
ICANN81 | AGM – GAC Wrap-Up Session
Thursday, November 14, 2024 – 15:00 to 16:00 TRT

DAN GLUCK: This session will now begin. Hello, and congratulations and welcome to the GAC Wrap-Up meeting on Thursday, the 14th of November at 12:00 UTC. My name is Dan Gluck from the ICANN Policy Development GAC Support Team. Please note that this session is being recorded and is governed by the ICANN Expected Standards of Behavior and ICANN Community Anti-Harassment Policy. Interpretation for this session will include all six UN languages and Portuguese.

Please state your name and language you'll speak if other than English, and remember to speak at a reasonable pace. If you'd like to speak during this session, please raise your hand in Zoom. Due to a technical disturbance in a previous session yesterday, for the rest of the meeting week, permission to unmute and open your camera in Zoom will have to be granted by the GAC support staff. This access will be made available for official delegates of GAC members and observers only. You can seek that option by raising your hand to take the floor. I'll now hand the floor over to GAC chair, Nico Caballero.

NICO CABALLERO: Thank you very much, Daniel. Welcome back, everyone. Thank you for keeping the energy and the spirit high at this time in the week. I know everybody's a little bit tired, most probably.

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But before we actually start the wrap-up session, let me welcome Liz, the new Ombuds, new ICANN Ombuds with a big round of applause. Welcome, Liz. Her real name is Elizabeth. What's your last name? Field. Field, sorry. But Liz is okay, I guess, according to what you told me. So, let me give the floor at this point to Rob Hoggarth. He's gonna walk us through some very interesting follow up work, which I'm absolutely sure you are very anxious to hear. Rob, over to you.

ROB HOGGARTH:

Thank you, Nico. Liz has a commitment later on this hour, so we figured we'd give her the first five, eight minutes or so just to explain a bit about what her goals and expectations are from the Board and to, you know, basically share her availability with the whole committee. So, Liz, be happy to have you do that. Thank you.

ELIZABETH FIELD:

Thank you, Rob. This is Elizabeth Field, I go by Liz, I am the new Ombuds. I'll do a very, very brief introduction because many of you probably already heard, so I won't bore you with any more of the details. So I'll just very briefly a little bit about the role and my background, but as brief as possible, and I will share with you sort of three principles I have for evolving the office and, you know, kind of the messages from the Board that I've had. So really the role itself, so is set out in the bylaws.

As you know, I handle complaints about unfair treatment and complaints under the anti-harassment policy and a role to play in

request for reconsideration. Beyond this, I want to highlight that I offer other services around communication, relationship building, conflict, and you know, prevention is part of my aim is the prevention not just of conflict, but the escalation.

We don't prevent conflict that's healthy, but we prevent the escalation. So that's a little bit on the role. My background is, I've got two decades, I've worked both as you know, Ombuds and conflict resolution, but also in something called organizational development, which has given me, you know, an anti-harassment and inclusion work as well. And I've worked with the human rights movement, I've worked with the UN agencies and I've worked with the UK foreign office. So I feel that the ICANN environment is quite familiar, the bottom up, the consensus building, and the complexity and richness of that as well.

And I think there's two things which I've been highlighting over and over, but I think the Board has made this really clear to me is the independence of the role and how important it is that the role is independent and that I have that as my responsibility to maintain that independence and I report into the Board. So that's the highest level in the organization.

Three principles for evolving the office, I am very data focused, so I'm very interested in evolving the office in line with the data and needs of the community. So I'm very interested in people being in touch with either ideas or information that will help me respond to what the community needs, and as part of that strategy, I want prevention at the core of that.

My second principle is around communication and engagement with the community. So I really want to have as much communication and engagement as possible. And again, we'll be planning that quite carefully.

And finally, the third is around promoting the desired environment in ICANN, so talking positively about what we want as opposed to what we don't want. And yeah, so my aim is to work collaboratively and I'm hoping to work with all of you, and I'm available for questions now if anyone has any. Thank you.

NICO CABALLERO:

Thank you very much for that, Liz. Do we have any question for her at this point before we move on? I don't see any hand in the room or online, so thank you so very much for that, Liz. I understand you have other things to do, so thank you again for your time. You can go, no problem. Rob.

ROB HOGGARTH:

Just one quick observation. You and Liz seem to share an affinity for data and metrics and that, so there may be some good collaboration there in the future.

NICO CABALLERO:

But before you go, I do have a question, a very quick question for you, Liz. What would be the procedure, let's say a GAC member has any kind of problem, I don't know, during coffee breaks or in the corridors or

whatever, you know, and they feel that for whatever reason they need to report something, what would be the procedure?

