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LOS ANGELES – CTO Commonwealth GAC Members Meeting  
Tuesday, October 14, 2014 – 12:30 to 14:00 PDT  
ICANN – Los Angeles, USA

TIM UNWIN:

Could I please have people's attention. The Commonwealth Telecommunications Organization, the CTO meeting, is about to start. If you're not going to the CTO meeting, if you're a non-commonwealth GAC member, please head out to lunch. We need to use this room, please.

I wonder if we could switch the projectors because we need the slides off the laptop we've got up. There's no need to do the scripting unless you're wanting to miss your lunch.

Perhaps if people who are staying for -- if people are staying for this meeting, they could perhaps move up to the front so it's a little more collegial. That would be great. We'll get underway in a couple of minutes.

Okay. Ladies and gentlemen, let us get underway. There is a sheet of paper coming around for signing up. Many of you will know that we've recently created a Commonwealth/GAC mailing list. If any of you would like to be on that, can you just put a tick by the end of your email. And we can then move forward. We've just lost the picture again. Okay. Thank you once again. So the purpose of this meeting is to share agendas and interests across the Commonwealth and consensus building. We circulated the agenda earlier. Eight items. I will try and get through it in half an hour so we can all get through for lunch. But I

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will rely on your support to do that. Basically, beginning with updates on commonwealth initiatives, mutual help on priorities. There were no given agenda items for that. But this is an opportunity for you to raise issues that you might like to for further discussion. Mark will then say a few words on human rights in ICANN. Those who were here this morning already covered that.

Outreach. Protection over IGO indicators. OECD would like to say a word there. Touching on ITU elections and then concluding.

For those who may not be from the Commonwealth, it's worth just putting that map up to set the scene for what we're going to be talking about. I think people are aware, Commonwealth is 53 countries. Covers all continents and a third of the world's population. So working together in collaboration and coherence, we can achieve a considerable amount.

So updates on Commonwealth initiative, since we're running late, please can we keep short on this. Mark, can I hand to you for IGF in Turkey.

MARK CARVELL:

Yes. Thank you, Tim. And welcome, everybody, to the meeting from me. I'm a member of the multistakeholder advisory group for the IGF. And one of I think about eight or nine members of the MAG from the Commonwealth. As I'm sure most of you will know, the 9th IGF was held in Istanbul on the 2nd to the 5th of September. The overarching theme of this IGF was "Connecting Continents for Enhancing Multistakeholder Internet Governance."

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The chairs summary of the IGF has recently been posted. You can find it on the IGF Web site, [www.intgovforum.org](http://www.intgovforum.org).

There's a call for contributions from stakeholders. And I hope you'll note the importance of this. For comments and views on the format and schedule and the themes of the 9th IGF, the deadline for submitting those comments is the 27th of October. Those comments will feed into a paper for consideration at the next IGF open consultation and MAG meeting which will be in Geneva at the ITU on the 1st to the 3rd of December. And one of the key aims of this open consultation is to determine the modalities for taking forward issues and conclusions that were made in Istanbul, to take them forward intersessionally up until the next IGF, which is in Brazil, Joao Pessara, on the 10th to the 13th of November 2015. So we're already on the track now for preparing for the 10th IGF in Brazil.

Registration. Just going back to the open consultation, I should warn you that registration for that meeting has to be done online by the 15th of November. There is no on-site registration for this open consultation meeting. So, if you don't register via the Web site before the 15th of November, I'm told you can't actually attend the meeting. So it's an ITU stricture, apparently, because they're hosting the meeting.

This was a critical IGF occurring at an important time following the NETmundial conference in Sao Paulo, which -- the result of that was clear messages about strengthening existing processes, including the IGF. The WSIS+10 review is about to enter its final phase with preparations for special event in New York in December of 2015.

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So, as an outcome from the 2005 World Summit on Information Society, the WSIS, as we call it, the IGF is coming under particular scrutiny. So views on strengthening the IGF, the way forward for it, especially vital for enhancing and progressing the IGF still further. The mandate is coming under renewal, of course, at this time as well. And that's part of the WSIS review. Should the IGF continue? That is a decision for the U.N. general assembly. So it's an important time. The U.K. position -- and I believe is the position shared by many Commonwealth member states is that the IGF mandate should be renewed as a key multistakeholder forum for all stakeholders to come together, including governments, on an equal basis.

