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ICANN81 | AGM – Joint Meeting: ICANN Board and GAC
Tuesday, November 12, 2024 – 13:15 to 14:30 TRT

DAN GLUCK:

Hello and welcome to the GAC joint meeting with the ICANN Board on Tuesday, the 12th of November at 10:15 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 the ICANN Community Anti-Harassment Policy. During this session, questions or comments will only be read if submitted in the chat pod.

Interpretation for this session will include all six UN languages and Portuguese. If you would like to speak during the session, please raise your hand in Zoom. Please state your name and the language you will speak if other than English and remember to speak at a reasonable pace. As a kind reminder, cables with microphones are reserved for GAC members and observers and for this session invited guests from the ICANN Board.

All right, I will now hand the floor over to Nico Caballero, GAC Chair.

NICOLAS CABALLERO:

Thank you very much. Welcome, everyone. I hope you enjoyed your lunch and the fantastic Turkish food and Turkish coffee and tea and so on. Let me welcome the Board. We have the pleasure of having Sally Costerton, ICANN CEO, Tripti Sinha, Chair of the Board. We have Becky

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Burr, Danko, Alan, Edmon, and my distinguished vice chair, Nigel Hickson, from the UK, as well as Zeina Bou Harb from Lebanon.

Welcome, everyone. This session will be running for 75 minutes. That is still 2:30 PM. And we have some interesting reviews and as well as GAC topics and questions that were shared in advance of the meeting with the Board. But basically, we have four main issues, four main topics to discuss today. The next round of gTLDs, as you may have guessed at this point.

Some issues regarding Policy Development Transparency, like the ICANN Code of Ethics and SOIs. And we'll have a deep dive in that regard very soon. And then we'll also discuss urgent requests for disclosure of domain name registration. And finally, some overviews about global discussions taking place at the time regarding the GDC and WSIS+20.

So, without further ado, let me welcome again the Board. At this point, I will hand the floor to Tripti Sinha, Chair of the Board. Over to you, Tripti.

TRIPTI SINHA:

Thank you, Nico. And on behalf of the Board, let me reciprocate our appreciation for this joint meeting. We've had some very good meetings of note. Our intersessional meetings in the last couple of months have yielded some very good solutions and we appreciate the back and forth. And so, we're looking forward to this discussion. Thank you for your questions. And I'm going to turn it right back to you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Absolutely, thank you so much. If we can move on to the next slide, please. So, we have topic number one. I'll very quickly read what the whole thing is about. The GAC appreciates the Board and ICANN staff's responsiveness to recent GAC Advice regarding implementation of the ASP. And GAC members, we basically intend to share our reactions with the Board to presentations earlier in the week regarding progress and plans to initiate the ASP. And so, at this point, let me open the floor for discussions. Comments, questions, anything you would like to mention at this point from the floor or online? Well, we're talking about the ASP, the Applicant Support Program. Comments, questions, thoughts? And I have the UPU.

TRACY HACKSHAW: Please go ahead. Thank you, Nico, Tracy, Hackshaw, UPU. So, I'd just like to reiterate our appreciation for the discussions we had intersessionally with the Board on resolving, I believe resolving the issues we had regarding ICANN80 advice and the board's proposals, which we believe were a good compromise in dealing with that. And I think we are on a good path forward with regards to the ASP and trying to ensure that we have regular reporting, monthly reporting as we agreed with what's possible, course corrections, if there's anything that comes up in that reporting, as well as the Gates of 20 applications, at which point we will take a look again at whether or not you would have to any further work on the diversity aspects of this.

Another issue that I think we raised and has come up a bit since this discussion is the fee, the 227K. And one thing that we did want to note

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is that as you would recall from the ICANN80, ICANN79, ICANN77 advice, the gap did indicate that they would have liked to see the application fees for the ASP reduced to the greatest extent possible.

We do know that we have settled on, based on GGP, the guidance there, 75 to 85%. However, having noted the new fee of 227k, we believe that the 34,000, which is the approximate maximum fee that you would pay on the 85% level if you get the maximum waiver is quite high for several of the underserved regions that we are speaking to in terms of how they get financing and so on. So, what we are proposing, or would like to propose is that, and I had a discussion with Org on this earlier, if there's a way that ICANN could sort of provide awareness to when they go out into communications to not just the applicants, but also the financing institutions in those countries and potential funding agencies.

So, include them in your targets so they understand what this program is all about, what the DNS industry is all about. So, when the applicants approach for financing for the 34K or more, that it will be something that will be known to these institutions. So, perhaps some sort of material that will be able to be shared with the banks and credit unions and funding agencies, et cetera, in those underserved regions countries. So, that's a little bit of a nuance of what we would like to suggest going forward. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO:

Thank you for that, UPU. Sally?

SALLY COSTERTON:

Thank you very much, Tracy, UPU. Yes, excellent suggestion. Thank you very much for your comments, first of all, and thank you very much to the whole GAC from behalf of my staff team for your tremendous partnership in this. It's been remarkable and it's incredibly valued. There will be monthly reporting that will be shared with the IRT. You will be able to see it. And I know some of you were at the meeting with my team earlier this week when you saw it. So, I wanted everybody to be aware of that.

