
ICANN82 | CF – Joint Session: ICANN Board and CPH
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WENDY PROFIT

Hello everyone, and welcome to the joint session of the ICANN Board and the Contracted Parties House. Please note this session is being recorded and is governed by the ICANN Expected Standards of Behavior and ICANN Community Anti-Harassment Policy. This is a meeting between the Contracted Party House constituents and the Board so we won't be taking questions from the audience.

Interpretation will include English, French, and Spanish. Remember to please state your name for the record for the interpreters and the scribes and the language you will be speaking if other than English, and please speak at a reasonable pace. This point I will hand it over to the floor over to our ICANN Board Chair, Tripti Sinha.

TRIPTI SINHA

Thank you, Wendy. Welcome everyone to the joint meeting. Our apologies for starting late, we were running behind we were in another meeting. I don't want to delay this any further so I will turn it right over to Becky Burr.

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BECKY BURR

Great, thank you very much. And this is the first meeting with our new Contracted Party leadership, Beth Bacon and Owen Smigelski. Welcome to you, guys. I know you all have your jobs cut out for you. I think we decided to start with the questions from the Board first so if we could go to those. And the first one is meeting structure input we're dying to know what your creative ideas are.

OWEN SMIGELSKI

Hi, this is Owen Smigelski from the registrar Namecheap and I'm the Chair of the Registrar Stakeholder Group. Thank you very much for this opportunity to come and share and discuss it's always good to have interactions with the Board and get to get feedback. Well, they put a lot of pressure on me here to solve everything so I don't know if I can necessarily do that. But we didn't want to start out and say that we really did enjoy the session yesterday I think was helpful to take that community feedback. And you have that opportunity for discussions, moving forward. It's something that the community does need to be involved with as we're dealing with something that the community created.

There can be some slight tweaks that were ICANN can make some changes. But if we're making some significant changes, we do need to make sure that those are things that are going through the community and process there just to avoid concerns. I know there's certainly thoughts and feelings from a bunch of the people in the constituency we had to cut the queue when we were discussing this earlier so you know leave it to all the various

members to give their feedback, which I expect will be a very lively Public Comment session.

But there are some high-level things that that that us and the CPH that we want to say we are flexible so we're not just stomping our feet and saying no changes so that we do understand the need for some change but there are a couple things that are really just very important for us. I think the first is, having three in person meetings, although you know it was good to have online meetings when there was a need for that. We weren't as productive in those meetings and there really is a good benefit to coming together, being able to work collaborate.

A lot of us in the CPH we do meet every week, so we do see each other a lot but being in person, I really helps that it's, I heard somebody describe what we do is I go to a meeting and I work with all of my competitors to get something done together, and I think that really fostering being able to work together helps foster that that relationship there to do that. We do like the thought and the idea is somebody did raise that years ago, you wouldn't know the ICANN meeting schedule to maybe three years in advance, and you know we only know to the end of this year.

And so that has an increased cost, I would imagine for ICANN, but also for those of us who have to budget and plan our travel and arrange time off and attendance, having that in advance, I would be a little bit more because the more predictability, a little bit ability to budget and take advantages of things like that. You know we're receptive to the multi-year contracts for the same locations.

Obviously, we don't want to always go to the same place every single time but understand that there's some cost savings associated with that. Good. One thing we would like to see from ICANN is as these changes are being proposed, it's good to see them in high level but there's no associated savings with that so if we're going, if ICANN could do x, it would save this, y would save this. So, being able to consider that and see that to understand, oh, if we go along with this, this is what we sacrifice this but the benefit will be this without seeing that really kind of makes it difficult to do that.

I think for us also is, cutting a day. Would that necessarily save as much we don't really again, we don't know how much that would save on for some of us were incredibly busy and we've been at this meeting, some of us for five days. But at the same time if we do know in advance, we can kind of adjust our schedules accordingly.

And then one thing we do also wanted to ensure is that we do have, safety for all of our members we do have some of our members who, are either due to religious or orientation or other purposes, feel uncomfortable or in some cases, have not attended ICANN meetings because they don't feel safe. And so, we really need to respect that and make sure that whatever changes we do moving forward, that we do have everyone feeling that they can come to an ICANN meeting and be themselves and not have to, concern so, I think I covered all the things there that we discussed earlier so I'll pause and get back to you.

BECKY BURR

Anyone else, Kurtis?

KURTIS LINDQVIST

I was going to address this question about the costings, obviously we do have costings for a lot of things and you can cut and slice this in many ways. Which I think was one of the reasons we didn't include it in this round because we didn't want the focus necessarily to be on the what if we divide it this way and instead talk about the principles, but we do have the data and we can think about a way to make that useful. But yeah, there was a bit of concern that if we start sharing too much detail then we start moving boxes around instead of talking about high level principles, but point taken.

BECKY BURR

Anybody else want to jump in on this? Catherine?

CATHERINE PALETTA

Thanks, this is Catherine Paletta from Identity Digital. I'm the Vice Chair for Policy of the Registry Stakeholder Group. And something we heard the GNSO say yesterday in their session with you and that I want to reiterate. It's just that cost savings is important and we definitely need to look at this process or look at how we meet. Keeping in mind ICANN's financial security, but we also need to make sure that whatever changes we make allow us to work and get our work done and work efficiently. And we shouldn't be sacrificing that to save money and we should hopefully find ways

to do both at the same time. Potentially work more efficiently with lower costs.

BECKY BURR

All right, thank you very much. I know we're going to be talking about this more and your point regarding needing to involve the community in any major changes is well understood. So, if we go on to the next question about working together with governments to encourage public policies being created with an understanding and awareness of ICANN policy. And the multi-stakeholder model. This is obviously very important and this is a place where the contracted parties have a particular role in making sure that governments understand your business and your business model as well as other things.

BETH BACON

Thank you, guys, very much. We've had this kind of flavor of question a few times and I think it's a good one for us to continue to discuss. Especially, this is an interesting year in that we have kind of two aspects of government engagement where it's the WSIS+20 review that's looking at the WSIS+20 review that's looking at kind of the foundational support for the multi-stakeholder model that we're doing right now. And then also there's, kind of more bespoke attacks or legislation addressing the DNS and policies at that level, DNS blocking, DNS abuse, various things.