If you look at statistics for attendance in Istanbul, it was pretty positive. In total there were 2,400 on-site participants, further 1,300 participating remotely. If you break that down by stakeholder group, civil society was -- of the onsite participants, the civil society representation was about 780, governments 571, private sector 600, technical communities 260. So the makeup of stakeholders attending was very good as was the geographical spread by continent. I won't go into the details of that now because I'm under pressure to wind up.

But I'll just conclude by stating that the MAG really was well seized of the importance of moving the IGF into a new phase with innovations.

And I will just list very briefly the key innovations. There were five best practice forums. Secondly, the commitment to work intersessionally -- and, as I mentioned before, the meeting in Geneva in early December will look at the modalities of that. That will look to in particular the national and regional IGFs -- and there are many such IGFs within the

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Commonwealth sphere -- to pick up issues -- that the invitation for them to pick up issues from Istanbul, from the chair's report, and move those forward and then report to the Brazilian IGF so we get some kind of real movement and progress with some of the key issues such as access, sustainability, child protection, critical Internet resources.

Of course, IANA was a major feature of the discussions in Istanbul.

There is a commonwealth IGF Web site. So that, as I hope many of you will recall, that provides an opportunity to capture some of these developments with regard to the global IGF. Perhaps later on we'll -- we might touch on the future course of the Commonwealth IGF. But we from the U.K. believe it's a vital forum for Commonwealth stakeholders to contribute their views on the model of the IGF and the way forward for it.

Transcripts of all the sessions in Istanbul are on the IGF Web site. You can access them there.

So with that, I'll conclude. I'll take questions offline later on any aspect of the IGF, if anybody wishes to contact me. Thank you.

TIM UNWIN:

Thanks very much, Mark. I'm sorry to cut you a bit short. Does anyone have any brief questions or comments or observations for Mark? Thank you.

Secondly, from our side, just to update people on the Commonwealth side of the security model ongoing regional workshops, you'll recall that coming out of the ICT ministers conference and agreement on cyber

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governance framework for Commonwealth countries, we were charged with developing a series of documents, one of which was the international cyber security strategies. And these are now being discussed in regional workshops with the next two being in Barbados 17-18 November and in Kenya 20-21st of November. Should anyone want more information about those, please contact me, and I can pass you to the right people. But do also share those dates with your colleagues as to how you might want to participate.

Very briefly, in previous events of this group, we've said very little about actually what the CTO is doing. Many of you are unaware, I think, of some of our work. So I thought I would just put one slide up here. Basically, it's the membership organization of governments, companies, civil society, and commonwealth countries. Three operational divisions working on research, capacity development, events. Focusing on six priority areas in the strategic plan.

But our strategic plan will be renewed over the next year. So we would very much welcome contributions from members and indeed others as to the areas that we might focus on in the next four years.

And as, again, people will probably be familiar, we're now increasingly trying to coordinate Commonwealth positions in various international fora.

Just to give you a snapshot of some of the things we're doing and dates for your diaries, there's so much I can't really do it justice in just a few moments. But there's a broadband forum in November in Nairobi and digital switchover in February in Johannesburg.

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Coming up in Caribbean ICTs and disabilities workshop in Antigua, I mentioned cyber security workshops one of the most exciting initiatives is, of course, we've recently run and are going to be running two or three a year for members of regulatory boards on the big picture of their role in ICTs. I will leave it at that. You can read far more quickly than I can speak.

The final thing I wanted to say just here is that the CTO council agreed that we would develop a statement on post 2015 goals. And, when another colleague is speaking, I will share this document. I've shared it with you in soft copy, but you might be interested. I think many of us would recognize that ICTs are not featuring sufficiently in the post 2015 agenda. And this is a document for that we have put together in consultation with members for sharing more widely.

There is now a separate presentation from COMSEC on the cyber governance initiative, so I will just quickly bring this up. It's ten slides. So forgive me, given time I'm going to go through it very, very quickly. But the CCI is now a program embedded in the commonwealth Secretariat to deliver comprehensive programs to reduce cybercrime. It -- the initiative originally was created in 2011 through the Commonwealth Connects Programme and was created by -- which was created by heads of government in meeting in Malta. And it was mandated to move forward work in this space. It focuses particularly on simplicity, encouraging people to work together to coordinate and leverage the expertise of partners.

It has recently been relocated in terms of Secretariat functions to the rule of law department in the commonwealth Secretariat and that

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provides support to the executive management committee. Again, you've probably read the details further down more quickly than I can say them.

