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SINGAPORE - Global Domains Division (GDD) Update (1215 - 1330)
Monday, February 9, 2015 – 12:15 to 13:30
ICANN – Singapore, Singapore

AKRAM ATALLAH: So I guess it's time to get started.

Thank you very much for attending the GDD update session. We have a lot of material to cover and I hope to leave some time for Q&A as well so I'll try to be brief and not read everything on the slides, but like I said, there's a lot of material.

So the way I organized the update is to try to show you what we've done since the last meeting, so between L.A. and Singapore; what we aim to achieve in Singapore; and then what are we planning to do between Singapore and Buenos Aires, so that you have an idea of what to expect from us in the next period.

I will start with some -- And I broke the slides into categories that are not necessarily the way we're organized, but more, hopefully, the way you see us deliver our work so that it's more meaningful to you than to us.

In the security, stability, resiliency and technical area, we've conducted 62 presentations and trainings across ICANN's five regions. We've delivered on 18 requests for assistance on identifier SSR issues, released the biannual SSR activity report and that has a lot of information in it so please do look it up on the Internet. It's available on our Web site, and it has a lot of material.

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So we started also looking at the root key signing key rollover, and we've added members to that team and that team will meet here and will continue to work.

We've assessed implementation of the SSR review team recommendations, and we're developing a plan for ICANN 52, so we will be updating you here in this session on that.

Collected and analyzed software and process requirements for the IANA stewardship transition. I know that everybody's working on accountability and all of the nice, you know, things to do for the future, but in reality, there is one thing that really matters; that is, how we perform the IANA functions and how we update the root. And that needs to -- depending on -- and today there are three parties involved in that: Us, VeriSign, and NTIA. When NTIA is out of the picture, how are we going to do this? So we're looking at all of these different ways that we need to update our software. And we have some plans on that, and we're working with VeriSign on that as well. So it's very important to focus on this and be ready for that, continue to provide the stability that everybody is used to and takes for granted, because I think we've done such a good job with VeriSign and NTIA on this that nobody looks at it. So it's good, but we need to continue that post the transition.

We spoke at technical forums. The Future Internet Summit in China, the IETF, and the NANOG in the U.S. as well. So a lot of engagement activities and a lot of work there.

On the IANA functions, we continue to perform to the standards that everybody expects from us. We have delivered our customer satisfaction survey and updated it on our Web site. We had a very nice

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response rate, and we had 93% of the respondents with overall satisfaction, which is higher than the previous time we did the survey. So that's a -- either the survey is getting better or the results are getting better, but one way or another, we're actually improving it.

We also published our monthly reports for all root zone changes. And I know that we take these for granted. We don't know what all of the different details that the IANA team delivers on, but it's important to go to their Web site and see what good job they do, and I commend them for that. It's day in, day out. They perform the job without, actually, much recognition.

So there were, I think, 76 top-level domain delegations. This number depends on when you start the counting, so there is a little bit more than that, probably, in the trimester.

We also processed 1,000 protocol parameter requests and over 210 root zone change requests as well. And we did key ceremonies, the key signing ceremonies in November in Los Angeles and January in Culpeper, Virginia.

So a lot of work from the team.

On the industry engagement side, we have implemented an escalation process for our registries so that if there are any issues that they are not getting service on, they can actually reach out and escalate up the organization.

We've hosted the registry roadshow in Istanbul which follows the one that we did in, I think, Tokyo and Los Angeles. So this was the third piece of the roadshow that the registry team set up.

Participated in registrar events in multiple places you; conducted outreach sessions; presented at events, you know, all over the world.

We are working with our contracted parties on different things. We've surveyed the registries to determine how to prioritize document translation. We keep getting questions on these things. We want more documents translated, but yet when we look at the optic on the readership on the documents that we translate and put on the Web, the readership is very small. So we wanted to see what is a priority so we don't just spend a lot of time translating documents that nobody wants to read. So hopefully that would help us focus our efforts to get you what you need translated and not what we think we should translate.

We conducted Webinars, and we published papers -- a paper regarding Registrar Accreditation Agreement insurance alternatives. The public comment period is open now.

Of course on the new gTLD program, we've executed an additional 258 registry agreements, so we're almost at 800 registry agreements signed.

We've passed the 500 delegations, so congratulations to both IANA and our registry and operational teams that have been working diligently to get this done, but that's a good milestone. 500 is, you know, not quite 50% of what we're going to have in new gTLDs, but it's a substantial mark and we should be celebrating this.

The contention sets, we've made a lot of progress in the last trimester. Over 70% of the sets have been resolved. Most of them actually have been resolved independently. The parties resolved these issues by

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themselves. But we also conducted some auctions and resolved a few of these contention sets through the ICANN auction process.

 We have had some requests from the community, both from the GAC and the ALAC to actually address the sensitive -- what's called sensitive strings. We assisted the NGPC, or subsets of the NGPC, to meet with the GAC and address some of the issues that they had, that the GAC had on its mind.

 We're still not over this. So they are not happy with the way the implementation has been done on their advice, and we continue to work with them to explain some of the issues that are not -- we believe they're not clear to them, but also there are issues that they're not happy with, and we're looking to see how we can work these issues to get them to close.

