
ICANN84 | AGM – Q&A with ICANN org Executive Team
Thursday, October 30, 2025 – 9:00 to 10:00 IST

ANDREA GLANDON

Welcome to the Q&A session with ICANN's executive team. I am Andrea Glandon, remote participation manager for this session. This is a unique opportunity to engage directly with our executive team about the projects and initiatives at ICANN. We welcome your questions.

There are three ways to ask questions. If you are here in person, please go to the microphone and wait your turn. If you're attending virtually, submit your question through the Zoom Q&A pod. I will either read your question aloud, or you can raise your hand to speak directly. Simply click the raise hand icon at the bottom of your screen to join the queue, and we will unmute you when it's your turn. Whether you are in person or remote, when it is time to speak, please state your name and your affiliation clearly. Please do not use the chat for questions.

Real-time interpretation is available in English, Spanish, French, Chinese, Russian, Arabic, and Portuguese. Select your preferred language in the Zoom application. All participants must adhere to ICANN's expected standards of behavior and anti-harassment policy. Links to both of these are on the screen. Now I'll hand it over to Sally Newell-Cohen, ICANN's Senior Vice President of Global

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Communications and Language Services, to explain the session format. Over to you, Sally.

SALLY NEWELL-COHEN

Thank you, Andrea. And welcome, everyone. Good morning, good evening, good afternoon, wherever you are. We hold this session twice a year because we find it to be a really valuable experience where we can focus on your questions, and it's an opportunity to talk about what the org is doing, and to hear from you about the topics and the projects that you're most interested in learning about. The way this session will go is we're going to start with a brief introduction from Kurtis, then each of the executives will introduce themselves, and then we'll open the queue. So Kurtis, I'll hand it over to you.

KURTIS LINDQVIST

Thank you, Sally, and welcome, everyone. It's been 10 months, 22 days, and three minutes, whatever it is, since I started, so not that I'm counting. Now, joking aside, it's been really—this is the third meeting I've been a CEO, and it's been—I think it's been very good to have the chance to meet with you as all of these forums are. I have—I think it's been great for us, 10 months, to be in this, to get to know all of you and to work together with the community in these forums and through the topics you have, and so I'm very happy to have this session. I think they are very—actually, very important and very valuable for us to hear from you, as Sally said.

The first 10 months, or 11 months soon, has been a lot of learning, a lot of listening, a lot of understanding what the expectations of the community are, but also from the organization internally what the expectations or challenges or thoughts that exist among the staff that we have that are phenomenally engaged and really care about the mission of ICANN, and so there is a lot to learn and listen to from that as well. And there's been a few areas of focus that has been around the making sure that we deliver on the expectations when it comes to policy development and that we can—and implementation and that we can work through this and we can deliver on the various community projects and the community processes as we do, as well as looking internally to the organization and how we evolve and how we better support the community in the expectations all you have and look at how the organization can evolve over time to better do that. So I think it's been very interesting and very learning, a lot of learning the first 11 months, and I really look forward to continue that learning today and to engage with the community on those topics.

So thank you, and I hope you all had a very productive week. I think it's been very productive, very interesting week, by the way. It's not quite over yet. We've got a few more hours to go, but that's my reflection so far. So thank you, and over to Sally.

SALLY NEWELL-COHEN

Thank you. we'll start with the introductions of the executive team members, starting at the end with Xavier, please.

XAVIER CALVEZ

Xavier Calvez, CFO.

SIMON GARSIDE

Simon Garside, VP of Security Operations and Interim Head of Admin Services.

THERESA SWINEHART

Theresa Swinehart, I oversee Global Domains and Strategy.

JOHN JEFFREY

Hi, I'm John Jeffrey, General Counsel and Board Secretary.

KURTIS LINDQVIST

And I'm Kurtis Lindqvist, President and CEO.

SALLY NEWELL-COHEN

Sally Newell-Cohen, Senior Vice President of Global Communications and Language Services.

JOHN CRAIN

John Crain, Chief Technology Officer.

RUSS WEINSTEIN

Russ Weinstein, Senior Vice President, Policy Development and Support.

JAMIE HEDLUND

Hi, Jamie Hedlund, Contractual Compliance and Global Government Engagement.

SALLY COSTERTON

Sally Costerton, Stakeholder Engagement.

SALLY NEWELL-COHEN

Thank you all. As a reminder, for those online, please raise your hand or drop a question into the Q&A pod so we can read those out. And we're going to, as we do in all the sessions, go back and forth between online and in-person interactions. And if you would remember when, whether you're in-person or remote, when it's your time to speak, please clearly state your name and your affiliation. And now it's time for us to open the floor to your questions. And don't be shy to come up to the microphone. Sébastien.