Basically the EMC consists of states and organizations committed to using this, providing direction, pooling expertise, and the advocacy of the forum more widely. Just noting, its worth saying a little bit about what the commonwealth adds. The commonwealth is a long tradition of work and particularly driving from the commonwealth model law on cybercrime and the Harare Scheme for mutual assistance and it very much builds out of that. And heads of government have given it a mandate to proceed effectively.

Some of the successes. We could touch on maybe people from Ghana or Trinidad and Tobago can comment, but basically working on a model of identifying needs and then working with partners in country to deliver solutions. And work also following up in the countries listed at the bottom there. Contact details. Best place to get further information is cybercrime on commonwealth.int and Catalina Supaloo (phonetic) from Samoa leads on that with her assistant Shea Drak (phonetic). Tracy, do you want to add anything more? Mark or -- since you've been actively involved.

TRACY HACKSHAW:

Yes. So just briefly, I just want to encourage anyone who has not yet sent their request in or has not inquired about it from the CCI to do so. It's been, as I said, recognized as a good model for the region that we're in, in the Caribbean region, I guess in the African region as well, and we're waiting to see what happens in the Pacific and otherwise. So

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please, send your requests in. The address is on screen. And so far it's been quite a success, some very good case studies and success stories I'm learning from it. And you can check me off to discuss my own particular country's interest. Thank you.

TIM UNWIN:

Thanks very much. Again, I think we can take follow-up discussions with either Tracy, me, or perhaps Mark afterwards.

We move to item 2 which is really the opportunity free for all for any members to raise issues that they feel we could usefully develop some commonwealth-wide agreements on. Take care of items that aren't coming up on the agenda later. But if members have any interests that they would like to share, they would like -- the countries here present but also more widely to focus on, we've got the human rights discussion coming up in a minute, but this is very much meant to be an open consultation. I know we're running very much behind time. But if there are issues, please do raise them now.

I take that as no particular issues at the present time. But I think just bear in mind, in future, if there are issues in advance of meetings we now have the mailing list, we can share, we can discuss, and please bring items to the agenda in the future.

Mark, can I hand over to you now for carrying on the conversation on human rights and ICANN, and I will circulate the 2015 development goal document now.

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MARK CARVELL:

Yes, thank you, Tim. I thought it was important to share with colleagues in the commonwealth group our views from the U.K. on the importance of this debate we're having at this time on human rights and ICANN's responsibilities and what the GAC should be considering as -- in pursuit of those responsibilities. NETmundial as we heard from Brazil earlier, NETmundial statement made clear that the Internet as a global resource and governments have a primary legal and political accountability for protecting human rights and this is not clearly defined in ICANN, which is a private sector organization, of course, based on the U.S. law at this time. So it's not a duty bearer, if you like, of human rights law, but we, in view of ICANN's responsibilities, feel it has a -- it has to make clear its commitment to respect human rights throughout its global operations. So that's why this debate on human rights has moved centrally to ICANN discussions here. We've -- we've initiated discussions in the GAC at the last three meetings and here today this morning. There were discussions in Istanbul at the Internet governance forum, and there will be a cross community discussion tomorrow here at the ICANN meeting in the Encino Room at 1:15 to 2:45. I think this is an important issue for commonwealth member states. I hope you will share the commitment to advance this discussion in a meaningful and constructive way and look at the kind of options that we might realize that from the standpoint of governments, how we address these issues.

I have worked on some of these issues with my Council of Europe hat on. I represent the U.K. at the Council of Europe's media and information society steering committee which is the prime location within the Council of Europe for addressing fundamental rights in the information society and the online world.

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So the paper that's being presented to the GAC by Council of Europe authors, which was introduced by Thomas Schneider initially I think in -- at the London meeting in some detail, provides one input. It's not meant to be a text or a set of recommendations that we in the commonwealth should automatically sign up to. We should look at those recommendations, consider what's of particular value for the communities within the commonwealth as the Internet access continues to expand in our communities and the issues of freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, data protection, privacy become much more visible and the subject of political debate within our communities. So that's why I see this is a highly relevant issue in particular for the commonwealth member states.

I think I'll -- I'll finish there. But with a last plea that if you have a chance to come along to the cross community discussion, I think that will be very helpful for you to provide your views and comments and perhaps subsequently to follow-up as an input. But as our chair noted, that will condition -- those discussions tomorrow will help to refine our advice to the board in the communique on this important topic. Thanks.