 It's a tough one because we've already signed a lot of these contracts, yet they want us to adjust things, and we feel like it's not something that we can do. So there is some tension on these issues, but we're having other meetings while we're here to try to resolve this and get it to a close.

 Same thing with the ALAC. There were some clarifications that we did on the PICDRP.

 I want to clarify something here. It seems that a lot of people think that the PICs might not be enforceable by ICANN. Everything that's in the contract is enforceable by ICANN. So whether it's a PIC that a registry volunteered itself or whether it's a PIC that we put in the contract for everybody, they are part of the contract and, therefore,

they are enforceable. So that is one of the things that seems is not very clear for everybody.

And the PICDRP, we've heard things that it takes too long, it's not -- it's not tested. Well, it's a new process. Of course it's not tested. So before we start making changes to these processes, we need to see them at work, see how they're doing before we kind of engage with alternatives or adjustments to these processes.

So I hope that this clarifies a couple of issues that I've heard a lot of discussion on.

We started putting the standard panel, the PICDRP panel. We have, I think, seven -- three people on the panel, and we're expanding the panel. So we're looking for -- we opened -- we're inviting people to apply for the panel, and we have a few candidates and we're working on expanding that.

We also put a Web site or a -- we added a few Web pages on the new gTLD review program. I think that you'll be able to go see a lot of the information about the review on the Web site now, including the timelines and the plans and what's the progress on that and where we are on different things because there are a lot of different pieces to the review of the new gTLD program. It's very hard to keep track of everything, so I think this Web site is very critical for people to be able to keep up on what we're doing.

We also published the draft rights protection review paper and initiated the customer survey to inform the review on competition choice and trust in the new gTLD program. As you know, this is something where

we're going to baseline, and then a year later we're going to actually do another test to see how the competition choice and trust are changing as the new gTLD program continues to roll out.

So another big list of things that we've done. I will try to pick on a few here.

So this is more on the operations and customer support side. Of course we've exceeded our SLAs. We've been working very hard on that to meet your expectations, and I think we've done a good job on this.

We've done some work on the IDN ccTLD and the fast track, which people probably now forget about that we're still doing that. So there is still countries applying for ccTLD IDN fast-track applications and we're still processing these things.

We've done a lot of different engagement work and customer support, and I'll talk about the future of that, the customer support area, in the next sections, but we have a lot of promising things there. And we're improving our GDD portal as well, and we are -- we started to develop a process to adjust the COI amount. We know that a lot of new gTLD applications had much higher expectations on the number of registrations that they were expecting for their TLD, and they haven't seen those registrations get to those levels, yet they put in a lot of money for the continuation instrument. So if they want to bring those down to the levels of registrations, we're putting a process for that, allowing them to reduce their exposure. It's money sitting on the sidelines for them and it's not doing anything. It could be better used for marketing their TLDs. We want to help them out with that, so we're putting that process in place.

But it also works the other way around, which means that for the new gTLDs that put a very low COI, and now they've exceeded the registration numbers that they put the COI for, that provides them the opportunity to come in compliance with the agreement and meet the -- meet the threshold, the COI threshold that they should be at. So it works both ways.

And that should be rolled out next trimester.

So we also created an exclusive registration period which is for the TLDs that did the alternative path for collision mitigation, which means they took the block list and locked it.

We've actually developed a way for them to create a sunrise for unblocking these -- these strings that were previously blocked. This way providing the same RPMs for these names, these strings that were provided for any other name during the launch of the TLD.

We sadly launched a two-character ASCII label request process for -- at the second level, and we started the process of allowing TLDs to do that, and we were stopped by the GAC because they had some concerns about the way the process is being dealt with.

We hope to address this issue while we're here in Singapore. We have this on the agenda of the Board for our Wednesday meeting, and hopefully we will launch it again as we get out of Singapore.

And we released an enhanced SLA monitoring system. We increased the, actually, instances of -- or the points of testing that we have in the SLA system, and we're looking at ways to actually improve the communications and allowing the registries to be able to have access to

the data of the marketing system just like we see it so that they can investigate issues and have visibility to the system as well.

So a lot of progress on the operational side.

The few initiatives that we've worked on over the last trimester. We've been, of course, working on the -- on the different panels for -- for the IDN variant work, and we've increased the number of languages that we have panels for right now. So we included Armenian, Cyrillic, Japanese, Myanmar, and Neo-Brahmi scripts. This is basically a lot of volunteering work is happening in that space because, you know, the interest is there, so that's, hopefully, very promising for the IDNs, and we hope to make a lot of progress, get all of these panel recommendations . And Sarmad here is really making a wonderful job on delivering to the IDN expectations.

We also delivered on the WHOIS roadmap. The WHOIS initiatives has so many different pieces to it that we've been asked by a lot of different sides to provide some clarity on what are all these different moving parts there. So we put a roadmap that covers all of the different pieces. It's available on the Web site, and you can actually look at that. We shared it with the GAC who was actually asking for this, and hopefully provides necessary clarity to our work there.