ELIZABETH FIELD:

So first come talk to me, we can talk through the options, we can look at the options. So the options can be informal options, the options can be formal options. So the reporting would be formal. It is perfectly sufficient to just raise a concern and say, look, I noticed this, I'm uncomfortable about it.

So there are different options in terms of what, you know, you may want to take action on your own so I can support you assess how you would do that. You may want me to support action with you. So that could be, for example, mediation or, you know, some sort of shuttling back and forth. There may also be a formal, something may be a need to be investigated with a kind of conclusion at the end of that. So those are the options. Come and talk to me. You can also, if you're, you know, not sure, send me an email. And yeah, does that help?

NICO CABALLERO:

Yes, but what's your email address, number one? And where would you normally be located during ICANN meetings in case they need to reach out to you?

ELIZABETH FIELD:

So my email address is ombuds@icann.org. So this being the first meeting, I have an office downstairs. My processes aren't-- next

meeting I will have a booking link with slots available for individual booking and I will have hours for drop-in sessions where people can just come, you know, with anybody who's there, ask questions, say hello. So those two things will be available. Currently now, I am 3B14, but we have another hour. So I won't be there very long, but anything you want to get in touch, just ombuds@icann.org. And it's confidential, I should be very clear, absolutely. It's ring fenced from the rest of the organization. Nobody, if they wanted to, could even touch it.

NICO CABALLERO: No, what I meant was that your office will be normally located right next to ICANN Org's offices normally. No? Oh, oh, how would that work?

ELIZABETH FIELD: Well, they generally give the most discreet location for the office. So now that means literally it's the back of the building, past the toilets, you know, quite hard to find, a closet. But yeah, so it is a separate, I think it's separate and independent and uncoupled from anything else in the organization or in this ecosystem. Does that help, Nico? Thank you for the chance to.

NICO CABALLERO: No, thank you. Thank you for taking the time for being with us today. Any other comment or question in the room? That not being the case, thank you so much again, Liz. More than welcome to join us whenever you have time. Over to you, Rob.

ROB HOGGARTH:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. What we typically do in these sessions for wrapping up is pull you all together to look at the next several months, identify some critical dates. We'll clearly be identifying this. What we also do as staff is throughout the week try to capture different follow-up items, other activities that you've all identified as things that will require some immediate follow-up next two or three weeks, usually some longer-term considerations as well will come up.

This is an opportunity for you to look at the list that we've got and then also come back with some of your own thoughts. We don't capture everything clearly, there is now a regime of strategic and annual planning, and so many of the activities going forward will likely be linked to different objectives within the strategic priorities of the committee. So at this part of the agenda, I'd like to pop up on the deck there, up on the screen, Dan, the next slide, which just identifies a number of bullets that we flagged that will require some follow up, and I'll riff a slight bit on each one of the bullets.

The first, in terms of just community forum planning for ICANN82 is immediately at the top of the agenda. The period between ICANN80 and ICANN81 was five months. The period between ICANN81 and ICANN82 was closer to three months. So as many of you had heard already from Julia, we've already accepted all of the applications for travel support for ICANN82, and we immediately need to start gathering your input and feedback for agenda topics for the Seattle meeting.

So we encourage you on your own just to simply send messages to the committee email list to make sure that you start identifying prospective meetings. This is gonna be a five-day meeting in Seattle, not a six-day like we've had this time, but it will have a lot of the bells and whistles of a typical AGM in terms of some public sessions that will cut into the GAC agenda.

So the earlier you identify and share topics, the more opportunity the GAC leadership will have to, you know, consider the various options and work with you to identify priority scheduling and the rest. This meeting there was that, what did we refer to it as an historic number of bilateral meetings, that's not likely to be repeated at every public meeting, but there may be particular items or issues that you will be looking to discuss with other committees or supporting organizations within ICANN.

So it's very important for you to identify those for us. Something that you don't see as a collective group of members, but that the leadership team seems to see quite often is many, many, many requests from other communities to meet with the GAC, to share their views with governments. And so it's very important for us to be able to see as the support staff and for the leadership team to be able to consider what the options are in as usual a limited map of sessions for the meeting,

NICO CABALLERO:

Which will be kind of difficult to accommodate given the fact that ICANN82 is-- how many days are there, four?

ROB HOGGARTH: Five.

NICO CABALLERO: Five.

ROB HOGGARTH: Yes.