So there's kind of two different types of engagement, I think. But overall, when we were discussing this within the contracted

parties, making sure that our engagement is efficient and complimentary so we know what ICANN is doing, what are your messages, what are your thoughts, what are your priorities, and we can share the same from the industry perspective. There's a lot of industry and especially technical community engagement on both the higher level WSIS points and then also in local legislation, I'm based in D.C., so I spend a lot of time in the U.S. Congress, whether they like it or not. There're others that are more centrally located to Brussels or Geneva where we can be complimentary in our messages.

So I think a little more coordination actively, intentionally between ICANN and the technical community would be welcome. And the way that we do communicate those things, I think you say, let them know about our businesses. I think we need to speak to governments in a way that says, do you see this thing that works so well? This internet that is contributing to your sustainable development and your growth and all of these different projects and internet safety and safety online. That's us. We do that. And then explain it that way.

I think we need to present it in a way that we have not in the past, which is take the tangible thing that they are either trying to fix or they are evaluating and explain how we support that from ICANN and the technical community to make it much more tangible because we don't need them to understand how the internet works necessarily. We just need to know when they need to know when to call us to ask a question. So, I think really our message is more intentional collaboration perhaps and be consistent in that

cooperation. And I think the industry again, the technical community is fairly well organized, especially in this year, but we can do better and keep that going kind of post-WSIS on the more bespoke issues.

I think one other item is that when we were discussing this is previously, ICANN has been engaged, but it's been a little bit opaque. We get a little, we get, high level updates and things. But I would love to understand from Kurtis, as well as the rest of the Board. What is your vision for kind of government engagement? What do you think is appropriate? How, what are the areas where we can help you and be a resource?

KURTIS LINDQVIST

So, I mean, well, as we know, the, but there's just the IGF, the WSIS+20, and then there's government engagement in general. We have, we discussed at the Board, our strategy for WSIS+20 and the IGF this weekend and modalities unknown. So, we will roll this out and approach, approach this. And we definitely want to engage with all the SO/ACs and our contract with the wider business and how we communicate this and how we do outreach to the various nation stakeholders in this.

I think in the general internet governance, and I said this in the previous session as well, is that something I reflected because I got asked, what was the difference between Tunisia 2005 and what was the difference to today? One difference is that, that in 2005, we had this idea of the IGF and the multi-stakeholder model, but we didn't

really have anything to show for it. Today, we have something to show for it.

You know, we actually do have the proof of this, but I think there's one thing that if I'm going to reflect to one thing that is different, that in 2005, we had a massive solid support, but all businesses showcasing how important this underlying infrastructure was to the success of businesses. And I really think that we all should pull together to get those to come back and showcase that. And I think that's something we can all contribute to day out and day, day and night show that this is really the underpinning of why we are successful, why we're delivering this, how we create economic value out of this.

And I think that's something that all of you can help us in this and with your companies and businesses to address this and show that this is really what this is delivering. And with your partners and with your customers, because you also have very strong customer network, right? And you can utilize that. And that's something we'd really like to see work on. And as we roll out our messaging for WSIS+20 and the work, we'll look to reach out to all the SO/ACs and engage you in that as well.

BECKY BURR

Thanks. I have Chris and Beth. Chris?

CHRIS DISSPAIN

Thanks, Becky. Morning, everyone. Chris Disspain, Identity Digital. I think this splits into, in my mind, it splits into two parts. One is the

sort of the big threat, the WSIS stuff, which you've just been talking about. And on that side of things, I think ICANN needs to be more than just a facilitator for a bunch of other people to make their points. I think ICANN needs to have a position. Historically, it usually has had a position. It's gone forward and spoken with its own voice, rather than simply being a box in which the community sits and is able to speak for itself. And I think that is happening. And I really, really appreciate that. But there's another side to this. And that's not the sort of major UN things like WSIS.

It's the individual governments legislating without taking account of the multistakeholder model and the global way that this policy is done. And there are two types of government that do that. There are the governments who say we don't support this model and we're just going to create. And don't worry, I'm not going to name any governments. We don't support the multistakeholder model and we're just going to create our own stuff.

And then there are governments who come to ICANN and say that they support the multistakeholder model, but then still go away and produce legislation which breaks the global policy. And I think we need to be braver. I actually think we need to be pushing back and say we are actually in charge. And we can do this and we do do it. And push back and say it might take slightly longer than you want. And you might not even get what you want.

I'm reminded of 2009, I think, when XXX, Becky, was it 2009? When XXX was approved by the ICANN Board, the US government was completely against XXX being approved. Their public position was

it should not be approved. But they didn't then go away and say, right, well, you've said everyone can have it now, let's go and legislate to stop it from happening. They bought into the model and they accepted it. And I think we need to be brave, prouder of what we do and braver of what we do and push back a bit more diplomatically and say, no, we're doing it. Thanks.

BETH BACON

Sabastien, thank you. Thanks, Chris. I mean, plus one, Chris, always. I think something else that we can work on is, I mean, we keep saying let's talk about our successes. Do you want me closer or further away? Okay, that's what they all say. So, I think that's something that we can be, besides the broader points of being engaged, I think something that we always say is let's talk about our wins, let's talk about what we're doing well. And part of when we're saying, let's speak the language of the governments we're talking to and saying these are the tangible things that you like, these are the problems you're trying to solve. Here's the work we've done.

I think we could be more intentional about us providing you specifics and vice versa, where you think that the Board is doing well. I think that then translates into those broader multi-stakeholder conversations, because a big part of the multi-stakeholder IGF conversations are showing that I can't, we're not just saying it's good because it's what we have, it's what we've been doing for 20 years.

Technology has evolved, ICANN is evolving, you're working a lot on Board readiness, we're doing a lot of very technical things like transfer policy that's really good, it's great for registrants, it protects their data and their registrant, makes things stable and secure. So, I think we're doing a lot of really good things but we're not telling them what that means for them. So, I think just maybe an offer that we can do some follow up work and just be more intentional about identifying the wins, and I think it then translates to the support for the model.