We also published the final report on WHOIS accuracy reporting and system pilot.

It's also available for public comment right now. Please do provide your comments there. This is a pilot that we hope to actually use for looking at WHOIS accuracy as signed in the new gTLD program by all the

new gTLD -- new gTLD -- new top-level domain registries, and we will do it every six months as requested by the GAC advice that we put in the contracts, and we will use that to monitor the improvements of the WHOIS records.

And we created a community working group to ramp up efforts on universal acceptance of TLDs. We will talk more about that as well.

So what are we trying to achieve in Singapore?

We have a lot of different sessions, open sessions, and then we have some other closed sessions for working groups and to make progress on certain areas. But again, I don't want to read every bullet that's there. It's important to look at the different sessions that we have. One of the highlighted sessions here is the gTLD technical operations lessons. I think that's very important for the operators to attend. There are a lot of things to discuss and for us to be -- to make sure we're on the same page and to learn from what we've done and how we've done it and make sure that we get your advice also on these issues.

In IANA functions, we are providing a who, what, why. We're trying to educate a lot of the attendees at ICANN meetings on what IANA functions are and what we do. And I think that's -- we did that last ICANN meeting. And we -- it was very successful, so we're doing this again this meeting as well.

In the industry engagement section, of course, we -- you know, we're pushing forward all our work with the contracted parties. But very importantly is our thick WHOIS implementation. We have a meeting to, hopefully, close the gap on some of the different understandings of the

-- of the way to do the thick WHOIS. But also other aspects of -- we can address also other aspects of WHOIS as well in that meeting. So please do attend and participate.

On the new gTLD program, we'll have a status update. And we will talk about both the program itself and the application progress. But a big section will be on the reviews and the next round and where we are and what needs to be done to get there.

So, as I mentioned, Karen Lentz and her team have done also an exceptional job in this area. And the Web site has a lot of information now on the progress of the reviews.

In the operations area, we have, as usual, we have the GDD information booth. It's a place for you to go and schedule meetings with our operational team, our engagement team. So, basically, our subject matter experts. So, if you have any question on any requests that you're dealing with with GDD, please go ahead, schedule a time. We will meet with you, go over the issues, understand your point of view and make sure that we make progress on any of the tickets that you have in the system.

We have also a session on AROS. AROS is actually a platform that we developed at the request of the registries and the registrars. Just for everybody's information, we had a lot more registrars than we had registries. The new gTLD program there are going to be more registries than there are registrars or roughly the same number. And making sure that you have attention of the -- your opposite party -- so, if your registry and you need to contract to some registrars to sell your domains or vice versa, if you're a registrar and you want to represent

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some registries, it becomes much more difficult to get together and work. And this platform is supposed to eventually help both parties get their contracts with each other signed and documented in a fairly easy way and sustainable way.

So we're doing a session on that. So please join and give us your feedback so that we can improve the tool and make it what everybody expects it to be.

Also, we have the GDD portal user group workshop which is where you tell us improvements on the portal that you would like to see and how the features are working for you or what else we need. And, also, the prioritization, hopefully, of what needs to come next and all of that. So please do attend and participate in that.

The WHOIS roadmap with the community -- this is -- All Things WHOIS I think already happened. I'm not sure. No? So it will be next. So please do attend. There is a lot of work on WHOIS. And I think it's -- you know, I mentioned that. And I kind of almost had my head chopped off for it. But we want to make sure -- I know that there are a lot of things that are in the WHOIS that we need to do. But also, it's not smart to do things. And, before we get to operationalize some features, we have new features that have to be added or replaced. So we need to line up things in a way that makes sense to put the resources of the community or the contracted parties on. So, if we're going to ask them to do a thick WHOIS, we shouldn't ask them to do a thick WHOIS and then a month before they launch their thick WHOIS, we come up and we ask them to do something different. So we have to line it up and we get benefits from what they do. No other business operates in a vacuum. So we

need to make sure that we take all of that input and line up things the right way.

WHOIS clarifications: This is a -- something that we put out. I think we're down to clarify the requirements on what you want to see in the WHOIS displays. And I think we're down to a couple of different items that we need to close the gap on. Hopefully, we can do that this meeting and move on to implementation on that.

And then on universal acceptance, I think that we're seeing a lot of engagement from the community. There is a session on that that we will update the community on our progress there. And it seems the enthusiasm is very high. So I would encourage you to pile up on this and make sure that we keep the ball rolling and we keep the enthusiasm growing on getting these things done.

The IDN program update, as I mentioned earlier, that's a good session to know where we are in that. And then the root zone LGR workshop is also a good, I would say, technical workshop for people who are interested in more of the details to participate in.

But a lot of progress is being made on the IDN side. And, hopefully, that will see the fruits of this -- of all this work that the team is putting very soon.

Now, very important is to set a record, you know, on what we're promising and what we're going to deliver on and check against that record the next time we're together.

So what I'm trying to achieve here is I'm trying to put a few deliverables that we are going to be working on -- it's not everything that we're

working on. But it is some of the stuff that we're working on that we want you to have visibility to. And I welcome any input on either some things that we're working on that maybe should be lower priorities, some things that we should be working on that we're not that you don't see on those slides, or that things that needs to be higher priority than we are forecasting them to be.