SÉBASTIEN BACHOLLET

I'm going to speak in French, if I may. And I may. We do have the tools for that. Thank you so much. I know it might be a little bit of an imposition to take the headphones, but I think it's necessary. So maybe we can start the two minutes now to not use it for the introduction. Thank you very much. For 10 months, you've been there. It's a good amount of time, but it's not that much, Kurtis. When you came in, you had a basket of recommendations that were there waiting for you when you came. I'm not certain that we are at

the end of the process. And I would like to know how we will get to the end of the entire list of recommendations so that we can start anew. Thank you so much.

KURTIS LINDQVIST

Thank you, Sébastien. I'm sorry I was too slow with my headset, but I think the question was about the recommendations that were waiting for me when I joined, and what the plan is to process through them. Something we're doing, thank you. So we are tracking all the recommendations. Something that we've been discussing internally, and I'd like to say it's not just recommendations, it's also, of course, policy implementations. There is asks from the SOACs, and there's a whole list of work, if you want, or expectations from the community. And we do track all the recommendations that have been given, and the status, and for all the other work. But we don't do so much to actually be transparent about where we are with this, and what's the status where we're doing this. And we are working on making this a little more transparent to be able to show with the community where the status are, so we can work through this, and also try to identify if there are issues that are holding us back, or that it's taking longer to implement, or work through that we want. Not all of this is dependent on the org. Some of this is also dependent on external factors. But we are working through this, and Xavier's team is also the ones who are actually keeping a track of this, and making sure

we're progressing on this. And I don't know if Xavier wants to add something on that as well.

XAVIER CALVEZ

Merci, Kurtis. I'm going to give some information in French, just to add a little bit of information on the topic that Sébastien mentioned. Every quarter, there are several reports that the org produces in order to give public information on the progress of recommendation implementation. There are two reports that are important, WS2, and the status of implementation is at 88%. The 12% that is remaining is in progress in terms of implementation. In terms of specific reviews and recommendations on those specific reviews, the implementation process is at 68% final, those that are completed, and the rest is in progress. This is for that side of the recommendations that are for the organization. The community also has some recommendations to implement, and those recommendations are final at 38%. That's the level of finalization. A lot of work was done, and the progress of those recommendations is quite visible. Thank you very much.

SALLY NEWELL-COHEN

Thank you, Xavier and Sébastien. We don't have anyone on the mic or online, so if anyone has a question, please feel free to come up.

TOM BOLDT

Good morning, I'm Tom Boldt from .VI and the U.S. Virgin Islands. First of all, I'd like to thank ICANN for their assistance that they have

lent to .VI when we had a transition in leadership, and they were quite helpful in bringing us online, and we appreciate that. I have a general question, and that is, what do you see as the three leading trends with regard to the Internet, and what do you see as the future of ICANN?

KURTIS LINDQVIST

The future of the Internet, that's a very broad question. I think the future of the Internet is that it's going to continue to be a tremendously successful platform for value creation. We have had a phenomenal history in the last four decades, and especially, of course, in the last maybe three decades, and I think that will continue. If we adhere to the fundamental principles of Internet that we have today, I think that will continue. I think if we continue to have a permissionless innovation with a ubiquitously accessible Internet built on shared technology standards and shared values, it will continue to create a phenomenal value and continue to be the source of great innovation. That's what all of us have to defend and ensure that the principles that built this continue, and that's my view of the future of the Internet. I hope and believe that it will do. There's the old saying that the Internet runs around damage, including regulation, and I think and hope that's true.

The future of ICANN is that I think that my personal view is that our role as ICANN staff, because ICANN, remember, is all of you as well, so the question is as much addressed to you. It's not just ICANN Org. ICANN is all of us, and ICANN is what we make it. And I think for

ICANN Org, our role is to fulfill or enable the community to fulfill that vision. The desires that a community has and the direction the community wants to go in, our role is to enable and facilitate that's really ICANN Org's role to deliver. But the direction is all of us. It's not the ICANN Org, it's just the direction. That's the role of the community. Anybody else want to add? John?

JOHN CRAIN

So, the future of ICANN, I'll talk really not about ICANN, but about identifier technologies. I've been working around identifiers for a few years, and I've always been told that this identifier or that identifier obviously a lot of people here are interested in domain names, will cease to be relevant. We've been told that for 30 years. But the reality is that data needs to find its way from point A to point B, to the right service on the right machine, with the right indicators for what to do with that data. And that will probably always be the case. The IETF is very busy. The Internet Engineering Task Force, sorry for those who don't know the acronyms, is always busy with new protocols, new standards, and those come with new identifiers. So from the technical side of ICANN, which is all about ensuring the uniqueness and the registration of identifiers, I think we will remain to be busy. There will always be a need for that service.

SALLY NEWELL-COHEN

Thank you, Kurtis and John. We still don't have any questions online, so I will take your time, you don't have to rush.

