
ICANN81 | AGM – Shifting Paradigms: Multistakeholderism, Geopolitics, International Law, and New Internet Infrastructures
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ANDREA GLANDON:

Hello, and welcome to the ICANN81 plenary session, Shifting Paradigms-Multistakeholderism, Geopolitics, and Emerging Internet Infrastructures. My name is Andrea Glandon, and I am the remote participation manager. Please note that this session is being recorded and follows the ICANN Expected Standards of Behavior and the ICANN Community Anti-Harassment Policy. Interpretation for this session includes Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian, Spanish, and Portuguese. Please click the interpretation icon in the Zoom toolbar to select your preferred language output.

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transcription, click "closed captioning" in the Zoom toolbar. Now, please welcome one of our session moderators, Ram Mohan. You may begin.

RAM MOHAN:

Good morning and good day to all of you who are dialed in from around the world. Welcome to this plenary session. Before we get started, let me just say a few words. The session is titled Shifting Paradigms-Multistakeholderism, Geopolitics, and Internet Infrastructure. Joining me in this panel and in this session are Nigel Hickson, who is to my left.

Nigel will, in addition to providing concluding remarks, also help coordinate the online comments that come in and questions and interventions that come in. On the next slide, you will see our panelists. Olga, Pari, Chafic, and Kevin are arrayed on both sides of me and they will provide their perspectives and their thoughts on this important topic.

On the next slide, you will see respondents, audience respondents, Benjamin, Jorge, and Amrita, who are also here, and we will invite them and include them, both in providing their points of view, but also to help include all of you as the audience in this interactive session.

So, let's go back to the first slide and let's speak just for a moment. One slide prior. Yeah, let's stop there. So multistakeholderism, for those of you who haven't experienced it, although most of you here are here because of multistakeholderism, but it's a form of governance where

various stakeholders, including governments, businesses, civil society, and technical communities collaborate to address global issues.

It's a departure from traditional models of governance, which were often dominated by governments. In the context of internet governance, multistakeholderism has been particularly influential. ICANN, for example, operates on a multistakeholder model, bringing together diverse groups to develop policies and standards for how we should come together to help think about the governance of the internet. Some of the key characteristics of multistakeholderism include diverse participation. We want to include a wide range of stakeholders, and those stakeholders include governments, businesses, civil society organizations, technical experts drawn from around the world to participate in the decision-making process.

That decision-making process is consensus-based. Decisions are not done via majority vote, but what this does is it ensures that all stakeholders have a voice and that your interests are considered when decisions are made. When those decisions are made, they are done in a transparent and accountable way. This is a key feature of multistakeholderism. The processes are transparent and the decision-making bodies are accountable to their stakeholders.

What that is intended to achieve is flexibility and adaptability, because that is really why we're here. While multistakeholderism has been successful in addressing complex global issues, internet governance is not the only area. We've seen multistakeholderism take effect in looking at the challenges from climate change or sustainable

development. But when you bring together diverse perspectives and expertise, multistakeholder models, I believe, can lead to more effective and equitable solutions.

Now, we think that way, but the paradigms are shifting in front of us. The panel here in front of you consists of individuals who not only bring deep knowledge and expertise in the forces that are shifting what we know about the internet, but in addition to that, they're actually some of the people who are helping make that shift happen. So, we have with us not just knowledge and expertise, but some of the movers and shakers of the paradigms that are changing.

I'm pleased that all of you have taken the time to share your perspectives on geopolitics, new technologies, and how the internet itself is evolving in parts of the world that we don't always hear about. In this session, we will explore the challenges and opportunities presented by changing geopolitics and new internet technologies and delve into the implications for the multistakeholder approach. Can the multistakeholder model adapt and flex in this new environment?

Let me start with you, Pari, and ask you to present your thoughts on that initial question. And if you could take a moment, just introduce yourself and then share what you think.

PARI ESFANDIARI:

Thank you very much, Ram. My name is Pari Esfandiari, and I'm president at Global Technopolitics Forum, which is shaping the conversation at the intersection of geopolitics and technology. I am

also a member of ALAC, representing EURALO. Now, looking at the geopolitics landscape, I think we can encapsulate it in two words, complex and dynamic. By complex, I mean that the context today is no longer defined by the clear ideological divides of the Cold War, where there was no interaction between the two sides. Instead, we have fluid and opportunistic alliances.

China has emerged as a tech superpower, shaping its own vision for a digital future, while the US competes to maintain its global leadership and rule-based order. Adding to this complexity is the influence of tech giants, companies like Google, Amazon, and SpaceX, who now act as independent global forces, setting the frontier of innovation and wielding influence on a scale that was once reserved for states.

Moreover, we are witnessing a shift from traditional alliances to transactional ones, where swing states or digital deciders, countries like India, Japan, South Korea, UAE, are carefully balancing economic opportunities with national security. They must weigh these factors as they navigate an increasingly multifaceted environment where both economic gain and sovereignty are at stake. Despite these competing forces, our world remains interconnected and interdependent, yet dynamic and unpredictable. Global political shifts continue to surprise and, at times, unsettle many of us. And I stop here. Thank you.

RAM MOHAN:

Pari, thank you so much. Kevin, what do you think?

KEVIN KREUSER:

Yeah, you mentioned the successes of the model and it's the democracy for the internet and where everybody gets a seat at the table. If it's done properly, it ensures that transparency, accountability, representation, the idea being that it keeps the internet open and decentralized. Because if it's done properly, it counterbalances those fragmentation, divergent interests, power imbalances, and government overreach that we've seen more and more building over the recent times.

So, as we're going to discuss, right, it needs to continue to evolve and remain inclusive and flexible, which to date has been a huge part of its success. I represent Web3 companies, several Web3 companies, and it's a community that is not going away. And I think for the traditional DNS Web2 needs to embrace it with open arms because fragmentation all of these concerns are a real thing. And so that's where I'm focused on.

RAM MOHAN:

Great. Thank you. Chafic?

CHAFIC CHAYA:

Good morning. Thanks, Ram. My name is Chafic Chaya. I'm from RIPE NCC, handling public policy and government affair in the Middle East region. Thank you. It's wonderful to be here today with you. From the Middle East region perspective, I believe that the internet infrastructure and governance is as varied as cultures, as political systems, and economic level across the region. The diversity we see ranges from countries with minimal internet infrastructure to those with advanced technology and governance models.