I think that's very critical for having a good relationship where we are working on things that you need us to work on and not what we think we should be working on.

And so I'll go over a few of these. And I will open it up for Q&A afterwards.

So on the SSR and the technical area, we will publish our biennial SSR activity report before we get to Buenos Aires. You see the list. So we're going to do the DNS risk framework. We have a framework that's been developed. We are looking at the mitigations that we're going to put in place on that. And we're working with the community on this. So we provide more information on that. We will initiate development of revised advice registry system. We get a lot of advice, and we don't have a repository to track the progress on that. So we're working on this, and we're hoping to start development of the tool that we'll be able to track things through and get back to the community on our progress there.

We are working with RSSAC leadership on enhancing the root server system. And we should be able to show, you know, a lot of progress before Buenos Aires. And we have some initiatives in that field as well.

We have the technical expert group. We're working with them on formalizing their role and what is expected from them.

They're going to be looking mostly at the future of the DNS and things that we should be working on for security and stability as well as technical areas in our role.

And we will continue to the implementation of the RZM modifications or planning for the modifications in the scenarios of the absence of NTIA in that process.

Now, we haven't had any recommendations from all the different working groups that are working on the transition. But we believe that, in the next trimester, we should see some recommendations there. And, based on that, we will do some development on the different scenarios to make sure that we are prepared for the transition.

And we will deliver the draft of the plan to change the root key signing key. We're working with our partners on that. And, hopefully, we'll be able to deliver the plan there.

On the IANA functions, of course, we continue to deliver service as expected. So our SLAs will be refreshing the cryptographic devices for the key signing ceremonies. This is overdue, and we need to get that done over the next trimester. I know that I already ordered the HFMs, so I signed the CPOs. So next trimester, hopefully, we'll be upgrading those. We will publish the 2014 SysTrust audit report. And we will be announcing the plan to solicit candidates for the TCRs for the key signing ceremonies. We had a couple of resignations. We need to replenish the TCRs. And there are some requests on -- to change the

way we handle these volunteers and maybe participate in their offsetting some of their costs of travel and the like. So we're going to come up with a plan and put it together and deliver it the next trimester.

So, as you can see, you know, there are a lot of things that happen in the background that not everybody, you know, is involved in. But it's important to know that all of this work -- this team that you see does a lot more work than what you actually see yourselves.

On the industry engagement side, I mentioned to some of the registries and registrars that we are planning to put an intersessional between every two ICANN meetings, so three intersessionals a year. We're hoping to make these intersessionals working sessions with the contracted parties. We know that the ICANN meetings have a lot of distractions from transitions, policy development, business issues, you know, all sorts of work that happens all together. And then this work is so important that, when somebody wants to do their business at ICANN meetings, it distracts them from participating and volunteering into the work that we need them to participate in for the long term and for improving our policies and our processes. So we're going to provide this opportunity as an intersessional for more focus on the business. And the business meeting not only come -- ICANN staff coming and doing presentations.

We're going to work with you on developing these intersessionals so that we get you what you need. Whether it's engagement with the operational folks, whether it's presentations from us, whether it's presentations from you on your needs, whether it's you meeting with

each other, we're going to facilitate that if that's needed. So the idea is to make it really focused on the contracted parties for engagement and for working together and getting a lot of the issues resolved there so that we have more opposition in the ICANN meetings for PDPs and policies and policy developments and the other issues that ICANN is -- the ICANN meetings are a center for. And I hope that, actually, we will harden these meetings and they'll become essential meetings where we get a lot of our business done and you appreciate them. So I want you to participate in the definition of the meetings to get the most out of them

We hope to -- we complete the spec 11 security framework. I think we made a lot of progress. We have meetings here on this. So, hopefully, we'll be able to finalize this. The full launch of the AROS in the next trimester. We will launch the registrar training program on learn.icann.org.

We will also address the registrar accreditation agreement insurance. So we have some work being done on that. It seems that the insurance program and requirement is not what it was supposed to be. So we are working with you on improving that and addressing this issue.

We will accomplish educational documents for current and prospective registrars. We had a lot of additional registrar applications in the past six month, and I think that we need to refresh these things and work with the new entrants to make sure that they have all of -- everything that they need to be a good exemplary registrar.

We're also releasing an API for Service Level Agreement on the data access in near term. Okay.

In the new gTLD program, we have put in some milestones on contracting as well as on the delegation. And the reason for that is to provide everybody the ability to get to their deadlines successfully.

So we're not trying to rush you through these things but we're giving you a template that tells you if you finish this within this time, then you have this much time to get the next step and the next step so that you can get the contract signed on time as well as get delegated on time. So these -- these interim milestones are guidelines and posts that show us that you are working in goodwill to get these things done and that we hold your hand if you need to to get through the process successfully and on time.

We also plan to reserve -- resolve 85% of the contention sets. I think that most of the scheduled auctions will fall within the next trimester. There are some -- some contention sets that are held back because of accountability mechanisms or other issues, so these we might not be able to get them done in the next trimester but we should be able to finish all of the scheduled auctions by then.

