
ICANN84 | AGM – GNSO: NCSG Welcome Session
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ANDREA GLANDON

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When speaking, please state your name for the record and speak clearly at a moderate pace. And I will now hand the floor over to NCSG Chair, Rafik Damak. You may begin.

RAFIK DAMAK

Thanks, Andrea, and thanks everyone for joining us today. It's already, I think, day four or even five for many of us. But today, on this first session, we are trying kind of to keep that all the tradition. An ICANN meeting the constituency day, the opportunity for us as a group to discuss, to review like what we had at the session or to

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prepare for next session, and also to discuss about the topics that we got this week.

So, what we are trying to do here first to explain like what we are aiming to do. So, we have, I believe, four sessions. So, to keep us busy. And we try to cover several areas and to achieve several goals. So, this first session, we called it the welcome session. And it changed many times kind of to adjust because we got some, not saying urgent, but a change that we thought that's better to cover.

The idea here is we wanted to engage more the fellows at NextGen. We go to talk to them with Juan and Wisdom as the chairs from NCSG NCUC, and NPOC, try to convince them to join us, to come to talk to us. But we thought that it's better if they can have also the opportunity to talk to us. And this is why we have this session.

And we adjusted because, as you could see in the last days, there is talk about the WSIS+20 review, and we have the co-facilitator. And we thought it's good opportunity to have them to come. I mean, it's just one co-facilitator to come and to discuss. So, hopefully, we can spend like 30 minutes with them if they made it on time. So, this is for the first session.

For the rest of the day, we'll have after the policy committee session as usual, and that will be with Thompson. Then another session in afternoon, we'll have interaction with the finance team. Don't worry, we are not going to necessarily go into budget a lot, but it's more really to understand more like how we can participate

in the process of the budget, really implement the strategic goals for ICANN.

And then the last session will be related about WSIS+20. The difference here is that we co-organized it with two civil society organizations, GPT and GNI. And that's an opportunity for us to continue work on this topic, since we have several members that are involved in the process. And also follow up of the webinar that we had a few days ago before this ICANN meeting. So, this just kind of overview and to set the scene for the day and for this session.

So, trying to see if we have several fellows joining us. I see a few, hope that there will be more later. And we want just to give them maybe opportunity to present themselves, to share why they are here in the ICANN meeting, and if they have any question to us and we'll be happy to answer. So, I guess I'll start with you first.

AYEDA FRANÇOIS DANIEL

Hello, good morning, all. My name is Ayeda François Daniel. I am from Benin. I am ICANN84 Fellowship. I am glad to be in this session to know more how gTLD was managed by GNSO. But I have some question. I would like to know, when you see in the world, in the internet, we see we have big TLD. My question is, it is necessary to add more new TLD?

In cyber security, we see it is necessary to reduce attack surface. But new gTLD adding, it is not adding more bigger attack surface because to multiply DNS abuse. For example, when we have

icann.org and we add new TLD .cn, people can create icann.cn to probably another malware. All people don't know difference between icann.org and icann.cn. I would like to know what is the purpose to add new gTLD? Thank you.

RAFIK DAMAK

Okay. Thanks. Maybe we can try to hear from everyone and then we go on the question.

SETH ADJEI GYIMAH

Good morning, everyone. Am I audible? Okay. So, my name is Seth Adjei Gyimah. I was an ICANN82 Fellow and now an ICANN84 Fellow. I was also a Fellow from the Ghana School of Internet Governance and also a Fellow from the European School of Internet Governance in Germany. I work with the University of Ghana. I'm also a member of the NCUC. So, since I came to Dublin, I think the first interaction I had with the NCSG was when you came during the onboarding section to talk to us. So, this morning, I decided to officially come and join this session to really understand how your work is.

I'm a member of the NCUC mailing list and the NCSG mailing list. I see a lot of things happening. I see a lot of the work going on and all that, but I want to be actively involved going forward after this fellowship. So, I'm here this morning to physically observe and then, if possible, talk to a few people to get involved in most of the work you are doing, the PDP works, the DNS abuse works. There's

so many things going on within the ecosystem regarding NCSG and NCUC to personally get involved. So, that is why I'm here this morning. Thank you very much.

RAFIK DAMAK

Thank you. Yes.

MACIEK PIASECKI

Hello, I'm Maciek Piasecki. I'm a first-time Fellow. I didn't get the fellowship at first, so this is my second meeting, but I was remotely at the first one. I worked as a journalist for more than a dozen of years, mostly in the human rights sector and authorities monitoring very much in the front lines, just filming the police at the protests, but I needed to step away from that. On the way, I learned a lot about cybersecurity. I did a fellowship with Internews and they helped me to become a trainer in cybersecurity for other vulnerable groups.