You know that in a region marked by instability and often continuous conflicts, we had a lot of challenge to work there. But fortunately, we still have some platforms and we still have forums that can promote and support the multistakeholderism. There are a couple of NRIs in the region, I can name Lebanon IGF, and a regional NRI I can name Arab IGF, in addition to some really important activities led by the internet organizations. I call them the three musketeers, RIPE NCC, ICANN, and ISOC. So, these three musketeers, they are doing a lot of jobs in promoting multistakeholders and getting people together to discuss internet-related issues to the region.

And one of these platforms, which is unique, a community-driven platform called MENOG, Middle East Network Operating Group, to be held in Oman in two weeks before the global IGF. This platform is really the only one multistakeholder who is really driven by the community. Because what's in the region, what's the main challenge in the region is how to gain the trust and confidence of governments.

So, these forums, these activities can work together to create this multistakeholder approach. To end my overview on the Middle East, one important note, that although we succeeded in getting these stakeholders together, but the influence of this platform for policy outcome is still limited. Thank you.

RAM MOHAN:

Thank you. You are opening up a really interesting line of thought and dialogue for us to have. Before we get to that, Olga.

OLGA CAVALLI:

Thank you, Ram. And thank you for having me. I'm honored to be in this panel. And thank you for your nice words about us being part of this beautiful community and environment. I'm only one of those many people that are here that are colleagues that sometimes I see more than my friends in Buenos Aires, where I live. My name is Olga Cavalli. I'm from Argentina. Recently, I'm a ccNSO appointed by an NomCom member. And I was several years member of the GAC. I was vice chair of the GAC. And presently my job, I am the Dean of the National Defense University. So, this is a new job I have since February.

So, I would like to follow up from your comment at the beginning. And I think that the beauty and the success of the multistakeholder model is understanding that no single stakeholder can solve this complex issues. I think that's something that we have been understanding after, I think, 30 years that we have been going around with this new model started by some meetings in the United Nations, then ICANN, and then some other regional processes. So, this understanding the role of different stakeholders and that there is no single stakeholder that can solve these complex issues brought by global connectivity, internet and the access.

And also, I have seen that it has been evolving and somehow permeating to other activities. So, we have this concept of the multistakeholder having all stakeholders together, but I see also better dialogues among some stakeholders, for example, unions talking to civil society organizations and governments. So, this is easier in the last

years. I think we have been learning. Technical community interacting with service providers. I think this has been an evolution, a very good success evolution of the multistakeholder model.

And answering your question about geopolitics, I think in all the history, there's always geo tensions about different countries and regions. What we see now is that the global connectivity and the very quick spread of information brings new challenges and also the very fast evolving of different technologies, like simple example of fake news or misinformation that it has been existing since people talk and write, but now is so influential also in governments and democracy.

So, from a developing economy and developing region and perspective, I would say that the big tensions that in my opinion, I see is in between developed economies to main developed countries and for developing regions. If you look at the evolution of the GDP per capita after the Industrial Revolution, like one century ago and now, this gap, there is a huge gap in between the GDP per capita of developing economies and developed countries. This has been really enhanced in the last years through the interaction of the global interconnectivity and the use of internet and other technologies.

So, I think this is really challenging. 20 years ago at the WSIS, we thought that the technology was going to be a leapfrog for development. I'm hoping that it happens, but I see this gap growing. So, my concern now is, are we in developing economies only buying technology, using technology, or are we really using it for development?

RAM MOHAN:

That is again, a set of really interesting questions. Kevin, you are part of the vanguard of groups that are helping evolve technology or bring new technologies to the namespace to start with. Are those sets of technologies going to be a leapfrog for development or are they going to threaten the current order of things? What is your perspective on that?

KEVIN KREUSER:

First, I guess I should introduce myself. My name is Kevin Kreuser. I am a general counsel to D3, which is a company just looking to bridge Web3 with the traditional DNS, and also general counsel for a couple other Web3 companies and foundations. And prior, I was a counsel for GoDaddy and ICANN as well.

So, to your question, I guess it's like our emerging internet infrastructure is contributing to the geopolitical tensions. I think absolutely and naturally, right? We're living in a world of rapid technological change. These cutting-edge innovations are transforming not just the industries, but the way that we interact with the world. And I think governments just naturally react differently to these shifts.

You look at AI and blockchain, crypto, for example, right? The EU was quick to jump in and legislate on AI and extending those rules beyond their borders. Meanwhile, many other countries are still trying to catch up figuring out how to regulate in a world that's moving faster than their laws can keep up. When it comes to blockchain and crypto regulators, many of whom do not even understand how the DNS works, yet are

trying to put rules, scrambling to put rules in place for technologies that they don't understand. So, the result is a lot of inconsistent, sometimes misguided regulation and or enforcement.

And when governments don't quite get something, it leads to a lack of trust and other headline misconceptions in these emerging technologies. And that's where these tensions, I think, start to grow and build. And so that's what I think for us in here and just in this community is education is important. There weren't even Web3, I don't think sessions on the agenda here until several weeks ago, and credit to ICANN's OCTO for starting this dialogue and conversations because these technologies aren't going away and they're very much intertwined with the fabric of our lives.

RAM MOHAN:

Thanks. Pari, what do you think about emerging internet infrastructures and technologies? Are they contributing to geopolitical tensions?

PARI ESFANDIARI:

Thank you, Ram. I think emerging internet infrastructures have resulted in remarkable productivity and offer hope for overcoming environmental challenges. However, by their very nature, they're also intensifying current geopolitical tension and, in some cases, creating entirely new ones.

One significant factor has been the issue of data sovereignty. The internet's borderless nature is now clashing with countries' increasing

desire to control data generated within their borders. This has led to some degrees of fragmentation as countries establish national laws and infrastructures such as China's Great Firewall or Russia's sovereign internet. These are aimed at limiting foreign influence and enhancing internal control.

Now, these concerns are further intensified by satellite internet networks, like SpaceX Starlink. While these networks expand connectivity to underserved areas, they also introduce national security concerns and sovereignty challenges. They enable foreign companies or governments to operate in another nation's airspace, gather extensive data and exercise significant control over connectivity.

Elon Musk's selective activation of Starlink in Ukraine illustrated the strategic control private company can wield over internet access in conflict zones. With clear implication for national sovereignty, this growing influence of private entities over global connectivity raises important questions about universally accessible internet and the management of connectivity in politically sensitive regions.

Blockchain technology adds to the complexity. Its decentralized nature allows for economic exchange outside of traditional financial systems, creating unique regulatory challenges. While some countries like the EU are cautious about blockchain, others like El Salvador have fully embraced it. Blockchain's ability to circumvent sanctions and regulatory control disrupt traditional governance models, causing tension.