ABDELMONEM GALILA

Thank you. If you would, and then ... this is Abdelmanem Ghalila for the record, I will speak in my own capacity. Actually for the follow-up, for the brief explanation ...

SALLY NEWELL-COHEN

Could I interrupt you for a second, please, just to speak a little more slowly for the scribes? And ...

ABDELMONEM GALILA

This is Abdelmanem Ghalila for the record. I am the numbering affairs director at the National Telecom Regulatory Authority of Egypt. I will speak in my own capacity as a follow-up to the previous question for my colleague about the future of the Internet. Actually, I will not speak currently about the future of the Internet. There are some areas in this world that are away from being online, so the question is here. What is the plan of support of ICANN for this area in order to be back again to be connected online? Thank you.

KURTIS LINDQVIST

So, connectivity and bringing more people online is actually outside ICANN's mission. It's of course something that's a very important part of the Internet's growth, but it's not part of ICANN's mission. Our dear friends and colleagues in ISOC do work on this, and they do a lot of work in this area and have been very successful, they have some very successful programs running in this, and we think that's

very important, and we really support them in doing that, but that's not been in size.

There's a second part to that question, though, is making sure that everybody can be online and it's accessible. That's about the work we do on IDN and universal acceptance to make sure we have this in the languages and scripts that people expect, and that this works across the entire ecosystem, be it domain names that we are responsible for, the identifiers, or enabling this in email addresses, but also promoting accessibility through scripts and languages, which is very, I think, very important. I know one of my colleagues wants to add to that point.

SALLY NEWELL-COHEN

Thank you, Kurtis. Next at the mic, please.

ROBERTO GAETANO

Good morning, Roberto Gaetano, EURALO, At-Large. I was not sure to ask this question because I thought it was a little bit out of scope, but the answer that John Crain gave let me decide that it is indeed in scope. I have been convinced years ago by Vint Cerf to join the interplanetary network working groups, and I have learned that there's a whole class of different protocols, specifically the delay-tolerant networks, and those protocols are different from them as an extension in which much simplification of the IP protocols, and that will be in, of course, as John has said, it is, the CTO is keeping an eye on this. However, the problem is that this is not just a matter

of protocols, and it's just not a matter of different routing systems and so on. I think that we have an overarching problem, which is the governance process, because this will bring completely new challenges. It's not just about domain names, but it's still a situation in which all the different stakeholders that have an interest in interplanetary communication, but satellite communication and, by the way, as John knows very well, there are already some applications of the DTN on Earth, so it is something that is actually, it's not something that is in the remote future. But we need to make sure that this further development of the Internet follows a governance model that is multi-stakeholder. And do you think that ICANN has a role on this? Because these discussions are happening at the IGF level and outside ICANN. But I don't see a lot of activity within ICANN to discuss this issue. Sorry for having been over time.

JOHN CRAIN

That's okay, Roberto, and thank you for that question. And as you're aware, I am following the interplanetary network protocols and discussions. So, is it the Internet or is it not the Internet? I would argue it is. I've not seen anything that says it's not part of the Internet. Many of the protocols, as you know, are in many ways harkening back to older days of protocol design, because we're now looking at networks with physical components and challenges that look a little bit like some of the older problems that we had.

So ICANN, the policy realm, is mostly about the domain name space. Much of the policy around protocols are actually more technical

policy, and those are set within the standards. Often it is about who will register what name and what form of uniqueness. I see no difference there between the protocols that we're doing for the interplanetary network and those that we're doing for the on-planet network. So good, open standards are important, clarity about the technical policies around what gets registered by whom for what are important. I'm not sure what policy discussions need to happen that will overlap with what ICANN does, but if it is within the ICANN realm, which is laid out by our bylaws, then I don't see a reason why it couldn't be here. But if it's outside that, then it falls into the discussion that many topics of policy on the internet fall into is where does that happen. This is not unique to the Interplanetary Network discussion. There are hundreds of different policy discussions that are looking for homes. Happy to have a conversation offline about this. Thank you. We have someone coming up.

BILL JOURIS

This is Bill Jouris speaking for myself, moving from deep policy questions to administrative trivia. When I look online that, of course, ICANN 85 in February will be in Mumbai, but for the rest of the year, everything just says to be determined. I wonder if you could tell me when we will find out where we're going next.

SALLY COSTERTON

Thank you for the question. We will be making an announcement later on this week, and the intention is that we should publish the

next two meetings in, where are we now, 2026, and one further meeting. So I won't do that now because the board need to vote tomorrow, but that's what's going to happen. So you should know very soon. Thank you for the question. That'll be today. I'm so sorry. I've been at the ICANN meeting too long. Today.