NICO CABALLERO: Five days. So we will need to be extremely careful in terms of choosing, you know, the right sessions with the right communities. Back to you, Rob.

ROB HOGGARTH: Thank you. And I promise short descriptions of each bullet point, so I'll move on to the next one. The second bullet is potential GAC comments regarding the continuous improvement program. You'll recall that Tracy Hacksaw made a presentation over the weekend about that. There is a public comment period open, and so you will undoubtedly receive some follow up from us or from Tracy reminding you about the opportunity to submit comments. Typically, these types of activities in general are evaluated by the leadership.

Many of you are familiar with the emails that go out fairly regularly after GAC leadership meetings that share recommendations that the

leadership team has made as to whether there should be a collective GAC comment or whether it's really an open season for you all to comment individually. Many of you who see the collective GAC comments that go in will also be reminded of the footnote that's always appended, which allows and certainly does not restrict any individual government to make its own comments in any of these public comment opportunities.

So that's always an option, obviously. But this seems to be an area that is of interest collectively to you all in that it ultimately will influence, if not potentially impact your operations as a committee. So that's something you'll see some quick follow up on.

In addition, some of you who attended this morning's session, moving to the next bullet, are aware of the fundamental bylaw amendments that the Board acted upon over the weekend. I explained in a much longer than I wanted it to be and probably much longer than you wanted it to be, email sort of explaining that process earlier in the week. But the bottom line is when a fundamental bylaw is being considered, it's not sufficient for the empowered community to just sit on its hands. In the case of a fundamental bylaw amendment, there is an expectation that at least three of the five decisional participants approve the action.

This is gonna be a agenda item as a warning to the chair and vice chairs on their first meeting here in a couple of weeks after the meeting to try to get a sense as to what their recommendation is gonna be to all of you in terms of whether the GAC will give that thumbs up, abstain, or look to object to that action from the Board. So this is one of those rare

instances where there is an actual response required. So that's gonna be right in front of you all here over the next several weeks.

Next bullet, GAC comments on feedback to the Board regarding the ccNSO policy recommendations. This was correspondence to [00:16:08 - inaudible] about a week before the meeting, and this is part of the broader bylaws consultation process that the Board and GAC engage in. When there is a policy proposal that goes to the Board, the Board by design, somewhat by professional courtesy, reaches out to the GAC to ask if there are any policy implications that governments are interested in expressing.

And so Nico has received that correspondence, there's no deadline on a response, but I think what you've indicated to me, Nico, is that a response before the end of the year would be appropriate, particularly since the issue was vetted and discuss more publicly here at this meeting.

Next item, GAC consideration of the operating principle amendments that are connected to potential changes in tenure for the GAC leadership. You all had a full opportunity to converse about that during the strategic operations discussion earlier in the week. And if I recall correctly, there wasn't much strategic discussion.

There was frankly a really good robust conversation about this item. Nico just sent out an email just yesterday or the day before, basically acknowledging that this will continue. There were some conversations you'll recall about discussing that particular item during this wrap up.

Ultimately, as further consideration was given to this topic, the decision was made to delay things a bit. Once I get started, I just roll. So thank you for that tip. Thanks, Dan. So that, you would expect that, and we have been instructed, according to the email from Nico, to look to schedule a committee wide call on this topic in the December timeframe. You all appreciate much more than we on staff do that you have a very busy internet governance calendar in the month of December. So we will be challenged to pull that together.

And I think the expectation or hope is that you'll be able to use the intercession period between ICANN81 and 82 to refine the options, make some determination at ICANN82 about whether you will proceed in this area, and then move to final approval in Prague in order to have any changes that are agreed to, and that's not even assumed at the moment, but any changes that are agreed to would then be able to be put into place for the next election. It's important for those who seek nominations for future vice chair roles to know what they're signing up for.

NICO CABALLERO:

Very, very good point. If I may interrupt you for a second, Rob. So the idea is to have this approved by ICANN83 in Prague, or not approved at all, right? Maybe we decide not to do anything, which is fine, but if we plan to approve it, at least have it ready by Prague ICANN83 so that the next election cycle will be based on very specific and very, let's say, well understood rules.

As Rob said, if you step forward for the vice chair position, you know that it's gonna be a two-year commitment. And the same thing will go for the future chair. He will know that it is gonna be, you know, a three-year commitment or maybe not, or maybe three two-year periods or not change at all depending on what we decide, right? But again, there's no urgency, you know, in dealing with this, let's say housekeeping issues, but I really think, you know, especially for the benefit of the future chair, you know, to try to align again and make the terms coincide with the Board cycle.