TIM UNWIN:

Thanks very much, Mark. And it may already have happened, but the Council of Europe again circulate the text of that document to the commonwealth/GAC mailing list. So if you haven't gotten it, it will be useful to read that before attending the meeting tomorrow. Any brief questions for Mark? This is clearly a major issue and with the commonwealth charter all governments in the commonwealth have actually signed up to a series of principles which found expression in the

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document on the -- the cyber governance framework as well. So this is something where coordination can certainly reap benefits.

Moving on very briefly to item 4, compared with the turnout of commonwealth governments in London participation of commonwealth governments here in Los Angeles is somewhat less. And one of the things we were charged with doing was encouraging greater outreach to commonwealth members not here and certainly the feedback that I have had, and it might be useful just to see if there's anything else that needs to be added to this, we might take further. But both the costs of attending here but also its proximity to the ITU meeting, particularly countries with small numbers of relevant staff and limited capacity really created a problem this time and also many commonwealth countries, particularly small island states and particularly the Pacific that's less than the Caribbean which tends to be better represented, are really difficult issues. But I was wondering if there's anything anyone else would like to add on this. Yes, Mark, thank you.

MARK CARVELL:

Just to add that it's great news that St. Lucia and the Gambia have joined the GAC. I think that's great news.

There are -- I don't know if we've got the latest list of nonparticipating Commonwealth members. We can't go through it, but I think it's incumbent on all of us in our bilateral contacts with Commonwealth member states who are not in the GAC to explain the importance and value of participation through membership and the importance. And of course there is remote participation, although it's not very visible at this meeting. I'm not -- Anyway. But that should be enhanced if -- if it's not

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already being done. So I don't know if Tracy has or Peter has a comment on enhancing remote participation in GAC meetings. No? Okay.

I'll leave it at that. I've made the point, anyway.

Thank you.

TIM UNWIN:

On remote participation, it is there. I just think it's not used very much. I think we reported St. Lucia last time in London, did we? Or thereabouts, and for the record, The Gambia is no longer a member of the Commonwealth. We hope that won't last for very long. A temporary glitch.

Anyone want to add anything else there? And I think we really do, as Mark suggests, need to encourage members to participate. A third of the world's population, 53 countries. If you're thinking about the elections and when we'll come to other elections later, that is quite significant.

Tracy. Sorry. I missed you, yes. Should have hit me. Sorry.

TRACY HACKSHAW:

So there was an initiative in the Caribbean to do a prep meeting that ICANN facilitated. Maybe CTO, you may have a similar activity could you work on because that could draw in members, I think, before the meeting; indicate to them what the issues are. Perhaps you could do it without necessarily ICANN's -- I mean, you have the resources, I imagine, to do a Webinar or some sort of call. You don't necessarily

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need the facility of ICANN. You could have a -- on a list, circulate some requests for what's to be on the agenda for the meeting. Perhaps like a few weeks before. Maybe do either a call or Webinar of some sort. (Indiscernible) staff, ICANN staff, I'm sure they would be willing to help, as well as anybody, even the GAC, we will help as well. And maybe that might draw in people who are -- don't normally participate. At least they'll come to the Webinar and perhaps they can actually attend the meeting thereafter, either remotely or physically.

TIM UNWIN:

Thank you very much. And we were hoping to get a mailing list done through ICANN earlier, but that, for various reasons, didn't happen. So we've only just developed a mailing list ourselves.

I want to be politically very correct here that, ideally, I think this should have been done by not the CTO, but it is currently on our address, and so the Commonwealth GAC@CTO.INT, we can use that to coordinate and we will follow up on your suggestions.

So can we move on to item 5? Jonathan, thank you for joining us.

Would you like to give us an update? This item was spoken about, discussed the at our last meeting so I think it is good to have an update on IGO indicators.

JONATHAN:

Thanks, Tim, and thanks everyone for being here and for the support you gave us in London.

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As Tim said, you may remember my colleague Alexandrix Kofea (phonetic) gave you a sort of brief introduction to the issue at the meetings in London. But just as a recap, the OECD and a coalition of about 60 intergovernmental organizations are asking ICANN to give us protections for our names and acronyms at the top and second levels. We are asking for protections that are consistent with IGOs unique status under international law. For example, the protections that are already guaranteed to us by Article 6ter of the Paris Convention, protections that would include recourse to dispute resolution procedures that are compatible with our privileges and immunities, and protections that are not cost prohibitive for the kind of resource-constrained organizations that we are.

