on here as we move forward.

NAELA SARRAS:

That's great. I don't know necessarily that I want to add too much more. So thanks, Joe.

I kind of just want to give an example really of ... I think it's something exciting that's happening recently. I think depending on where we're doing engagement, the engagement is completely different. And North America is kind of a weird region because honestly, people reach into ICANN where they need to from North America. They don't really need engagement as much to reach into exactly the function that they need.

But one of the examples, I just wanted to say, where it's completely different what we're doing now in North America with this one group ... And I think they're presenting on this, in this meeting. There's a group in Canada that came together recently to do the label generation rules for a script in Canada called the [enictote], I think. I hope I didn't butcher their name. So this is for native communities in Canada. And label generation rules means they take the script and then they determine which of these characters in the script can be used to make up labels in domain names, and that becomes the label generation rules. And ICANN has study groups that design label generation rules for the root zone, for the labels to go at the root zone. But then these tables, a lot of times, are actually adapted for domain names at the second level and beyond.

So with that type of engagement, I don't think that ICANN would have done this ten years ago because we were focused on completely different things. And when we were talking about IDNs and label generation rules, there was a lot more obvious things that we were focused on, such as label generation rules for the Arabic script or the Cyrillic script or the Devanagari scripts in the Indian languages.

So now I think we are starting to get a better awareness of where in North America we need to engage. And engagement of underserved communities is a very important area for us. Thank you.

GREG SHATAN:

Just wanted to say very briefly that there's a completely different aspect of universal acceptance, which is equally important, if not more important, in North America, which is the new gTLDs: dot-horse, dot-ninja, dot-science, dot-who'syourmama. Whatever they may be, those know significant acceptance issues, and the vast majority of them are in English script, so it's not an IDN issue. And in many cases, the problems are with large corporates. They may have a ten-year plan to deal with universal acceptance, but that's not going to help for the next ten years. So that often gets maybe more play in North American UA Day. And NARALO and ISOC New York are actually cosponsoring a UA Day when we did so last year as well. And we spent a good amount of time on that last year also on the dot-Quebec issue, which is still germane, especially because somehow they decide that Latin scripts don't have variants, even though other scripts do.

So there are plenty of issues here. And of course, I'm mentioning that there are 42 million Spanish speakers as a first language in the United

States, which is a lot more than there are in many Spanish- speaking countries. So we have our share of issues. Actually, there's an interesting in the article in the New York Times about how many languages are spoken in the United States, and it's in the hundreds, including somewhere the last speaker in the world is in the United States. Even if they came from the Caucasus or from Africa, the last speaker is now here. So not that that's necessarily going to be an IDN issue, because we're probably not going to have an IDN for one person, but nonetheless, the linguistic diversity of United States and Canada are spectacular. Thank you.

JOE CATAPANO:

Thanks, Greg. You're not the last speaker in the world, but you are the last speaker for the session. We do have to close.

[Venda], I apologize we did not get to your announcement. However, if you can supply information to maybe Giose, we can send this out on the regional mailing list and reach even more people than are in this room or on the Zoom.

Thank you everybody for participating. Have a great rest of your meeting.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]