Otherwise, trust me, it is really, really difficult to get up to speed, you know, and be there kind of lost like for seven or eight months in a row and trying to catch up and trying to understand what they've been talking about for the last seven months. And so it's tiring, it's complicated. So the sooner we deal with the issue, the better. But as I said before, we're not in a hurry by no, means there's no urgency, but it's an important issue. Thank you for that, Rob. Back to you.

ROB HOGGARTH:

Thank you, Nico. We're in the home stretch in terms of the staff list, and I'm hoping that a number of you are thinking or identifying for the final bullet, any other matters to be identified by membership. The next topic is frankly, a follow-up to the informal conversation that took place in after hours last night, which was, I think, a fairly robust discussion among a focus team to consider further GAC collaboration efforts regarding internet governance issues.

And so that's something clearly that's gonna be a much broader interest in the general internet community over the next year. And a takeaway that we took from that informal discussion is that there would be additional discussions about how that might develop. So not only providing that notice to some of you who did not participate, but also to remind those who did, that's something for further consideration. And Christine, do you want to speak to that?

CHRISTINE ARIDA:

Sure. Thank you very much. And just briefly to say that we had a very fruitful discussion with I think quite a lot of support, quite a lot of interest from GAC members. I thank Anna from Portugal to step forward, having stepped forward to take the role of a topic lead on that thing and on that item.

And I think what we agreed upon yesterday is actually to create a mailing list, and this will be shared with the full GAC so that interested GAC members can join that mailing list. And on that mailing list, we'll start discussing about activities which we'll be working on, which more or less are kind of listed in the annual plan, if you'd like to revisit that and look at it. Thank you very much.

NICO CABALLERO:

Thank you for that, Egypt. So there it is, an email list will be created and it will be shared with you. Thank you for leading this effort, Egypt. Greatly appreciated. Back to you, Rob.

ROB HOGGARTH:

Thank you, Nico. The next bullet is something that was discussed in the meeting between the GAC and the Board earlier this week. And that was an expectation that the trio or triad negotiations between GAC members, the GNSO Council leadership, and the Board would continue with respect to the topic of urgent requests for registration data. The group, the triad had an initial call just on the 4th of November, so very shortly before this meeting transpired. That was inspired frankly, by, you know, a lot of good work from the topic leads and others who are interested in this issue since the BGIG call, which took place.

And so this is something that it seemed as if the board had committed to doing some quick follow up after this meeting. Obviously, from a support staff standpoint, we'll be in a position to help pull you all together at the appropriate time that we get that outreach, or to help you do further outreach to those that you're encouraging to pull together.

So that's gonna be an item clearly in the December timeframe, at least before the end of the year to continue that momentum. The next to the last bullet is much more of a cultural theme for you as a committee that you continue to learn from. It was just at the Kigali meeting in June that you agreed to this new strategic plan annual planning regime, where collectively you agreed on these nine strategic objectives.

And what we observe from a staff perspective is that the chair and vice chairs have embraced that approach with each of them taking on caretaker roles for the various objectives. And that effort will continue.

We'll undergo an interesting potential transition period as the new vice chairs come on board in the late March time period.

But it's clearly something that has helped the planning and preparation for this meeting, something that will influence the scheduling for ICANN82 and beyond. And something that I hope you all feel is really helpful in terms of directing the work of the committee, ensuring that you are prioritizing what collectively you want to prioritize.

So with that, Nico, I can throw it back to you and entertain any other things that came out of the meeting this week that you all observed that we missed, or perhaps even other things that have occurred to you over time that have not been addressed and should be considered ideally in the context of the strategic plan, but not necessarily. So thank you very much for allowing me to give the summary.

NICO CABALLERO:

Thank you so much for that, Rob. Any questions for Rob at this point? Any comments you would like to make? I think it's pretty self-explanatory. If there's anything we missed, if there's anything you would like to add to our plate at this point, you can do it. Or on the contrary, if you think that it is way too packed and that you have a better idea on how to deal with things, as I usually say, good ideas are always welcome. So let me open the floor in order to see if there's any suggestion. At this point, I don't see any hand up in the room or online. Okay, so moving on. Rob, back to you.

ROB HOGGARTH:

Thank you, and thank you very much for not noting that we had missed 20 or 30 issues. Glad to hear that we're at least in the right ballpark. This slide just reflects some important dates or benchmarks that we'd be looking to affect here in the next several months.