So once again, thank you so much for the support that you gave us in London which was really key.

There's been a little bit of movement since the last meeting. Just before London, you may recall that the NGPC advised the GNSO to consider amending previous advice that it had given on IGO protections and that was incompatible with advice that the GAC had given on the same issue.

Then just before this meeting on the 7th of October, the GNSO Council wrote a letter to the NGPC which contained some troubling language. I'll read from the letter.

It said, "Our understanding from our discussion with Chris," it's reference to Chris Disspain, "is that the Board has yet to finalize a response to the GAC's advice from the GAC's London communique but that the NGPC and the GAC nevertheless have reached a mutual understanding that in relation to IGO acronym protection, the IGO's

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initial request for permanent preventative protection; i.e., through reservation or through otherwise being withheld from reservation, is not implementable."

It's not yet clear to us where that conclusion came from that these protections would not be implementable, especially since, as I said, these protections that are already guaranteed to us under Article 6ter of the Paris Convention have, indeed, been implemented in one way or another in many members of the GAC.

It's important to recall that the GAC has consistently stated since Toronto that we must have these kind of protections; that the IGOs are entitled to preventative protections. And for the past three years we've still been waiting for ICANN to come through with some sort of way to implement this solution.

The most recent development occurred on last Saturday morning when we had a meeting with some members of the ICANN Board and the NGPC and the GNSO, and we spoke about this at the GAC meeting on Saturday. But for those of you who weren't there or those of you who missed the item, basically what's going to happen is that a small group of IGOs will be formed to consult with the GNSO on this issue in effort to reach acceptable resolution to this problem.

It won't be difficult for us to get this group of IGOs together effectively. As I said, we already had this coalition of about 60 IGOs, and there's already a group of about five or six of us who have been very active in this issue.

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The IGOs that are present at this meeting are the World Bank, the World Intellectual Property Organization, the Organization for Islamic Cooperation, and the OECD of course.

The mechanics of this small group are still being worked out. Just before the GAC meeting on Saturday, you may recall that the NGPC circulated a discussion document that purported to be the baseline that these discussions between the IGOs and the GNSO would begin. But as I stated at the GAC meeting on Saturday, the document didn't take into account previous discussions that the IGOs had already had with the NGPC.

So hopefully we're going to be able to agree on different language for that document that would be a baseline, a starting point for those discussions so that they get off to the right start so they accurately capture the issues that are important for both sides and, more importantly, accurately capture the agreements that have already been reached on some of these core issues.

So the IGOs are guardedly optimistic. There's still a bit of tension between the GNSO's and the IGOs on this issue. And hopefully this small group will be a way for us to dissolve some of those tensions and just as a way to have more open, more free-flowing discussions so both sides can reach a better understanding of this issue and so that we can finally move forward.

Some of the things that we're asking for and some of the things that we thought had been agreed on with the NGPC in previous meetings were notification through the trademark clearinghouse for IGO names and acronyms, with notice going not only to IGOs when there's a potential

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conflict but also notice going to the potential registrant so that we can make sure to sort of head off any -- any conflicts as early of a stage as possible.

We're also interested in the creation of URS or UDRP-like dispute resolution procedure that would actually be accessible to the IGOs given our privileges and immunities.

So once again, thank you so much for all of your support in London. The IGOs will be proposing additional text for the communique this time around as we did last time, so we would very much appreciate if the members of the Commonwealth would support the IGOs on this issue.

I invite any of you to come to me in the hallways or after this meeting to talk to me more about this issue if you want more information. And thank you again so much for your time.

TIM UNWIN:

Thanks so much, Jonathan. And sorry to put pressure on time but we do need our stomachs looking after as well.

Jonathan said any further discussion, but I think that we have previously agreed, as far as we can as a group, very much to support this initiative in line with our existing practices and the IGO protection is important.

Would anyone just like to make any other observations, comment, support, or speak otherwise?

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UNDISCERNABLE: I have a request. I just have a request. Could you please add the African Union Commission in your mailing list?

TIM UNWIN: Yes, so long as you sign this afterwards. You've given me the ideal opportunity.

One of the things in developing the list is I was tempted to put every Commonwealth GAC representative on the list, but we feel that we actually shouldn't do that, so my assistant wrote, but anyone else can be on the list as well. So can you come and sign that? And not everybody has signed this attendance sheet, so if you could do that afterwards, that will be great.

