
ICANN80 | PF – Navigating the Multistakeholder Approach: The ICANN Community's Role in Global Internet Governance
Monday, June 10, 2024 – 15:30 to 17:00 KGL

ANDREA GLANDON:

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microphone. To view the real-time transcription, click close captioning in the Zoom toolbar. Now please welcome one of our session moderators, Jordan Carter, you may begin.

JORDAN CARTER:

Thank you and good morning, good afternoon, good evening, wherever you are and welcome to this discussion. Along with Pari Esfandiari, my co-moderator will be taking you through this session today, which is exploring the ICANN community's role in global internet governance. And probably you're familiar with the discussions that have been happening at recent meetings on topics like the Global Digital Compact, the upcoming WSIS+20 review next year. And we are here to hold open a space for community views and dialogue about these issues with something of an action focus on what can we do as community participants, a little bit of maybe what ICANN can do as an organization to play an effective role in these discussions.

My colleague Pari is going to give a little bit of context about the issues that are at stake here and then I'll come back a little bit with some information about the session flow and how we're going to run the session. So, Pari, let me hand over to you.

PARI ESFANDIARI:

Thank you, Jordan. And a very warm welcome to all participants here in this beautiful day in Kigali and also those joining virtually from around the world. Today, we gather to discuss topic of immense

significance to the future of the global internet and its governance. The multi-stakeholder approach has evolved considerably since its organic birth over 50 years ago to its formal inception at WSIS 2003 and through 20 years of experiments.

We find ourselves at a critical juncture. While geopolitics continue to shape the debate, today we focus on the challenges that have emerged over the years and look for opportunities to engage and influence the conversation in various UN processes.

The stakes are high as the future of the internet's accessibility, openness and inclusivity is being shaped. ICANN as the prime example of multi-stakeholder approach has both interest and responsibility to safeguard the multi-stakeholder approach, a cornerstone of the internet's development that ensures diverse voices are heard and integrated into decision-making processes.

Today, we tap into the collective wisdom of our community to ensure that this approach remains resilient and influential amidst the challenges it faces. Now, without further ado, I pass the floor to Jordan to start the discussion. Jordan?

JORDAN CARTER:

Thanks, Pari. I will not quite start the discussion but I'll just let people know how the session is going to go. We're going to start with four rapporteurs who are going to give us updates into four of the current processes that are happening or that have recently happened.

So, we'll be having a brief on Net Mundial plus 10, on WSIS+20, on the Global Digital Compact and a report back from the high-level governmental meeting which has been happening here in this room yesterday. Each of those speakers, and you know who you are, will get about three minutes of time. And then we're going to move to a quite flexible back and forth between audience participants and some pre-prepared audience participants.

So, we've got some people who were given a heads up who based on their expertise would like to make sure they get a chance to table their perspectives. Those people will get a two-minute warning. Those people all know who they are and hopefully they are close to a microphone. The two-minute warning is a sign. Do you want to demonstrate the sign, Andrea? Do you want to, the sign is a time sign?

So, you might not see it, but either you or we will see it. And if you go over your time allocation, we'll probably interrupt you, which you may find rude, but no one else will. Once we've had the readouts and those interventions, as we do that discussion, we're going to try and structure the discussion into three phases. But we know that people will put their hands up for the queue in the Zoom room at different times. We may know you might not want to make a comment or ask a question on the specific topic we've asked for. That's okay.

Our online moderator, who is in fact here in person is Nigel Hickson from the UK government. He'll be keeping an eagle eye on the chat and the online participation as well. So, we're hopeful that between the three of us we won't miss any hands which go up in the Zoom room.

So, if you haven't already joined the Zoom room, please do that. If you wish to make a comment at any point, we're not going to take physical hands up in the room as an indication. And that also means that if you are one of the people who knows that they're on our list of people who will speak, we would urge you to put your hands up in the Zoom room early on so that we get your expert perspectives into the mix as early as we can.

So, that's probably enough about the way the session will run. Without further ado, I'll pass to the first rapporteur, Bruna Martins de la Santos, who's going to be giving us a report back on Net Mundial Plus 10. Bruna, you have three minutes.

BRUNA MARTINS DOS SANTOS: Thank you very much, Jordan. Hello, everyone. Net Mundial, as everyone knows, was held in Sao Paulo in May, 2024 and built on the outcomes of the original Net Mundial meeting for 2014.

Might feel like we're talking about 10 years ago but really the meeting was organized amid some new fears regarding the current direction of processes like Global Digital Compact, which prioritize the relevance of multilateralism and managed to somehow disregard the long-term convening power and contribution of forums such as Internet Governance Forum and suggest the creation of new spaces.

Understanding the moment as critical for defining the direction of the digital ecosystem governance, actors from the broader community

identified the need for an essentially multi-stakeholder discussion space that could provide an adequate environment from all sectors to meet and agree on strong messages with concrete recommendations on the preservation and application of multi-stakeholderism in the most diverse governance spaces.

I'm also glad to note that the event highlighted Brazil's role as a leader in digital governance, particularly given its current presidency of the GD20 and the multi-stakeholder international governance model led by CGI.br. In terms of outcomes, I would like to highlight just a couple of them. First one obviously is the Sao Paulo Guidelines as a set of guidelines and process steps as a how-to for effective implementation of MS approaches in internet governance and digital policy processes.

Throughout the guidelines, we reaffirmed the guiding 2014 principles and reinforced the need for more openness, inclusiveness and agility in internet governance as well as the need for stakeholders to be well-informed and have the resources to engage effectively.

Second point is about contribution to global discussions. The document's final statement issued messages to ongoing global discussions such as the GDC and the IGF. Here in particular, the focus was to strengthen the IGF as a premier forum for chatting our digital future and rather than creating new spaces, we should leverage on the current ones to ensure better coordination.

There were also some considerations regarding improvements on multilateral spaces and here's a proper request for more information

about processes, clear messages, schedule and points of participation. Last but not least, the guidelines stress the importance of making digital governance processes more inclusive and accessible to ensure that all relevant parties can participate effectively. Thanks a lot.

PARI ESFANDIARI: Thank you, Bruna. And with that, we will go to Ana Neves who will enlighten us about WSIS+20 and UN CSTD. Floor is yours.