SALLY NEWELL-COHEN

Thank you. Please come back. Oh, there's one here.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER

Thank you. I will speak in French. Thank you, first of all, for this open session. When I was a student, we talked about people having their own domain names, each of us. But with the evolution, we see that domain names are mostly for companies, organizations, and not so much individuals. They don't necessarily reserve a domain name. The average age is aging, and what is your perspective on that? Are you aware of the issue? What can we say about that issue? Is it an issue, and do you feel concerned by this trend? Thank you.

JOHN CRAIN

I guess I'll take this one. Maybe it's because I'm old and strange, but I have lots of personal emails and domain names. So domain names are about bringing people to data. So I think if people have an online service and they want a unique way of labeling that and being able to ensure a steady anchor point in the identifier space, I do see people using them in that way. But the internet is changing, so we're seeing more people putting their content on platforms and deciding

that they are going to stick with that platform and then dealing with the transfer of their services in different ways. I don't think this is a good or bad thing. This is just people finding the way they need their services. And also we talk about the people, but there's also quite a large use of machine to machine that is using domain names because they want some form of readable identifier on the human end for diagnostics, etc., that are also using domain names. So I don't think it's good or bad. It's just evolution. And the important thing is that they keep working and that the ecosystem behind them is stable and secure. So I don't think it's a good or a bad. It's just an evolution of the way people use the online services.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER

Thank you for your response. I would like to add that the internet was decentralized in the past. Now it is centralized with platforms such as social networks. It is completely centralized. So that's really an evolution of the internet. I just wanted to add that to the response. Thank you.

SALLY NEWELL-COHEN

Jordan.

JORDAN CARTER

Thanks, Sally. Good morning, everyone. My name is Jordan Carter, .au domain administration. One of the memes of the ICANN community at times is how quickly we do or don't do our work, the pace of the work. And there are many opinions among the ICANN

community and staff and board about this, but not much data. And obviously the work of the ICANN staff is in one mode a secretariat, if you like, of that policy process is integral to the pace or not. So I was wondering if you could share any thinking you're doing about facts rather than opinions about aspects of that. And I don't know why I'm feeling bad, but I hope it's not me. Thanks.

KURTIS LINDQVIST

Thank you. We actually discussed this question a bit earlier this week. I think this is actually very true, that there is a lot of opinions, and rightly or wrongly, by the way. I'm not saying that they are to be dismissed, but I think we have very little data on the policy development. Policy development this end-to-end from the inception of an idea of a policy all the way through a full implementation. And one of the things I've asked Russ and Theresa in their roles as SVP of policy, and well, Theresa asked the implementation part, is that we should increase the transparency and what policies are being worked on, or ideas to policies, where are they? How much time do we spend on different steps and stages in that process, just to help us identify what is actually happening in the policy development? But likewise, also do the same for the policy implementation, be transparent on in what stage is all the policy implementation, what's the next expected steps, how long do we spend there, why do we spend time in certain stages? Because that will help us get some data, and perhaps just as a staff, but also the community, to understand what is actually leading to a policy taking a certain time, so that we have this idea of, are there certain

things in the policy development stage that would help us improve the policy implementation, for example, and vice versa? So there might be more correlation we can do, we can actually have some informed thoughts about this, and where are we, what's happening, can we help, can we as staff help support the community in those stages, can we as staff improve the implementation side? There's many things you can gather from that, but I completely agree that at the moment we need to have a bit more insight into what this is, so that we can improve it and we can learn from it. And I think this is a, not to I'm trying to avoid the use of blame, but not to try to prejudge or preclude why things have happened, but to learn from it, and really see it as a learning exercise to how do we make this better. But for that, we need to understand what has happened and what we're doing. Also looking forward, how do we do this better in the future? I don't know if either of you, so Russ wants to, I don't know, Russ is nodding.

RUSS WEINSTEIN

thanks for the question, Jordan. And I think we have a good foundation to start on this. I don't want to say we're starting from zero. The GNSO team uses what we call a portfolio management suite of tools that do track each and every project and by theme. What we don't have is that level of detail Kurtis described, identifying where the issues are being debated and how long they're taking in those stages to really help us zoom in on how we can help advance those and move them forward. And then similarly, I think connecting that into the work Theresa and her team do to

implementation. We have some high level things, but I think there's an opportunity to interconnect those more and to get to another level so that we can really hone in on where the bottlenecks are or where the issues are. Sometimes it's not a fault. It's a hard issue and we have to work through it. And getting to consensus takes time and takes care to bring everyone along. So when things are in a stage, it's not always a bad thing. But obviously, we do want to keep accelerating the work forward to enable us to get to the next step of work. Theresa, I don't know if you want to add.

THERESA SWINEHART

I think it's a really timely conversation and we've also been looking at different ways to have the subject matter experts of the staff that are handling some of the implementation already joining some of the policy conversations to start helping inform those discussions. So little things that we can do to both help have recommendations that come in that can be implementable in a way that can be expedited or add less confusion at the end when we need to deal with that. And then in addition to what Russ and Kurtis said, looking at how we can provide the tracking so it's visible to everybody so we understand where some things might get slowed down in the process and determine whether there might be ways to alleviate any steps that we might need to take with the community in order to help expedite things. We welcome ideas on this as we work on it.