Thank you.

So the next paper is the one I've just circulated. I hope it is up-to-date, but a key role at the Commonwealth kind of coarse play is in supporting each other in international elections. And in our circumstances, particularly for ITU coming up next week.

The agreed position that we've adopted in following sort of discussions with ministers in March in this year and in subsequent meetings is where there is direct competition in the first round, very much a free-for-all, but, secondly, there could be value in uniting the 53 votes around the Commonwealth country that is most likely to gain the -- the relevant position.

So I should stress absolutely the CTO nor the Commonwealth bodies are about supporting any one candidate, but more importantly, it's about

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supporting all candidates in the Commonwealth where we can in the votes.

I've circulated the paper. If anyone present is standing and I haven't or we haven't listed, please let me know. But this was taken from the ITU site just on the 8th of October.

As a remainder, there are three Commonwealth countries standing for the DSG post. In terms of the RRB, one person standing for Africa and one for Asia and Australasia in the two regions. So clearly the DSG post is the critical one there and what I just said would apply.

More -- Perhaps more interestingly for us, the Commonwealth countries standing for the Americas, for Africa, for Asia and Australia. And I've received a particular plea from the Caribbean. I think everybody here knows, since it was said last time but we'll say it again, that the Caribbean hasn't been represented on council for many years, and the Caribbean countries have united around the nomination of Barbados. And it would clearly make a very significant difference if Barbados could have the support from other Commonwealth countries, and they've articulated that very clearly on a number of occasions.

But as you can see, across the Commonwealth, we have a good number of people standing, and it will be, you know, good that we could all support each other. I'm not sure there's anything else that needs to be said on that, but perhaps it is a moment for any countries who are standing in this or in other elections if they would like to make a statement.

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HENRI KASSEN:

Thank you, Chairman. Well, I'm just referring to the elections coming up at 2:00, in any case. If I look at the ITU list, the GAC list, the GAC elections seem to be very easy. Hopefully noncontentious in terms of Commonwealth support.

Namibia standing, supported by the African Union and the African -- basically the African countries and other blocks. Of course EU and others, as far as I could gather.

So I just realized that the communications didn't get through to everybody, so I wanted to use this opportunity to just introduce myself. I'm Henri Kassen from Namibia and standing as GAC vice chair, one of the three GAC vice chairs, and the support of the African -- the Commonwealth countries will be very much appreciated. I hope to take the baton from Tracy and Peter. Hopefully we can continue and feed the Commonwealth with our representation there at GAC. Thank you very much.

TIM UNWIN:

Thank you very much, Henri.

Anyone else like to ask anything about their standing in either the ITU elections or any other elections?

Yes.

Okay. Yes.

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UNDISCERNABLE: Just to second what Henri said, all Commonwealth countries are requested today in the GAC to vote for him. That's all. Thank you very much.

TIM UNWIN: Thank you very much. I think -- the 7th item -- and I'm not quite clear how many people know about some of the processes that are ongoing. And I haven't heard -- and I haven't been at every session here at ICANN -- but the role that the World Economic Forum is playing following on from NETmundial and ICANN in moving forward agendas.

I have been following this a little bit, and I put a link there. I think we'll circulate these slides to everybody afterwards.

But, if there's anyone here who is familiar with the new Internet Governance Cooperation Network that the World Economic Forum has established and they would like to share information about that now, that would be helpful. I mean, basically, if you look at those who attended that meeting in -- convened by the World Economic Forum will note that there were not that many Commonwealth countries present. There were not many countries present from the poorer countries of the world. And I think this is another example of duplication and replication and a lack of certainty in the direction in which some of these Internet governance issues are going to be resolved.

And, if I can express a personal opinion, it does seem that this was very much marginalizing any role that the GAC might play in ICANN if some of the key decisions are actually going to be taken out of this forum to

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be discussed in a body that might not be seen as necessarily being truly representative.

I'm saying that from messages that have been passed to me. But I do think there are some issues that we need to think about quite seriously there. And the GAC might also consider more widely.

Is this an issue that is of concern or not? I look to people who have much more experience in ICANN and GAC than I have.

Yeah. Peter and then Mark.

PETER NETTLEFOLD:

It's quite possible Mark should have gone first. Perhaps he knows more than me.