KURTIS LINDQVIST

I just want to add one thing to what Chris said, you talked about buying into the model essentially, but I think there is another nuance to this and that is to time and time again, explain the underlying principles as to why this works. Because I think that, Chris made it sound like it only applies to government, I think it's actually wider than that, but it's to society in general to understand the principles, why this works and why we create economic value out of this model. And I think, because it's so easy to forget about, and I think when you do legislation, whatever it is, understanding that these are the principles you're building that on.

So, I don't necessarily want to classify governments the way Chris did, but I think we have to have that broad understanding of, because I think that understanding of the principles is irregardless of what the other geopolitical views are. I think they are the important part that even, to use Chris's words, use the non-aligned countries would be buying into those principles. And I think that's

really where you need to anchor this, and that goes back to this point of explaining this to the wider society all the time. And I think that's really what we need to do better.

SEBASTIEN DUCOS

A lot of things I want to say have been already said. I'm not naming a country either, but I happen to be a European that is happily a resident of Europe and etc. Beth mentioned earlier, I'm also GoDaddy, Beth mentioned earlier interaction on the hill, and I think that there's a lot of larger players that have that interaction much better on this side of the Atlantic than on our side of the Atlantic, I don't know exactly why.

But I think that it could be also something that we need to work together on. You have your entries in Brussels, the way maybe the industry hasn't been so successful at, and maybe we need to find ways to walk in the door together, explaining why these things, not just ICANN by itself, not us individually, but trying to do that more together. And then plus, plus, plus, again on blowing our own trumpets, we're shy little buttons, we don't always explain so well what we're doing and how we progress.

I think that there's a lot of frustration with the pace of ICANN, how long things take. We need to explain both why it takes that long, why taking long makes things more stable, possibly sturdy. And even with people that know as well, again, this week, questions were asked, because obviously it's not a message that we're able to pass, again, particularly from my own region. And I think that

there's more collaboration that we could have with ICANN staff, particularly locally.

TRIPTI SINHA

Thank you. I just wanted to make one comment. There's a theme emerging in the last session as well. There was a comment made about how we're not telling our story well, and we should be celebrating our successes, explaining what we do, how we do it and why it's so effective. So, Kurtis, I think this might fall on your shoulders, but indeed we have to tell our story well.

BECKY BURR

Any other comments on this? Jeff?

JEFF NEUMAN

Thanks, Jeff Neuman with Dot Hip Hop. I'm also the vice chair of administration for the registries. Yeah, it's telling our story. I think that's great. And then touting our successes, like the recent transfer policy, which will hopefully be coming up to the Board very soon. But it's also getting stuff done. So, when the transfer policy gets to the Board, it's not that we're going to go, okay, well, maybe it'll get implemented in three years. Right. It's actually moving to the next step and then not just telling our story, demonstrating our story, I think is key. And I think it's hopefully by action, we do just as good of a job as we do in telling it.

BECKY BURR

Absolutely. okay, any more on this? So, we move to the next question. What are the challenges you face in contributing to the budget and Ops plans discussion?

CATHERINE PALETTA

Thanks, Becky. I'm going to take this one. As the vice chair for policy of the registry stakeholder group, I oversee our Public Comment process. And so, this was my first Public Comment that I worked on for the ops plan and budget. And it was my first opportunity to really dig into all those materials because there are a lot of them. And we really appreciate the opportunity to comment on the budget and ops plan, especially as the contracted parties who are the primary funders of ICANN. We think this transparency is really important and we think it should continue. Not that anyone was suggesting it wouldn't. But the materials are also oftentimes very opaque and hard to understand.

I brought in some of our finance folks to look at it as well because I'm a lawyer and I don't manage budgets. So, this was very new for me. But in particular, we saw in the budget materials themselves, which I understand are being worked on for many, many months ahead of them being put out for Public Comment. Things like the registry fee increases were not in the main body of that Budget and Operating Plan for fiscal year 26.

There was a document published in October of 2024 that kind of laid out the predictions for these things, how much money ICANN expected to bring in. But then that wasn't put together with the actual budget materials. And that's one example, right? It's not

about how we handled the fee increases or anything. It's about needing to know that that document was published somewhere else and it wasn't included in the other document. It makes it really hard for the community to comment effectively without seeing everything in one place.

We're obviously sympathetic to the fact that there's lots of rounds of review. And to get this thing done, the work starts many, many months in advance and has to go to a graphic designer to make it look pretty. And all of these because some delays. And as things develop, it might not be the most up-to-date information. But we also acknowledge that there's lots in those documents that we might comment on, but that our comments aren't really going to change.

So, ICANN office locations. It's great. We need that information about how much it costs to run the different offices or personnel or something. But we know that our comments are best directed towards other areas of the budget. And we often find that we would like a bit more information about those things. So, I think how we meet is a great example. With all of the conversation on meetings and evaluating that process and those procedures, more information about the meeting, even just the forecasting for the meetings.

We saw that meetings are often over budget. More information about why and how allows us to engage better in the how we meet process because we have more information from the budget. And then finally, as maybe this was raised in the GNSO session, we are

volunteers. And it's a lot of work. And I appreciate the business realities of ICANN needing to get their budget materials done and approved and finalized. But it's not a huge amount of time that we're given to dig into all of these documents. It's not a huge amount of time that we're given to ask questions, because it goes out for Public Comment.

You have a few weeks to raise specific questions. Not that as procrastinators, like the humans that we are, that we wouldn't necessarily still be crunching towards the end. But the time constraints can also be limiting as well. Thank you.

JEFF NEUMAN

Thanks, Jeff Neuman. I think one of the other things I'm trying to think of how to phrase this, when the plans are put together, it's a look at a static point in time. And so, the question, I don't know the answer of how we do this effectively. But I believe, Kurtis, during the welcome ceremony, you said, in actuality, for the first six months, we're in excess of what we thought we were going to have. And that if we continue on that path, we'll end the year with some sort of excess.