BENJAMIN

Good morning. I'm going to speak in French. My name is Benjamin. As far as the next round, with the recent events on the USP test platform, I heard that the round might be moved. So I have a question and a comment. Is this actually something that you are considering? And a comment now. I've been working with public candidates for the next round, and I think it would be a good thing that the date is maintained, but that the date of the end is moved back, is pushed back, so that the message for the future candidates is not, the applicants, that they understand that we are not pushing back again. We've been telling them it's 2026. It would be a good thing for the choice of the back end by applicants. I think the date of opening should be kept. It is something to be considered, I believe. Thank you.

KURTIS LINDQVIST

So this relates to what we announced last night, that there was an issue with the RSP testing platform for RSP applicants. We will adjust the reveal of the RSP applicants according to the delay, and we will announce that shortly. We are not anticipating changing the opening date of the next round. I don't know where that comes from, because we've been very clear throughout the entire week that we are not anticipating to change that. I don't know if Theresa wants to add anything to that.

THERESA SWINEHART	No, I think that's also what was reflected in the announcement that we posted yesterday. Thank you. Thanks for the comments, though
SALLY NEWELL-COHEN	For those who may not have seen it, the announcement is posted on ICANN Org if you want to look at it and get the details for that. I think we're next going to go to a comment online. Andrea, please.
ANDREA GLANDON	Thank you, Sally. This is from Andrei Borobyov from .ru. At the previous ICANN meeting in Prague, the results of 10 years of work by ICANN and the community on addressing the issue of universal acceptance of multilingual domain names was summarized. However, the problem is clearly not fully resolved. Can we be confident that ICANN will continue to consistently work on this issue together with IDN Registries and the technical community?
THERESA SWINEHART	So, first, thank you for the question. It's a topic near and dear to all of us and the team, of course, that's working on it's a fundamental part of the strategic plan, so Objective 3.1 within the strategic plan, and then the organizational objective, Item 10, on digital inclusion. In addition, we have a dedicated team of five full-time staff on this that are working on various parts of it, also working to create awareness around the importance of universal acceptance with other partner organizations that can help get the word out, and work with platform providers, and then the team working on the

internationalized domain names themselves, with many in the technical community and the local communities looking at different language groups. We've also looked at, as you know, we have established the UA Expert Working Group with the community to move this dialogue forward, and the Universal Acceptance Day, which is coming up next year again. Morning, Peter. Hello? The Universal Acceptance Day has created additional awareness globally around the topic, so thank you for the question and any suggestions to continue creating awareness around that is most welcome. Thanks.

KURTIS LINDQVIST

I realize I didn't answer the second part of Benjamin's question, so let me just quickly do that. My question was to keep the application window open longer. At the moment, we don't anticipate doing that's not something we're planning for or have considered, so just to answer that as well. Thank you.

JOHN CRAIN

Also, to the last question, Andre, if you think there are things we can do in the technical realm to improve the compatibility with IDNs, etc., please come talk to me and my staff because apart from the work of Theresa's staff, the Office of the CTO also works closely on this. We have a lot of technologists. We're active in the protocol world and the standards world, so feel free to reach out to us, please.

SALLY NEWELL-COHEN

Thank you, John. We have no questions or comments online, and there's no one at the mics if anyone would like to come up.

MICHAEL PALAGE

Michael Palage, speaking in an individual capacity. Kurtis, you mentioned earlier that this has been 10 months on the job. I've had the ability to work with all seven ICANN CEOs over the last 26 years. One of the things that I found interesting looking back is that there have been some CEOs that bring in new blood, fresh faces into the organization. I was wondering, do you envision bringing in, adding to the leadership because right now over the last couple of years, the faces have been static, and I was encouraged by the recent announcement by you bringing on Ambassador Karklins to a senior leadership position. And I was really encouraged because I thought, wow, this is someone who's going to fill the shoes of Tarek and fill that void. Now, what was interesting is that previous position was a direct report to you. Unfortunately, Ambassador Karklins is going to be reporting to Jamie, which just seemed a little odd, to be honest. And I think having Ambassador Karklins on there as part of your senior leadership as a direct report would be a good thing. And this is actually something that a lot of people have been talking about in the community that it just didn't make sense to them. So maybe if you could expand upon that. And the best analogy that I could give that really resonated with me would be if you were to go and hire Vint Cerf as ICANN's internet evangelist and then have him report to Chris Mondini. And that, I'm just saying that was not me. This is someone else from the community. But I think it really does go to

the point of what is your vision? And if I can, Jamie, to your point, when you did this, I don't know, but it was a little bit of a Freudian slip. You actually announced, I believe, your old title, because your old title was Contractual Compliance, U.S. Government Affairs. Now you're Senior Global Engagement and Contractual Compliance. And one of the things that I think is really important is contractual compliance is just so important. Can you just perhaps have that be dedicated to one individual? So those are my thoughts and comments. Thank you.