Finally, artificial intelligence is now integral to managing and optimizing advanced internet infrastructure. Improving network performance and security. However, AI-driven data management also raises serious concerns about data sovereignty and surveillance, as countries differ widely in their approaches. China uses AI-emphasized surveillance, while the EU prioritizes privacy. As AI becomes central to national security and economic competitiveness, the global race for AI leadership adds new tension, giving countries with advanced AI capabilities a disproportionate influence over digital infrastructure and standards.

We have seen this dynamic before, with US-China competition over 5G networks and companies like Huawei. Security and espionage concerns led countries to limit foreign control over critical infrastructure, complicating the development of global technical standards. And I stop here.

RAM MOHAN:

Thank you, Pari. So, Chafic, we're hearing two perspectives, right? You have Kevin saying, hey, government regulation is misguided, it's over-regulating, and it helps reduce innovation. Then you have Pari saying blockchain has the ability to circumvent controls, and AI is being used to enable surveillance in a new economy based on that. How is it looking from your point of view?

CHAFIC CHAYA:

Thank you once again for the question. It's a time topic. We had a lot of discussion during the last two days here in this meeting about the impact and the relation between geopolitics, governance, and technology. And once again, coming from the Middle East region, this is a good example that technology is fueling the geopolitics.

Emerging technologies and infrastructure is like now for governments, a strategic arsenal for them. And you know that many countries are now in the race to take over the digital space. We see this everywhere. So, countries now, we have a lot of countries, they have measures to assert the control of internet infrastructure, and they have measures to monitor the data traffic, not only inside their countries, but across the board. And this can also push for more political tension.

In addition to that, I think Pari talked about the cyber security. So, countries still now are bumping to invest more in cyber security, including the internet technologies. And these technologies, they are not using only for their own interest. They are using, let's say in some cases, to disrupt other neighbor countries. So, this escalating investment in cyber defenses and offenses, give the geopolitical tension a more vast track and make them more distributed very quickly.

In summary, what I can say here is that these developments highlight the reflection of and the driver for more geopolitical tension. And this, I believe, will change the relation between governments and countries.

RAM MOHAN:

Change it how?

CHAFIC CHAYA: I don't know. Let's see.

RAM MOHAN: Olga, what do you think?

OLGA CAVALLI: Well, I think that one of the beauties of the multi-stakeholder approach and model is exposing the importance of the roles of different stakeholders. And I will be a little bit disruptive with what I will say now. I think sometimes we have this confusion about equal footing and all stakeholders are equal. I see that sometimes the roles of stakeholders are totally different, but their importance is absolutely important in the same.

So, the fact is some of the stakeholders have more formal role in governments and others are very relevant to bring information to governments. So, there you have a challenge for governments when establishing regulations. They must go to the community, to civil society, to companies, to the technical community, to businesses and understanding the problems that they are trying to solve with the regulation. And that is extremely challenging, because governments have their own bureaucracy, which is okay for their transparency and functioning and the other stakeholders have different dynamics of working.

So, I would say that some of the principles that are in the NETMundial+10 principles are very interesting to have in mind. And I will stress two of them, which I think are relevant for us that we participate in this multi-stakeholder life. Accountability. Establishing mechanisms to ensure that all stakeholders are accountable for their commitments and actions within the governance framework. This is not only for governments.

And one nice example is private companies and social networks companies that have been evolving in their privacy information to users. So, this is a very good example of accountability. Us users of technology must be accountable for what we do. Are we having the hygiene that is requested for cyber security? We are the ones that must take care of that. So, this accountability in different stakeholders is something that we have to understand and we have to put in our hands, not only in the hands of governments or big companies.

And also, number six of the NETMundial principles, which I think is very interesting, adaptability and agility. This comes to the governments. And I think it's not easy because sometimes governments have a structure that takes time. But I think that we must, from governments and from other stakeholders, try to make all the processes more agile because technology goes really very fast and things change very, very fast. So, having that in mind makes the different stakeholder roles, would make the different stakeholder roles more, I would say, more relevant and more active in this environment. It's not easy what I'm saying. It's challenging, but life is challenging.

RAM MOHAN:

Thanks, Olga. So, let me stay with you and ask you we have Kevin here speaking a little bit about new technologies, blockchain-based technologies, that are starting to have an impact inside of the DNS space that we're in. And you were advocating for the multi-stakeholder model as a good model. But when you have the disruption that the new technologies are bringing in, how do you think the multi-stakeholder approach itself is being impacted?

OLGA CAVALLI:

I think that I will be disrupted again, sorry for that. I think sometimes the multi-stakeholder model, it's also making problems to itself. A nice example is public comments. We do public comments, so that's published. So, are you really giving the right message to the right audience? Are you considering language barriers? Are you considering disability barriers? Are your websites really accessible for everyone? Are you expressing what you want to ask really in a manner that people will understand?

So, sometimes we rely on some concepts of the multi-stakeholder model and we are fine. I'm happy because I did the consultation. And I have very good examples in mind. For example, the Marcos Civil process in Brazil. I think this was remarkable. But that takes time and takes a lot of work and a lot of effort to go to the right audience, to bring all the information from the community to the documents, to make it an irrelevant policy.

So, sometimes I have the feeling and sometimes this multi-stakeholder model is criticized for that because we rely on some of the concepts of it, but we don't go into the real content of what we want to achieve. So, I have good examples. I have also some other examples at the national level that could be enhanced just by opening or seating people at the table. Are you inviting the right people? Are you inviting the right experts? Are you really being inclusive and not only putting some set up that looks like multi-stakeholder but would not bring the desired outcome?

RAM MOHAN:

Thank you. Chafic, so in the region that you come from, you were saying that the multi-stakeholder model is struggling a little bit in some of these areas and you were saying that trust and confidence to build that for the policymakers, there is a challenge. Now, when you have new technologies, when you have these changing geopolitics, does multi-stakeholder have a place or is it that the pace of change is so high that you have policymakers saying multi-stakeholder just takes too long? I can't wait for public comments because AI is changing every day. What do you think?

CHAFIC CHAYA:

First of all, I echo Olga's observation on how to understand multi-stakeholder. It's a very important thing. And what's the role of each of the multi-stakeholder groups? If we can define our roles very clearly, then we can have the best of the best of multi-stakeholder. But not defining multi-stakeholder and the role of these players, then the

contested definition of multi-stakeholder will stay. This is the first comment.

The second comment, I like what you said at the beginning, said movers and shakers. And we need movers and shakers to continue supporting the multi-stakeholder. And once again, the technical community in the Middle East region, namely the three musketeers, RIPE NCC, ICANN and ISOC, it's not a promotion, but this is the reality what's happening on the ground. They are doing a great job. And one of the important achievements that we did is we gained the trust of governments.