Well, that's not what the budget or Operating Plan had assumed. And so, and again, I don't know the answer to this. How do you work in facts or changed assumptions or things that have changed since the times the assumptions were made? That's one. Again, I don't have a great answer on that one. But the other point is, and it relates to what we asked the Board the last time, which is with the fee increases, it is what it is. I'm not talking specifically about

that. But we had asked what the long-term strategy was with respect to any kind of increases or needs that the Board believes the organization has.

In other words, was it a one-time thing? Or is this a long-term strategy that we're going to do it every year? Because we believe that there must have been some longer-term plan than just, well, let's just increase it for this year, and then we'll address it next year. Because, obviously, we have to plan our budgets too. And so, kind of all of that together makes it, in addition to what Catherine said, difficult to make comments.

BECKY BURR

Kurtis?

KURTIS LINDQVIST

If he's saying your question towards me, I'm going to come to, so maybe I'll come back to that. But I want to-- I guess Xavier, I think, wanted to comment as well-- but I just want to do two points. I mean, on the timeline of the comment, I mean, there's, there's a challenge. I mean, in my mind, the time we approved a budget ahead of the fiscal year starting is already phenomenally long in advance, right? We're trying to forecast 18 months out, which I don't know any business who would survive doing that, right?

So, extending the comment period even further makes that even more of a challenge, right? And so, I understand the dilemma, but it's also, I have to run a business based on this and it becomes really, really hard, right? There's a second point to that is on the

long term, I mean, obviously, on the forecasting, so Xavier and his team, and with all the direct reports to me, we do a re-forecast all the time. So, we actually, internally, we do look at what changes and our revenue might change because of higher registration numbers.

They might go down and we lose, but we need to have a long-term site. What the long-term, so yes, there might be a small excess by the end of this year, which was not assumed when the budget was made. That doesn't mean that we see that next year though, because we do have a longer-term analysis as well that we're looking at, and we're trying to understand what do we believe this should be.

I mean, again, we, based on this, on the insights we have and what the trend looks like. Xavier and his team do a lot of analysis on that, but there is a re-forecast that's ongoing all the time. We try to take that into account internally. But let Xavier comment on the other thing. Xavier wanted to make some points on the other question.

WENDY PROFIT

Roving mic, turn on please. Thank you.

XAVIER CALVEZ

Thank you for the opportunity. I'll congratulate you on having reviewed the documents. And at the same time, scold you for not having done it before recently. The CPH this year has taken the time and, and taken the time to review and to submit comments, which are all helpful. So, there's a lot of history about the process.

Sometimes I want to blame your CEO and myself for the structure or some of the process, but I'll take responsibility for it.

There's a lot of information and a lot of documents in your, obviously not the first ones to mention it. And there's a lot of history as to why we have the structure of information that we have. It's interesting because in the previous session, your colleagues have said the same thing about there's a lot of information and ask for a bit less. And you're saying there's a lot of information and we would like a bit more detail, which is, I'm being facetious about it, but this is the multi-stakeholder model.

Everyone has a different perspective to it. And I can have the same person, I have the name in mind who said, I would like an executive summary. And I would like details about this. And this is normal. And this, we take on that challenge. It is an endeavor, but it's natural. It's right. And we want to be able to address that. So, we take your comments are therefore extremely helpful for us to then try to evolve the structure of the information, the level of granularity of the information.

About the process and the timeline of its process, I said facetiously, but it's sad that it takes us about 18 months to plan for 12 months. And we do that very much ahead so that we try to have the longest possible Public Comment period, which is 60 days, which is 20 days more than the required Public Comment period. Because we would like to try to give as much time as possible. But time then means early information.

Early information means a lot of assumptions, less facts. And therefore, we do these budgets and plans very much in advance of the fiscal year to which they apply. And illustrations of that, which also speaks to what Owen was mentioning, is we end up by producing plans often without, for example, knowing in which location we will have an ICANN meeting. And from a financial accuracy standpoint, of course, it is a challenge. It's not that difficult either. We have contingencies for that purpose. And we can plan without necessarily a lot of facts, but it challenges the process.

We do want to look at opportunities to update the information that we use for budgeting purposes closer to the beginning of the fiscal year to which it applies. So, for example, this year, hopefully it's a scoop that won't hurt me, we know now where we are going to go in March 2026. When we produced the budget, we didn't. Now we have, therefore, more accuracy about the costs, and we're going to need to update that. So, in the final budget that we will submit soon to the Board for their approval, it will be different than in the draft. We want to be careful with that because we want to have adequate engagement with the community to make that transparent.

We don't want to slip in changes that you guys don't see, and then the Board approves them without your knowledge. So, we want to be careful with that. Challenge of the form and volume of information, we're well aware of it. We do want to try to lower the bar for access, while at the same time providing all the information that everyone wants. And there is a large diversity there, but even

more so, therefore, why your comments are useful, because it guides us. And the comments in the previous session on the same topic also guide us.

We would like to try to have, for example, more topic highlights in the plans rather than a flat 250 pages, which we know some communities are more interested in some things than others. We also don't want to speculate on that, so we'll need a lot of engagement. Thank you for taking the time, and I hope that you will continue to spend a bit of time on it. Thank you.

BECKY BURR

Thanks. I have Sajid and Chris in the queue.

SAJID RAHMAN

Thanks. And on the comments of the performance, etcetera. So, when I looked at the ICANN budget last year, and this year, there is this saying that the curve in the road is not the end of the road, unless you fail to make a turn, right? So, the good news is that, ICANN has made a turn, and you could see the actions that were taken last year and also the discussion that we're having now. So all those actions are culminating to some positive turn, which, Kurtis referred to would probably result into some, not a deficit, but some surplus. But we are not out of the woods yet, right?

So we are focused on the cost efficiency, on getting more expenses down, and having the more funding eke out is sort of what we're looking at. We don't play with many levers on our P&L, so these are the two, three levers that we can play with. And the curve has

happened. The turn has happened. Now we are going to, see how the rest of the months and the years turn out. Thank you.