I decided to get ICANN know more a little bit better after finishing a summer school with the cyber hub that's run by Joanna Kulesza in Poland that revolved around the lower orbit satellite connectivity. That was very valuable for me because this was a rather new subject for me. I knew people who use satellite connectivity as journalists. I used it myself, but it was just practice.

At that time, I learned this kind of practical experience can be valuable to the legal, to the technical experts because it's good to give them the feedback how this technology is used on the ground.

Right now, I'm just trying to get myself useful, I think. I will have questions about the kind of skills that you need right now in the group because I'm still looking for my way forward. Yeah, thanks.

SIMON KNOLL

Hello, my name is Simon Knoll. Basically, I was not aware that everybody has to introduce himself, but nice to be here. I'm an attorney from Germany and I'm a member of the IPC, but please do not hate me. I'm not here to spy.

RAFIK DAMAK

Don't worry, you are welcome and you are not alone from IPC. So, thanks for all those introductions. I just remembered that when I maybe I missed it or dropped something when trying to introduce the agenda, we have also the constituency session with Juan and Wisdom in the afternoon. And before the last session, we also will have from ICANN Org, the people who are working on DNS abuse and that, I don't know how to call that report, to come and discuss with us. So, just to have that in the record.

So, we heard some questions. Who wants to respond about what I mean? And if I understand correctly about adding a new gTLD and the risk with that, who wants to give a shot and respond?

MANJU CHEN

So I guess I'll take the first step to this question. So, I think your question is definitely valid. There are huge parts of the world that don't need new gTLDs, but ICANN itself, it's a coordinator of the

DNS, and there are definitely strong wishes to have new gTLDs in the sense that they feel like it's going to create more competition, which creates more choices for the consumers. And that's the whole kind of idea of expanding the routes, which is to introduce more new gTLDs to the world.

And I guess another very important reason for us who don't speak English growing up is that in the next round, there will be more new gTLDs in your own languages, or that's what we hope. There will be more people applying for new gTLDs in their own languages, and starting hopefully after that, you'll see more domain names in your own languages.

And that actually, we hope and we are optimistic that it can create more, in a sense, improved access to the internet from all over the world, because I guess for a lot of people, it's still very hard to get into the internet in the sense that most of the domain names are still in English. It's a very English-dominated kind of space.

So that's what we hope to achieve by introducing the internationalized domain names, which we call IDNs for short. That's another kind of reason we want a next round for all of those of us who are not in it for the business. And of course, there are just people who like to have more gTLDs because they can sell more and they can get more money. And having more domain names will create more DNS abuse. I personally would say it's an immature assumption. There's no really correlation between more domain names and more abuse, but that's my personal opinion.

And we have more people who are more experienced and more expertise on DNS abuse, but that will be my brief answer to why there needs to be new gTLDs. I mean, I totally agree that there actually don't need new gTLDs, but I'm still hopeful that IDNs will create more opportunities for those of us who don't speak English growing up and create more opportunities to those who don't know English as a thing. And English shouldn't be a thing in the future. That's my hope.

RAFIK DAMAK

Thanks, Manju. And also, I take the opportunity here to ask those on the Zoom, if they want to ask any question or intervene, please feel free to do so. And I see Farzaneh in the queue.

FARZANEH BADIEI

Yeah, Farzaneh Badiei. DNS abuse is a valid concern, but we see narratives that are spreading around about DNS abuse by the government specifically that we are dealing with some crisis, but there is no crisis. DNS abuse has always been there, and it always will be. And there are contractual amendments that have been done to ICANN registries and registrars to mitigate DNS abuse. There are multiple initiatives that work on DNS abuse mitigation.

So for the new gTLD, I am skeptical about the new gTLD value, the value that it can bring. I don't think necessarily it's going to increase, it's going to overcome digital divide or things that developing countries really care about and provide better access

for people to the internet. But that's another thing ICANN wants to do. But with regards to increasing DNS abuse, as Manju said, it does not mean that we are going to see more DNS abuse if we have more new gTLDs. Some of these new gTLDs in this previous round were doing so badly that it just stopped providing their services. So I'm not that worried.

RAFIK DAMAK

Thanks for that. Okay, it's clear. Let's see if there is any question. And I see maybe another fellow who can join us. Hamzoz. Yeah, you should. And if you want to introduce yourself.