The first obviously and most immediate, is the publication of the GAC communique, based on your assurances, Nico, that that will be done early tomorrow morning. Then it's on looking at an 18 November publication date, recognizing that we have the 72-hour review period. I made the slide before your discussions just a little bit earlier this afternoon. I think our target as staff is to have the minutes completed by the 6th of December. So that's our target to have that all available for you as part of your meeting records.

As I mentioned earlier, a key follow up deliverable is planning for ICANN82. Expect to see from Julia a call for topics. Again, please don't let that stop you from typing up something right now and suggesting while it's fresh in your mind. But that's something that we're gonna look to have due in the December/January timeframe because in the January/February timeframe we'll be conducting agenda setting calls with you all to confirm the topics, get feedback from topic leads with respect to session objectives, and otherwise get your general consensus that the approach and strategies and priorities for ICANN82 are consistent with your expectations.

Finally, ICANN82, early March, so it will, with end of year holidays and the rest, come up very quickly. So we're primed and ready from a support staff standpoint to make that happen, and we appreciate the

leadership's guidance in terms of the content that we produce. So those are just some key dates. Others will come up, but those will be more as developments warrant. Thank you.

NICO CABALLERO: Thank you so much for that. Rob. One thing to take into account at this point is the visa issue. I recommend you start working on your visa arrangements as soon as possible in order to have some peace of mind ahead of time because we all know that the whole visa issue, not only for the USA, but in general, it's a complicated thing and I just want you to be aware of that fact. So having said that, let's move on to the next slide. Back to you, Rob.

ROB HOGGARTH: Thank you, Nico. We have a hand.

NICO CABALLERO: Sorry, Manal, did you-- Egypt, go ahead, please.

MANAL ISMAIL: If we can go to the previous slide. So I'm not sure whether ICP2 is also - because we have a deadline on the 6th of December. So if this is something to add to the key dates this year, and of course, the January/February date is on there.

NICO CABALLERO: Good catch, Egypt. Thank you so much, Manal. No wonder why you were the best GAC chair in the history of the GAC, no joke. Thank you so much for that, Manal. Rob.

ROB HOGGARTH: I always put an Easter egg in the slides for Manal. Don't you know that by now? Thank you very much. We'll capture that as a follow up and note for all of you that to the extent that, and I know this was an issue of particular interest that the vice chairs expressed as to whether there are comments, contributions that are gonna be expected for the ICP2. Thank you.

Item four is something that we actually instituted under Manal leadership with respect to evaluating the meetings and using the wrap-up session to also collect input and feedback, good and bad, but primarily bad or constructive, as we say in the staff, to get feedback from you as to the effectiveness of the various sessions, what we missed, what we could contribute in terms of further organization.

There are three particular areas. There's just all the sessions generally, but with a particular focus this time around on the bilateral sessions. So would welcome any comments or thoughts that any of you have about that. As I mentioned earlier, this was the first public meeting where you met with all of the other SOs and ACs. There was a time in the past from a committee perspective where there was some reluctance actually to conduct these bilateral sessions.

That momentum has changed, but it would be useful to get that feedback from you all with respect to whether they work, whether they don't. Frankly, we did get feedback anecdotally about, gee, maybe they could have done more of X or Y, too much lecturing, not enough discussion. Getting your feedback and being able to capture that in our notes would be very helpful. Then generally, we got very good feedback and continue to get great feedback in the capacity development space.

Certainly, in the last two years, you've observed that the capacity development activity has been taken from a workshop concept prior to the meeting, to now an activity that takes place after the opening plenary with the cultural focus on and recognition that it's something that it really applies to all delegations and all GAC participants. It's frankly, an opportunity not only for basic information, but for more sophisticated exchanges of information.

So your feedback in terms of the level of those interactions would be helpful. I think there's been, fair to say, some active conversation among the leadership team about how that might be evolved going forward, particularly in the area of topic selection. So I think you're gonna see some evolution in terms of the planning that goes into capacity development going forward. It may mean that you have a couple different sessions during the full week.

But the key, I think, element that has been mentioned to us as staff is with the new expectation of the next round of new gTLDs, there's a tremendous interest from GAC representatives to understand what the tools, responsibilities, and opportunities you all have to act as

representatives of your governments or of your constituents as these applications begin to come in, that would benefit from additional capacity development. Sorry, Nico, please.

NICO CABALLERO:

No, no, I just wanted to say that as you correctly pointed out, this is not an underserved regions issue anymore. It has evolved into a full GAC, and rightly so, into a full GAC discussion. Thanking, of course, Karel and Tracy, Trinidad and Tobago and the UPU for their efforts that, you know, in a positive way has evolved into a full and permanent, let's say, part of the GACs agenda. Just wanted to take note of that. Back to you, Rob.