KURTIS LINDQVIST

There were many questions there. If I was planning to reorganize the executive team, I don't think I'd announce it from stage, to be honest. I'll take your point that organizations evolve over time, and every leader will make evaluations of whether the leadership team that he has fits the need on that. And I will continue to do that just like anyone else does throughout leadership positions. You continue to evaluate the team you're working with. You set objectives, and you hold people accountable. That's how you work as a leader.

You're right. There are leaders who believe that they need to restart everything from scratch. I'm not one of them. I think you evaluate and you form an opinion based on those evaluations. As for the recent changes and why this was done, one of the things I believe is that the ICANN executive team should work as an executive team and focus on being executives. We had this discussion with—actually, I have been very transparent internally about this, and it

was reflected in the announcement. I believe that Yanis has a very important role to fill, and he will focus on building that team. That doesn't mean that—because someone is an executive, it doesn't mean that's a diminished role or it doesn't have diminished attention, but there is a difference between being an executive working with an executive and overarching organizational questions versus being a dedicated and highly focused on a very important topic to ICANN. And the decision I made was to make that organizational change. And in looking at what I believe was the best structure, compliance is an interesting question, because the community in the past has cared, very deeply, that this Standalone. At the same time, we can't have an unlimited executive team. You do have to find a reporting line and a consolidation. And my choice was what I announced. And I think that's the reflection of the leaders we have. And I think that Jamie will be a great executive and work in the executive team and at the same time leading those two functions forward into what we expect of them. The next person in the queue, please.

OM PRAKASH SHARMA

Hi, thank you for the opportunity. My name is Om Prakash Sharma from Nepal with NextGen program. My question is related to global stakeholder engagement. I would like to know what has worked well with the GSE team and what didn't work and how you are planning ahead to reach each and every economies and stakeholders for their support and contribution. Thank you.

SALLY COSTERTON

I guess that question is for me. Thank you. Wow, big question. Not quite as big as the future of ICANN, but in the zone. Thank you for the question. It's a very timely question. We have been running a global stakeholder engagement function on a global scale now for over 10 years. And we have always been very focused on bringing our organization to the stakeholders. That's why we rotate ICANN meetings. That's why we have regional offices. And as many of you in the room know, we have engagement leads all over the world looking after different parts of our ICANN community. And it's been very successful over the years. Newcomer programs like the NextGen, which I'm delighted you're part of, have been a big part of bringing new blood, new participants into the ICANN community, along with our longstanding fellowship program. So those have all sat within this function. We also have the meetings team in this function. So what I've been focusing on with my team over the last year or so, and also with many of my colleagues here who also do engagement activities. John's team, for example, does. Theresa's team does. Jamie's team does, certainly, both on the U.S. side and globally through the global government engagement team, is how are we more joined up? And is there a way in which we can better question, where do we putting it? How do we start at, how do we focus on delivering the outcomes that are in our strategic plan? Because that's our North Star. That's what the community have had their hands on, the board, staff, everybody. That is our multi-stakeholder set of goals for the next five years. So in the moment, to

answer your question, what have we learned? We've learned that global footprint really matters. And we know that holding effective ICANN meetings that rotate around the world is critically important. We've had lots of feedback on that this year through the How We Meet discussion. So the current, the next level of focus is how do we show, how do we help to deliver those critical outcomes? And how do we show that we've done it? So more strategic, I would say, in summary. And thank you for the question and the opportunity.

SALLY NEWELL-COHEN

Thank you both. The next person at the mic, please.

ANUPAM GAUTAM

Hello, everyone. It's me, Anupam, from Nepal. I'm also with the ICANN NextGen program. So there is a growing debate over the digital sovereignty and the national control of cyberspace. And we actually saw that in Nepal a recent time back. Does ICANN foresee a future where the idea of single global internet, the one world, one internet, that could be possibly challenged? And how is ICANN preparing for that possibility? Because it's being seen throughout the world right now. Thank you.

KURTIS LINDQVIST

So there are many layers in that question. The first is, as I said, I believe that we do need to take a step back. I started by describing how successful the internet has been. And it's been phenomenally successful on these principles. I think the risk of that is that people

are starting to take this for granted. And that is very dangerous. Because as you said, when people start taking it for granted, we stop defending it. And I think it's something that we need to remind ourselves and defend ourselves that the one internet, be it on any layer of the protocol stack or along the identifier space, is truly what built this. That's back to the principles I talked about. And we really have to safeguard against fragmentation. We have to safeguard against intentional, unintentional fragmentation, be it technical or other reason, political, regulatory, whatever the fragmentation reasons are, we have to protect against this. And that's really important. We will continue to explain and highlight and defend the values within our remit and our mission. Because that's our role. Others will do it on other parts of the internet. But I think you're right. It will be under attack, as I said, intentionally and unintentionally. It's our role to make sure people don't forget about this. And I don't know if John want to talk about technology or Therese about the IGF, but the WSIS+20 discussion, for example, is very much about defending this, that we are working and ensuring that the work we do here remains relevant and can continue to have bearing on the internet.