Next Tuesday, we have a closed government roundtable in Oman, only to discuss with governments internet governance processes. And if you asked me this question five years ago, it was a taboo. No, we don't want to sit with the technical community. Now things are changing. So, this is a great achievement. And I believe if we continue in this direction, we can have the outcome that we expect.

RAM MOHAN:

Okay. So, you say there is hope. But Pari, you were saying in your earlier comments you look at China, Russia or other places, they have a different view of what good governance is or what governance is. What do you think in terms of the multi-stakeholder approach as both geopolitics as well as these new technologies come and challenge the existing order?

PARI ESFANDIARI:

Thank you, Ram. So, I think if we look at the diverse, there are diverse governance philosophies. China favors a centralized top-down approach, US leans towards a market-driven bottom-up decentralized, and EU emphasizes regulations and privacy. This divergence leads to some friction in competing standards, creating multiple, often conflicting visions of internet governance. So, when we come to multi-stakeholder model, this all comes down and makes the achieving overarching agreements difficult.

However, I think the strengths and beauty of multi-stakeholder model is that it allows flexibility. It allows agreement on certain issues and disagreement in others. In fact, this fragmented environment ecosystem we have, rather than becoming a problem, it becomes a strength if when we use multi-stakeholder model, we allow this kind of agreeing on principles moving forward and letting it to adapt to the context in different countries, to economies, to politics.

So, we have a lot of opportunity there to embrace. And even, I think, these different philosophies that different countries have, if they speak to one another, they can actually strengthen because each have their own strengths and weaknesses, and they can become building blocks of overall regime. Thank you.

RAM MOHAN:

Thanks, Pari. So, Kevin, even major technology leaders and business leaders in emerging technology areas like AI, some of them are on the record saying we need government regulation because just private folks getting together, it's not keeping up with the pace of change. In

the blockchain area, it is famous for its proponents saying it's decentralized, governments have no role in this, and therefore it provides a great way of democratizing many of the things that have been centralized and controlled.

But that makes a lot of people really uncomfortable, right? So, it pushes folks to say we need regulation, we need more not just control, but we need to have some guardrails around this. Do you think the multi-stakeholder model has something to contribute in that area?

KEVIN KREUSER:

Yeah, the regulation question is interesting because we're seeing regulation by enforcement, and so we've gotten to the point where you want some certainty, and that's where the calls for good governing laws has come from. I think the multi-stakeholder model and the decentralization purity of Web3 are very much aligned. But whether the multi-stakeholder model can fit with emerging technologies, I think it's yet to be seen.

I think they definitely will test the multi-stakeholder model in its inclusivity and flexibility. Does the pace of technological advancement and the influence and interest of large state and corporate actors fit within the current multi-stakeholder model? Probably not. But unless the multi-stakeholder model evolves in a way that it becomes more inclusive and flexible to these emerging technologies, I think governance, if done right, is welcome in these technologies. But we're just so far apart right now that it's hard to say.

RAM MOHAN:

Okay. So, folks in the audience and who are listening in, we've set the stage for you. We now want to move to bring your points of view in. On the next slide, we have a few questions for you. We have respondents who are going to help moderate this and help bring their points of view to help you get started.

The three questions that we have, and I'm not going to go in question one, question two, or question three. They're going to stay on the screen in front of you. If you have a point of view, please come up and present that point of view, but keep your comment short. But before we get to inviting all of you to come in, let me ask if-- from the audience respondents on the previous screen, you see that we have three audience respondents. So, let me ask you to come up and present what you think. Amrita, would you like to start?

AMRITA CHOUDHURY:

Thank you, Ram. Amrita for the record. Could I see the questions? One thing which hearing the panel and it goes overall is there is no one strict model of multi-stakeholderism. There is a multi-stakeholder model which ICANN follows. The RIRs may be following a different model. So, in my point of view, it is where the views of the relevant stakeholders are taken into consideration, not only during, I would say, the initial phases, but even when decision making and implementation happens.

If I look at these questions, I think we need to look at one of the most important aspects is when there are emerging technologies coming in

or innovation is happening. This is primarily driven by the technical community, not by ICANN standards, but the general technical community or businesses. And today they are very fast paced. The impact of it is realized later. They are normally made for good, not for bad. It may be used in a different way. Even the AI models or LLMs, et cetera, you talk, the intent is always good, not malicious.

And the way technology is moving ahead, regulatory affairs has to keep-
- The impact is so high. That is why governments are sitting up and seeing. Most governments want to use it for good. That's why you have the hashtag AI for good. But again, they have their biases. They have other things which come in. And that is why you need different community members involved. Even when you're talking about governance of AI, for example, it is often said that you need the other stakeholders in the table.

And by stakeholders, you need to have the relevant stakeholders. For example, people who understand the technology or who understand what the impacts could be, the rights issues could be there, the communities which can be impacted. And I think that boils down to what Olga was saying is perhaps we could look at the Sao Paulo principles or even what the NETMundial is saying that even for multi-stakeholder model to really function, there is a checklist. Are we being inclusive? Are we being open? Are we being transparent? Are we educating the stakeholders?

For example, the technical community may understand technology, but they may not understand rights or privacy. Similarly, the civil

society come with a lot of experience from the ground, but are they kept abreast with what is happening? So, I think that education part is also important. They are going to be there. Decision-makings in various places may take time, but if you can explain what benefits it brings, I'm sure most nation states would accept it. Thanks.

RAM MOHAN: Thanks, Amrita. Jorge?

JORGE CANCIO: Oh, thank you, Ram. Jorge Cancio, Swiss government for the record. So, it's a very general discussion. Thank you for having me. After all, what are we all aiming at? So basically, I would say respecting human rights and fulfilling development goals, which every now and then are updated. We will have the next update in 2030. The big difference or the great difference of our time is that we live, a UN panel said five years ago, in an age of digital interdependence and others have underscored that it's a time of competition with interdependence if we look to some security advisors. That's just one aspect.

The question is really we are more interdependent than any time in the past and digital is part and parcel of it. It's part of our lives. It's no longer digital, physical. We are in a hybrid world. So, this means that we are subject to mutual externalities. So, what the ones do be it positive or negative impacts on all the others in our globe. And what we do digitally has climate impacts. What we do digitally has human rights impacts. So, there's a very huge interconnectedness.

So actually, there's a need for cooperation. We cannot avoid it. There's a need of cooperation. The question is how? Do we do cooperation in a negative way through competition, through adversarial tactics where some who are in a better position exploit that position and have some short-term advantages or do we try it a harder way? So as the saying goes if you go alone, you go fast. If you go with all, you will go farther. But it takes time. It takes time because you have to discuss with many people.