To this question specifically, it is something that's on our radar. This is, I'm talking about making funding agencies aware of this round and what potential applicants might, so they're not coming in cold is what you're saying, isn't it? Yes. So, for example, development banks are on this. One of the things that we need to work through with you and anybody in this position in the GAC that wants to work with this, hopefully we're already talking to you and also with the At-Large group.

When we're in specific target countries and regions, making sure we've got the right development bank contacts on our outreach database so that we're talking directly to the right people, recognizing that some of the more high-profile global funding agencies are often not in the relevant countries where those applicants might live. So, we need to be smart about, not that we shouldn't talk to them as part of the global outreach campaign, but we shouldn't assume that just because we have, that somehow, we've ticked that box. Thank you for the question and comment.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Thank you for that, Sally. I have Alan Barrett next.

ALAN BARRETT: Yeah, thank you. This is Alan Barrett. I think Sally said a lot of what I was going to cover, but yeah, let me emphasize that the Board very much wants to find or support deserving applicants from all over the world. And to that end, the Org has developed a communications plan, which has been shared with the GAC.

They will have outreach in specific countries and collaborate with GAC members in those countries to identify the appropriate fora or organizations to target in the countries. And the materials related to the Applicant Support Program, I think have already been translated into a few languages. And the org is interested in collaborating with anybody in countries that use languages that are not yet supported to allow the materials to be translated into even more languages, as time and capacity allows.

We're also aware that the funding is limited. And if there are too many applicants, then the Board has committed to looking for additional funding. We can't sign a blank check. We can't say that regardless of how many applicants we'll be able to support them all because we don't know how many there might be, but we have committed to looking for additional funding if that becomes necessary. Thanks.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Thank you for that, Alan. Any further comments or questions from the GAC at this point regarding the ASP program? Please go ahead.

VINCENT MUSEMINALI: Thank you very much, Chair. This is a Vincent Museminali from Rwanda for Liquid. So, I want to ask some questions related to Applicant Support Program. We're told that it is intended to make applying for a new gTLD or operating registry more accessible to applicants who would be otherwise unable to access due to financial resource concern. The ASP is for gTLD applicant seeking financial and non-financial support.

If I go away, it has been said that the financial support is for NGOs, MSMEs, and indigenous categories. So, I'd like to inquire if ICANN can think about financial support for registries in these developed countries to seek for financial support to apply for generic top-level domain because some government and organization run their own ccTLDs and may wish to run the new generic top-level domain. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Thank you, Rwanda.

ALAN BARRETT: Sure. Thank you very much for those comments. I think the Applicant Support Program is intended specifically to address those applicants that you're talking about, the countries which already have their own ccTLDs and who may be interested in expanding to new gTLDs or possibly using IDNs.

NICOLAS CABALLERO:

Thanks. Thank you, Alan. Thoughts, questions, comments regarding the ASP? If not, we'll move on to the next subtopic, which is Contention Sets. So, as you can read on the screen, throughout the meeting week, the GAC will seek to absorb ICANN81 discussions and reactions to the board's October follow-up regarding the effort to achieve a mutually acceptable solution as per the ICANN bylaws to the resolution of contention sets and then discuss GAC member thoughts with the Board. But at this point, again, let me open the floor for comments, questions, or for a discussion. Any comments or questions for the Board in this regard? And I have Switzerland and the UK. Switzerland, you go first.

JORGE CANCIO:

Thank you. Jorge Cancio, Switzerland for the record. I guess Nigel can then recap the discussion as topic leader as well. So, first of all, on this question, I wanted to comment the process we have been having. I think the Board has been quite responsive to our Washington and then to our Kigali consensus advice on the matter. I'm here, Becky. So, I think the reaction of launching the community consultations, as we asked you for in the Kigali communiqué, is really a way of showing your goodwill and your good faith in this discussion.

I appreciate that personally quite a lot. I think we understand that time is of the essence because this is really an issue that has to be clarified before we launch the next round and have the AGB ready, et cetera. So, as to the substance, I think we had some conversations with the GNSO council. We had conversations also internally in the GAC. We of course

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absolutely agree with the prohibition of private resolutions, including private auctions. That is very welcome.

Maybe we are still looking into the use of alternate strings, replacement strings, as ICANN Org is calling them in their presentations. But it seems to be a useful instrument at least and, of course, on ICANN auctions of last resort. We also had a good conversation yesterday with the GNSO council, understanding that after all, this is part of their recommendation and having or taking into account that apparently there's no other better solution under Californian law.

I at least personally would defer to your judgment. After all, it's your fiduciary duty to do the best in the global public interest. But yeah, I think these are the comments I wanted to share with you, but maybe Nigel can add to that. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO:

Thank you for that, Switzerland. So, if I understand correct, thank you for the comments, right? But you don't have a specific question to the Board at this point, right? Okay, thank you. I have the UK next.

HICKSON NIGEL:

Yes, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon to all here physically anyway. And it's a pleasure to be able to discuss these issues with the Board as has been mentioned. We were talking earlier in the week about what has gone on since Kigali. And we mentioned the extensive dialogue that has taken place in relation to bylaws consultations, in relation to the GAC Advice on ASP and contention sets.

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So, we thought we'd have lots more advice this time because we had such fun. That was a joke, Becky, really. No, I mean, sincerely, it was a very productive dialogue. And as my distinguished colleague from the UPU has said, the way forward on applicant support program is very encouraging. We had excellent discussions with the ICANN Org earlier this week, and there's work to do. We all know that, but we see a way forward.