We will continue to work with the NGPC to address remaining GAC advice on new gTLDs. We want to get that behind us as soon as possible. I know you guys don't want to -- want to see this done as well, but we want to be careful and do it in the right way, so our goal is to address these issues before we get to Buenos Aires. And I think we're almost there, but it's important to set the goal and make sure we deliver on it.

We will publish the program implementation reviews reports for comment. As we mentioned earlier, there is a lot of progress there, and so we want to publish the report so you can comment on it.

We will launch the trademark clearinghouse independent review, root stability review as well as economic study. So a lot of work on the reviews will kick start in the next trimester and we want to complete the Rights Protection Review report, including the public comment period. So all of that will be done next trimester.

On the operational side, we will launch the global customer service capability within staff -- with staff in Singapore and Istanbul. This is very important. It's something new that we're doing. We would be able to actually -- you would be able to reach ICANN operations through phone lines, just like you are today do that through the ticketing process online. You'll be able to pick up a phone and call a customer service rep that will actually provide you with answers. And if -- if they cannot, they will provide you with the right place to go to get your questions answered and get your business done with ICANN. And this will be operating 24/5, which means follow-the-sun model in five business days across the world. I know that some -- some people would feel Saturday and Sunday are business -- you know, in some areas, Saturday and Sunday are business days, but we will not be able to cover that in this first rollout.

We will, of course, meet or exceed our service target levels. We will conduct customer satisfaction surveys, also provide you an opportunity to give us some feedback on how we're doing.

We're implementing a lot of case management improvements, and we're deploying CRM enhancements to optimize service delivery. So a lot of work on the I.T. side for the systems and the tools that you guys are using. Hopefully, we're trying to consolidate a lot of different tools, and you'll see some deliverables in the next trimester, and I hope that we will continue to enhance these things and get you to -- to the place that you expect us to be in as quickly as possible.

And again as I mentioned, we will launch the process for registry operators to adjust COI amounts in line with registration levels.

On the initiative side, we will seat the new generation panels for additional script communities. We will release the label generation rules for root zone. Open-source LGR tool. We will begin developing that. Assist with label validation and determining variants. This is very critical for a lot of the applicants that want to see the variants rules implemented. And once we do this, then we're going to -- we're going to start, hopefully, talking about how do we do a variant and what's allowed and what's not allowed with the community, and we will engage everybody on how to make that happen. But these are very important fundamental pieces to the puzzle that we need to have in place before we get there.

Also launched implementation of the advisory group for forwarding inaccurate WHOIS reports to registrants. One of the things we signed up to in the GAC advice was that we will do a scan of WHOIS records -- a statistical scan of WHOIS records on a periodic basis. And we also, in the ATRT2, it's important for everybody to know, they were requesting

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that we do the same thing. So we said instead of actually doing two different things, let's combine the two and get them together.

So we have a pilot that we ran. I think we did about a hundred thousand different WHOIS records. We took these, and we analyzed them, and that's the report that you're seeing right now and it's open for public comments.

We will plan to do that twice a year, do two statistical samples of WHOIS and establish a trend of looking at the WHOIS accuracy over time. So that once we do these samples, when we find inaccurate records, we want to make sure that we prepare our registrars to receive the inaccurate records and handling them. So we want to work with the registrars on how they want us to give them those records and how they will handle them, because if we're going to sample, you know, between -- twice a year, we could send them the records over time between the two samples, but we definitely want to send them all the bad records. It's just we don't want to overwhelm their systems but we do want to get these records corrected. So that would be something that we want to work with the advisory group on defining how to do and make sure that everybody's ready for it.

We will conclude ongoing WHOIS-related implementation matters. That's a very wishful thinking, but we hope to.

We'll initiate community dialogue on ICANN-related privacy issues. That is topic that I think is becoming very important for all of us. A lot of people say why isn't this done? Why don't you just get some lawyer to give us a description of what is happening and then we can decide how to go from there?

This is like moving sand. Every time you look at the laws on privacy and stuff, they're shifting, they're changing. And we are in a period now where it's becoming very -- because of all of the cybersecurity issues and all you hear about, you know, the leaks, and I just received on my email that our -- what is it? Our health provider was actually breached, and all of the -- millions of, you know, patients and subscribers' information is at risk.

So this is becoming very important for a lot of law enforcement -- not law enforcement, but a lot of governments and countries. And they are focusing on that, and they're coming out with laws for protecting the consumers. And we need to stay on top of that because it does affect us, whether we like it or not, and we want to make sure that we don't fall behind and then leave it up to our registrar and registries to carry the burden on their own. So we need to work with them and try to figure out how to move forward and get this in a place where we can all navigate it and it's actually manageable.

So I think it's going to become a lot of -- it's garnering a lot of focus from everybody and we need to work together on that and try to get to a place where we are all comfortable with.

We'll also conclude the implementation on the IRTP-C and we initiate the implementation on IRTP-D. I think IRTP is inter-registrar transfer policies, and these are different rules that they're already adopted, but we're starting to implement them now and we need to get those two done.