ANA NEVES: Thank you very much. I think I had a PowerPoint. It's not coming to be shown? No?

JORDAN CARTER: Sorry, we didn't get any PowerPoint sent through. Apologies, Ana.

ANA NEVES: Well, it will be useful to have a good picture of what is going on. Carlos, I sent you a PowerPoint. A PowerPoint? No, only one slide. Well, never mind. So, we will have the WSIS+20 review in 2025 and in the CSTD, the United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development, which is the functional body of ECOSOC responsible for the follow-up of the WSIS since 2006. And so, in the session of the CSTD in April this year, there was a presentation of what the report will be. Like, and which will be presented next year in April in the CSTD.

So, that report will inform all the discussions that will lead to the ministerial or high-level meeting on WSIS+20 review. We are having open consultations. So, the open consultations at worldwide level, they were concluded by the 31st of March. But now we are doing open consultations at the regional level. And so, the first one was held in Dubai for Western Arab countries on the 22nd of May. And the European regional open consultation will take place on the 17th of June in Vilnius. During the EuroDIG.

So, there will be more regional open consultations. And so, we are still waiting for what will be the outcome of the global digital compact, which will have a great impact, of course, on the WSIS+20 review. But for the time being, we are doing in the CSTD, our work and to do what the assembly of the United Nations asked us to do, which is to elaborate, to produce a report on the basis of the questionnaires and open consultations to be presented to the governments. Thank you.

JORDAN CARTER:

Thank you, Ana. Sorry about the slide mix up. Our third reporter is speaking on the global digital compact. And it's Jorge Cancio from the Swiss government. Jorge, over to you.

JORGE CANCIO:

Thank you. Jorge Cancio, Swiss government. So, first of all, just to mention that we had the WSIS forum high level event two weeks ago as part of this WSIS+20 process. There was a chairman summary by the

Swiss minister hosting the event. And if anyone is interested, I can circulate it to you. There is some language there on WSIS+20 and the GDC. On the GDC, the global digital compact, what is it?

So, in a way, it's the new kid on the block in the terms of digital governance. It's supposed to be a political instrument at the UN, United Nations level for an open, free and secure digital future. It will be an annex to the pact for the future, which is a much broader instrument being negotiated by member states in New York as we speak.

And actually, the GDC is being negotiated these days. So, next stop is this Friday where they will continue the negotiations in New York and it will be continued during June and probably July. And it has to be finalized at the latest for the summit for the future, which will be held in New York on 22nd, 23rd of September. And what is in the global digital compact? Well, there are many common goals for this digital future about what is it that today means meaningful connectivity, data governance, the governance of artificial intelligence, how we deal with platforms or human rights, of course, in the digital sphere.

So, it's a document of about 14 pages. Although if you look at all the comments from member states, it amounts to 80 pages depending on how you look at it. And of course, it has an impact on the wider internet governance framework ecosystem. So, also on ICANN, there are even some specific proposals from some member states on the critical internet resources. And there is an issue, a discussion on whether some of the proposals contained in the GDC may amount to duplication of

existing structures established through the World Summit on the Information Society.

PARI ESFANDIARI: Thank you, Jorge. And now we go to Charles Gahungu. Charles?

CHARLES GAHUNGU: Thank you. I'm going to provide some updates on HLGM. As we all know, HLGM, the High-Level Government Meeting, an event hosted, organized, and implemented by a GAC member government in conjunction with the GAC and ICANN. The previous HLGM was on 22nd October, 2018 in Barcelona, when we had also the ICANN63. And the last one, or the current one, took place yesterday on 9th June, 2024.

From yesterday discussions, especially for those who were not able to attend, the HLGM had four sessions. Session one was about the ICANN and multi-stakeholder model, which I'm going to talk about briefly. And the second session was on cooperation and governance. The third session was to add a better digital inclusion. Then the last session was, support the development of meaningful connectivity in Africa.

Considering the multi-stakeholder model, which was discussed in details in session one, they talked about what ICANN does and multi-stakeholder model, the importance to continue enhancing its effectiveness, thus assuring it remains relevant and adaptive. It was necessary to keep open, free, secure and reliable internet. It was highlighted that ICANN has proven itself the key hub for the

participation of all stakeholders. ICANN has been an incredible success that we know, for example, for the last 20 years, but we also need to recognize that the need to meet the new needs with greater urgency.

The African Parliamentary emphasized on their support, especially to the multi-stakeholder model. And it was highlighted that there is a need even for active involvement of the wider policymaking government, which means the executive, the legislature, as well as the judiciary. The voice of government is essential and it is their duty to protect their population for harm, their decision influence, the domain name top level or second level domain. However, also it should be clear that the Government Advisory Committee is as strong as its member. It was clear that the high-level government meeting can make valuable contribution to raising awareness and understanding among government for the role of ICANN and the Global Advisory Committee. Thank you.

PARI ESFANDIARI:

Thank you, Charles and all the contributors. There were indeed great reflections and insights from the recent events. The support for multi-stakeholder approach is clear, but as usual, the devil is in details. Now in this part of discussion, we will focus on the primary challenges facing the multi-stakeholder approach. Some highlighted during the recent events, we will discuss issues such as how to manage competing interests and conflicts among and within stakeholders, ensure efficiency, improve transparency, accountability, participation, openness and inclusivity. Establish coordination and avoid

fragmentation among various initiatives, ensure flexibility and adaptability to dynamic geopolitics and rapid innovations.

Finally, with geopolitics intensifying, there are serious threats and attempts to shrink stakeholder groups and shift towards a multilateral approach. We want to explore how do these impact ICANN. With that, the floor is open for comments. We start with the next person in line. So, let me see who has raised hands. So, maybe we can start with Amrita. Would you like to make a comment about these issues?

AMRITA CHOUDHURY:

Thank you so much. Amrita, for the record. And I just had a few points to make. For example, there was a lot of discussion from the discussants right now about the relevance of IGF or even the multi-stakeholder model. And there have been studies done recently, such as by the DNSRF, that reinforces the impact of the IGF and its ecosystem on the global community, especially from developing nations.