On this particular issue of contention sets, thank you very much for the dialogue in the bylaws' consultation on this. As our colleague from Switzerland, Jorge, of course, has already mentioned, the resolution regarding private auctions and private ways of going forward was very welcoming. We see the resort to auctions of last resort as a consequence of that. And the alternative string way forward is something that we have discussed.

Hopefully, well, we will be responding to the Board and the consultation that you launched on the way forward on Contention Sets. We also note that having an alternative string may well help smaller enterprises and Non-Commercial Enterprises, one of the issues of our previous concern. So, that's encouraging.

I had one other point, but I can't think of it, but that's enough. So, I had no question either. Well, yeah, sorry. The question was really in your interactions with the community this week, it'd be good to know what other groups and bodies have been reacting to your most constructive proposals. Thanks.

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ALAN BARRETT:

Okay, thank you. This is Alan Barrett. I'll try to respond to that. We have, I think, had a very constructive dialogue between the Board and the GAC over the past few months regarding resolution of contention sets. And as the GAC recommended, private resolution will not be allowed. We do hope that the option of applicants providing an alternative string or a second choice in case their first string is in contention will have the result of reducing the number of contention sets.

And we think that's positive. We plan to, that auctions, what used to be called auctions of large resorts, and I think we're still calling them that, will use the ascending clock second price method, the same as was done in the 2012 round. And yeah, I think we've had constructive dialogue and we hope that the Board will soon receive confirmation from the GAC that that dialogue has indeed arrived at a mutually acceptable compromise. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO:

Thank you so much for that, Alan. Still on the point of contention sets, I have the European Commission and then Chinese Taipei. Please go ahead.

MARTINA BARBERO:

Thank you very much, Chair. This is Martina Barbero, European Commission for the Records. And I'll also start by appreciating the very constructive dialogue. I think it was very helpful to have these exchanges over summer. I think our question, which is also something

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we put to ICANN Org yesterday, because we have been thinking about this alternate string, but what is a bit unclear to us, and I know you've put a lot of thoughts in that, because the applications are linked to one string with one business plan, I guess that for alternate string, they would have expected to have a separate or different business plan for the alternate string. But I don't know exactly if you have, and we got feedback from ICANN Org that this will be possible through the procedure for applying to put different input according to the string.

We were just wondering if you had further consideration in terms of, do you think that the applicants will go for two business plans? Do you think they will be more likely to have one string with a business plan that is also partially adoptable to the second alternate string? Just trying to understand a bit, how do you see this question? We might be asked by applicants how to proceed in this respect. Thank you.

BECKY BURR:

Thank you. So, we've intentionally left this as open as possible. Applicants could provide two entirely distinct and unrelated strings, which may or may not require different business plans, or they could apply for alternative strings for the same business plan. It really, I think is going to vary from applicant to applicant. I personally expect that it's more likely to be a single business plan and alternate strings that fit, but that is just my wild guess. But what we've tried to do is impose as few constraints as possible so that we provide as much flexibility and so that the alternative string option can provide as much flexibility as possible.

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It is interesting. Once we came up with this concept of the alternative string, we began to identify other issues that are partially addressed through it. So, we're quite sure that this is going to provide some really interesting options and alternatives for applicants.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Thank you so much for that, Becky. I have Chinese Taipei next.

KEN-YING TSENG: Thank you, Chair. My question is about the term private resolution. We have been seeing the letter saying that the first condition is, there will be no private resolution when there is any string contention. I just want to get more clarity and understanding on the scope of the so-called private resolution. For example, if the two parties, they can reach a settlement arrangement and the one party can withdraw the application and allowing the second party to obtain the registration, would that be allowable or not? That's my question. Thank you.

ALAN BARRETT: Yes, thank you. This is Alan Barrett again. In the scenario that you postulate, I think that would be classified as private resolution. And the plan is to prohibit communication between the parties. So, they would not be allowed to discuss such things. And they would, therefore, being unable to discuss, they'd be unable to reach a settlement where one withdraws and the other one remains. Thanks.

BECKY BURR:

Yes, just to add to that, when we looked at what happened in the private auctions, which I think we all agreed was not desirable and something that should be prevented this year, we did reach out to experts to get advice on this. And we got very strong advice from the experts that if you actually wanted to avoid private financial auctions and the use of these arrangements, sorry, there's a cat up here, that the post-application joint venture could be easily used to disguise what would otherwise be a private auction.

So, we looked at lots of alternatives, lots of ways to control things so that the joint ventures that were produced as a result, because the advice that we originally got from the community was that we should allow post-application joint ventures. But we found that we had no way of actually enforcing that we would have lots of disputes about whether the joint venture was bona fide, whether it was just a sham for an auction or a payout. And so, we ultimately decided that that was not a good option.

The alternate string is intended to address that in part so that in fact, if you get applications that would otherwise be in contention, both of the parties can get a gTLD and move forward and proceed and nobody gets knocked out. So, the goal is to actually allow both parties to move forward, one with an alternate string.

NICOLAS CABALLERO:

Thank you very much, Becky, for the explanation. Please don't be scared by the cat. That's the official GAC's pet. His name is Tom. So, don't worry about that. I don't see any other hand up regarding a

Contention Set. So, for the sake of time, let's move on to the next topic, which is topic number two. This is SOI Statements of Interest. And in general, the ICANN Code of Ethics, as you all know, this continues to be an important priority area for governments in ICANN. And we welcome the release of the draft Code of Ethics.