ROB HOGGARTH:

Thank you, Nico. At this point, frankly, just looking for any feedback, comments, or any observations that folks would like to share, including first perhaps from the head table and you, and then anybody else who wants to intercede.

NICO CABALLERO:

Wang Lang. Anything to add? Anything you would like to mention at this point, or we're good? Okay, Nigel?

NIGEL HICKSON:

Just a couple of points, Mr. Chairman. Thanks for the opportunity. Excellent meeting. The interactions that we managed to have with so

many different parts of the community, I think was enormously useful on two counts.

One, I think it was very useful for those community groups to be able to talk to the GAC. The GAC is held in some sort of mysterious, I haven't got the English really to describe it, but like in a cloud almost. I mean, the GAC over the years, as you've heard many of us say, has become much more transparent and open under the leadership of Manal, of course, and yourself, Nico, but it's still held in some sort of reverence. I think that's an odd English word, but it describes it. And so for the community to come in and talk to the GAC is helpful for them, but it's also helpful for new members.

Two or three new members have expressed to me how beneficial it was to understand what these people did. They might have read that there was such a thing as the GNSO or the SSAC, but just to understand what they did through an oral communication was extremely useful. Now, I recognize that in these oral dialogues, we do need to have interaction and not be a purely a webinar about what that organization does, but that's something that could be reflected.

The other point of capacity development, I think is absolutely, he and you are right. It not only helps new members, but it allows in a really helpful setting for people to come along and talk to us about what they do. Thank you.

NICO CABALLERO:

Thank you for that, UK. Egypt, anything you would like to say?

CHRISTINE ARIDA: Thank you, Nico? No, just briefly to join Nigel in saying that it's been a very good meeting with a lot of interaction. I have to say also that I'd like to thank the government of Turkey for hosting us, obviously so generously, but also this facility has been enabling in that interaction. Really having everything that close where we can walk from one room to the other has been very good in us exchanging views and going from a meeting to another. So just wanted to mention that. Other than that, thanking all GAC colleagues for their engagement. Thank you.

NICO CABALLERO: Thank you very much, Egypt. Columbia.

THIAGO DAL-TOE: Thank you so much, Nico. Following up the announcement of the elections for vice-chair, I really wanted to take the opportunity to thank everyone and thank my colleagues that participate in the election.

As I mentioned before, I think the fact that we've had elections like three times in a row, and there are more people interested in stepping up than the amount of seats as vice-chairs show that there is a commitment from this community to share the load of the work. It is a learning curve, this past few months, but I'm happy to do so and welcoming my colleagues from Australia, from Switzerland, and from the Netherlands to this position. Thank you so much.

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- NICO CABALLERO: Thank you, Columbia. Lebanon, anything you would like to say?
- ZEINA BOU HARB: Yes, echoing Thiago's greetings to the new vice-chairs, I would like to also wish them good luck with the new, I don't know, if it's an adventure or what to call it. Anyway, in my capacity as caretaker of the strategic objective too, I would like to inform my colleagues in the GAC that they should expect to receive so many emails, mainly regarding to the effectiveness of the GAC, a survey and also maybe a call for mentors because we are planning to implement a mentorship program for the newcomers of the GAC. Thank you.
- NICO CABALLERO: Thank you very much, Lebanon. One thing though, the current vice-chairs are gonna be there till Seattle, just in case. So we're not gonna have any kind of farewell ceremony or celebration or beer for that matter yet. So wait for Seattle. That's one important thing I wanted to clarify right off the bat. I have Australia next, and then Netherlands. Australia, please go ahead.
- IAN SHELDON: Thank you, Nico, and thank you for the warm welcome to an imminent vice chair position, very much looking forward to working with you all. I wanted to congratulate the planning committee on another successful meeting. I know how busy the agenda is, how many things we are trying to jam in every meeting. We always have a very, very busy schedule. I think the balance we had with the communities, particularly those who

we hadn't met with for quite some time were particularly useful. It's always good to restrengthen those relationships and find new opportunities for collaboration with the community.

The one thought I did have about the agenda, as much as I enjoy communicate drafting and the process we go through, I am thoroughly disappointed in this meeting that we actively chose to skip the public forum this time around. The public forum is an excellent opportunity for the GAC to hear from the community directly. In previous meetings, we had open mic sessions with more or less success, but we didn't have it this time around. And so the public forum was that great opportunity to hear directly from the community in one spot.