BECKY BURR

Chris?

CHRIS DISSPAIN

Thanks, Becky, and thanks, Xavier and Sajid for the comments. I'd actually like to turn this around for a little while and talk about the challenges that we may be able to do something about. So, part of the issue is that the budget comes to a bunch of people, mostly of whom don't have experience of reading budgets. And when we ask questions, when questions are asked, they are asked of the people who prepare the budget, who are basically accountants, and they reply, as accountants would reply to people who don't actually understand accountancy. So, that's really quite a challenge.

Now, what the ccNSO does is it has its own SOPC working group, which we try to put representatives of ccTLDs who manage the money on. And it strikes me that this is something that the Contracted Parties House could also do, which is to try and get, and I know we've kind of talked about this in outline, to try to get an SOPC equivalent Working Group in the Contracted Parties House where somebody from finance at Identity Digital, somebody from finance at Namecheap, somebody from finance, etc., can be on that committee, can actually read the budget as an accountant, and knows the right questions to ask, having been informed by us in lay terms what our concerns are.

So, I think that actually is something that we can do to help, as much as what Xavier talked about, of having specific highlights that say, if you're interested in meeting costs, this is what you might need to know. If you're interested in staffing costs, this is what you might need to know. So, I think a combination of those things, with us stepping up a little bit more, we're very quick to complain or to make statements about things we don't like. And part of the issue is we don't necessarily have the depth of knowledge to be able to argue cogently why there's a problem. So, thanks.

BECKY BURR

Thanks. Anybody else? Thank you very much for this input. We often don't get as much detail and color on our questions so we really appreciate it. Shall we move into your questions.

BETH BACON

So, the CPH felt like it was a logical follow up to our Istanbul meeting where it was, we'll call it pre-Kurtis, and now we are current Kurtis. We outlined our priorities and areas of interest for the CPH and for the incoming CEO. I'm happy to quickly go through those I think we provided them in some prep, but I'm happy to reiterate those but we wanted to then turn it back and say, now that you are on Board and here. We'd love to hear how those land with you, what your priorities are, what you're, as you're making your way through your, your first ICANN meeting as CEO. What is jumping out at you as, as your needs. I think as a, just as a reminder.

The things that we flagged were, first continuing progress on the things that we think we have done well successes. The Board and the CPH especially but also the rest of the community have really become more flexible in our engagement, especially in the policy development process. We love the representation of staff and Board members in those processes early on so that things don't come up to the Board and you go, what is this. And then we have to backtrack.

So we think that's been a wonderful improvement. We've appreciated. Again, the focus on the conflicts of interest policy. We really brought that to the Board and the Board push that along with it was as a community level issue we'd love to, obviously looking to see that come to fruition, and really wonderful session this week already on it to hear other views. And then we just noticed, we, we highlighted enhancing ICANN's effectiveness, especially again as we go into this evolving Internet Governance landscape and different things, enhancing our efficiency focusing on those items that are ICANN's core mission delivering efficient actionable policy.

So, a lot of that is on the CPH. The folks in the PDP we need to be more disciplined so that we give the Board recommendations that are very clear and actionable and then implementable so that we don't end up having six months on either end of the of IRTs and things. So, a lot of that is, again, work on CPH but also coordination with the Board. And again, we just really appreciate the dedication of support from the Board to the policymaking process and the

flexibility and kind of innovative ways that we've been able to evolve that interaction, I think it's been really effective.

BECKY BURR

Thanks, and I'm going to turn this over to Kurtis, but just to let you know, we work collaboratively with Kurtis and he's come on Board and as identifying priorities as we speak. So, this is a work in progress.

KURTIS LINDQVIST

Yeah, thank you. I mean, maybe, maybe I'll do a little preamble first because of the questions phrases so I mean to what Becky said is that, I mean I really genuinely to, I mean I've been saying this to staff so I might as well say it here right. And I said it in the speech is the wonderful thing is that everyone has an opinion about ICANN. And so did I right and because I wasn't a community although nine years ago, but I was very conscious not to take a lot of perceptions with me right or because we all have opinions.

But really try to understand the spend the first few months to listening to the staff and their needs concerns opportunities challenges. And the same with SO/AC leadership. The calls we had with all of you and Ross and his new role as the SAP policy join me on this and we named it the Kurtis and Ross world tour. And it was really quite useful it was very beneficial to hear all this feedback and have this engagement and really helped shape thoughts that are ongoing that I'll have as Becky said discuss with the Board about the priorities, going forward.

And I think that a point about the continued conversation and discussion and the policymaking there was something we discussed in some of the calls as well was the. I think everyone appreciates the-- I hate to use the word informal but the engagement on it on a day to day either but the non-formal as you say engagement with between staff and the various policy processes because that helps, as you said, bring the policies become more understandable more implementable when it comes to that position so I think that's useful.

And I think to the other part of what we discussed about the Board appreciate the vibrant community discussion on the code of conduct for example I think that's been doing quite a bit of progress in that I think that's been very good with yesterday. And, and the same with working with actually Anti-Harassment policy and other similar policies we have. So, that's been very useful. And I said I think this the engagement between the organization the community and the Board and the community is really important between the various community groups. And, and that's also a very essential part of showcasing and making the multistakeholder model work. That's been very useful.

I think it was actually part of the question was also about the fees but I think we covered most of discussion already. So, I don't think I need to repeat that necessarily but the other part was about the effectiveness and the governance is really important that we support the current model. And we had this exchange earlier and I think what we talked about is that we all have, I mean, the end remark was that we also had to get work done and I think that's

something we all subscribe to that this has to be some outcomes from this.

And we do think that this is a very foundational part of what we do I mean we are, to some extent, the shop window for the multistakeholder model so we had to make sure we deliver on that and we actually had the outputs on that. And finding ways to further work on that and then find ways to improve that that's very much on my priorities.

So, coming back to your question about what do I do? I'm going to work together with the Board to come up with a project direction, I think. And that's an ongoing discussion with this. This input has been very valuable for that. So, I hope that sort of answers the question what we had on the internet ecosystem, internet governance, I think we covered before. Thank you very much.