And this brings me to the question of the multistakeholder approach, to the multistakeholder principle. As Amrita said, every time I hear model, I have a problem because there's no such model. There's an ICANN model which is also different to what we had 10 years ago. So, it's also evolving. And we have different flavors, different implementations of that thought in different organizations, in different processes. So, when you have that variety, of course, there's the danger of passing off, of window dressing, of saying, yeah, we consulted. It's multistakeholder. Or yeah, we published a draft. It's multistakeholder.

And that's really a problem because people get confused. It's a little bit with the concept of democracy, but let's not dwell into that. So, that was an issue. And of course, there are many principles out there about what the internet governance approach means. NETMundial made good work. Also, the IGF, of course. And I just wanted to draw the attention of the audience to the Sao Paulo Multistakeholder Guidelines, which were adopted by the community, assembled virtually and in Sao Paulo earlier this year, because it really fills a gap.

It's not perfect, of course, but at least it gives you a standard where you can look into and say, okay, these are principles, these are guidelines, and these are process steps that you should respect as much as possible, depending on how fast you're moving or how difficult your issue is. And I hope that the community will develop tools to assess processes and organizations against those standards because it's the best we have, I think, honestly, at this moment.

And that brings me to the last point. If we take the multistakeholder approach seriously, if we take seriously that everybody has something to say, has some interests to put on the table, some values to put on the table, it's much easier or it's much more possible to find a new digital deal for everybody that works for everybody. And that should be, I think, personally, our goal with the WSIS+20 review we are having now in the next year. Because if we are just competing, defending our interests, we will end up much closer to a zero-sum game. Of course, we will. We may always end up there than really making progress in achieving human rights and development goals for everyone. Thank you.

RAM MOHAN:

Thank you so much. Benjamin, let me ask you to come up and provide your points of view. And then we're going to go to the audience. For all of you in the audience, if you'd like to contribute to this discussion, there is a microphone, of course, in the center aisle. But we also have folks roving microphones on the two sides there. And so, please raise

your hand and we'll get to you, if you want, to the roving microphones. Okay? Benjamin.

BENJAMIN AKINMOYEJE:

Thank you. My name is Benjamin Akinmoyeje. I'm based in Namibia and I'm a PhD student. So, I represent academia as well as civil society. So, I'm going to talk with the first questions and I'm going to get inspirations from Chafic as well. Some of the challenges and barriers to innovations and cooperations in sub-Saharan Africa, as you may know, is essentially maybe things like instability. It's a big deal because it involves a lot of inconsistent regulations that come from different government regimes and all of that. Also, infrastructural gaps, as we talk about emerging technologies. In these regions, people are still trying to catch up with pre-existing technologies and all of that.

But I must say, as somebody who is in the civil society space, human rights and global goods is very, very critical. Something that is important. So, protection against this, especially new technologies, is something that most of this population will look towards government to do something about. But that doesn't necessarily mean it's an approval of the government and related mechanisms. But what they are only yelling for, it's something that protects their well-being and improves their lifestyle.

Also, it's fragmented ecosystems. As you may see, these are regions with a lot of countries. They are not just one entity. So, different countries have different bilateral arrangements, organizations, and all of that that serves their immediate needs. However, it would have been

important or very helpful if there was a collective approach towards this because their scenarios are almost the same thing.

And then, another barrier would be skill gaps, capacity gaps. The understanding of these tools, this technology, just in relation with infrastructure gaps, it's enormous. You can't govern what you don't have, or you can't even have a strong say in what you don't have practical touch of. And as I've said before, instability. But then, one of the significant barriers to this conversation and approach of multi-stakeholder is research and development that is not existing in this space. And as an academia, I see that a lot.

So, some of the things in LLM's conversations, ChatGPT AI, you're just writing papers about it, a lot of theoreticals. But what is the tangible experience of this? So, all of this makes you to be pretty much an observer at the table when stakeholder conversation is happening and what do you have to bring on board. And for me, that is really a limitation to some certain degree to make you participate and be a commanding voice in the room. Most times, you are just like a token to represent.

And I hope the regions and for others, it will be important to bring more voices and more empowerment because this community has the larger emerging population to jump on the technology to bring about the cumulative number that can bring the maximum benefit to the intervention.

So, I would move from there to the second question, which is how can multistakeholder approach evolve to mitigate risk and ensure inclusive

and effective decision? Just drawing immediately from some of the things I've said, I could quickly relate to Olga's contribution. Some of the cultural nuances and communication that goes out, does it really pass across the message to these regions that this is what we want to do and this is the value that it brings to you? Is it empowering or exploitive?

If it's empowering, then everybody wants to join in and want to make the necessary contribution to be part of the conversation in a very healthy way because we have shared values, we have trust, and we have shared goals, interest as well. But what we see oftentimes, from my personal opinion, is just exploitation. It's more of a race of political hegemony and even commercial hegemony taking over the region and you align to those arrangements.

So, in order to ensure that it evolves properly, let's motivate equal participation, build capacity for regions or civil societies' engagement collectively, not a function of how much they bring or economic value that can be gotten from them. And let things like human rights be top on the radar of these conversations. Then a maximum input can be gotten from the community to engage in decision-making and participation, respecting that.

And finally, so one of the things I would like to say is that issues like global good principles can be emulated, can be used, which is not only quantified by numbers or by value-add in terms of, as Olga had said, that we've seen that digital technologies were supposed to bring a form of leapfrog for sub-Saharan regions or developing countries, but what

we have seen is it has really expanded the gap and it's not looking like it's going to change anytime soon. So, how do you participate in a governance process that keeps increasing the gap or sending you low, sending you down? So, we need to change and evolve that process to such that it protects, it guides, and it elevates.

So, when it now comes to the final questions, how can the governance of emerging technologies benefit the evolution of the East to be human rights, respecting global good, and ensuring that the benefits spread almost equally? We know it can't spread equally, but considerably for as many people as possible. I mean, I'm sure, putting some research and development in developing nations to make sure they have equal footing, bridging some of the infrastructural gap to ensure that they participate effectively and making sure they're at the table when some of these innovations are being considered and equal participation, even in things like AI, it will ensure that the emerging multi-stakeholder approaches will help us also govern the emerging technologies. Thank you very much.

RAM MOHAN:

Thank you, Benjamin. I appreciate that. We are now going to move to the community interaction part of this, and let me start with you, Nigel. Are there any comments, questions coming in from online?