HAYDER HAMZOZ

Good morning, everyone. I apologize for the late. I did not expect the traffic in Dublin. I'm Hayder Hamzoz. I'm from Iraq, representing INSEM. I'm part of K Project. It's an alliance for supporting civil society during ICANN and these kinds of events. And I'm here as a digital right defender. Thanks for having me.

RAFIK DAMAK

Thanks, Hamzoz. And let me just, you were also with us in our first session on Saturday about DNS blocking. You were one of the speakers there. Okay, let's see if there are any questions. Please, please don't be shy. It's important for you to interact. And I heard maybe to follow up, you heard a question, since you are a member, is how to get involved, to become active. So it's a good thing that you are following already the mailing list. We have also our policy

call, I think, every three weeks. And that's also the frequency for the GNSO Council meeting. So, yeah, anyone want to...? Yeah, okay, I was going to say if anyone want to respond. But yeah, you can go ahead with your question first.

MACIEK PIASECKI

It's a very general question, but I would like to hear your views. I, for the past few weeks, have been learning what are the issues facing ICANN right now. I did a public comment on the DNS abuse issue, specifically addressing how blocking domains can be abused by some governments via law enforcement agencies. But I wanted to know what, from your side, are the most pressing issues or most pressing aspects of those biggest challenges that ICANN is facing? And what are you planning to do about it?

RAFIK DAMAK

Okay, so we got two questions. Michaela, I think you want to respond to the last one? Yeah.

MICHAELA SHAPIRO

Yes. Hi, Michaela, for the record. So good to have you guys here. And thank you again, Hamzoz, for the intervention on Saturday. It was really helpful. So, really great question. A few of the things that are top of mind for me that we've been seeing in conversations across other constituencies is the potential of trying to open up the definition of ICANN DNS Abuse.

So right now, it's limited to five categories. There is a potential push by some, or interest by some, to try to reevaluate that definition. We are understandably a bit concerned about that because it took a while just to have a clear-cut definition. That's something that the NCSG has been very active and we're very successful in achieving to get that kind of narrowed scope.

So from our end, we would want to continue keeping that narrow just for the sake of, there's more than enough work to be done just on those five categories. But we are understanding that DNS abuse is evolving, but our sense is that the new technologies that are coming in, the advancements are more about scale and scope rather than posing an entirely new type of DNS abuse.

From my personal view as well, but also a concern of the NCSG is that as these policy development processes move forward, that they will try to tackle a lot concurrently, which for a small constituency like ours with limited capacity and resources, to try to follow every single discussion of DNS abuse is already a challenge. So if they try to tackle two PDPs at the same time, that will make us quite divided in terms of our ability to follow all the discussions. But I don't know if others also have thoughts on that. Thanks.

PEDRO LANA

Yes, I think someone wants to add to Michaela, because I was going to answer the other question. But if someone wants to add, I think it should be first.

FARZANEH BADIEI

So, yes. Also, just to make it clear, because among this community, there is this impression that we are saying that you shouldn't mitigate DNS abuse. DNS abuse is real. And actually, as advocates for journalists and vulnerable communities that their human rights are hampered, state actors can do phishing and malware to get the private information of citizens and persecute them. So for us, DNS abuse can be also a human rights issue.

But we want mechanisms that are rights respecting. And I hate this word balance, because when you talk about balance, they always focus on their own issue, which is not rights. What we have to do is, unfortunately, because we see this kind of emphasis all the time to enforcement and mitigating DNS abuse, and there is not by the community, not the recognition that these mitigation mechanisms can actually have an impact on people's rights. We bring that perspective more strongly than talking about DNS abuse mitigation. But we also, some of us work in cybersecurity field. So we are not against DNS abuse mitigation, and we are not clueless about the techniques that are used to mitigate DNS abuse.

And another thing that we need to follow is there is this urge to ask registrants for their ID to register domain name. And this is a very, very concerning demand trend for us. So we are trying to push back on that, as well as we care about freedom of expression and a bunch of other issues. We have these, I can put some bullet points on what we are following.

RAFIK DAMAK

Okay. Thanks, Farzaneh. So I guess we will go now to the questions. And also, because I see someone, I think Sherry here asking about how to join actively. So I think similar commentary. Pedro, please go ahead.