It is an open platform where issues that the community want to discuss are being discussed because technology today, even digital, is all pervasive. It is not limited just for governments to make decisions because it impacts all of us. And the national and regional IGFs take back the messages and percolate it into their communities and in return bring back their issues to be discussed at this platform. While the multi-stakeholder model may not be perfect, but we do have the Sao Paulo Principles as guidelines for improvement, and it does suggest the IGF to be its repository.

Similarly, many of us have been speaking about IGF being the place where the GDC execution could be looked after. So, these are certain things, but we do need to strengthen the IGF ecosystem and the multi-stakeholder process. One of them is also financially. And I would also like to speak about the IGFSa, which is an association which supports the national, regional IGFs and youth initiatives. If you want to know more, you can go to igfsa.org. You can become a member. Your organization can become a member and support it.

We would be reaching out to more SOs and ACs about it in the days to come and happy to share about it. But from the developing country perspective, I think it is important that we reiterate back not only the concerns which we have to our governments and also what is concerning for us, but also the government to take feedback from different stakeholders within their country. And even when they are actually reverting on the negotiating text and possibly governments could also deliberate in supporting non-government stakeholders in their delegations, such as civil society, the technical community and business. I'll stop at that. I've just left some thoughts so that more people can speak. Thank you.

PARI ESFANDIARI:

Thank you very much. And now we can go to Sébastien. Sébastien, would you like to make some comments?

SÉBASTIEN BACHOLLET: Sébastien Bachollet speaking. If I may, I will switch to French. If you allow me. Thank you very much. Thank you for giving me the floor. There are people online who have raised their hands. I wanted to insist on a point. Net Mundial, 10 years ago, set up a number of principles. Unfortunately, I would say that during the 10 years that followed, we kind of forgot the work that had been done at that time.

Fortunately, our Brazilian friends have decided to organize a Net Mundial plus 10, with a very useful topic, which was the implementation of all these recommendations. And I hope that we will not forget what was said in these two meetings, 10 years in between, in Brazil. I think one of the things that could be done is an implementation of what was proposed at the end of April in Sao Paulo. And why not start with ourselves and see what the implementation of the principles is, how it works at ICANN, and how we can take advantage of it.

If you want to know more, after this session, there are two reports that were made in a letter by EURALO, which, on the one hand, summarizes what was done in a round table with all the EURALOs where we spoke about Net Mundial 10 years ago, where, for example, Fadi Chahade intervened. And then there is also a non-objective report, since it is from us, from Net Mundial, in April. I will put the link to these newsletters in the chat. Thank you very much.

PARI ESFANDIARI: Thank you very much, Sébastien. And now if we go to Chris Disspain. Is Chris here?

CHRIS DISSPAIN:

Hallo. Yes, I am. This is Chris. I wanted to briefly address the question that Jordan started in the chat about what's the stake. I think it is important that we don't look at this in silos. On the one hand, we have perceived threats from UN-led things, such as WSIS and the GDC and so on. That is one set of possible threats to ICANN's multi-stakeholder model.

Secondly, we have the propensity of individual governments and amalgams of governments to legislate Internet governance from a sovereign point of view. And on the third hand, if you can have a third hand, we have some governments or amalgams of governments seeking to legislate extra-territorially. All three of those things are separate, but are connected because they play into each other.

More that you lose individual governments' acceptance of the multi-stakeholder model, the more that the governments who are against the multi-stakeholder model generally are empowered and so on. I also wanted to make one other point, which is simply this. It is really important to remember that the multi-stakeholder model is not a thing that solves all issues.

There are plenty of Internet governance issues that are probably best dealt with in a multilateral environment, especially when it comes to things where legislation and regulation is actually required. The skill is to emphasize those points and speak in favor of the multilateral model,

while at the same time recognizing and evangelizing, if you will, those points that are best dealt with the multi-stakeholder model. Thanks.

PARI ESFANDIARI: Thank you very much. We now go to Manal.

MANAL ISMAIL: Thank you very much. As has been highlighted through yesterday's high-level government meeting, multi-stakeholder approaches to Internet governance is the most appropriate way to cater for the continuously evolving Internet and continuously evolving challenges. And it's the only way not to end up with policies that are not technically implementable or technical solutions that are in violation of the law and ultimately ensure that all such efforts meet end users' needs and expectations.

In that respect, inspired by Net Mundial plus 10 statement, multi-stakeholder approaches should be open, inclusive, transparent, accountable, agile, adaptable, effective and efficient, but most importantly also be mindful of power asymmetries among and within the different stakeholders, strive to treat all stakeholders fairly and equitably and facilitate meaningful and informed discussions, avoid duplication of efforts and long-standing discussions so as not to put less resourced participants at a disadvantage and respect all sorts of diversity.

That said, it's worth noting that ICANN's technical mission is impacted by global processes and at the same time has potential impact far beyond its limited limit. Hence, it's important that ICANN keeps its community informed and updated and participates actively to relevant global processes, facilitates community dialogue and any needed capacity building, maximizes benefit from ICANN's unique multi-stakeholder nature and from having the GAC within its structure and finally provides a role model illustrating an effective and efficient multi-stakeholder decision-making approach. Thank you.

PARI ESFANDIARI: Thank you very much, and on that note, we go to Anriette Esterhuysen.

ANRIETTE ESTERHUYSEN: Thank you very much, Pari. I'm remote. I'm in Johannesburg. Can you hear me clearly?

PARI ESFANDIARI: Yes, we could.

ANRIETTE ESTERHUYSEN: I just want to reflect again on this question of what is at stake because I think it's really vital. I think firstly it's the internet and it's the publicness, the openness of the internet. If we don't make sure that policy-making about the internet, whether it's made in multi-stakeholder spaces like ICANN, whether it's made at national level by

government, by regulators or at an international level such as through the Global Digital Compact, if we don't make sure that this policy is made in the public interest and in the interest of a free, open, interoperable internet, we are losing or risking losing all the hard work and the benefit of that hard work of the last 30 years.

And I think therefore it's really important that we strengthen our processes, that we make sure that how we apply the multi-stakeholder model is inclusive, that it's transparent and accountable and that we demand the same from multilateral processes. So, I think that is really what is at stake. If we don't actively use the Net Mundial plus 10 guidelines, if we don't try and improve and evolve our processes, this model that's been so powerful could become just a label. It could become an empty signifier.

ANDREA GLANDON: Pari, just to let you know too, we do have hands up in the Zoom. Just want to make sure that you can see them.