But I agree. I think one of the challenges with this issue is from my perspective has been finding out information that's not entirely clear what it's intended to do, aside from following on up on some of the NETmundial outcomes and what it's actually intended to be. So my initial reaction is it was creating some new standing organization. Apparently, that's not true, I'm assured. But, again, I don't have great information. What I've been told it is doing is trying to -- it's a temporary thing, as I understand it. And it's meant to be finding homes for various issues. So one of the first questions I had is, if it's looking at a whole range of issues, why is it different from the IGF?

And the answer that I received was it may well be that this initiative, as one of its outcomes, points to the IGF as the right place to be. But maybe the IGF isn't the right place to be for everything. There may be

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some other forums which have particular expertise or particular standing on particular Internet governance or Internet-related issues, depending on how broadly we want Internet governance to be defined. So that's kind of all I know, basically.

But one of the challenges I've had is -- not being at the meeting and finding out what exactly it's meant to do. I've certainly heard lots of criticisms of it being dumped on people, another example of top-down ICANN management-type stuff. I reserve judgment on that. Because I still, basically, don't know what it is. That's what I've heard from talking to several people. If anyone else knows anything else, that would be great.

TIM UNWIN:

Thank you very much, Peter. Mark, would you like to add?

MARK CARVELL:

Yes, thanks.

U.K. government wasn't at the launch event and meeting on the 28th of August. So we were not there either. Ed Vaizey, our minister, couldn't make it at that time.

We have a kind of watching brief as far as NETmundial initiative is concerned. We -- there are pros and cons. In its favor is that it draws the attention of heads of states and CEOs to the issues of Internet governance and the future course of multistakeholder governance, in particular. There will be an event in Davos in January for this initiative as part of WEF's program of activities. And that's where the

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engagement with ministers and heads of state and CEOs will take place. So that's in its favor.

It was set up at a time when the IGF was moving to increase outputs in terms of concrete initiatives. So it may well be a valuable vehicle for picking up IGF outcomes. Again, it's early days. We'll have to wait and see if it's going to do that. We may know more at the IGF consultation in Geneva, as I mentioned earlier on.

On the downside, it does risk undercutting IGF itself. And that was a risk that many of us expressed concern about. We'll have to wait and see. We understand the U.S. is perhaps more committed to supporting this initiative than European member states. But they have the same concern that we have, that it should not diminish or subordinate existing Internet governance processes and mechanisms. So it may help. We shouldn't dismiss it outright. And I should also point out that, while it's using the name NETmundial, it's actually not a Brazilian initiative. There's no direct link, really, to the NETmundial conference in Sao Paulo. Brazil's position is clearly to stay with existing processes and mechanisms. Thank you.

TIM UNWIN: Thank you very much. New Zealand.

NEW ZEALAND: Thanks. I just wanted to add something to Peter and Mark's comments. Being at NETmundial there was definitely a lot of talk about the number of different initiatives, different foras, different events that we're expected to participate in. There was some frustration about the

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number of events we're expected to cover and how we can keep up. I mean, if large governments are struggling, smaller governments are struggling even more. One of the things that came out of NETmundial said that while there is room for new initiatives and new fora, they should not be initiatives that duplicate. They should always add to current structures. So I just echo your comments that there is a bit of confusion as to what this adds and whether it is possibly duplicating. And I think we'd like to consider that because we're a bit concerned about the number of new initiatives still existing after NETmundial.

Thanks.

TIM UNWIN:

Thank you very much. Does anyone dissent from the view that we're all concerned about the number of duplicating -- potentially duplicating initiatives? This really does affect the Commonwealth usually. Because, compared with the U.N. system, we have many small island states. And this could actually be something we could take away from this meeting. I'm seeing lots of nods. Thank you.

And I don't want to flood your inboxes. Something I appreciate with ICANN is just how many e-mails one gets from the GAC. So we won't use the mailing list extensively. But, if I hear more information or if others do, perhaps we could share information on the mailing list about that.

Finally, ladies and gentlemen, I apologize for going through this all so quickly. But is there any other business colleagues would like to raise? I take that as a no. And I take great pleasure in closing the meeting and

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wishing you an enjoyable lunch. For those at the ITU, we're not holding a formal Commonwealth agenda there, but it would be great pleasure to meet up with you again in something informal. Thank you for joining us today. If you haven't signed your life away on our sheet of paper -- there are many of you who haven't signed it -- it's up here.

Thank you.

[ END OF TRANSCRIPT ]