We appreciate the timely reaction of ICANN Org to develop the current proposal. We're studying the draft carefully and we hope that this matter can be resolved quickly. I'm not going to read the whole thing. You can see it on the screen. So, the questions are basically, the first one is we are interested in Board member reactions to the ICANN Org draft document currently out for Public Comment. That's the first. And I'll stop here in order to see if we have any reaction. Is that an old hand, Chinese Taipei? Are you requesting the floor right now? Oh, okay, okay. I'm sorry, I'm sorry. So, Tripti, please go ahead.

TRIPTI SINHA:

So, first, thank you for the question. And as you know, transparency is very important to the Board and we appreciate the GAC's continued interest in the topic. So, in terms of our reaction, the board's reaction, we are supportive of the draft code of conduct that's out for Public Comment at the moment. And as of November, the 7th, we heard three submissions have come in. And by the way, all these submissions are in support of the draft.

In terms of next steps, after ICANN81, ICANN Org will coordinate all the public comments that have come in and they will also put together a community-based panel so that there could be a discussion in the

community with regard to the draft proposal as well as the comments that have come in. And then the Board will look at that and adjust it accordingly and look to see when we would ratify this and put this.

Our plan right now is to implement it in the first quarter of 2025. And so, that's where we are. Those are our anticipated next steps. And back to you, Nico. And my colleague, Chris, would you like to comment further on this?

CHRIS CHAPMAN:

Thank you, Chair. Simply to add that the need for the Board to set a community-wide expectation on statements of interest is entirely appropriate. And it's entirely consistent with what the Board is doing in other elements of ethics, whether it's conflicts of interest in the Board, transparency, you name it.

I think there is a new found intent, desire, recognition by the Board that things that have been drifting need to be addressed. Having said that, ICANN can't of itself enforce these statements of interest engagements. It is a collective responsibility of all the ICANN community. And we would encourage the relevant community to be proactive and positive in that regard. And that when it bubbles up to Board level as well, you will find a reaffirmation of these new principles. I just wanted to in effect, add to and double down on our intent.

NICOLAS CABALLERO:

Thank you very much for that, Chris and Tripti. I don't think I need to read the second question because they can have already answered

them, unless my distinguished GAC colleagues have a different kind of question. But at this point, let me open the floor again for comments, questions, or any thoughts you would like to share with the Board at this point. And I have Switzerland. Please go ahead.

JORGE CANCIO:

Thank you, Nico. Jorge Cancio, Switzerland for the record. Yes, I guess it comes as no surprise that I take the floor because it's a matter that has interested us quite a lot in the last meetings. So, maybe, again, as a bit of a broken record, but thanks again. I think the Board has been very responsive, very timely in its reaction, especially to the Kigali communiqué. And we are looking into the code, into the text.

We are also listening to the community, I think both in meetings, as yesterday with the GNSO Council, as of course in the corridors with the coffee time to see. And at least personally, I see that the reactions are very positive, very supportive. So, that's a very good sign. I think that we are still looking into the diverse reactions before we take a complete position. And as far as I'm aware, there's a communiqué language in the making that will probably go in this direction. So, just wanted to share that with you and to thank you again for the timeliness and the responsiveness and also for the clarity, if I may, of the text, because it avoids too much icon-ese or lawyer-ish language, which we all sometimes tend to abuse. So, thanks.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Thank you very much for that, Switzerland. Any reaction on behalf of the Board or we can move on? It's up to you. It's up to you.

TRIPTI SINHA: No, thank you very much for your words of support. And we look forward to getting more public comments and moving this forward. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Okay. So, seeing no other hand in the room or online, let's move on to the next topic, which is urgent requests. And just to give a quick background, the GAC notes that since March 2024, the ICANN Board has deferred action on the GAC's Advice in the San Juan communiqué to act expeditiously to establish a clear process in a timeline for the delivery of a policy and urgent requests. And I'll stop there and I'll go straight to the question.

So, the first question is that, the GAC appreciates the recent, for November 2024, trilateral call on this topic between GAC members, the Board and the GNSO council. Any comment or question regarding that call or anything you would like to share at this point with the Board? Let me open the floor at this point. Okay. I see no comments, so I'll go right to the next one. Considering that the Board has deferred action on the GAC's Advice in the San Juan communiqué and follow up to the advice in the Kigali communiqué to act again expeditiously and so on and so forth, when can the GAC expect to receive feedback from the Board on

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the GAC Advice and the GAC's latest proposal? That's a question for the Board.

BECKY BURR:

So, thank you for the question and thank you for participating in the trilateral call. We also found it to be very useful and we have been talking with members of the community and the GNSO council in particular about the ways forward with respect to policy development. At this point, I can't give you an exact timeline, but I can tell you that we have been socializing the idea of having a couple more trilateral calls to make sure we've nailed down all of the questions that need to get addressed in that.

We've also been talking with the GNSO council about what the proper vehicle for policy development would be. We actually tentatively believe that we can think of this as a continuation of the EPDP phase 1 Policy Development so that we wouldn't have to necessarily open up a whole new policy process to address it. We're interested in the work that the PSWG is doing on the authentication issues and I understand that there was a useful meeting on that and there's progress being made on that.