PARI ESFANDIARI: Yes.

ANDREA GLANDON: Okay, thank you.

PARI ESFANDIARI: Thank you very much. And now we go to Jorge. Jorge, floor is yours.

JORGE CANCIO: Okay, thank you. I was waiting for other interveners, but happy to take the floor. Just to make a point that we are talking about the digital governance ecosystem, which is really a balanced ecosystem with many different elements.

Some elements are more multilaterally framed, as some of the agencies implementing the outcomes of WSIS, and some elements are much more on a multi-stakeholder basis, like the Net Mundial meeting we had in April. But they complement each other, and there are different roles, different functions. The question is that also the multilateral environment can take inspiration from many of the innovations that we have been developing in multi-stakeholder fora, not only here in ICANN, but also in Net Mundial, in the IGF, in other places.

And I think it's worthwhile looking, as others have said, into the São Paulo multi-stakeholder guidelines to take inspiration from those, and maybe also apply them to how we do things here in ICANN, but also outside. How do we do things in the GDC negotiations? So, that would be an interesting analysis. Thank you.

PARI ESFANDIARI: Thank you very much, Jorge. And on that note, we go to Lise Fuhr.

LISE FUHR: Thank you. I'm Lise Fuhr. I'm Director General of ETNO, but I'm also a member of the IGF Leadership Panel. Just very quickly, thank you all for the presentations. I think it's important we try to paint the picture of what's going on, and all processes are extremely important, and I believe they will influence ICANN and the multi-stakeholder model, all of them. As a member of the Leadership Panel, I would like to draw your attention to some of the work we're doing, both in ensuring that IGF is strengthened as a place to discuss all issues around the but also emerging technologies like AI.

We're also creating a framework we call the Internet We Want, which has been out for consultation, and it will be further discussed in the communities in the multi-stakeholder way. I agree that we cannot see all the processes in silos, and we need to recognize that we're all influencing each other. Very quickly, last, I will make sure that the Net Mundial Plus 10 guidelines, of course, are implemented in the work we're doing in the Leadership Panel. Thank you.

PARI ESFANDIARI: Thank you very much, and now I turn the floor to Nigel to go online.

NIGEL HICKSON: Yes, thank you very much, and good afternoon. Also, there's been a really great discussion in the chat, which people might want to look at and reflect some of the comments Jorge was making, the engagement of ICANN in multilateral processes, being a multi-stakeholder body.

This, I think, is important because ICANN has over, perhaps the last eight or nine years, really enhanced its participation in many different processes, and as such, has become more well-known, more recognized, and its work has been more appreciated. No doubt, there can be further discussion on that. We have Waithaka Davis. I'm sorry if I pronounced that wrong. It could be Davis Waithaka, but would you like to take the floor?

DAVIS WAITHAKA:

Thank you. My name is, for the record, Davis Waithaka, Elimu Holdings, where we run the Taking Schools Online program. One of the things that we take from our work is that the multi-stakeholder engagement is really the only way that some sectors, like the education sector in Africa and in Kenya in particular, where I come from, it's the only way that some people can get online, and we find ourselves not only discussing multi-stakeholder engagement, but multi-stakeholder win-win situations, literally win-win-win situations.

So, our big work, and that's the reason we're here at ICANN this week, is to look for these wins, the benefits from the multiple stakeholders as we take all schools online. Just for illustration purposes, Kenya has around 95,000 schools, public, private, all of them, but less than 1,000 are online. But when we work together in a multi-stakeholder way, we find that we are able to sustain the taking of schools online in Kenya, in East Africa, and I believe it's a model that can be shipped out to the whole world. Thank you.

NIGEL HICKSON: Thank you so much indeed for that, and I do apologize for getting your name wrong. It won't be the first, I mean it won't be the last time I get names wrong. Could I go to Bibek Silwal, from Nepal, please?

BIBEK SILWAL: Thank you very much. This is Bibek Silwal, from Nepal, for the record, and this time ICANN fellow. So, my concern is more of a question and a comment. So, recently we have many processes going on in the internet governance sector. We have the ongoing internet governance forum, we have the Net Mundial plus 10, we have the WSIS+20, we have the global digital compact, although it's a document, but a lot of this process are working on same areas, and somehow the process has segregated and the synergies are not the same. The efforts are being duplicated.

So, my question is, how can we find synergies in all these events? Because the issues are the same, the stakeholders are the same, but why all this process are having in segregations? Why is the effort being duplicated? So, also the follow-up question to that, how are the least developed countries, the developing countries, or the small islands are being included in the process? Thank you.

JORDAN CARTER: Thank you, and the question of synergies between the processes is definitely one of the key ones to do. Before we move on with the

speaking queue, we've got a couple of other people who had indicated earlier, I'm just going to remind that we've been asking about what's at stake, what are the issues, and we've heard a bit of feedback there. I'll gently encourage you if you're interested in your remarks to also think about what is coming next in these processes, maybe sharing some perspectives there, and also what we can do at ICANN as we move through the discussion.

So, that's just a little reminder. I'll take the next speaker in the Zoom queue, and then I'll come to Veni Markovski, from ICANN, if that's all right. So, the next speaker in the queue is Zakir from Pakistan.

ZAKIR SYED:

Yes, thank you. This is Zakir from Pakistan. I just wanted to highlight the fact that, in addition to the forums highlighted by our colleagues, including the Net Mundial, the HLGM, the Global Digital Compact, and ITU and IGF and all that, there is another important forum, which I'm not sure why we missed out here, that is called the World Internet Conference, which has been taking place for the past 10 years annually in China.

And I believe that also is an important forum to be discussed in discussions like this, because it offers and promotes and supports international cooperation and dialogue on Internet governance, fostering collaboration among nations and stakeholders. And then at the same time, it offers an alternative to the existing forums for Internet governance discussions, complementing these forums like IGF, ICANN,

these HLG, ITU and IGF and all those. So, I just wanted to highlight that it is there, and by the way, one of the, when the Net Mundial was taking place back then, when Fadi Chahade was the chief, was the president of ICANN, he was appointed as vice chair to the high-level committee of WIC back then. And so, this is an important forum that I wanted to share here with the audience. Thank you.