So that's my report. I hope I didn't bore you too much with a lot of details, and it was informative, and I'll get -- please, if you have

feedback and you'd like to see this update change or have different pieces in it that were not covered or more details or less details, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Now we'll open it up for questions. If you have any questions, please go ahead.

AMADEU ABRIL I ABRIL: Good afternoon. I'm Amadeu Abril from CORE.

Thanks a lot for the update. It was more or less what we expected. And thanks for the all the progress.

I have just two petitions for two small additions. One small, one not so small. The small one, and I apologize for repeating that, for one year and a half we have been asking IANA to publish in its page where is the root zone database with all the TLDs. The TLDs that are, you know, from right-to-left scripts, like Arabic script or Hebrew script, in the correct way. They display with a dot in the wrong side. So it's not dot bazaar, dot Shabaka, dot mezir (phonetic) dot emulate (phonetic), but emulate dot, mezir dot, Shabaka dot, bazaar dot. It's very ugly, but on top of that it's very difficult to explain people that this (indiscernible); show them this is not a fake, you know. TLDs in Arabic script exist. They go there, say, oh, even the entity that manages that is unable to use this correctly. Why should I? Right?

So I think it's very simple. IANA told us this is not them. This is communications. And apparently with the different department, things are over and nobody is responsible. So I don't know what to do. I don't think this is for the ombudsman, but for one year and a half we have

been writing IANA, writing communications, saying that in the public forum.

I think you understand what I mean by, you know, incorrect displaying of the dot in the wrong side. So please tell someone to fix it one year and a half later.

Now the second --

AKRAM ATALLAH: Can I answer this very quickly? Please send me the link of the Web page you're talking about because there are a lot of different places where this information is present. If you could send me the link where this information is incorrect, I'll make sure it gets corrected.

AMADEU ABRIL i ABRIL: To you?

AKRAM ATALLAH: Yes, please.

AMADEU ABRIL i ABRIL: And the second one is regarding WHOIS; all right? And it's an old request regarding WHOIS output for the European-based TLDs. Maybe others, but the European Union TLDs have this concrete problem of the local laws telling them, one way or another, that displaying personal data from individuals not carrying out commercial activities with the domain names shouldn't be allowed, shouldn't be there.

Now, we proposed in January 2013 to ICANN to have a common approach to solve that, both on how to prove that this is the law and to agree on a possible solution. We need something similar for the registrars, on the waiver. Indeed, there was individual different to countries, but trying to get a sort of common approach to that.

Now, the last thing we were told over one year ago is, well, this is not very high on the agenda. One day there will be a process for that. But we advise you we want this to go one by one through RSEP, the Registry Services Evaluation Procedure.

Now, our problem here is that, if you check, this happened back in the years with cat, tel and name, and the three solutions are completely different.

We believe that having different solutions for 100 different TLDs in Europe with different -- completely different outputs is not the best one and still encourage ICANN to put that again on the table and to accept negotiating with the geo TLDs and with European TLDs together a way to prove what's the state of the law and, you know, to agree on what should be a workable solution for not publishing this data.

And just saying, well, you know, there's a reform for WHOIS going forever, now many of them are NGA and it becomes pressing, and data authorities are getting interested in that, and, you know, we'll get letters one day over the table and be forced to do strange things with WHOIS, but in a disparate way. I think that working together is better.

Thanks.

AKRAM ATALLAH: Thank you. We are looking into this. We are working very hard on that. But I hope that you appreciate how hard of a problem that is. We're -- we will continue to make progress, I hope. But we will focus our work with the legal team on trying to figure out a plan that we will be able to share with you at least in Buenos Aires on what we -- what we can and cannot do and what's our framework to getting what we can do done. Okay?

BRET FAUSETT: Thanks, Akram. It's Bret Fausett. That was very helpful.

I actually have three questions all on the WHOIS accuracy stuff. On the pilot project, I looked at the report. And I didn't think that they published the underlying data. So I would be curious, actually, to see my data. So, clearly, they must have captured some Uniregistry data along the way. I'd be curious to see how we fared and maybe start my own work behind the scenes before it becomes a compliance issue about how to do that.

AKRAM ATALLAH: Can I ask a quick question on that? You would like to see your own data privately, I take it, not publicly.

BRET FAUSETT: Correct. And, actually, leads into my second question. During the presentation, you mentioned that there was going to be a compliance program that was going to start in January 2015 that was working

behind that. I'm not sure I heard that correctly. You're looking at me like I didn't get that right. So maybe you could clarify what the compliance piece is that's going to trail behind the WHOIS accuracy study.

AKRAM ATALLAH: So, basically, what we're going to do with the data when we do statistical sampling of the WHOIS records, we're going to get those records. And then the ones that show that there is -- that they're not accurate, we're going to send them to the compliance just like an outside party would actually send them to compliance. And then compliance would actually check those records. And, if they deemed them to be inaccurate per the agreement, then they will forward them to the registrars.

So it's not that we're initiating a compliance initiative. It's just that we're going to use our -- the data that we operationally get and then do what everybody else would do with an inaccurate record is feed it to compliance.