PEDRO LANA

Pedro, for the record, to be very short, since you're already following the mailing list, that would be the first step. And there is where we get most of the opportunities to join. This is a learn as you do community. So the important thing I would say is not feel afraid of joining in a certain activity. We have like working groups, internal working groups about communication tasks, for example. And the thing that most people do to start participating is just helping in a public comment. I was saying that, don't be afraid, because we never, at the first moments, we know what we are doing there. So I think the first one I did, for example, was a financial reports comment. I had no idea what I was doing, but that's the kind of way to get engaged.

We are a community that have a lot of people who are interested in helping and guiding. You just need to ask. In these first moments, people will be there for you. Also saying like the first guidelines on how to do this, how to do that. But even though it's important to get to those other people, people who are more experienced to sort out certain details of what you're doing. And since we are a volunteer community, we are always happy to get new people who

are interested in doing things and help and producing some new work. So don't be afraid, just join one of the opportunities that appear on the list. And as you are doing, you are learning and things will get easier over time.

RAFIK DAMAK

Thanks, Pedro. Okay, let's see if there is any other question or comment. Okay, so maybe I can add here more about how to get involved. So as Pedro shared, we have basically the public comment when we ask people to join and the drafting. It's always a good opportunity because we don't necessarily ask those who are already involved in the process like working group to do so. We'd like to have others. And it's a good opportunity in a way you will read the report. If you have a question, you can ask those who worked on the issue previously and are involved in the related working group. And usually, we try to have more than one person to do the drafting. So, of course, need some coordination, but it's an opportunity to kind of join.

Also, I mean, it's good like you join this session and we'll have other later, but also our policy call when you can listen to the update from our representative and GNSO Council, because that's also most of the work is done and our priority there. And when needed, we can have updates from those who are participating in working group, review teams. They can share updates, but here it's just the main point you can ask a question, try to have some clarification.

And I mean, we have several people who get involved. For example, I want maybe to ask here, as an example, Ken. Ken is here with us. I think a good example of someone who participated in some working group and he get involved, maybe he can also give us some insight about the best way to be active. Sorry, I can't put you on the spot, but I thought that maybe good to hear from those who went through the whole process.

KEN HERMAN

Thanks, Rafik. Ken Herman for the record. So you've observed that I have a journey through the stakeholder group and that journey continues. So I think my process was to basically find an issue that resonated with me and felt that I could get my arms around and read up about it, listen to the discussions about it, try to ignore all the other noise that comes from the discussions around other topics. And slowly, slowly, you become more sort of aware of what the issues are, what are the subtleties involved. And I guess the hardest part for me was trying to avoid making stupid comments and questions that were irrelevant.

But I find that the group is very welcoming to new people that want to try to contribute something. And even if you're not quite grasp all the subtleties of an issue, are prepared to explain the different aspects of it and help you understand how to do things. And I think probably just to reiterate, for me, the most important approach was to find an issue. And because there are many, and I think there are many now on the docket that we have, where there are

comments that are being prepared for a number of different issues, and there's plenty of opportunity to become involved.

So, it's focus. Try not to absorb everything all at once because it's drinking from the proverbial fire hose and just learn about what the details are. It can be difficult to get your arms around it, but that was my approach.

RAFIK DAMAK

Thanks, Ken. And we can also maybe hear from others. So we'll try to maybe respond to, I see a comment or question from Sherry and then we can go to Anriette. So about like how to navigate. I think it's good words, how to navigate. There are already existing material and I think like one shared like the GNSO policy report that is made before every or each ICANN meeting. And also since we have in particular our policy call and we go through the GNSO Council agenda, we can see there really the priority and also there are materials shared at that time, like the kind of what they call it, the radar, which put like all the work stream, working group within GNSO and with all the related links.

And as was said, I mean, it's always also the kind of advice, don't try to understand everything at once. You can pick up and also you can ask question and you can reach out to any of our members. I see like Farzaneh, you can ask me also anytime. You can also ask a question in the mailing list during the call. I mean, we can of course do better to try to do more, but I think there are those existing way that can be used, yeah. Anyone want to add on this? And because

I think Anriette wanted to comment about the previous topic related to DNS abuse. Okay, Anriette, can you...?

ANRIETTE ESTERHUYSEN

Thank you, Rafik. I'm sorry, my camera doesn't work, but can you hear me?

RAFIK DAMAK

Yes, we can hear you.

ANRIETTE ESTERHUYSEN

Good morning, everyone. I'm Anriette Esterhuysen here. I'm affiliated with the Association for Progressive Communications. I mean, I think I'll comment on this more recent discussion as well. I think one of the challenges of working in ICANN, particularly as NCSG members, is that the topics that are important to us are often dealt with only partly in ICANN, but they're also dealt with in other policy forums. And it can be quite difficult to get a grasp of these issues if you only operate within the ICANN space.