JORDAN CARTER:

Thank you for adding that to the list. And there may be other forums as well that people are aware of and want to put on the table, so please feel free to do that. Veni, do you have some thoughts on any of these questions that we're discussing?

VENI MARKOVSKI:

How much time do we have?

JORDAN CARTER:

Two minutes.

VENI MARKOVSKI:

Well, two minutes is not enough, but I'll tell you what, I mean, you already know what ICANN is doing. We launched the WSIS+20 outreach networks in San Juan. So, we actually urge everyone to go to the government engagement webpage and subscribe so they can get the latest information.

We do follow those processes within the appropriate frameworks, the GDC, obviously last week there was readings of the revision one on Thursday and Friday, and we know what we were following, what's happening. And interestingly enough, there were some interesting contributions which will be probably taken into account and included in the next revisions. We do, obviously WSIS+20 is a big goal, it's a CEO goal, and we are following that as well very closely, everything that leads to the WSIS+20.

So, we were at the WSIS forum last week in Geneva, we are following obviously the IGF and other places, but people are talking a lot about the multi-stakeholder model, and we just need to also make a clear difference between the multi-stakeholder model of internet governance, and people already are talking about the multi-stakeholder systems of internet governance, and ICANN's own multi-stakeholder model of governance, which are very different, obviously, sometimes people confuse them.

We think that the more the communities engage with their national governments, the better the chances are that they can impact and provide information and impact their government, their national positions, and as long as they provide all the facts, governments are smart people, they don't need to be educated about these things, but they just need all the information that there is, including about what we do, which we obviously do with the governments, but also ccTLDs, registries and registrars, root server operators, RIRs, anybody can go and talk to their governments and use opportunities, forums, etcetera,

to make sure that the latest information about what's happening in the field of managing the unique technical, I mean, the technical underpinnings of the internet is on their table. Thank you.

JORDAN CARTER:

Thank you, Veni. So, that's one what we could do proposal, is to be in touch with the parts of our governments that are talking about these issues at the UN, to help inform them and to help them deal with these issues constructively. I'll turn back to the Zoom queue. Lang Wang, are you in the room?

LANG WANG:

Thank you, Jordan. I'm Wang Lang from China. In today's highly interconnected world, global internet governance is not only a technical issue, but also a complex issue involving global public welfare. It is crucial to listen to the voices of different countries, regions, cultures and interest groups in order to build a fairer and more inclusive internet.

Under some frameworks such as WSIS and IGF, their importance in maintaining diversity and balance in cyberspace has been demonstrated. This diversified participation enables the internet governance decision-making process to fully consider the interests and the demands of different groups and promote the development of more equitable digital policies. Thanks.

JORDAN CARTER: Thank you very much for that intervention. The next person whose hand is up, who has not spoken yet, is Hossein Mirzapour, from Iran.

HOSSEIN MIRZAPOUR: Yes, thank you. My name is Hossein Mirzapour from Iran. First of all, I should acknowledge once again this interesting discussion in the right place. Actually, it's happening in GAC Room and I think it's inspirational.

Second, for the people here in this discussion or in ICANN who may not be satisfied of a multilateral process and what's happening under UN GDC and they find it a bit threat to multi-stakeholder model, I would like to briefly bring into the attention that GAC has been a unique opportunity inside ICANN and for everybody to have more impact on that. I think that's the time, maybe it's a bit late as well, to ask ourselves, to challenge ourselves bravely whether we have benefited this unique opportunity to have enough impact on multilateral process. Thank you.

JORDAN CARTER: Thank you. The next speaker, Annaliese Williams.

ANNALIESE WILLIAMS: Thanks, Jordan. I just wanted to respond to comments Veni made earlier and I'm seeing a bit of commentary in the chat as well about the importance of engaging with your governments on these issues. I

thought perhaps not everyone necessarily knows how to go about that so I thought perhaps I might make some comments on how people might, if they chose to engage with their governments.

I would encourage people to build relationships with the people within their national governments who are engaging on these issues and if you don't already have those relationships, I would suggest that perhaps your GAC member would be a good place to start having those conversations. Many governments do run stakeholder consultations nationally to help them prepare and help inform their positions when they participate in these multilateral processes so I would encourage people to look out and see if your government is running one. If your government isn't running a consultation, you can still provide your views to them either via your GAC rep or you could write them a letter if that was what you wanted to do.

I think having conversations with other stakeholders here at ICANN or at other multi-stakeholder like national IGFs is a good place for people to start building relationships with others who are paying attention to these issues. The UN processes can be quite opaque for people who aren't governments, so a way of understanding what's going on and when the right time for making an intervention might be. You can get information from engaging with other stakeholders.

There are many ccTLDs closely engaging in these processes so just some ideas for how people who might be interested in engaging better could go about starting those conversations. Thanks, Jordan.

JORDAN CARTER: Thanks, Annaliese. I'm going to hand back to my colleague Nigel to run the queue for a while.

NIGEL HICKSON: Thank you very much. I think we got some people in the queue but let me first say something about some of the chat. As I said, a lot of the chat and it's a very vigorous chat indeed has been about the role of ICANN members so that's worth reading as many of us are ICANN members and the responsibilities we have in both ways.

The responsibilities we obviously have in the GAC in terms of bringing our national government's position and trying to outline what that is and socialize it within ICANN and the broader ICANN community but also feeding back not just to the government and not just making sure that our individual governments understand what ICANN does so that they might reflect that understanding in other fora that they participate in but also standing up and being counted in terms of our role in different fora as well.

So, when we're at ITU meetings, when we're at IGF meetings, wherever we are as GAC members that we reflect some of this ICANN outreach and engagement in those meetings and whether as ambassadors or just as GAC members and there's some in the chat about that, that seems to be a really worthwhile exercise and in addition to that whether there

needs to be some sort of more skills packages to help people in that endeavor.

So, going to the going to the chat and just picking up a couple of online or potentially online it's difficult to see I know but Fiona has not had a chance to speak yet so Fiona would you like to take the floor? Fiona Asonga? Perhaps you're having difficulty coming through.

FIONA ASONGA: I am actually looking for a mic and here I am.

NIGEL HICKSON: I'm so sorry. You're here, yes, we'll, grab a mic yes.