BRET FAUSETT: And that's starting -- has that already started?

AKRAM ATALLAH: No. The group is supposed to meet to define how do we do that so that we don't overwhelm the systems. When we're going to do it twice a year, maybe we can actually spread them out. Or I don't know. But the working group should be able to define how to do that.

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BRET FAUSETT: Okay. And then my third question -- since I've already asked two questions on WHOIS, obviously, I'm interested in the implementation advisory group on that. How do we get somebody on that team? The WHOIS implementation advisory group. That -- I think it was on one of the more recent slides toward the end that you said was going to get started here in the nearish time period.

AKRAM ATALLAH: So there is a session on that. But you should be able to join the team. I don't see what the issue there is.

CYRUS NAMAZI: May I? Bret, hi. This is Cyrus Namazi at ICANN. There, actually, is a team already formed. They've met twice. But, if you see me offline, I'll be happy to put you in touch with the right people. There is also a session dedicated to all things WHOIS where the details of this will be presented. Karen, what time is that session? Right after this one, I think. 3:30. Yeah. 2:00. Sold! It's today.

JIM PRENDERGAST: Hey, Akram.   It's Jim Prendergast.   Lots of stuff to process in that presentation, so thanks for that. I'll ask on the two-character issue, why is it kicked to the full board and not to the NGPC? On the two-character issue it went to --

AKRAM ATALLAH: So the minute that you become a registry, then any issue that's a registry issue is no longer an NGPC, handled by the NGPC, just because you're contracted and, therefore, it's an RSEP request and all of that.

If it was before you became a contracted party, then those issues will be addressed by the NGPC.

KATHY KLEIMAN: Kathy Kleiman, am I on? Kathy Kleiman, Fletcher, Heald & Hildreth. I had a question also about WHOIS, following up with Bret. When you're looking at WHOIS accuracy, what is the standard that you're doing the study with? So there are two ways to look at it. Are you looking at the accuracy of all fields in WHOIS, or are you looking at the accuracy of some of the fields? So the standard is all accurate or contactability? And contactability means that somehow the registrant is reachable. Contactability was the standard in the 2013 RAA. Contactability was also the standard adopted by the WHOIS review team that, as long as the registrant is reachable, there are legitimate reasons why the registrant doesn't publish, say, an address. We already heard from that from Amadeu. What is the standard you're using in these studies? Thank you.

AKRAM ATALLAH: So I think that the pilot was addressing the WHOIS review team's recommendations. And they had some different levels of accuracy that they -- that were defined. And they are in the document. So, if you look at them, you'll see that. That's why we did not want to take these records that are deemed inaccurate by the study and send them to the

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registrars directly. We want to take those and send them to compliance because compliance will actually check if these records are compliant or not. And then they will forward the ones that are not compliant to the registrars. So now it's important to differentiate between the RAA requirements and what we can do when we check.

At the time of registration, you could test contactability differently than what you can do post registration.

Because, if you're trying to register a domain, you send an email. If they want to register a domain, you have to reply. So you're going to get accurate representation if the email works or not.

When you're doing post check, I might think it's spam. I might not reply to it. So does that actually define a bad WHOIS record? I don't know.

So it's a little bit difficult. And we're working through these details. And some of these issues will be teased out through the working group that's working on that. And, hopefully, we can get to a point where we don't just represent information that's very confusing. We're trying to line up all the requirements with what's contractual -- with the contractual obligations so that we define things in layers, which means this is -- they meet the contractual obligations or they don't. And then the next layer is a higher level than what's contractually -- what the contractual obligations cover. And then the third one is, you know, we're knocking on doors. I don't know. But we're trying to tier it and get the contract obligations and what we're studying to be aligned so that we're not addressing issues that have no meaningful way to be addressed through the contract. Okay? Thanks.

DONNA AUSTIN: Do you want three guesses on the topic? Donna Austin, for the record. Akram, just in relation to the two-character labels -- and you said that you hope you'll have a decision from the board meeting this week -- can you give us some insight into the process? It might help us, you know, have a better understanding of how these things are managed when you receive a communication from the GAC or, you know, maybe other experience as well. Because we don't have much visibility into the process. So, if you can give us some insight, that would be great.

AKRAM ATALLAH: So I don't remember the resolution exactly by the board. But I think the resolution was instructing staff to work to develop a process to do the two characters in line with the GAC advice or something along these lines. So we developed the process. We thought we were actually complying with the GAC advice or lack of the GAC advice. But we took the process based on letters received from the GAC. And we performed -- we put the process together in compliance with that.

When -- and we started processing some of the requests. And then we received the letter from the GAC saying wait a minute, that's not what we meant or that's not what we wanted. And they had the list of requirements.

So on the stuff that is clarifications or some visibility to what's happening when and stuff, we're starting to work on those already. But when they said that, basically, that's not what they wanted, we felt like we need to stop, get with the board. Because the resolution was to

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actually work in line with the GAC advice. When the GAC came back and said that's not what we expected or we needed more information or something like that, we felt like it -- we need to stop. It was actually the prudent thing to do. We met with the board. And the board agreed that we should wait until they provide us -- they look into the matter and deliberate and decide what the next step is.