And I think DNS abuse is actually an example because I agree with Farzaneh's comments. We should be careful about not over weighting, overvaluing DNS abuse. The problem of harmful content is a real problem, but it's not a problem that's going to be solved just through looking at DNS abuse. It's a problem that has multiple solutions. And so I think that's one of the challenges of negotiating this space is to take an issue that matters to you, such as harmful content, for example, or fake news, whatever you want

to call it, disinformation, and then to understand what piece of that puzzle sits inside ICANN and what pieces sit in other spaces and how can you engage in those spaces?

And I think that makes it quite difficult, but it's also possible to do that. And I think one of the traditions in ICANN is that it's not about content. And I think for me, as somebody who's not always that active inside ICANN, but who follows from the outside, I think that becomes very important. How do we recognize the importance of DNS abuse, but without violating that fundamental principle that ICANN does not deal with content and controlling of content?

And I think we've got to be careful. I see particularly at ccTLD level, often the ccTLDs, they cross that barrier. They're not just dealing with DNS abuse, they actually become regulators of content. And that can be very problematic, particularly in countries where there are not strong protections for particularly political speech. Back to you, Rafiq. Thank you.

RAFIK DAMAK

Thanks, Anriette. Okay, let me see if we have anyone in the queue, but yeah. You, and then, yep, you're next. Oh, he's first.

Maciek Piasecki

Maciek Piasecki, fellow. I wanted to ask who do you identify as allies, both within and, as I understand, outside the organization. Where does the interest of the Non-Commercial Stakeholder Group converge with the interests or topics of the other groups here, but

on which forums and with which organizations you're planning to work to make ICANN's voice heard on those topics that may not exactly fall under ICANN specifically remit?

BRUNA SANTOS

Bruna, for the record. Just going to say that the whole conversation about allies, non-allies, it's a bit trickier at an ICANN level, right? Because as part of GNSO, we need to work with every single party of the supporting organization, and we need to discuss different interests and so on. Sometimes our interests, NCSG's interests might ally with the Commercial Stakeholder Groups. Sometimes it might ally with the ISPCP or IPC or anything like that, but it's not really a fine, there's not really like a certainty that in this moment, these are allies, in that moment, these are other allies and so on, and in general, we do need to work with everyone.

But since we're part of GNSO, as part of the PDPs and so on, it's not necessarily kind of our daily job to interact or to deal with opinions from groups such as ALAC or such as the GAC because they are just advice, not just advice, but they are advice, and they come at a different moment in the process. Of course, the PDP process has evolved over the last years in order to welcome those views as the process is already going in general, but at a day-to-day basis, our counterparts are basically part of the GNSO, so that means Commercial Stakeholder Group, registries and registrars groups, ISPCP, ICP, Business Constituency, and all of those groups within it.

In terms of outside of ICANN, I would say like, NCSG has been a voice at spaces like the IGF for years, but whenever we do this is to try to elevate a lot of the problems that take place at ICANN, such as, I don't know, like this tendency that Anriette and Farzaneh were already talking about over freedom of expression, or even like government attempts to try to re-dispute some discussions or IP lawyers also ideas of re-disputing some of the ICANN's decision in other spaces and so on, but I would say that our participation is a bit limited to the IGF in itself, or sometimes RightsCon as well.

So in terms of spaces, RightsCon, IGF, we have been there, but it also depends on the issue, like Pedro has been to WIPO, many of us have discussed in different spaces, but it's not really like a well-defined matter, it's on a daily and kind of request basis, so, yeah.

RAFIK DAMAK

Okay, thanks, Bruna. Farzi, do you want to say?

FARZANEH BADIEI

So our members are usually, as well as digital rights organizations like EFF, Article 19, and ACLU, and also we have individual freedom fighters that join us. We also have technical community that gets involved with operational thing, but it has to be not for profit in nature, of course. But as to the allies, we have worked-- when it comes to governance issues at ICANN, we sometimes agree with the Commercial Stakeholder Group, because both of these groups

want participation at ICANN, and also we are sometimes aligned on transparency issues.

And we also, at one of these meetings, and I'm going to sound like an Indian now, but it was a RDRS meeting. RDRS is this triage system to send a request to a private information of the registrant to the registrar to decide whether they want to disclose it or not. So we were talking with IPC, and John was IPC's, the Intellectual Property Constituency, and we worked together on a human rights language, actually, to be put in that report to mention that we need the registrar in their response to say if they have done a human rights balancing or not.