FIONA ASONGA: Fiona Asonga from Kenya. I would just like to say that we are talking to a group of people in this room especially GAC representatives, who are already open and ready to receive ideas but a lot of governments around the world particularly in Africa have an approach to engagement that doesn't support feedback. So, that makes it very difficult to have a multi-stakeholder discussion when the government of a country assumes that because they are government, they have the final say and there is no room for impact for input.

It makes it difficult for then stakeholders to be able to give feedback to impact on policy decisions, and any activities that would impact on growth and getting the internet out there and getting more people

online and the growth of the cyber space so to say, because government takes it like it is their space, it is their mandate and they don't have room for that feedback. So, then the issue is not so much the GAC representatives who come in because some of them are not the final decision makers either. They get a report from the GAC, they take it to their ministries, their governments and then it can't be acted upon. How do we get those governments, the governments to be more open and accommodative of multi-stakeholder input? Thank you.

PARI ESFANDIARI:

Thank you very much, Fiona. The fact remains that at the core of majority of problems, it's a geopolitical issue, it's political ideology and that's not an issue that we can really easily tackle. So, having said that I think it's important maybe we can now focus to see that how can have strategies that make the multilateral system more adaptable to multi-stakeholder model. How could bring strategies to better integrate some of the multi-stakeholder wisdoms within it? Anybody likes to answer maybe Veni would like to answer to that. No? Who would like to help us? Jorge please.

JORGE CANCIO:

Thank you, Pari. So, maybe I can share some national practice. Of course, if others with stakeholders were here, they would say, okay, it's never perfect how you do things at home, but at least we try and for instance, we are discussing the future regulation and governance of

artificial intelligence in Switzerland, and what we do is to use a platform.

We established for which is a platform with about 350 people from all stakeholder groups and there, we inform on what steps we are taking, we get feedback from the different experts and then we factor in that in our work, and of course, there's a specialty in Swiss politics in that any law that is passed afterwards by the political framework, by the parliament, has to go through a period where 50,000 people can call for a popular vote. So, if you have ignored an important stakeholder group, they can exercise their community powers so it's not unsimilar to what we have here in ICANN and that makes sure that you really listen to the people

PARI ESFANDIARI:

Thank you very much, Jorge and I think we can go to Anna please Christine

ANA NEVES:

Yes. Anna Neves, here. I raised my hand on the chat, but, on the chat? No. One on the zoom but it seems like that maybe it was not seen, because I wanted to make a comment on what Anneliese already said and Jorge and so many others and the chair of the board said something similar yesterday. So, we have the GAC members and GAC members are the representatives that the different stakeholders should approach it's well we know that the majority of the members of the GAC,

they do not attend the meetings, but you have the names on the list that was already provided by Jorge Cancio and you can approach them even if they are not attending the ICANN meetings.

ICANN meetings is really the right place to gather all these different stakeholders and to talk with the GAC colleagues, but besides that, it's very important that even GAC colleagues they talk to ministers of foreign affairs because at the end, the discussion in your work is between the ministries of foreign affairs of governments. So, when we are talking about governments, we have to see what we are talking about who is really negotiating and if the minister responsible for ICTs, for the digital, for this area of the digital is not talking is not in dialogue with his counterpart responsible for foreign affairs in its government, so it doesn't work. So, we really have to have here a good network of different stakeholders and to influence a lot the ministries of foreign affairs. Thank you.

PARI ESFANDIARI:

Thank you very much and now we go to Chris. Chris, please.

CHRIS DISSPAIN:

Thank you, Pari. This is Chris Disspain. I wanted to bring us back a little to what should or could be done. I'm hearing a lot of suggestions built around, go talk to your own government and that's perfectly valid and we've established that that's a perfectly useful thing to do. Many people can go and talk to their governments, but there are many that

cannot. Traditionally, the ICANN multi-stakeholder model, the ICANN multi-stakeholder model has been promoted and defended by ICANN, which means that it's not just folks telling their own government and hoping that that government has it high enough up its priority list to speak about it in multilateral environments, but that there is a central voice that goes to those multi-stakeholder and multilateral environments and supports the ICANN multi-stakeholder model for dealing with ICANN's aspects of internet governance.

So, I'm wondering if I could ask the question, what is the rationale behind ICANN moving away from proactively defending the model and leading the ICANN community and engagement globally with governments to a position that seems to be will give you a facility that helps you to do it yourselves. Thank you.

PARI ESFANDIARI:

Well, I think this question sits in the Veni's lap.

VENI MARKOVSKI:

Yeah, I'm sitting next to Chris, so I couldn't miss the opportunity. But I don't know why Chris would have the impression that we are not defending the multi-stakeholder model of governance of ICANN or of the internet in general, because that's what we all do.

We publish papers, we publish positions, we do everything that we can in order to be able to protect the model and show everyone that this model is actually working and viable. And the high-level government

meeting yesterday was yet one example of how we actually do that. So, if somebody has left with the impression that we are doing it, we're not doing it. It's not the case. Thank you.

CHRIS DISSPAIN:

If I just could respond with one point, which is fine, but if you look in the chat, you'll see a vast number of people who think that that is the case. So, if you are out there doing what I've just described, then you probably need to make sure that that's communicated in a more forceful fashion with the community. Thanks.

JORDAN CARTER:

More communication. I'm going to turn to someone in the audience, sorry, who's not in the Zoom room. So, please introduce yourself and go ahead.

CINDY GAMASSA:

Thank you very much. Cindy Gamassa for Congo Brazzaville. My comment goes back to also the multi-stakeholder model and how we can approach different political models. I will also talk about the high government level meeting that could be used as a tool to actually be more political at this point and talk about the different models. I think during those meetings, we can be less technical and turn a little bit more about the politics because those are the representatives that are present at this moment.

The ministers are there and they can talk about the conversation we're having there because those are the ones taking the decisions. So, this could be one moment where we can discuss the models and where they could actually themselves reflect on how they could be more inclusive and how they could listen more to the people that report back to them. Thank you.

JORDAN CARTER:

Thank you very much for that. The next speaker on our list who's yet to say anything is Russell Woruba from the government of PNG.

RUSSELL WORUBA:

Thank you, Jordan. I was just going to send you a message to give me space, but thank you very much. I have noted the comments raised by Chris and Elise and the good work Veni and the team are doing to communicate that. I had the wonderful privilege of last week meeting the co-lead in the drafting of the digital government compact in Singapore. It was a discussion around a forum of small states and there's about 170 to 180 small states that have the voting power in the UN.