BECKY BURR

Thanks. Tripti, maybe you have a few words to say about the process for goal setting.

TRIPTI SINHA

Thank you, Becky. So, yes, the Board is currently engaged with Kurtis and we're taking a slightly different approach this time. This is in harmony with a Kurtis. We would like to have the goals in place prior to the budget process in other words, have his goals aligned with the fiscal year. In the past, we would approve it at the start of the fiscal year, and the budget had been approved many months prior. We are also working. So, taking that into account we right

now we aim to have the goals in place, and we're calling them actually objectives will have the objectives in place by the next meeting which is in Hanoi.

And we are working with Kurtis he will produce his understanding of priorities from his assessment of studying ICANN, understanding the landscape, talking to the organization, talking to the Board and getting feedback from the community. And we do a back and forth, and they will be aligned with the strategic plan which will also get approved soon very soon. And they will have KPIs attached to them key results and deadlines and timelines. So, as you know these goals do get published, and you will likely see something quite soon.

BECKY BURR

Other questions, inputs, comments? No? We have a few minutes left, and we've been using extra time in all of our sessions to start a conversation about reviews and priorities with reviews and all of the things that we have on the table in terms of the Continuous Improvements, the Holistic Review, the Pilot Holistic Review, the ATRT4 issues and so, we actually like to invite you to give us some input on this. We're conscious of our obligations under the bylaws with respect to specific reviews in particular but not exclusively.

We're also very conscious of the bandwidth that the community has the competing priorities on the community and on Org and the Board and so, we are really working hard brainstorming through

this but wanted to take this opportunity since we have time to get input from you. So, I'm going to open the floor. Chris?

CHRIS DISSPAIN

You're pointing at me, Beth? Okay. Thank you very much. Thank you very much. Just to say we actually have till noon, should we wish to take it. So, we've got plenty of time for us to bounce this ball backwards and forwards. So, I'm in a slightly challenged position here because I've got at least two hats and probably three, but I'll give it a go.

So, I think the registry stakeholder group's view I think is that we're clear about, we went through a lot of thought about the CIP stuff because it got quite confusing about whether we were reviewing ourselves or whether the GNSO was reviewing itself with us as a part of it, should there be a separate process for the registry stakeholder group. There was a fair bit of confusion on that. And I think that, and there's also challenges with the five principles because one of the principles, for example, is about accountability to outside.

And actually, if you look at the registry stakeholder group's charter, its accountability is to itself, to its members. So, that makes it quite, obviously in the GNSO it's a different thing, but as the whole, but as the individual organization. So there have been some challenges there. But I think there's a general acceptance that, and I think the registrars are in the same boat, that there's a general acceptance that continuous improvement is very important, we need to do it, and we should grasp the nettle on that. So, on that

side of the fence, I think we're fine. I think we're all of the same view that we are reviewed to within an inch of our lives and the reviews are challenging and not always particularly helpful. And I think that there, I'm not sure that there is a clear, well I know that there isn't a clear understanding about what ATRT3's recommendation actually means.

So, I think everyone knows that I'm now going to put my chair of the Pilot Holistic Review hat on. Everyone knows I think that we've reached out to the leaders of the community, SO and AC chairs and to the Organizational Effectiveness Committee to talk about that.

The Board I know had a discussion on this on Friday, I think it was Friday, and you're the Org team, Jason and Jessica, and are going to meet with Sophie, Hay and me, and the chairs of the SO/ACs tomorrow to actually work through what you've said, what you said at your meeting, see if we can produce a way forward. I think from the point of view of ATRT4, I think everyone acknowledges that it's a conundrum because you have a bylaw challenge, the bylaw says you have to do it.

I actually think that, speaking as a lawyer, I actually think there are ways around that. You can in fact not do it. You can say that you're going to suspend it. There are methodologies you can use to achieve that. However, that's challenging and people get upset because they're concerned that you're avoiding the bylaws and so on. So, I have a suggestion, I know it's not unique to me, of a way that we might work this forward, and I'm happy to go into that if you think that's helpful, Becky. So, the way that I see it is this. The

CIP stuff is basically done. ICANN, in its inimitable way, maybe in the middle of trying to overengineer it, but in essence it's done. The five principles are agreed.

Everyone understands that each SO and AC is going to interpret those principles in the way that they want to, and they're going to create their own process for how they're going to do the Continuous Improvement Program. So, the time has probably come to let it go, to give it to each SO and AC. And from the review of that, so there will in future need to be a review of the CIP work, which is what the Pilot Holistic Review team is supposed to be building.

For that, what we could do is we could stop the Pilot Holistic Review from trying to build it right now, send the reps and the Pilot Holistic Review from each of the SOs and ACs back into their SO and AC to take part in and observe the creation of each SO and AC's CIP process and work, and then bring that team back together again in a year's time.

Once those CIPs have been built, to say, now how are we going to review this? Because it's quite clear there are going to be four or five different CIP processes, and so reviewing them is going to be a bit of a challenge. But we can build that once we know what the processes are and how they interrelate. So that would deal with building the review of the CIP work. That then leaves the other side of the fence, which is that ATRT3 also envisaged that the Holistic Review would do structural reviewing.

Some people think that it would do structural reviewing by looking at the CIP work and saying it's obvious to us that the, I'm going to use the ccNSO as an example. The ccNSO should think about possibly restructuring. ccNSO, you should think about possibly restructuring. Other people think that the Holistic Review should look at it and say, the ccNSO needs to restructure. Here is how you should restructure.

There's a real challenge there as to which is the right way to deal with it. And whichever way you choose, there's got to be a huge amount of work done to structure that review so that it's workable and acceptable to the ICANN community. Because I've used the ccNSO as an example, and I can tell you that if you go to the CCs and say, an ICANN volunteer Holistic Review is going to review your SO and is going to tell you how to restructure it, they're not going to be very happy about that. And that's not what they think ATRT3 recommended.