NIGEL HICKSON:

Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we have a couple. So, we can take them now, unless you want to take them.

RAM MOHAN: Why don't we take them now?

NIGEL HICKSON: Yes, yeah, we can take them now. We can, indeed. So, the first question we have online is from Shadrach Ankrah. Apologies if my pronunciation is totally wrong. In any case, so the question is, in most underserved areas, regions, citizens have to choose between access to connectivity and other technologies or prioritising their privacy. Where people prioritise privacy and user control, then they are left out from using some technologies or services due to other government interference. How do we then empower underserved or unserved communities to build their own technologies or services and being free from influence and interference from big tech companies and authorities?

RAM MOHAN: Who would like to tackle that question? Go for it, Chafic.

CHAFIC CHAYA: At the heart of our daily work is capacity building, and I heard from colleagues now that capacity building is crucial in multistakeholder. So, one of the challenges that we have is that these undeserved communities cannot reach us, so we need to go there and reach them. But, once again, the conflicts, the instability in some countries, we cannot do this, so we work online.

And the other challenge is that, as the question in online, that some countries have challenges that are totally different from the others. That means some countries, they still don't have infrastructure, where others are talking about privacy, human rights, AI. So, our main priority is to help these countries without infrastructure, so we can secure them the connectivity, so they can connect to the internet and join this global discussion. So, yes, capacity building is very important to reach, to make awareness, and to promote what's happening on the global scene.

Just one other observation, how we can do this at a national level? At a national level, once again, I give a good example from IGF Lebanon. Lebanon is a country now that is facing a lot of challenges, but still, the IGF is the one place where all stakeholders are gathered together to discuss the priorities of the internet, to keep the internet working. Another example is what we call the NOGs, Network of Country Groups. So, we build communities. So, we get to these countries, we build communities, and get the community to do their work with their priorities and their challenges.

RAM MOHAN:

Thank you, Chafic. Let's go to you in the audience. Please note we have a 90-second timer, because we'd like to make sure that we include as many comments that come through. Please introduce yourself, then of course.

HOSSEIN MIRZAPOUR:

Hello, everybody. Hossein Mirzapour for the record. I'll try to go fast and with a clear question to our distinguished speakers. Actually, as most of you, especially dear Pari mentioned, probably because of the different internet governance territories across the world, reaching a global framework for regulation is not easy at all. We know it very well, but as we have seen during past decades, each day, each month, there are more people using internet as their daily life platform.

Across the world, in all major cities, you see a lot of people struggling to claim their rights for something happening on online platforms with no clear response from their local jurisdiction system. On the other hand, what happened, for example, to Pavel Durov in Paris has shocked many of us in this room. Actually, in one of the so-called hometown of freedom, he's still there and he cannot freely join his team to develop, to continue his innovative path to benefit us.

My clear question for you and others is, would you think ICANN is the best place to address this big challenge and set a timeframe to reach that global framework or not? And if ICANN is the best place, would you see enough efforts here? If ICANN is not the best place, where is the best place for that? My last phrase. I think any integrated global community needs an authentic responsible leader. Thank you.

RAM MOHAN:

Thank you so much. So, I'm going to focus on one question. Is ICANN a good place to address these challenges, Pari?

PARI ESFANDIARI: I think ICANN's remit is limited. Personally, I think IGF perhaps is a better place for this kind of discussions and leadership. And yeah, that's how I see it.

RAM MOHAN: Thank you. Let's go to you. Back to you, Nigel, for online.

NIGEL HICKSON: Yes, thank you very much. Indeed, Mr. Chairman. So, we have Shreedee Rayahmajhi, which is probably pronounced wrong, but he's a good friend of ours. He's often contributing to our discussions here. And the question is, how do you see the multi-stakeholder model evolving? Is it the same people bringing in different ideas within the communities, or is it different people and different stakeholders bringing in different voices that represent issues?

RAM MOHAN: Thank you, Nigel. Kevin?

KEVIN KREUSER: That's a good question. I think it's more bringing in new ideas than it is people. But new ideas bring new people. So, I think it's a combination of both and the evolution. The way it works, the way it's baked already, it works. It's just expanding, not the remit, that's not the ask, but rather the inclusivity and evolving it in that way.

RAM MOHAN: Got it, great. Let's go to the microphone here. Are there any others on the sides, number one or number two? Okay. Before we go to the center, let's go to number two.

VIVIEN MAIDABORN: Vivien Maidaborn from New Zealand for the record. I was really struck by the statement paradigm shift and fairly excited to, in my own brain, feel what if we thought of some of the fragmentation and difference in the world as a positive thing rather than something that is breaking the internet. So when I come back to the core principle of multi-stakeholderism, it's about celebrating how better it can be, the internet can be, with very diverse voices.

So, I wonder if the paradigm shift could be facilitated by rather than there being a human rights push for involvement, there's a government, business, technical community demand for it, because that's how all the things we're trying to do be better. And I just wondered on your comments, kind of building on some of the comments of the panel about that paradigm shift. Thank you.

RAM MOHAN: Olga?

OLGA CAVALLI: It's a very interesting perspective. I would say that if we want to find the perfect space for all the participation, we may fail. I think we have to find the beauty of participation and human rights. It's a very, very

interesting perspective. I would say that now, with artificial intelligence, once you start to try to understand what may happen, you always end up understanding the ethics and human rights related to it. So, I think it's a very, very interesting moment to include that.

And from other comments that I heard before, which is the perfect space, I think perfect is an enemy of the good. I think there is no perfect space for participation, but if we do our own, if we bring our own ideas and we do participate with what we have from our country's regions and knowledge, we may be enhancing that space.

RAM MOHAN:

Thank you, Olga. And Pari, just for you to think about as you get to the final parts. There's a comment online that says the IGF is a UN top-down directed entity not well suited for developing the necessary varieties of multi-stakeholder approaches. So, something for you to think about towards the end. Anybody on my right, number one, any questions from this side of the audience? No one. Let's go to you, in the center.

SEBASTIEN BACHOLLET:

Bonjour, hello. My name is Sebastien Bachelet. I'm going to speak in French since we have our interpreters that are greatly able to help us communicate. I'm going to not speak too fast to give you the opportunity to listen in with your headsets. Three points. First one, I am convinced that it would be very useful to talk differently about

ICANN and the model, we used the term model, a model for whom, what type of model. We need to have ICANN evolve. That's what I believe.

In Sao Paulo, we had NETMundial declaration that we have to use at ICANN. We are a global organization. We have to think in those terms and look in those proposals from NETMundial, Sao Paulo. That would be great. That would be a document, a basic document for ICANN tomorrow, and we do a holistic review of ICANN. I hope we can have that rather quickly, this holistic review of ICANN.