JOHN CRAIN

So I can't count the amount of times that people have come to me and asked me about digital sovereignty. And I always go back and say, well, what do you mean? So digital sovereignty is not just about what ICANN does. One global internet for us is often about the ability to communicate from one end to the other predictably using the

identifiers. We are an organization focused on the identifiers of the internet and making sure they work. There are lots of other elements of digital sovereignty that fall outside of ICANN's world. Everything from making sure you have like localized hardware capabilities to education of skills, etc. What makes the internet work is not just the technology behind it and the identifiers that we use and the open standards, which are all very important. But society has a need to communicate and do transactions globally. So yes, there may be localization of networks. Everybody needs to remember that internet is not a network. It is a network of networks. It doesn't look the same from every vantage point. It actually looks different from many vantage points. That's part of the design. So when we talk about one world, one internet, we're talking about that ability to communicate through those open standards. And I think that will continue to be the case as long as people have a wish to communicate globally. Thank you.

THERESA SWINEHART

Just to add on to this, I think it's an opportunity for all of us to be cognizant not only to not take this for granted and issues of fragmentation, but also that the internet has an impact and digital solutions are in very different spaces. So education, health care, various other areas and dialogues that are happening. So the importance of staying engaged at the national, regional and international levels and help inform on that so there's not unintentional fragmentation in some of the policy development work that occurs. ICANN can do what it can in the context of what

we have as our mission, but really encourage all to continue to stay engaged in all the dialogues that are happening, even if they're in issue areas because a lot of things are now running on this internet and it benefits us all.

SALLY NEWELL-COHEN

So thank you, Theresa. Xavier, I think you wanted to make a comment. Do you want to wait? Michael, please.

MICHAEL PALAGE

So follow-up question is Xavier and then John Jeffrey. John, to you first. There was a session yesterday talking about anonymity and the need to allow registrants to register domain names without being identified. And one of the things that I raised during that session was that in order to pick up the badge to attend ICANN, you have to hand over a government-issued ID. And in order to participate in Zoom, there now is the requirement to disclose your identity. Could you perhaps share why that is so important for ICANN to have that and why those same principles should not be extended to registering a domain name? That's your question. And Xavier, the follow-up to the pre-ICANN session regarding the hard and soft cost to WSIS+20.

JOHN JEFFREY

I'm not sure that's really a question for me. I don't think that it's a legal requirement that we do that. I think that we do that by the choice of information that we collect from the meeting. But maybe, Sally, do you want to take the question?

SALLY COSTERTON

The only thing I would add to that and the need to say who you are is transparency and to know who you are, who you're affiliated with, and it's the same as the code of conduct. So that's really one of the reasons for it. And it's a good practice. And that's part of it. I don't know. John, you want to?

JOHN CRAIN

So I sat in that conversation yesterday. It was really interesting. It was both sides of the conversation around needing to identify an individual or an organization and the need for privacy, etc. One of the differences with a lot of that conversation, and I think Maciek in the conversation there pointed this out, is that although we do look at that data to do that connection, we don't actually store any of that data that we look at here at ICANN meetings. And that, when you start storing it, of course, brings up a whole different world of conversations. So I thought it was a really interesting conversation in that room, and I'm looking forward to seeing how it actually progresses within the community.

XAVIER CALVEZ

Thank you. So just for everyone, Michael asked a question during a public session during prep week a couple of weeks ago. And this question, and Michael, you'll correct me if I'm not representing it correctly, was what are the costs incurred by ICANN to support the WSIS initiative? So two parts to the answer. We have incurred

additional travel costs associated with this specific initiative, because there's been more meetings on the topic, as everyone knows. And we have had more participants, both from the board and the organization, to those meetings. Separately, we have tried to estimate the amount of time that has been spent by ICANN staff on the topic over the past about 12 months. And the answer to that is that there's 16 staff members who have spent a fraction of their time on the topic, between 5% of their time up to 50% of their time. 12 out of those 16 are in functions that would naturally be participating to this type of activities absent WSIS conference anyway. And a couple more staff members have provided their expertise to a small fraction of their time in addition. So that's the answer to the question. That represents effectively 3 and 1 half full-time equivalent. So the fraction of 16 people's time added up together represents approximately 3 and 1 half full-time equivalent over the past 12 months. I hope that answers your question. And please react to it. Thanks.