And Nico posed a question to us, do we want to keep drafting or do we want to go to the room? And we collectively made a decision, and perhaps rightly so given how much of the communicate we had to work through, but I think next time around, let's try and do better, and let's try and make sure we can find those opportunities to hear from the community outside of those more structured sessions that we have. Thank you.

NICO CABALLERO:

Thank you so much for that, Australia. On the point. You are a witness, you know that. Anyways, I wanted to participate in the community forum, but there's no way for me to force you to accept my good or bad ideas whenever they come up. Most of the time you don't, which is healthy for everyone, I guess. But it is what it is. Thank you so much for that, Australia. I have Netherlands next.

MARCO HOGEWONING:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. hopefully for the final time, for the record, this is Marco speaking for the Netherlands. To the substance matter that's on the screen. Yes, I do see a lot of value of the bilaterals, and I do appreciate that we manage to meet with each and every constituency during this meeting.

Then again, as my Australian colleague just said, meeting time remains very scarce. So as much as I would encourage to continue that, maybe it's also good to look into a more staggered approach. I do see where the sentiment comes from that some of these sessions were more introductory than substantive. And then some of them were indeed more capacity building than on topic. That's something to be developed, something to work on, I think.

I think it's really good to have those introductions, especially with some of these constituencies we haven't met for years. So if we can continue to do so, that also means that we can delve a bit deeper into the substance to the matter of introductions.

They are valuable, so maybe it's also worth encouraging the other constituencies to help us with onboarding new colleagues and move some of those introductions as part of the prep week and have shorter compact introductions for those who need them. So then with the meeting, we can go into the substance. Value and planning and capacity development, it's really is and remains a very important topic. I like what you and Rob just said, preparing ourselves for the 26 new

gTLD round and all that follows, especially in trying to form an opinion about almost 1500 strings.

I know that was a tremendous task. I know that some of us in this room are old enough to remember it and have sat through this exercise before. I think it's well worth starting with the next meeting to somehow put the GAC on a capacity building trajectory, learning from the past experience. I mean, the good news is that the colleagues who sat through it are still here. So it's scary, but not deadly. But I think it's good to take that on board for capacity building trajectory towards 2026 to really understand what is needed from the GAC and how looking back at the previous round, the process can be improved. I think with that, that's the substance that's on the slide.

Of course, very much thank you for the warm welcome. I would also very much like to thank the outgoing vice chairs for all their hard work in the past few years. Much appreciated and looking forward as we onboard to learn from you. Thank you once again to the government of Turkey for hosting us here. It has been splendid.

And finally, and I don't want to go back to agreed text, but I do think there is one important omission in the GAC communique in section one, where we talk about how many members and observers have attended. I think we've missed that the GAC as of this meeting has an important new observer of the feline variety. And I think we should recognize our furry friend that has been carefully watching over all our sessions during this, and much appreciated. It was a very warm welcome this time. Thank you.

NICO CABALLERO: Thank you for that. Netherlands. Iran, was that old hand?

HOSSEIN MIRZAPOUR: Actually, it was just to thank the government of Turkey for hosting this event on top of thanking you and the whole GAC crew for holding this very fruitful and interesting meetings and et cetera. And of course, once you have given me the floor, I should share one important finding with you.

As you mentioned, if we extend the wise president of GAC missions of the regions, we celebrate less because if we reelect them for after two years, it means that we extend our celebration for another two years, right? It's very important to take it into consideration. Or maybe you have another suggestion, Nico, I don't know, to celebrate maybe yearly as you wish. Thank you, anyway.

NICO CABALLERO: Thank you very much, Iran. Again, it will not be applied to the current team of chair and vice-chair. It's for the future. Whoever, he or she is in the future, that will be the case. Thank you so much, Iran. I have Switzerland next.

JORGE CANCIO: Thank you, Nico. Jorge Cancio, Switzerland, for the record. I'll try to be brief because I think we are already looking forward to finalizing the

meeting. Some short feedback on the bilaterals. I think it was very good to have again meetings with all the SOs and ACs.

At the same time, I think they could be more interactive. Some of them were more of a capacity building nature. And I think there are ways to frame them in a more interactive fashion. On the capacity building, perhaps, yeah, building on what Marco said, we have now a lot of work coming towards us on the new gTLDs. We could focus on that being very practical and digging up the examples from the past and working on this dummies guide new gTLDs for GAC colleagues, which I would very much profit from.