I know my time is up, but when we talk about ICANN, when I am at ICANN, I am a representative, I have one voice of the end users of the Internet, and I do not consider myself as civil society. In ICANN, there is a structure that is quite different, and we have to take that into account. Let's not forget about it, where we come from, and where we will go. Thank you.

RAM MOHAN:

Thank you so much. So well made. And I agree, ICANN definitely needs to evolve, and the NETMundial, the Sao Paulo principles are a very useful place to start. Nigel, any other questions online?

NIGEL HICKSON:

None.

RAM MOHAN:

Okay. Anybody from this side? Okay. Anyone from that side? No? Okay. Back to you in the center.

JORDAN CARTER:

Thanks. My name is Jordan Carter from auDA. Just offering a couple of personal thoughts. It is a bit like the hammer and nail problem. Sometimes you do not need multistakeholderism to solve problems, but some problems could benefit from using multistakeholder methods, right? So, I think a bit of clear thinking about where that might help for particular emerging technologies. For example, if there are some central identifiers that need to be coordinated, we have proved that multistakeholderism can work there. But trying to there is multistakeholder dialogue forums like the IGF, which is not a top-down institution, or there are institutions that do things.

And one thing we do not want to see, I think, is some assumption that just because one institution uses one approach of multistakeholderism to solve its problems, that that is something that can be just carbon copied and applied everywhere else. The internet thrives because of its diversity. So that is important. One of the main barriers to innovation there, I think, is literally resources. We are spoiled here at ICANN. Other people are not so lucky. Thanks.

RAM MOHAN:

Thanks, Jordan. Well-timed. Kevin, did you want to have a quick response to that? Olga?

OLGA CAVALLI:

I think Jordan made a very, very interesting point about resources. Time, I think, is one of the enemies of a good outcome. It takes time to

do the right thing. It takes time to call the right people. It takes time to do the right meeting and understanding the views of others. And also, it takes resources. We have seen several multistakeholder initiatives, I would say, in Latin America, that without a solid secretariat, they just don't work. And that needs resources. So, I totally agree with Jordan. Thank you.

RAM MOHAN:

Thank you. Nothing on this side. I think we're back to the microphone in the center. Please.

BRUNA SANTOS:

Thank you. And thanks for the session. First of all, thanks, Olga, for being the sole speaker that has been-- Actually, speaking about the global majority in Latin America in that sense, I'm a little bit frustrated with the discussion because it seems like we're still caught up in some a digital Cold War. There was a lot of perspectives about Russia versus the US and China. And I think the problem is way beyond that, right? The problem is also about lack of inclusion. The problem is also about us thinking that the majority world doesn't understand what we're talking about or what's happening at ICANN and so on.

So, I listened to Jorge saying that we need cooperation. And I do agree with that. But I do believe that beforehand, we need inclusion, we need the voices, we need the civil society voice that unfortunately was not in that panel. And that's problematic in a year like that because we're really at an injection point for Internet governance where not only we

need to improve our model and our systems, but also show people that ICANN is functional. It's nice. It still exists. And it still works, right?

So maybe I'll just wrap up that by saying that, first of all, we need to leave our silos. And we also need to go to New York. We need to talk to policymakers and other parts of other communities just so we can properly advocate for what ICANN is and the way it should remain. So, thanks a lot.

RAM MOHAN:

Thank you so much. Our next commenter, please.

PETER TAIWO:

Yeah, thank you so much. Peter for the record. I just wanted to say that one of my favorite books says that people look at you and sometimes not detest. Multistakeholder engagement or model is hunker on trust, and it depends on who is defining this. So therefore, we need stronger institution and movers and shakers that people trust that can move multistakeholder in the right direction.

And therefore, these institutions and individual or movers and shakers must have shared interest, value, and vision that encompasses the whole people. Because if you bring multistakeholder to the table and says, this is what we are doing and advocating for, is you're representing our interest. For instance, in Africa, we have 54 countries, depending on who is defining. Okay. So, we need to bring people to the tables. We need to do continuous assessment of what is

multistakeholder is and how it is evolving and bring people together and continue building capacity. Thank you.

RAM MOHAN:

Thank you so much. So much resonance with that idea. Nigel, anyone else online? None so far. Okay. Let's go back to you.

RENATA MIELLI:

Thank you very much. Renata Mielli from Brazil for the record. I'm going to speak in Portuguese for the sake of diversity, of the language diversity in the room. I would like to point out two aspects that I consider that are critical in this debate on how to strengthen the perception of society, specifically of international agencies and governments on the role of the multistakeholder model.

We need, as São Paulo bylaws state, that multistakeholder model and multilateralism are interrelated processes that need to cooperate each one of them within their own mission. Multilateralism has a specific role in decision making and enforcement in the digital ecosystem. And we need to advance in the formulation of statements. We're not only speaking about internet governance in the NETMundial, but also, we need to understand that we are speaking of internet governance and digital policy advancements, because the world is governed by the digital aspect.

And besides, I'd like to add that emerging technologies benefit from the multistakeholder process because of the expertise and because of the history we have of discussing over different subjects throughout the

years. So, in the last years, there are many, many sectors that have not been discussing matters such as privacy and new technologies. So, we need to consider this to avoid fragmentation of the governance in this very time, which is very sensitive, politically speaking. Thank you.

RAM MOHAN:

And we have the last comment from the floor. We have one comment there and then we'll go to you and then we will wrap the audience, please. Please.

ROSEMARY SINCLAIR:

There we go. Thank you, Chair. Rosemary Sinclair from .au, Australia's country code manager. I wanted to make a comment about some of the initiatives that we as a country code are doing to support the multistakeholder model in a very practical way. And I make these comments to encourage other country code managers to consider doing the same. We have to move from talking about this model to supporting this model.

So, just to give the audience a flavor of the kind of things we're doing, we're establishing an academy in Australia for young students who are interested in internet governance and digital policy and the application of the multistakeholder model. And we have, of course, our own Australian IGF. But this year, we developed a position paper out of that IGF. We've been supporting the Pacific countries IGF. Their focus is meaningful connectivity. We go from that to the Asia Pacific region IGF.

So, we're building a tapestry of interconnection and support between the layers of these groups. And, of course, we will be supporting the global IGF. The NETMundial+10 statement is incredibly important. And the very last thing to mention is the technical community coalition for multistakeholderism, which is focused on the GDC and the WSIS+20 processes. Thank you.

RAM MOHAN:

Thank you, Rosemary. The final comment from the floor.