SIMON KNOLL

So I just have one remark that basically connects to a lot of things that have been said before. Simon Knoll, for the record, I'm sorry. I am not speaking on behalf of anybody or the whole IPC, but rather as a silent observer that I was the last two years before joining the IPC.

I believe that it's crucial for new people and for existing members here to also, and that goes for this group as well as for the IPC and for all the other constituencies and interest groups, to start communicating a little bit more instead of just talking past each other. Because if you sit in sessions, you actually hear a lot of things that probably are in the shared interest of everybody, and

especially, and now it's getting specific, the DNS abuse or not DNS abuse.

I have seen discussions about the definition of DNS abuse for the past two years, and I have heard some people, but not enough, saying what's the difference? In the end, we keep it narrow. Let's keep it narrow. But the problem remains, and it remains the same for everybody. It's not a problem of third world countries, first world countries, however you want to call it.

We have problems with freedom of press everywhere nowadays, even in countries like Brazil right now, I think is not the best place. Germany is not even within the top 10 of freedom of press anymore. But still we have people, grandmas, grandpas, that are basically attacked or they fall victim to DNS abuse, getting ripped off, investing money and all that stuff.

So in my opinion, it is the most crucial thing that needs to be done right now is to talk more instead of just expressing opinions and talking past each other. So that was just something that I wanted to say.

BRUNA SANTOS

Bruna for the record, I was waiting for you to give me the floor. Simon, we do talk to each other. And NCSG, it's part of the, you know, the NCPH. What is the acronym for NCPH? Non-Contracted Party House. I always say non-commercial, but it's non-contracted. But I want to make everyone non-commercial, so maybe it's that.

No, we do talk to each other, and in the past meetings, we have had a day zero or joint meetings between the both sides of the NCPH house in an attempt of discussing these issues.

But the positions, sometimes they might not change, right? Some members of the IPC or some members of the BC have been advocating for changing the DNS abuse definition, and we are a little bit against it for the purposes of trying not to open the way for ICANN overreach on content or any further interference with freedom of expression and so on. So some of these positions, even though we can understand each other's points, it's sometimes a bit difficult to agree on a way forward in that sense. But I mean, there's a lot of discussions going on, and just yesterday, GNSO Council was discussing maybe a standing committee for DNS abuse as we might start the PDP and so on, just so people can keep in check or further communicate on what are the developments in that area.

So just to point that out, because, I mean, although it might seem like we're not talking, the NCPH has had a whole day zero kind of session where we discussed a lot of our different positions and how to move forward, even despite the fact that we might not agree in all of them. So just adding that.

RAFIK DAMAK

Yeah, thanks. So our guests just arrived. I mean, we will have shorter time than planned, but we will do the best of it. So welcome for joining us today and to have this interaction with the Non-Commercial Stakeholder Group. We are the space for a civil society

within ICANN, in particular, the GNSO. And we have several of our members who are involved in the WSIS+20 process review. And we thought it's a good opportunity for this interaction.

EKITELA LOKAALE

Good. Good morning, colleagues, and thank you for having us. Apologies for stepping into the room a bit late. I would have wanted to spend more time with you because I have a civil society background myself. So even though now I'm a diplomat, but oftentimes I find myself more at home in the company of civil society because I cut my professional teeth in civil society as a human rights lawyer. And I enjoy and value the work that civil society does.

Now, I don't know how much you'd like to hear from me. I don't know whether you are in the room when I made some remarks yesterday. I would hate to repeat everything that I said yesterday. But just to point out maybe two or three things that would be of interest to civil society based on my own understanding of what I think would be of interest to civil society.

The underpinning of WSIS framework, talks over people centered, inclusive and development-oriented information society. The essence of that speaks to the inherent dignity of human beings. At least that's my understanding of it. Which therefore means that essentially WSIS is rooted in a human rights-based framework or approach. For that reason, therefore, if you've looked carefully at

the draft that we produced, we made every effort to retain the focus of WSIS on the human person as the primary focus.

So we've received feedback, for instance, that we've given a bit more attention to human rights and that the human rights section is the longest in the draft. We apologize for that. But apart from that also in terms of the process, we've tried to make sure that we uphold the multi-stakeholder nature of WSIS, which means that we tried, for example, to create a multi-stakeholder sounding board as a platform for non-governmental groups to process their views and channel them to the co-facilitators. And we found that sounding board to be very, very useful in giving us feedback that would come from groups that are not part of governments.