Something that I missed a little bit was perhaps a social location only for GAC members. I don't know, something after the meeting. The coffees are great, the tea is great, but some social occasion with something facilitating also the interaction between those members who don't speak to each other so often in a more informal setting.

And I was thinking about maybe a speed dating, I don't know, something could be organized to work on that. Something that was a bit of concern to me is the relatively low number of onsite participants, and of those voting for the elections, I think 78 out of 183 or so, it's still as something we should work on or at least think about how can we increase those numbers? And of course, talking about elections, I'm very happy to be elected to join the chair, vice chair team, as Kavouss would say, and look forward to successful work with all of you. Thank you.

NICO CABALLERO:

Thank you so much, Switzerland. I don't see any other hand, so Rob.

ROB HOGGARTH:

Thank you. We've been closely capturing all the feedback, so thank you very much for that. Couple of things to note just from various comments that were made that might help flesh out some things. Thanks to you, Ian. Back at ICANN80, you made a plea for more information being shared about the communique.

Staff worked with the leadership on the Art of Communique document. Quite voluminous, hope many of you found that to be useful. The results that Nico continues to look for is obviously a communique drafted in two hours. I don't know that that will ever be achieved. But one of the efforts again, that started under Manal was this concept of asking for topics ahead of time, asking for language ahead of time as well. That has proved to be quite successful in the past. You all actually spent less time drafting the communique this meeting.

I guess one of the reasons for that is you didn't have consensus advice. That always tends to take a little bit longer. When we put together the schedule, we're always looking to offer as many opportunities and options for you to conclude your work during the week.

So I hope you found that to be useful. What we will do going forward, working with the leadership team is to find the right balance of the schedule to allow things like the public forum attendance. And so we'll work to, to shift and achieve that. Zeina reminded me to make a pitch to you all, and I don't think you've seen this frankly much recently from

me because there have not been as many opportunities, but one of the things I try to share with you in my occasional consolidated emails are volunteer opportunities.

And we're gonna be approaching another cycle of community-wide or ICANN Org oriented opportunities to volunteer, not necessarily as a representative of the GAC, but as a participant, as an individual to lend your expertise to a number of different activities that take place, not within just government discussions, but more broadly operationally. So please look for those. One of those opportunities that just opened is to join Zeina on the selection committee for the Community Excellence Award, which will be given out at ICANN82. So if any of you are interested in that, as I look around the room, a couple of you have participated in that in the past.

And it's very useful for someone who has a knowledge of the broader community to join with other community members to talk about the qualities and expectations that the multi-stakeholder community has for everyone who participates.

So that's just the first of many, I think you're gonna see in this cycle. Please, note them and if you can't participate, maybe encourage somebody else to contribute.

It always seems from our staff perspective to be very valuable for others in the community to see government interest participation, and quite frankly, given the quality of the knowledge base, the brains that you all have, those contributions are really quite valuable to the overall employment of the multi-stakeholder model. That's all I had, Mr. Chair.

Thanks very much for making this a productive wrap-up session on our part.

NICO CABALLERO: Thank you so much. Before you go, before we go, as a matter of fact, well I have to stay for the annual general meeting at 16:30. You are kindly invited to attend that session at 16:30 that will be running for 16:30 to 17:30 PM right after the next coffee break. But last but not least, I have the government of Turkey. Meltem, the floor is yours.

ONUR GENÇER: Hello, Nico.

NICO CABALLERO: Oh, go ahead. I'm sorry, I see the name here as Meltem. So sorry. Go ahead, please.

ONUR GENÇER: Okay, Meltem, go ahead. So is Meltem online?

NICO CABALLERO: I'm seeing her hand online.

MELTEM ERGUN: Hello, everyone. Hello, everyone.

NICO CABALLERO: Please go ahead, Turkey, we can hear you loud and clear. Please go ahead.

MELTEM ERGUN: Okay. I had to return to Ankara due to a sudden duty, and I'm sorry I couldn't be with you at this time. It was a great honor for us to host you in Istanbul, in Turkey. And also, it was very nice to get to know you all. Thank you very much and I hope you see you in another meetings.

NICO CABALLERO: Thank you very much for that, Turkey. Speaking of thanking people, thank you so much to the GAC support staff, and for that matter, to ICANN support staff as well. Thank you to interpreters, thank you to ICANN Org, and thank you all delegates for coming from far or close. Thank you so much for taking the time of being here. So that basically brings us to the end of this session. Anything anybody else would like to say? I don't see any hand up, and coffee's waiting for us. So that being the case, the meeting is adjourned. Thank you so much.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]