So, to the extent we can support that work. We want to make ourselves available to do that. So, I think we need to nail down a couple more issues before we go into the actual policy development and we will probably speak with you more about that to gauge your interest and willingness to participate in a couple more trilateral discussions to get there as quickly as possible.

NICOLAS CABALLERO:

Thank you for that, Becky. The floor is open for questions or comments. In the meantime, can I ask you, roughly speaking, are we talking about a three-year, six-month, two-year PDP process? Roughly speaking, can you give us, in your opinion, how long more or less it would take?

BECKY BURR:

I never want to bet on the length of a Policy Development Process. One of the reasons that I would very much like to make sure we get that scope nailed down is because if we get the scope nailed down, we could probably move more quickly on it. I personally don't think that this is a three-year process. I'm not sure I would bet my firstborn son on that, but I will certainly do everything in my power to make sure that's not the case.

I think just in terms of starting the next couple of discussions that enable us to move expeditiously to identify the policy issues that need to be resolved, there's a simple way of dealing with this, which is to say, pick a number of-- pick some period of time that says within X period after authenticating that the request is actually from law enforcement, you'll get a response. It appears to be a simple question, but I think there's a feeling in the community that we need to round out the pieces of this.

I just want to make sure we all have all of our expectations on the table and we identify whether there are any other pieces of policy that need to fit into it. We would certainly want to have policy well before the implementation of whatever the authentication system is done.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Thank you for that, Becky. I have the European Commission.

GEMMA CAROLILLO: Thank you very much, Nico. Gemma Carolillo from the European Commission for the Records. First of all, let me thank Becky from the Board for the answer. I think the question from Nico, I mean, the follow-up question on the question you see on screen is that because in the GAC there has been a discussion throughout this time and there has been a sort of growing sense of frustration because the GAC felt that two consecutive advice, I mean, advice and follow-up advice were ignored or according to the GAC not adequately taken into account, in particular because the GAC was not asking for a solution but for a path towards a solution.

So, the GAC thought we had taken all the reasonable steps to have a constructive dialogue with the Board and with the GNSO on this matter. I also think we had the call on the 4th of November which was called with zero notice period, Friday to Monday, and there was a very big participation from the GAC colleagues. I think this is yet another signal of great openness from the GAC into a constructive dialogue with the Board and with the GNSO. And same for the work of the PSWG because in all honesty this is not a simple matter, the one on authentication, and this is a track where we already see significant progress thanks to the effort of the colleagues from the PSWG.

Having said that, but I think this was a necessary premise because we had a number of discussions with the colleagues in the GAC. I seem to understand that the Board is open to consider the path forward that the

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GAC has proposed in its letter from 15th of October, which means that we might have two separate tracks, one on timeline and one on authentication of law enforcement.

Considering that the second one has somehow already kicked off, it would be really good that indeed we have very soon a trilateral meeting with the GNSO to nail down the details. I would just like to reiterate the view that the policy part which accompanies the authentication part should be restricted to the timeline which was the open matter at the end of the implementation review team effort. Thank you.

BECKY BURR:

If I could just add, I don't think there's any suggestion of expanding the policy issue beyond the timeline. The only question is sort of what are all the pieces that need to fit into the timeline. Thank you very much.

NICOLAS CABALLERO:

Thank you, European Commission, thank you Becky for the answer. Any further comments or questions? I have the U.S. next. Please, go ahead Owen.

OWEN FLETCHER:

Hi, this is Owen Fletcher for the United States, thank you. I appreciate the update on this and the responsiveness to the GAC letter of October 15th, thank you for that and that's good to hear about tentatively seeing an extension of the IRT as a way forward on this. I think we would welcome more discussions be they bilateral or trilateral as needed. I

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agree to identify any questions on an appropriate scope for the work or just to make sure that we all understand what sets of questions need to be answered to implement this possible approach. We also support the PSWG continuing its efforts to explore authentication solutions for law enforcement requesters. So, we hope to see if there's an appropriate mechanism for that. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Thank you, The U.S. Becky, is there anything you would like to add?

BECKY BURR: Thank you for that. I just want to clarify. It's not clear to me that the IRT is necessarily the right way but what I was saying is we don't think we need a new policy development process so you know it's not a whole new chartering process or anything like that. So, we're looking for efficient mechanisms but I wouldn't want you to walk out of here and think that it's clear that the IRT is the right way to do it. It may be that we just reconvene the already existing policy work.

OWEN FLETCHER: Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Thank you, Becky. The floor is still open. Any further questions, comments? I don't see any hand in the room. I don't see any hand online. Let's move on to the next topic which is topic number four. UN Level Global Discussions like GDC and WSIS+20. I'll go straight to the

questions. Can Board members share their reactions to the latest multilateral UN outcome regarding the GDC in particular, how it addresses internet governance issues relevant to ICANN and the multi-stakeholder processes? That's the first question. Should I go to Tripti? Please go ahead.

TRIPTI SINHA:

As you know, ICANN's been very engaged in the proceedings with regard to the Global Digital Compact in the United Nations and the current version which was ratified recently, we're very pleased with where they ended because the original versions of the GDC had left out the technical community and the last version now recognizes the technical community as a separate stakeholder. That was indeed a good place where the GDC ended. Also, it recognizes that Internet Governance is global in nature and it's diverse and multi-stakeholder. That also was very pleasing to us.