And a lot of that, if you read the elements paper that we released earlier and the zero draft, you would see that there is a bit of language and content, which is a big improvement from the earlier draft. And that is thanks to the input that we've received from member states.

Final point, because I would want to hear from you if there are any specific concerns. Between now and the high-level meeting, we are going to produce REV1 on the 7th of November, and then the second round of negotiations will happen on 20th and 21st of November. But in between, we will create an opportunity for stakeholders again to have consultations with us. And we are looking at the second week of November, around the 14th, but we're going to communicate that on the website.

So what that means is that we would expect to get your active participation in sharpening and refining REV1 and making sure that if there are any concerns that you want us to reflect, we do so through that forum. Eventually it's going to be negotiations among member states. So whereas, like I said yesterday, we've been meaning to create the broadest possible space for civil society and others, technical community and others to be part of the process, there are limits to how much of that we can do.

I really have, if there was an opportunity to kick open the door during negotiations and get everyone walk through, but again, UN rules and regulations do not allow us to do that. So we'll count on your creativity. I know you do this all the time. We used to do it ourselves. Civil society are some of the most creative people on how to just get those messages into the room through your own ways.

So I'll stop there and maybe invite you that any questions or comments. Thank you.

RAFIK DAMAK

Thank you, Mr. Ambassador. Let's see if anyone wants to go first. Yes.

MACIEK PIASECKI

Thank you, Mr. Ambassador. Maciej Piasecki, I'm an ICANN fellow. You've mentioned about involving people with the discussion, but how do we make sure we don't lose the voices in the first place?

Because at least two people I know from the fellowship, they did not get their visas to Dublin, people from the global majority countries, two of the fellows from Pakistan, they only received their visas 10 days prior to flying, which was very stressful for them, as they told me. So how do we make sure that we don't lose these valuable voices?

EKITELA LOKAALE

That's a difficult one, really. It's a concern that we've raised with member states. It happened during the IGF. I made that observation in Norway. There are a lot of people that wanted to be part of that. They didn't just get visas, Geneva and all these places, and it's not any one country. Now more and more countries are tightening their immigration laws and so on, which is a bit of a step back.

So what we've done with this process is we've tried to make it as accessible as possible by making almost all our consultations with stakeholders to be virtual. Actually, even the one that we're going to have in mid-November is going to be purely virtual. So that you don't need to travel to New York or any other place, we can still get your input. That's one way.

The other way is we maintain a very active website where we invite your inputs and we go through those inputs, believe it or not. We actually take time to go through them. So that way then we find a way around all these inhibitions that stand in the way of people participating. That's the best we can do. The rest, governments

have their own, they have rights to determine within their own national laws and all this, but I hope I-- did I respond to? It's the best we can do.

MACIEK PIASECKI

I understand that you've mentioned it's a hard question. That's why I'm asking it to you rather than just asking my friends around.

EKITELA LOKAALE

Thank you.

Maciek Piasecki

What I'm thinking, maybe we should organize these events in places where the global majority of people are, it's easier to access for them, rather places where it's tight.

RAFIK DAMAK

Yeah, sorry, because now we are getting queue and minding about the time. So we have Anriette to maybe speak remotely, and then Farzaneh. Andriette, can you speak up?

ANRIETTE ESTERHUYSEN

Thank you very much. Good morning, Your Excellency, Anriette Esterhuysen. I'm always the one that bombards you with questions. And so congratulations again, and thank you for being with us and really for the sincere effort you and your colleague and the DESA team's making.

I just have a reflection on human rights that has come to me actually, partly through a session that Global Partners Digital and Global Network Initiative organized with governments and technical community yesterday. And I'm wondering, and this is a question to you, the zero draft, like the WSIS+10 outcome document, does not go on in any detail into the action lines. It doesn't address the action lines.

And my observation, listening to governments in particular, is that I feel to some extent unintentionally that is diverting attention to human rights at a very generalized level. So you either have governments that are pro and civil society that are pro the language, which is very strong, I commend you for that. And then governments like G77, for example, who's wanting that section deleted.

It's also directing attention to internet governance and the question of the IGF. I think at the expense of implementation at the ICT for development and action line level. And my fear is that some important practical human rights implementations, such as for example, the action line on media freedom and media independence, which is implemented by UNESCO, it's diverted.

And I think that there's a discussion then about human rights at a very generic level, rather than at a very concrete, how does human rights compliance be integrated in implementation at action line level? For example, in the action line on e-education, how do we ensure that economic, social and cultural rights and non-

discrimination is implemented in how e-education is rolled out? The same for e-governance and e-agriculture.