So my suggestion on that side of the fence is that we shut that part of the Pilot Holistic Review and we move that work into ATRT4. So, you have a real reason to do ATRT4. You don't have to worry about the bylaws. There are going to be bylaw changes anyway because the Holistic Review is going to need those when it finally gets formed. But you use ATRT4. It's a very limited scope just to look at that Holistic Review work and you make sure that the people in that ATRT4 have got the right terms of reference to enable them to build a structural review of ICANN. But the caveat and the caveat on that is that the community understands and accepts that that is what

we are doing, that we are building that. I hope that makes sense and I'll happily answer any questions.

BECKY BURR

Thanks, Chris. Tripti?

TRIPTI SINHA

Chris, you've clearly given a lot of thought to this. That was a lot. And I'd like to share some thoughts with you that I shared at last session, which is, I think this is a good time. You just said that ATRT3, it's not clear what it meant, right. Now, that in itself tells us we have a problem, right. If we conduct a review and the review has findings and we say, we don't know what this means, we've got a problem on our hands. And the Pilot Holistic Review is paused. And there's a whole bunch of other stuff that's in flux, some not moving as fast as they should, some likely are moving at a good pace. And we've done many reviews with many recommendations, some of which are implemented, some of which are not, and the community has been committed to doing all this work and it's a lot of work.

So, I think it's a good time, ICANN is 28 years old, we're 10 years past the transition or close to it, that we reflect and say, are the reviews, the way they're constructed fit for purpose. Why don't we take a step back and talk about this as a community and possibly reinvent this and make it more effective. And what's the purpose, what motivated us to do this, we want to ensure that we are accountable, that we are transparent, but I think we've over engineered this to a

point where I think we've lost our way. And let's all come back and redefine this. So, I just want to share these thoughts that I shared with others in the previous session.

CHRIS DISSPAIN

Can I just respond to that? Just to say, Tripti, if you're going to do that, I'm 100% with you. I think that is, I'm trying to fit a solution into an existing mechanism. If you want to change the mechanism, I'm 100%, and I think pretty much everybody would agree with me, 100% behind that, because I think that's the right thing to do. It's a question of whether we have the guts to do it. But I just think, absolutely, if we can do it that way, that would be brilliant.

TRIPTI SINHA

You just said earlier that we need to be bold and brave, so let's be brave and take this next step.

SEBASTIEN DUCOS

I just wanted to make a little point that this is very dry and arcane to me so I'm not going to judge, but fantastic that you took it. But quoting my good friend and colleague, Ashley Heineman, who's got a bit of experience in government, and arcing back to the question of what we can do to better communicate, this is the language they speak. When these reviews happen and happen and are completed and accepted, this is exactly what gives us the credibility to the governments that we're doing the right thing, and we know what we're doing.

BECKY BURR

So, just to follow up on that, I'm trying to figure out whether that is a suggestion that we go ahead with ATRT4, or that we take a step back and look at what we're doing?

SEBASTIEN DUCOS

Again, too dry and complicated for me to have that. But if we need to close it, then we close it for the good reason and we say and explain. And if we need to go through it, but not having this in the middle of a process is what is important for governments to justify. Also, us to their own governments, if I can say so.

BECKY BURR

Beth, and then Chris.

BETH BACON

So, I think, Tripti, your comments of, is this fit for purpose? Are relevant and very much in line with the things that we've already been saying. If the CPH is saying we need to be narrower and more scoped and deliver implementable and clear recommendations, shouldn't our reviews also? And I think that as ICANN has grown, I mean, I was in the government with Ashley, when we made up these reviews, so I do apologize. I feel bad about that.

They've gotten bigger, the scope has gotten huge. And I think in no way any of what any of us are saying is should we reduce the amount of accountability and transparency with which we look at things. I do think that this, again, also goes along to us being more

efficient. It goes to us being willing to evolve our model and demonstrating that to governments and others. And delivering something that's more effective and usable. Because, I mean, the last, there was, I think it was the SSR2, it spent, there were things, recommendations that were simply out of the scope of the mission of ICANN. And they made it to the Board and then you had to spend time dealing with that. So, I think those are the kind of practicalities that we could focus on and just deliver something that's more usable.

BECKY BURR

Chris Buckridge.

CHRIS BUCKRIDGE

Yeah, sorry, too many Chrises up on this table. Too many Australians, perhaps. No, I just wanted to say, without prejudging any final decision here or the boldness that we're talking about, it ties into, again, the theme that you noted, Tripti, of telling our story and being very clear about how we are and why we are making these decisions. I think it's absolutely clear to me that there is no sort of intent behind this to diminish the accountability of ICANN. But to Seb's point, that's something we're going to have to work very hard to make sure is not lost in this process. So how we do that, how we make that case, make that point, and, I mean, I'm looking back to some of the earlier discussions we had about the GPI framework checklist as a sort of means that we could use.

I'm not sure whether it will be something particularly applicable to this decision, but that kind of approach where we really lay it out very clearly why perhaps strict adherence to what the bylaws seem to suggest is not the most effective route to accountability with the very clear aim and understanding that accountability is the top priority that we're trying to achieve.

BECKY BURR

Thanks. Tripti has two fingers, and then Jeff.

TRIPTI SINHA

Yeah, I just want to make it clear that by no means are we saying as Chris just said, we're going to diminish our accountability to accountability and transparency. In fact, I'm not sure we're actually doing justice to it today in the way we're sort of floundering and you know we're stuck and don't know where to go so I'm just suggesting let's look at novel and better ways of doing this.

BECKY BURR

Jeff? Did you have your-- Okay, we thought we detected that. Could have been it was like you know, I don't know. No. Could we have ATRT4 be focused on whether the reviews are producing the results that we hope for.

CHRIS DISSPAIN

Sure, we could. I mean you can, we can do that if we want to. Yeah, I mean, everyone knows what the sort of like the baseline problems

of the community. The reason why there's some parts of community push for structural reviews are they want stuff right. We all know that the bits of the GNSO don't like the way the GNSO is structured and if you go back and look at the history of how that happened, it was kind of mandated, they kind of ended up having to do it because the Board at the time said, "Look, if you can't come up with an idea, do it this way."