BERTRAND DE LA CHAPELE:

Hi, my name is Bertrand de la Chapelle. I'm the executive director of the Internet and Jurisdiction Policy Network. Very quickly, there's a word that we never mention when we talk about the multistakeholder approach, which is the word stake. What matters in the multistakeholder approach is that on an issue-by-issue basis, the ones who have a stake in the issue are fully included, but in proportion of their stake. And we have a tendency to consider that any topic should be basically dealt with by absolutely everybody.

In the WSIS declaration of Tunis, there is one sentence that people have discussed at length, which is in the respective roles. The respective roles of the different stakeholders vary according to the issue, the venue, and the stage of the discussion. And every topic should be addressed on an issue-by-issue basis by the appropriate network of actors that are really having a stake in this, in full transparency.

And the second thing is, on the second point, we always talk about decision-making, and we completely overlook the fundamental steps of decision-shaping, which is the preliminary phases where you actually scope an issue, you frame the challenges, and that's part of the role that secretariats or, in the case of ICANN, the org should be.

RAM MOHAN:

Very insightful comments. Thank you so much. Thank you for all of you from the audience who have contributed both worldwide and here in Istanbul. I am going to get to the final part of this session. We'll apply the same timer. Let me turn to the panelists for concluding remarks. Let me start with you, Kevin.

KEVIN KREUSER:

Thanks, Ram. I guess we're not looking to change or expand ICANN's remit, and we're not likely to change the direction of corporate and state actors. That's not the ask. The only thing we're hoping for is a platform to be meaningfully brought into the fold of the multi-stakeholder umbrella. Inclusiveness, engagement for the opportunity to education and understanding as to what these emerging technologies are, and probably more important, what they are not, so that there's not additional barriers born from ignorance, misunderstandings, biases, and not a track really bringing into everything. I think that was one of the comments over here earlier. It's such a pervasive view, these technologies, now that they shouldn't be over here. They should be in with everything. That's all. Thank you.

RAM MOHAN: Thank you so much. Pari?

PARI ESFANDIARI: Thank you, Ram. I think today's conversation highlighted that while innovation will keep advancing and the geopolitical landscape will continue to surprise us. Our focus should be on building a strong, resilient foundation to withstand these challenges. In terms of, we had a comment about IGF.

Personally, I don't think that we should reinvent the wheel. I think that each institution has a responsibility to do their work, including ICANN. So, we all have to try. But I think if IGF is not fulfilling the way some people would like it, maybe they have to try to change it. And so, we may not control every shift, but through a flexible and adaptable multi-stakeholder approach, we can lay a solid foundation for meaningful global cooperation to govern the digital space. Thanks.

RAM MOHAN: Thank you, Pari. Chafic?

CHAFIC CHAYA: Okay. I was requested to have my final comments in Arabic. So, please, if you can take your machine for translation for diversity. And thanks, Ram, for this. So, I'll speak Arabic. With the evolution of technological development and the geopolitical challenges, the traditional governance are facing a great deal of challenges. So, the multi-party or

the multi-stakeholder system is more able to respond to the latest technological development. So, defining governance would be much faster in order to follow with the new developments, so that every party would be able to participate in the decision-making, including the governments, technical experts, and the representatives from the civil society and technical society.

And in this context, we, as a technical society, we are engaged in our roles as a stimulator and as a promoter to this system, to this model, through our programs, in order to reinforce and encourage discussion and dialogue between all the different parties and to enable the infrastructure so that it responds to the needs of the region and the challenges. This model guarantees that governance could be able to continue the work of an internet that is unified and that is open and that responds to the needs of the future. Thank you very much.

RAM MOHAN:

Olga.

OLGA CAVALLI:

Thank you. I'm profiting from the excellent translation services that we have. And by the way, thank you for that. I will speak in my mother tongue, which is Spanish. I believe we must bear in mind one of the principles of NETMundial+10 adaptability and agility. I believe they are key. We must be inclusive, but really inclusive. We must include people of all ages, all walks of life, all genders, all stakeholders. We must

educate ourselves and educate others so as to understand the issues other stakeholders face. There are many challenges.

The main one, I believe, is time. Doing things the right way takes time and involves resources, many resources, which are not easy to get. Sometimes it's not easy, but I believe it's worthwhile strengthening this space for dialogues. And a message for developing countries. We shouldn't just be spectators or consumers of technology. We should try and have technology create value in our countries so that people get educated and get trained in the use of technology for the benefit of our peoples and the development of our countries. Thank you very much for having invited me to this meeting.

RAM MOHAN:

You've heard all of this. How do you want to conclude?

NIGEL HICKSON:

Well, we've got another hour, haven't we? So that's okay. No one wants lunch, do they, anymore? thank you very much. Nigel Hickson, UK. I'll be very brief. First of all, I think this discussion has shown there's a continuing appetite for discussions of emerging technologies, the multi-stakeholder approaches and how geopolitics affects us all. I reflect that if we had this discussion 10 to 15 years ago in ICANN, we wouldn't have had the sort of crowds we had today. And perhaps many people might have pushed back and said, what has this all got to do with ICANN? Well, I think that the comments, the really excellent comments that we've had today show that it is to do with ICANN, it is to

do with other technical bodies such as the RIRs and ISOC, and it really does affect all our lives.

So three brief observations from this discussion. One, the multi-stakeholder approach itself. Are we all bored with it? Well, apparently not. We recognise that it's not perfect. We recognise it's evolving. We recognise that it needs greater accountability among stakeholder groups. We recognise that the evolution of it has to be assessed against some criteria. And the NETMundial principles are a good start to that. And we also recognise that we need action and not just words.

Secondly, the role of governments was discussed. Do governments act too quickly? Do they act too slowly? We often get accused in our home countries of acting too slowly, of not picking up the scent, if you like, of not understanding what's going on. But at the same time, if we act too quickly and bring in regulation, then we can stifle innovation or just get things wrong.

And thirdly, I think we come down to emerging technologies, the problems that they face for us, how they affect our lives, how we cope with different paradigms, the role of the platforms, the increasing lack of accountability in some quarters. But finally, Mr. Chairman, there is hope. There is clear optimism for the future. And this has been an excellent dialogue. Thank you.

RAM MOHAN:

What a great way to wrap this session up on a note of hope and optimism, at the same time leavened by reality and practicality,

wanting to implement accountability, adaptability, agility, build trust and confidence, digital dependence also requires cooperation and inclusion. Thank you all of you for coming here. Thank you to the panelists. Thank you to the audience and to the respondents from everywhere. This session is concluded.

ANDREA GLANDON: Thank you. You can stop the recording.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]