The issue that he raised to me, the esteemed colleague from Zambia, was that it's an issue of representation. It's an issue of representation and governments are taking that literally to themselves. If that's something that we, in our multi-stakeholder which has worked for us, could be strengthened more than what we are doing and could be

communicated more, I think our governments, through us, through the GAC or other forums, that we can get that more done.

For instance, the underserved region groups which we have here in the GAC should be strengthened more. We should do others that allow the small island states to have an active role. I think we can achieve more and we could get more momentum in what we're doing. Thank you.

JORDAN CARTER:

Thank you, Russell. I'll move on to Abdul Karim. The floor is yours.

ABDULKARIM OLOYEDE:

Thank you very much. This is Abdulkarim. I want to, first of all, say that I, in a way, disagree with my sister, Fiona, in the fact that she thinks that a lot of government, especially African government, are not listening or they do not take feedback. I want to mention that as the vice-chair for the African region, for the ITU Telecommunication Development Advisory Group, the feedback which we get is that a lot of African government are listening but the challenge is the multi-stakeholder model sometimes. I think what we need to do is to analyze the multi-stakeholder model and see what is working and try to readjust some of the things that are not really working well. I think we need to have a discussion around some of the issues that have been raised with the multi-stakeholder model.

One of the critical issues for me as a person is the fact that things get muddled up in the process and I'll give you an example. For example,

you have the ICANN board sitting on top of the multi-stakeholder model and the ICANN board has the power to veto things even though it's gone through the bottom-up approach. Those are issues that a lot of people see with multi-stakeholder model that has to be addressed and at times it's not that government are not listening but these issues have to be addressed. Thank you very much.

JORDAN CARTER:

Thank you very much for that intervention. I'm going to hand to you now, Nigel, to do a few people. We'll try and fit the queue but we will stop at five.

NIGEL HICKSON:

Sorry, yes, thank you. Right, just a quick reflection of something in the chat and then we'll go to a couple of people in the queue that haven't talked yet. Just a reflection in the chat and very touched on this, on the role of ICANN and what it does. I think it's worth mentioning the excellent discussions that took place at the WSIS forum. I know several people were there last week or was it the week before? Week before? Whatever. The WSIS forum which the Swiss co-organized with the WSIS secretariat at the UN, at the ITU and elsewhere.

The technical community were there. ICANN put on a couple of very interesting sessions. ISOC were there and various other members of the technical community and there was a discussion there about whether in light of the important geopolitical developments on the GDC and at

the WSIS at some point the technical community might come together and issue a statement so that everyone understands where they're coming from. So, that was something that was raised there. Let me go to Rodney Taylor in the chat and then Jennifer Chung and then I'll hand it back to Jordan because I know that we're running short of time. So, Rodney?

RODNEY TAYLOR:

Thank you very much, Rodney Taylor, CTU, and I'll be very brief. Just two points. One, I wanted to support what was said by my colleague from Papua New Guinea with respect to small states representation within the multi-stakeholder model of internet governance. Here you will notice, and this is an issue that we've raised within ICANN, the issue of participation on an equal footing for small states with limited resources that are not able, even though the process is open, they're not able to actively participate and contribute. So, I think that's an issue that needs to be addressed.

The second thing is there are weaknesses to the multi-stakeholder model. Just in the previous session in the engagement with the ICANN board, my colleague here from Grenada raised the issue of CSAM and it is child sexual abuse material online and ICANN very clearly said it's not, obviously it's not within our mandate to address that, but clearly this is an issue of that, and other issues are issues of concern for governments and if maybe ICANN, if there's no technical solution, governments will in fact resort to the multilateral system that they're used to seek to

address these growing challenges. So, I just wanted to make those contributions. Thank you.

NIGEL HICKSON: Thank you very much and if I may, there was Tijani also in the chat. I think Tijani is remote.

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: Yes, I am remote.

NIGEL HICKSON: Also, on the Zoom. Tijani?

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: Yes. Hello, thank you very much Nigel. You know that I hate to disagree with you, but saying that ICANN is part of the technical community is not right. You know more than me that the ICANN community is made of lawyers more than technical, more than engineers. So, ICANN is an organization. ISOC too is an organization. The definition of the technical community and the World Information Society, is made of people who are technical, who are engineers, who are technicians, etcetera. So, I want to be clear that we have to make the difference between the technical community and the organization. Thank you very much.

NIGEL HICKSON: Thank you very much Tijani and it's good to see you, well not to see you, but to hear you anyway and I hope all is well with you. Jennifer Chung and then Ros. Jennifer?

NIGEL HICKSON: Jennifer's waiting for a microphone. We also have Bruno.

JORDAN CARTER: She's here. She's over there.

JENNIFER CHUNG: So, now I will stand up for this. I'm Jennifer Chung for the record. I'm speaking I guess personally. I guess two things I wanted to be quite brief with this. ICANN is both a part of technical community in the internet governance, I guess general community and discourse, and ICANN also itself is a multi-stakeholder community.

So, there's two areas I think we can ask ICANN to take an even more of a lead, especially in this time when we're looking at intensifying debates in the global digital compact and all of the multilateral processes. I think that Jordan must have already mentioned that there is a technical community coalition that is standing up and talking about it and I think if ICANN right now can shed some light on this being a successful example of bottom-up multi-stakeholder community standing up and giving these statements, it's really important as well.

As for the other part, ICANN being a multi-stakeholder community, I think it can also lead in this area to reflect this multi-stakeholder discussion into GDC, into the WSIS+20 processes, because we don't have a voice at the table. At least the ICANN community who are not part of the GAC or a part of a nation state, we don't get to sit at the table where negotiations are being made. So, I think there's two ways, very concrete ways, that ICANN can lead in this department. Thank you.

NIGEL HICKSON:

Thank you and I'll just take Rose and then hand back to Jordan.

ROSALIND KENNYBIRCH:

Thank you and I think Bruna's also had her hand up for a while so I'll be quick if we can make a few minutes. We've had a valuable conversation today but I think one thing we overlook about the multi-stakeholder model is that it supports us in not having to share the burden alone.