MICHAEL PLAGE

I'll follow up afterwards. Thank you.

SALLY NEWELL-COHEN

Sébastien.

SÉBASTIEN BACHOLLET

Thank you, Sébastien Bachollet. Chair of EURALO, until the end of the day, I wanted to mention that the discussion on the question of

showing your ID a few years ago, it was quite a while ago actually, we had a discussion about coming to an ICANN meeting anonymously. Now it's not possible. Some might have tried to go under a fake name, but it's not possible. Now in terms of reviews, I'd like to go back on that. I have three recommendations that I hold dear. The first one, I'm not asking for an answer, but the implementation of the holistic review, ATRT 3, I know what the status is. I know what is going on, but I am absolutely convinced that it is essential for the organization. Second, what is the status of all of the recommendations related to the ombuds office? And the third, of course, I forgot. It'll come back. Apologies.

KURTIS LINDQVIST

I'll take your notice on the first question. The status on the ombuds implementation, that's actually a question for the board, because the ombuds reports to the board are not made on it. John has an update or some idea on that.

JOHN JEFFREY

I don't know the exact answer, but we can come back to it. And there is a report that the ombudsman has made to the board this week, and there's ongoing work in the board governance committee relating to the ombuds and the review points.

XAVIER CALVEZ

To go back to the topic of the reviews implementation and the report that I mentioned earlier, it is on the website, Sébastien. You

have all of the detail of those recommendations. I don't have the number available, but you do have that information in that report. It is public. It is on our website. I will go back to it, and I can give you the exact answer right after the session. Thank you.

SÉBASTIEN BACHOLLET

But if I may, Sébastien speaking, if I may add one thing. My question is not to go what is in the documents. Today, there are a certain number of components that were not implemented. Even though we changed offices, we changed the ombuds, so when will we get to the end of that? When will we actually do it?

And the other important question is, what is the status of the implementation for the NomCom? Thank you very much, and apologies for forgetting my original question.

KURTIS LINDQVIST

I think that's a lot of questions for the board as opposed to the executives, but as far as I know, the answer on both of them is that, as John said, some of the ombuds implementations in the ombuds report to the board, that was done at the board workshop, and some is in the BGC, and I think that's where the work on the NomCom is as well. John has any further data on that, but that's my understanding.

SALLY NEWELL-COHEN

I did get an update from the ombuds who said, there are only a few outstanding recommendations that will be addressed when the

framework and process are published, and that all of the rest of the recommendations are complete. Thank you. We're going to take one more question that was posted online, and that will be the last questions, because we're just at time.

ANDREA GLANDON

Thank you, our final question from Brigitte Macron. Why did ICANN decide to close the Universal Acceptance Steering Group, UASG, even after recognizing its importance, particularly for the upcoming new gTLD round? Furthermore, the newly formed UA Expert Group is not truly independent, as its charter and scope were predefined by ICANN Org. If ICANN intends to retain such control, then what is the real purpose of forming this group? Where does community involvement and bottom-up participation fit into this process?

KURTIS LINDQVIST

So the new Expert Group is not independent. This is a setup by ICANN, it's a CEO-appointed group. The UA Steering Group was an independent organization ICANN had agreed to fund for 10 years, and we did, and I think we discussed this in Prague in quite great length. And we had decided that in the next phase of UA work was better done in an Expert Group that would focus on really pushing the implementation side, where we can help, and we as ICANN Org can get more engaged with the advice from the Expert Group. And that's the focus of ICANN, and that's what we're doing at the moment. My understanding, the Steering Group continues. There is a lot of community engagement around UA work here, and there's

been a lot of work this week happening. There's been a lot of engagement in various policy sessions. There's been a lot of work, I think, to be honest, I think UA has been mentioned in every single session I've been in, which is probably a testament to the engagement of the community. So that bottom-up policy work still happens here in all the working groups, and continues every single day as far as, I don't know if anyone else, I don't know, Theresa.

THERESA SWINEHART

Absolutely. I think just to add on to that, in the 10 years, it was really about the UA awareness, and now we're looking at the implementation aspect around that. One of the factors that I would highlight is the community is very involved in this, as Kurtis had mentioned. There's several SOs and ACs that have their own working groups on this, and of course the community had nominated the members to this working group itself. So we're really looking at the opportunity of the success of work that's occurred, and then building it into the next phase. And I think that's a nice trajectory, and it continues with the community involvement in this entire process. So I look forward to continuing that work. UA implementation and all of those aspects is critical for us to be able to make the internet really accessible to absolutely everybody in different language groups and the use of scripts. So thank you for the question.

SALLY NEWELL-COHEN

Thank you all. We're right at time. So I'd like to thank all of you for joining and asking the questions. To our remote participation manager, Andrea Glandon, and language services, and all of the executives. Thank you very much and have a great rest of your day.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]