So, there's dissatisfaction there there's dissatisfaction in the way that the Board is put together because At-Large wants to have two Board seats and not one, the issues that need to be dealt with. That would normally be dealt with by reviews, we know what they are, we just haven't got the processes in place to deal with them and that's what the reviews are about so if you want to put that job into ATRT4 because it's there and you, and you, and you want to use it. Absolutely.

BECKY BURR

The one thing I worry about is how we would how we would create a limited scope for an HRT because the language says that covers these things may include these things but it's not limited to these things and so with respect to SSR to, for example, we ended up with a scope that was not bound by ICANN submission. And so that's a question is procedurally how do we get to an agreement on a limited well then--

CHRIS DISSPAIN

Well, if that's the case and if there's a concern and a fear and it's valid concern and fear about that then take then actually take the next step which is to go to talk about what Tripti said and say actually what we're going to do is the board's going to resolve to stop everything including ATRT4 and do x, x being, how do you rebuild this review thing because it doesn't work.

And then we need to figure out how to do that, but that's probably not that hard to do we don't actually have that much choices that we do it we probably need some sort of cross community thing to do it. But if you want to take it outside of ATRT4 and make it something else as long as it's clear to the community that that's what we're doing. I wouldn't have thought it would be a problem.

BETH BACON

So, I think also a little bit like, I'm going to keep saying that because we're the CPH, the PDPs, we care about it, much like the GSO needs to have its own discipline, when you have formed the ATRT4 team, provide some guidance. And I have experience doing, I think it was ATRT2, which seems very long ago. It has a prescribed list, but it doesn't say that you have to offer 67 recommendations that are wildly out of the scope of the mission of ICANN, or add 15 extra topics. You can try and be disciplined within that team and say, we understand that this is an interesting point in a review. We understand that we have a need for this type of scope, and they can do that. So, I think there's some flexibility, but we have to have maybe a little faith in the team.

BECKY BURR

Well, just thinking back on SSR 2, some of the issues were, the Board sent back recommendations saying, it's an interesting recommendation, but you're telling us to adopt policy on behalf of the community. I think it was just something that would be very useful to have that issue resolved. Okay, other input. This is obviously a very important issue. I think we very much want to get beyond the flailing, and get to a point where the reviews are doable and produce results that are implementable within ICANN's mission, and that actually contribute to accountability and transparency. That's where everyone wants to get to. It's not a small job.

CHRIS DISSPAIN

Yeah, speaking as the chair of the Pilot, it would help me enormously if, we have a meeting with the SO and AC chairs tomorrow. Even if it's just some sort of holding position, I'd really appreciate getting some guidance as to what it is you want us to do. If you just want us to meet and say hi to each other, and not actually try and fix this, I'd appreciate understanding what, not necessarily now, but before the meeting, what it is you want us to do. Because that would be immensely helpful.

BECKY BURR

Okay, we can try that. I guess my question is, what's the status of the understanding.

CHRIS DISSPAIN

Well, we're meeting so that Jason and the team can tell us about the discussion that the OEC and the Board had on Friday. The current situation is, I think that the SO/AC leadership is considering, wants to get that feedback so that they can then figure out whether they actually think a structural review, building a structural review is actually the right thing to do. And then if it is, is this the right mechanism?

I think we all know this isn't the right mechanism, but the question is whether it's the right thing to do or not. And then, because I've said, if you tell me to build it, we'll go build it. But you need to be clear that this is what we, you being the community needs to be clear about that's what we're doing. So, I'm quite happy to just have the meeting and say, look, the Board is really working on this at the moment. There is nothing for us to do, if that's what you want. But equally, if you want a specific question to be answered by the SO/AC leadership, then we can put that question forward and start the ball rolling. Whatever.

BECKY BURR

Okay. Other comments on this, or any other business. Jeff?

JEFF NEUMAN

Yes, thanks. Just, I guess, not any other business, but I had brought up some questions on the long-term funding strategy with respect to fees. We had raised it at the last meeting as well. Some of us are doing budgets as well for a fiscal year of July 1 to June next year.

And so, if at some point in the relatively near future, you could let us know if your strategy on increases is something that is annual or was one time or whatever it is, because we all have to do our forecast too. So, again, not expecting an answer today, unless you have it. But just sometime in the near future. I just didn't want that question to get lost.

CHRIS DISSPAIN

One AOB?

BECKY BURR

He's anxious to provide an answer.

WENDY PROFIT

Can we have the roving mic on, please?

XAVIER CALVEZ

I didn't ask Jeff to ask this question, but nonetheless, thank you for that. So, Jeff points out to a very important natural principle, which is predictability that any business would like, by the way, ICANN as well. So, in setting a fee strategy is something that, in our environment, we want to do together. So, we need to be able to engage together on the topic we have discussed this approach with the staff members involved in those topics and would like to be able to start an engagement with, of course, the registries, the registrars about the long-term strategy of the fees so that we can develop it together. You guys have ideas.

I know, Jeff, you have some about, for example, lower fixed fees for smaller registries, for example. So, all those, this is an illustration of a question, but there's many other questions. Do we want the same level of fixed versus variable fees, et cetera? So, and the predictability of changes to those fees is something that any business, us included, should want to have and try to develop, and we will do that together. It's not I can't, who's going to come up with a strategy on a piece of paper in the background and then just spit it out. We will develop that together. We need to develop that together.

So, completely agree with the point, the need, and we'll find the endeavor to be able to do that and engage, of course, with the CPH on it as well as the rest of the community who is interested in what the fees are as well. Thank you.

BECKY BURR

Thanks, Xavier. Chris?

CHRIS DISSPAIN

I just wanted to say thank you to the Board for the Code of Conduct, which I think is a great piece of work. We had a really good session on it yesterday. I think we made some huge progress on enforcement. I know that not everybody is happy, but speaking personally, and I suspect for my colleagues as well, it's really great. Thank you very much.

BECKY BURR

Okay. Having said that, you get 15 extra minutes for lunch. Thanks, everybody, for a very good conversation.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]