Earlier in the discussions, there was concern about the internet governance forum. They were questioning whether that should stay or go and there is now an acknowledgement of that as well. All in all, we are very pleased with where the GDC ended. Edmon, would you like to add further comments to this?

EDMON CHUNG:

Sure. Well, I guess building on what Tripti mentioned, I remember very clearly actually Jorge asking me the question at an ICANN open forum at the IGF a couple of years ago. What's the Board doing with the GDC?

I hope you see that actually Feni's team and the government engagement team has been working very hard and also updating the Board periodically and having interactions and input from the Board to work on the GDC. I guess the next question is even more important. How do we take some of the positive elements coming out of the GDC and reinforce them in the WSIS+20 process?

NICOLAS CABALLERO:

Thank you for that, Edmon. But let's go step by step. Jack the ripper digs it. So, regarding the GDC, any further comments or questions? I don't see any hand in the room, so thank you for that, Edmon. Let's go to the second topic, which is WSIS+20. Tripti, would you like to talk about that?

TRIPTI SINHA:

Sure. In terms of what will happen at WSIS+20, it's not clear. It's too early to say what the conclusion will be because this is a process that will take place at the United Nations General Assembly. We're hoping that the co-facilitators of the WSIS+20 review, who will likely be two permanent representatives of the UN, will find a way to include entities like ICANN in their deliberations. We're hoping that the review would result, amongst many other things, in continuing to uphold the IGF so that we can continue to meet there and there'll be a convening forum for us, and the reaffirmation of this model, the multi-stakeholder model of Internet Governance, and of course, support for the technical community as a separate stakeholder. So, those are our hopes and

aspirations for the WSIS+20. And back to you now, Nico, and yes, go ahead.

EDMON CHUNG:

Yeah, just to add to what Tripti said, yes, we do have the WSIS+20 outreach network and also very recently the WSIS+20 discussion group that is actually a small discussion group with the SO AC representatives. So, these are some of the things that the Board through the staff team has been working forward, and that's a community effort. I think right now going forward into the WSIS+20, it really needs, in fact, this is the community, the GAC community is the community that needs to take some of those positive elements into the WSIS+20 process itself.

So, the small discussion group that is happening is useful, and I note that some of the members actually are also part of the community efforts on the technical community for the coalition on multi-stakeholderism that is also taking those notes and amplifying it through the community. But I guess what I would just like to add is maybe turning the question around, what does the GAC members feel about these efforts and how you can help us take those positive elements coming out from the GDC to reinforce them in the WSIS+20 process.

NICOLAS CABALLERO:

That's a very good question, Edmon. Thank you so much for the question. So, the floor is open. Thoughts? Comments? And I have the Netherlands and Switzerland and the UK. You go first, Netherlands, please.

MARCO HOGEWONING:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good afternoon, colleagues. For the record, this is Marco speaking for the Netherlands. And then thank you, Edmond, and the Board. Of course, duly noted the ICANN engagement in GDC and much welcomed. Also, behind the scenes, all your expertise in capacity building.

Looking at WSIS+20, also very much acknowledge the effort you are doing in bringing in and mobilizing the community. And of course, we share your hopes that with the co-facilitators, we find a way to include ICANN and other non-state stakeholders in this process and provide them a seat at the table when this is discussed. I was part of the reason why this question now appears on the slide. And let me elaborate a bit outside, of course, the community input into the WSIS+20.

I was also wondering whether the Board has already taught simply from an operational perspective. WSIS+20 also recognizes the role of ICANN as one of the relevant organizations in managing part of the internet. And that makes the review also important for, as it were, the ICANN Org business case. And I wonder if the Board already has had any thoughts or deliberations on the potential impact or how to ensure that ICANN as an organization can keep doing what they do now in light of the upcoming review.

TRIPTI SINHA:

So, in terms of what we're doing, our fidelity towards IANA functions and other technical components of what ICANN does continues to operate at a high level of efficiency. But in addition to that, we are

working very closely with other technical partners in the ecosystem. So, the RIR community, ISOC, and other ISTAR organizations.

Indeed, Sally can add to this, but those meetings have commenced, recommenced. There was a while when they were not meeting as often because of COVID and so forth, but those engagements have reconvened again. So, the best we can do is do what we do, do it well, and tell a better story of how the internet actually works, how the underpinnings occur, because oftentimes it's a mystery as to how all of this is happening. And I believe we're not telling a story as well as we should do, tell the story. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO:

Thank you, Netherlands. I have Switzerland next.

JORGE CANCIO:

Thank you, Nico. Jorge Cancio, Switzerland, for the record. Just a couple of points. Of course, it's very important to make the point about the technical community, to make sure that that is recognized. At the same time. I think many of us are part of the wider internet governance community in different fields that depends on the stakeholder. I think going back to Edmon, it's very important that ICANN continues to act as a platform, as a facilitator of this community-wide dialogue where it helps us to keep on the conversation and to form our coalitions, our alliances, our networks, and to bring in positions.