Private sector does a great job of financing important digital development projects. The technical community, as we've discussed today, supports us to understand how technical mechanisms can affect government policy and civil society brings our attention to issues we perhaps hadn't been aware of. Multi-stakeholderism is about working together. We don't need to do it all alone. That's the great part of our community and it's important to remember that this model is key to enabling collaboration where none of us are alone in discussing and addressing the issues of today. Thank you.

NIGEL HICKSON: Thank you, Rose. Over to Jordan.

JORDAN CARTER: Thank you and just before I call the last few, well I will call the last few speakers starting with Bruna.

BRUNA MARTINS DOS SANTOS: Thank you, Jordan. Just a brief intervention because a lot of the conversation back in Net Mundial was about meaningful participation and equality rights and also in the room right now and unfortunately, we're still lacking the provision of some mechanisms to ensure processes are truly inclusive as providing adequate notice, funding, accessible accreditation systems and so on.

But when we look also at some of the current problems there is the duplication issue which can become an even worse threat to multi-stakeholderism since sometimes the location or the organization of like events all at the same time, can mean the direct or indirect exclusion of key stakeholders and most of the time, from the global majority world and in my opinion, at least I tend to believe that a multi-stakeholder approach needs to acknowledge the Para symmetries not just between actors, but between North and South in the participation of those processes and the fact that those with more power and control, they also must be willing to join the discussion and give space for us to join

the discussion and share some of the power and as much as I understand ICANN is doing the best it can in terms of strategy.

I would just like to point out that during the high-level meeting yesterday we also had a very noticeable lack of civil society speakers in the conversation and I believe that the purpose of such a meeting to be hosted before an ICANN meeting, should allow for the exchanges between community and the GAC and some of the representatives that were here so just pointing out at some of the things that should be and could be improved in this community as well.

JORDAN CARTER:

Thank you, Bruna and I think I have Sébastien Bachollet.

SÉBASTIEN BACHOLLET:

Thank you very much. I wanted first to support what Jennifer said. She say with the better words I could have done, but I wanted to say that ICANN is a bottom-up multi-stakeholder organization and the board of ICANN is one of the only places where all stakeholders have a voice to the decision so for the comments about the board of ICANN. I think we need to support what the board of ICANN is doing and how it's organized. Thank you very much.

JORDAN CARTER:

Thanks, Sébastien. We have one more speaker who was on our list of possible interveners, Roberto Gaetano. Are you in the room Roberto?

He's online. You might want to add some perspective here just as we wrap up.

ROBERTO GAETANO: Actually, I'm online.

JORDAN CARTER: Hello.

ROBERTO GAETANO: Hi. I didn't ask for the floor.

JORDAN CARTER: Well, you don't have to speak. We will not force you but if you wish to, you're on a list in front of me. It was on paper that must be why it's wrong.

ROBERTO GAETANO: Well, no. I'm fine like that. I don't want to lose time for the discussion. Thank you.

JORDAN CARTER: Okay. Thank you. Look doing a very brief wrap-up, it's difficult to summarize such a discussion. One thing that it reveals is that if you try and talk about the shape of the multi-stakeholder governance model as

shaped by GDC and WSIS, you get discussions about politics, you get discussions about other processes, you get concerns and ideas about the way that ICANN business. You get the cross pollination and the interactions between the multi-stakeholder internet governance model and the multilateral digital policy processes that are shaping the digital world that we all seem to be swimming in day by day today.

I just want to come back before I give Perry and Nigel a quick chance to mention some closings as well. To the point that we all have the power to act in this discussion. Whether it's forming coalitions like the technical community coalition for multi-stakeholderism that Jen mentioned, whether it's by attending sessions like this and thinking about them, whether it's by speaking with your government or your regional organization, whether it's just doing some reading to find out more about the issues that are at stake.

It doesn't need to be a lot but everyone in the room can make a difference to developing and continuing to improve the internet governance model that we have to making multi-stakeholderism not just rhetoric but actually a true way of working which strengthens the internet and strengthens our organizations.

So, my closing encouragement from my point of view to you is do something however small it is to make a difference. Thanks. I'll pass to Pari.

PARI ESFANDIARI:

Thank you very much. I want to start by thanking everyone in here, all the participants and also emphasize that our work just began. So, this discussion was very helpful. I think we had really valuable insight and strategies but multi-stakeholder approach and I prefer to say approach rather than model. So, multi-stakeholder approach, have evolved long way from its inception but still it has a long way to go. It needs flexibility. In fact, we talked about categories.

Indeed, today majority of organizations or people wear various hats and these categories are not clear-cut and they're not easy to separate from one another. So, what is in my opinion what is most important is, its bottom-up process and it's the power to people that matters more than anything else. So, our work has begun here. Let us carry this momentum forward and ensure that this approach thrives and, on that note, I pass it to Nigel.

NIGEL HICKSON:

Yes, thank you very much and thanks so much to everyone involved in this session, the rapporteurs and the discussants as well. It's been very fruitful. A couple of people have asked in the chat whether the chat can be recorded. I think it is but no doubt people with more knowledge will confirm that. It's been a very rich chat and I think what this shows and other sessions have showed is that this is a really important topic for so many people, that we all have responsibilities.

I think we acknowledge as governments that we have responsibilities but I think as stakeholders, community members of ICANN we all have

responsibilities in this area and indeed as partakers in the internet, as advocates of internet, of users in the internet, of instigators of the internet, of pioneers of the internet, we all have a vision I'm sure that the internet enriches people's lives, that an open global interoperable internet does indeed take humanity forward, irrespective of all the problems and the challenges we face which we also have to recognize.

The final point is that this isn't just a session for Christmas, if you like. This isn't just a session for today. This is an ongoing dialogue. Let's not go away from ICANN and wait for the next session in two ICANN meetings. Let's engage in the dialogue. As Reddy said, he's set up this plus 20 network which is a brilliant inspiration. People are already posting excellent contributions on there. Use that, use other fora to make your views known but do make your views known and do advocate for the continuation of this process. Thank you.

JORDAN CARTER:

Thanks Nigel and with that I think we can wrap the session with thanks again to everyone and I believe that our next responsibility is to head to the terrace for a drink and maybe some news.

ANDREA GLANDON:

Thank you. You can stop the recording.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]