I think that we -- it's -- not I think. It's on the agenda for Wednesday. We're providing them with the paper on all of the details.

And I think that once they meet, hopefully, we'll be able to, you know, maybe relaunch the program with some of the adjustments and -- but I cannot give you an answer until they meet and deliberate.

DONNA AUSTIN: So it's your expectation that the process is going to change?

AKRAM ATALLAH: My expectation, if I had a crystal ball, I would say there are some low hanging fruit in the requests of the GAC. They wanted to have some visibility on which characters are -- which TLDs changing what or something along these lines. I don't have the details. So some of the simple stuff because we -- what we did is, to get things moving very quickly, we bundled a lot of the requests and put them together and moved them forward. And that was very hard for them, I think, to parse out and know what's going on.

So we might be able to do it in a more deliberate, you know, more clearer way that they would be -- it would be more transparent to them.

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So that's something that I think we can do. We can improve on and move quickly on.

But there are some other issues that they're asking for that we need to get the board some -- to deliberate and provide this advice on -- provide us direction on.

DONNA AUSTIN: So maybe I'll leave this until after we have the board resolution, but I would hope that we're not changing the process and that there's anything that is retrospective action for the registry operators given that it's been some considerable period of time now. Thanks.

AKRAM ATALLAH: I agree. Thank you.

JORDYN BUCHANAN: Hey, Akram. It's Jordyn Buchanan with Google. I thought I had another question, but your interaction with Donna inspired me to go back and take a look at the board resolution from Los Angeles. And it does -- you're right that it does refer to GAC advice. But it also says specifically taking into account the GAC's advice in the Los Angeles communique, which you had received and which I understand you developed the procedure that you had put out and that many of us attempted to follow.

So I guess I'm just curious as to why you think that non-los Angeles communique advice had to be considered when you had already done what the board told you to which was to develop a procedure taking

into account the advice in Los Angeles in which everyone in the community, I think, had expected that was the procedure that we would be following from this point going forward.

AKRAM ATALLAH: So I agree with you that we thought we met the requirements of the GAC communique when we developed the process.

So that's not the debatable issue. The issue is that they came back and they said, well, that's not what we had in mind.

So that, basically, puts into question whether our interpretation of what they had in mind was right or wrong. And, therefore, we needed to get to the board to provide us direction on that.

All right

JORDYN BUCHANAN: All right. I'll ask my other question. I noticed that one of the things you expected to happen in the future was launch of AROS. And I guess, reflecting on AROS, it seemed like a really awesome idea and would have been really useful about 18 months ago, probably. But I guess I'm wondering: Have you guys -- do you guys do ongoing consultation with perspective users of AROS to get an understanding of whether it is likely to still be useful given the delayed timeline under which it's being deployed?

And I guess I'm -- in my opinion, it probably isn't at this point. People have already figured out how to do onboarding without AROS. And I guess I'm just wondering how do you guys take stock of whether this is

still needed by the community and whether it still makes sense for ICANN to be investing resources into it at this point?

AKRAM ATALLAH: So I think there is a working group around AROS that is formed by the communities of users that defines what they want to see and how, you know -- and the usability of it.

But my perspective is that if it's done well, it will be -- it could be used forever. Because there's always changes that you do between your registrars and the registry contracts. And there are always new registrars. There's always new registries.

You know? So I don't think we should be -- if we can get to something that's useful, I don't know if that's actually going to be unused. If I'm reading you, you think that we've passed the time. We've only delegated 500 registries. So there's another 800 coming online. So there is still time for more people to use that. And, like I said, in the past six months, we've had, I think, over 500 applications for registrars, new registrars. So this is not going to be -- you know. I agree with you that the peak maybe -- you know, we're at the peak now. And, if it's going to be later, maybe it's not going to be as useful as if it was developed earlier. But I think it's still be used.

JORDYN BUCHANAN: Maybe I'll express my question more generally, which is what's the process by which we, the community, is consulting with the GDD in order to sort of understand and help evaluate your priorities? Because, you know, I think it is certainly possible that AROS is going to be useful

for one or more people. The question is there's an opportunity cost. You guys have finite resources. Is this the right place for you to be spending it? And it just seems like we probably need a better understanding of what you guys think is important, and you guys perhaps need a better understanding of what we think is important in order to make sure that everyone's spending sort of precious time and money in the right places.

AKRAM ATALLAH: I agree. I think that's very useful input. I would -- I would recommend maybe Christine, who is actually developing our operational systems with IT, basically. But she's responsible for deciding on the priorities and the roadmap of the products that we do to drive a -- to drive a discussion with registries and registrars to see what is the priorities that you would like us to present things with.

I think we have the roadmap in the making right now that we are finalizing this. Once that's available, maybe with the engagement team, Christine and her team, you guys, we can actually sit down and make sure the priorities are in line with what your needs are.

So -- any other questions? Very good.

Thank you very much. And see you throughout the week. Oh. Is there -- okay.

Thank you very much. Bye-bye.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]

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