Along this week, I don't know how many conversations, both formal and informal, we've already had on these topics. So, that shows that

ICANN community is as such a platform for these conversations. So, I would invite you once again, I know you are doing a lot, but invite you once again to be as proactive as possible, to engage in these conversations, because it really affects us all, all the different stakeholder groups. ICANN and ICANN Org especially can act as a catalyzer of these conversations, of this awareness raising, of this building of positions, developing of opinions. Thank you.

SALLY COSTERTON:

Thank you. Thank you very much, Switzerland. And I just wanted to respond to your request, especially to the organization. Just for the benefit of the broader GAC members, as well as the discussion group that was referred to by Edmon, and the mailing list, which have been very active. We have, I think, 540 members of our mailing list now from 85 countries. And I think probably quite a lot of people in this room may be on that list.

The discussion group has just got started. It's had two calls and it will meet as often as it decides that it wants to meet. And ICANN is participating in that as well as facilitating it, which is a little bit referring, I think, to what you're saying about not just the action of the discussion, but the substance of the discussion and sharing understanding of different positions, as you said earlier.

The other thing I just wanted to mention is that we, as many of you know, and I think all of you know, the organization has engagement teams all over the world, and we have had for many years. And those teams, some of whom are in the room with us now, are very close to you

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in many cases and work very closely with you in the relevant regions through our regional offices.

And it continues to be a priority for us, both as staff, but also with our community partners, whether that's GAC members or RIRs or other technical community partners, like ISOC, all these groups that Tripti is also referring to, to make sure that as we engage in regional outreach activities and regional meetings, as you rightly say, well beyond our, this is not just about our ICANN community, this is about our much wider global internet community, as you say, about the topic and how important it is to protect what we do and why we do it, and to prove all the time to show the world what this model achieves.

So, there's kind of a transverse activity, if you like, through the regions and through the world, as well as through these specific initiatives that are at the global level inside the Org. So, if anybody at any point wants to talk to me more about it, understand more, or for me to put them in touch with the colleagues in their region, just let me know separately. Thank you very much for the question.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: And thank you, Sally, for the answer. I have UK next.

HICKSON NIGEL: Can I defer to Anna and I'll go last?

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Sure, of course. I have Portugal and then the UK. Anna, please go ahead.

ANA NEVES: Well, I think that we need some Portuguese here today. So, let's go for Portuguese. I will speak in Portuguese. Despite a short comment, I think it is important to say in this meeting that ICANN will have a fundamental role in the WSIS+20 Review. At this moment, and having discussed the Global Digital Compact, I think we are fully aware that continuing discussions at the intergovernmental level at this stage will be a bit counterproductive because those who are against multi-stakeholderism will not change their mind. So, what we have to do is to be in bottom-up movements.

So, we have to reinforce everything that is action and entities that demonstrate that the bottom-up approach works and that the internet and the digital should continue to work. I think ICANN's work in this area is very good. I think we can reinforce it. And in the GAC, I think we have a very important role because we, representing the governments of our countries, and having here the various trends of the various countries in what concerns the governance of the internet and the digital, it seems to me that our point 8 of the GAC strategy on Internet Governance is very important so that several countries can be committed to this Internet Governance topic so that they can better explain at home and in their ministries what the bottom-up approach is about, and what it means to collaborate and be together to make decisions, and how everything is much more engaged and everyone is

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much more committed. This is absurd that I'm speaking Portuguese with words in English, but okay. Thank you.

TRPITI SINHA:

Thank you very much, Portugal. I couldn't agree with you more that the world would need help of the members of the GAC to reinforce this message of collaboration and partnership in working together and to ensure that all stakeholders have a voice at our table. Thank you very much.

NICOLAS CABALLERO:

Thank you, Portugal. I have the UK and then the European commission. Go ahead, Nigel.

NIGEL HICKSON:

Yes, thank you very much. I'll be brief. Nigel Hickson, UK. First of all, I really wanted to echo what Edmon had said here, and he took the words that I was going to mention to thank, in particular, the work that's already taken place in this regard. I think here we can link the GDC and the WSIS. The input that ICANN gave in some of the open consultation processes on the GDC and, indeed, the involvement of Tripti, the Board Chair in this process was incredibly encouraging. I think the evidence that ICANN presented was important.

Secondly, the linkages. We also think in our government, and I think many of us here when we discussed it in the GAC think important, that the GDC has laid a sort of bedrock, if you like, for the discussions of the

WSIS+20 review. But the WSIS+20 review is far more than just the governance of the internet. It's also capacity building, it's digital divide, it's development. And so, we need to reflect on those issues. It's not just a case of defending certain paragraphs in the WSIS agenda. It's more about that. But what it is about, of course, is the endorsement of the UN IGF.

We're delighted to understand and to appreciate the resources that ICANN, the organisation and the Board are putting into the UN IGF in Saudi Arabia next month. This is incredibly welcome to make the broader internet community aware of what goes on at ICANN and the criticality of the work it does. So, this is important. So, all kudos to the government engagement team and to Veni and his colleagues.

And finally, of course, we look forward to the UN GA discussions next year. It certainly ends in the General Assembly. But before that, there's critical processes. And let me just highlight three very briefly. Ana Neves spoke earlier. She performs an incredibly important role as chair of the UN CSTD.

The CSTD is the United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development. And they will meet in plenary session in the spring next year to adopt a detailed report on the progress of the WSIS process and also a resolution that will form perhaps the bedrock of the UN GA discussions that will take place later in the year.