So I'm just wondering if there's not a risk here that by not having any focus on the action lines at all in the outcome document, we actually lose some of that concrete implementation potential of not just talking about human rights, but actually applying it in what governments do on the ground or not do.

So I'm sorry to come up with such a challenging question, but I think it's possibly worth thinking about it, or at least to hear what your thoughts are about it. I think this could also help us perhaps with something like the right to development, which also just becomes a political football in many ways. But maybe when we talk about the right to development in the context of action line implementation, it might be easier to discuss it. Thank you and sorry for taking so much time, Rafik.

RAFIK DAMAK

Let's get to a question, and then... yeah.

FARZANEH BADIEI

I just have a few comments. We have been discussing this among ourselves and it's just several positions that some of the NCSG members have. So in the zero draft, there's the issue of public morals and fighting with abuse. Vague phrasing about abusive use of ICTs or public morals could justify censorship. And our own human rights analysis, we do DNS abuse human rights impact

assessment, provides concrete examples of how such vague phrasing could bring censorship and discriminatory treatment to domain name registration and to online activities in general.

So we'd be grateful if the abuse, the ICT abuse parts of the draft could be clarified a little bit more and have a stronger human rights language. But of course, it's an intergovernmental document. But state-centric governance emphasis could kind of override the community-driven processes. And we advocate for civil society, leadership and autonomy. And we want to stop government overreach.

So like if it could be clarified in the text that-- I mean, there are talks about balancing and stuff like that, but if it could be clarified a little bit further would be great. And this is my opinion, digital sovereignty rhetoric, I don't see it in that draft that strongly, but I do warn against interpretation of data sovereignty that legitimizes national filtering or localization. Thank you, sorry.

EKITELA LOKAALE

Thank you, Anriette. First, it's always a pleasure to listen to you. Your inputs are always spot on and quite concrete. Now the difficulty we have with the drafting is balancing between the need to go into level of detail that would give you concreteness in the proposals that you make and striking a balance between that and stating points of principle such that you don't go into the details if you were to look at e-education.

Then it would mean we go through all the action lines and reflect, for example, how human rights principles and standards would be reflected in e-commerce and so on and so forth. But, your point is taken. We'll reflect upon it and see how best to reflect that in Rev 1 and the subsequent versions of the outcome document.

Same, your point is also well taken. It's a delicate balance because, let's admit it, sometimes freedoms have been abused, cyberbullying of women, girls and young children and so on happens, all right. But that's not to say that we allow states to censor. The principle is the rights that people enjoy offline should be protected online. So we tried maybe without complete success to balance the desire of states to protect the public interest and people's rights to fundamental freedoms including media freedoms and all the others. So we'll have another look at that and just see, strike the right balance.

But the point I need to clarify is that it's not all the groups, and Anriette, this is more to you, it's not entirely accurate that the G77 are opposed to the section on human rights. They support it. In fact, I think one of their inputs was that the right to development needs to be more strongly reflected in the draft. There are countries, including my own, which are quite strong on human rights and are part of G77. So it's not entirely accurate that G77 wants it deleted. It could be a point of negotiation. Groups look for leverage, which point to stress and so on, as a way of pushing the line, so to speak.

Similarly, we are not really making this a state-centric process. In fact, we've been accused a little bit sometimes of making it too much multi-stakeholder because we've created a multi-stakeholder sounding board. We've organized consultations where civil society, private sector and others are in the same meeting with member states and we intend to keep it that way. And there's also strong language on multi-stakeholder model in the zero draft. So it's just the negotiations on the outcomes because it's eventually member states that are going to adopt the outcome document. But the content and process and everything is really a multi-stakeholder process and outcome. Thank you.

RAFIK DAMAK

Thank you, Mr. Ambassador. I am told that we have to finish and wrap up here. So, I want to thanks again for joining us and to have even this for short time this interaction. We are looking forward to maybe to follow up and how to see how we can participate more in this process.

And just to remind everyone, we have another session. in less than 30 minutes in another room. So thanks, everyone, and thanks for joining us.

EKITELA LOKAALE

Thank you. Denis, did you want to inform colleagues about--

DENNIS

After the publication of the REV1 on 7th of November, there will be a stakeholder consultation, most likely on 14th of November. We won't be asking for written input, but specific text suggestions in that meeting on 14th of November and this could be useful for this community.

ANDREA GLANDON

Thank you so much, you can stop the recording.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]