Secondly, there's an event at UNESCO. UNESCO played a very important role in the creation of the WSIS process and are responsible for many of the WSIS action lines. And thirdly, there's the WSIS High

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Level Forum, which is taking place in July next year. And that will, if you like, be the last set piece event for many of us or for many stakeholders before the actual General Assembly discussion.

So, I think it's very important that ICANN continue, alongside other members of the technical community, their participation and promotion of these events. So, thank you very much.

NICOLAS CABALLERO:

Thank you for that, UK. Any reactions from the Board before I give the floor to the European Commission? If not, European Commission, please go ahead.

GEMMA CAROLILLO:

Thank you very much, Nico. Gemma Carolillo from the European Commission. And I will really be brief. I understand we have another topic possibly even on the agenda. So, I'm trying not to repeat what the colleagues said. I would like to emphasize one thing in relation to WSIS+20. And this is that, of course, a key topic for discussion is the model. And we all feel very much about bringing forward the multistakeholder model. So, this is one objective per se, perhaps. But at the same time, it would be important that in these conversations about the future of the Internet, it's not only about the governance as a model per se.

So, multistakeholder because it's good, but also because institutions like organizations like ICANN in its community can show authoritative leadership on what are the challenges and the opportunities ahead. So,

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take a clear position as regards the evolution of the Internet and why there needs to be a continued multistakeholder model supporting it. And at the same time, also a reflection of how these organizations and their communities can evolve to support the new challenges. I think this is a sort of reflection that ICANN started somehow. But at some point, when we go closer to the end of the WSIS+20 process, it would be good to have perhaps even some sort of position because this would help a lot in the discussions. Thank you.

TRIPTI SINHA:

Thank you very much for that input. And we will keep that in mind. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO:

Thank you so much again, European Commission. UK, is that an old hand? All right. So, for the sake of time, let's move to the next topic. Next and final topic, as a matter of fact, which are the board's questions to the GAC. I'm not going to read the whole thing again. But what are the top three priorities and briefly explain why. And the answers are right there. ICANN's role in the preservation of ICANN's multistakeholder model. We were talking about that just a moment ago and GDC and WSIS+20. No surprises there. Effective and successful implementation of the next round. That goes without saying. And the third one is. And we also talked about this before. Urgent requests, as you may have guessed. I don't know if any of the distinguished GAC members in the room would like to elaborate a little bit more in this regard. So, the floor is open at this point.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: We still have a good five minute, you know, time frame for this discussion. I don't see any hands in the room. I don't see any hands online. I do see Lebanon. Please go ahead.

ZEINA BOU HARB: Yes, thank you, Nico. Just to say that we are not listing these priorities by order of priority. Because the third item on the urgent request is very, very important to the GAC. And we believe this should not be delayed anymore.

BECKY BURR: Thank you very much. And as I said, we have expressed openness to the approach that the GAC has presented. And we are endeavoring to nail down the issues that need to be resolved. And that will be working with you, with the GAC and with the GNSO council to do that as quickly as possible.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Thank you very much for that, Becky. I don't see any other hand. Oh, CTU, please go ahead.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE: Thank you, Chair. Nigel Cassimire from the Caribbean Telecommunications Union. You're talking about the CEO's priorities. I have no quarrel with what's on the Board. But I would just like to suggest that maybe outreach be high on his agenda and especially to what I would call the underserved areas. So, we're making some

provisions right now for more applications from underserved areas in the next round. But I think enhancing the value of what ICANN does, enhancing the value of Internet governance. Because even in the small territories, the value of digital transformation has been made clear with the pandemic and so on. And a lot of us are challenged to move effectively towards developing digital economies and so on.

So, I think in the Caribbean's case, it has been maybe 10 years since we've had an ICANN CEO in the region. We have had a virtual participation from an ICANN chair during the COVID time at one of our ministers' meetings. But I think we need to see a little more hands on, a little more presence. Certainly, in the Caribbean, and I would make the case as well for the so-called underserved areas. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO:

Thank you so much for that, CTU. I can certainly volunteer to go to the Caribbean anytime. So, count me in by all means. So, we're running short of time. I have the U.S. next.

LAUREEN KAPIN:

This is Laureen Kapin. And this is a quick question for Becky. Just following up on the discussion we had with urgent requests. You had made a statement about you wouldn't want us to walk out thinking that the IRT was necessarily the place where ongoing follow-up would take place, the phase one IRT. And I was just wondering what other places you think in policy mechanisms that are still alive could be there in addition to that?

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BECKY BURR: I'm not certain. I am talking with the GNSO Council to figure that out. We definitely want to use an existing mechanism. We don't want to create something new. So, I think we're fully on board with that. But we just haven't nailed down exactly what the right place is. And the IRT is just a little bit awkward because it's really not supposed to be developing policy. It's supposed to be implementing. But we'll figure it out.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Thank you for that, USA. That's all we have time for. Thank you so very much. We need to wrap up the session. So, let's give a big round of applause to our distinguished Board members. Thank you so much. Tripti, any final words, anything you would like to say?

TRIPTI SINHA: Oh, thank you. We really enjoyed the exchange of ideas and input that we've received. We've had great intersessional conversations, as was this. So, thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Thank you so much. So, the meeting is adjourned. Please be back at 3 p.m. for the session with the ASO. Thank you so much. Enjoy your delicious Turkish coffee.

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