
BEIJING – Middle East Strategy Working Group
Monday, April 08, 2013 – 15:00 to 16:30
ICANN – Beijing, People’s Republic of China

BAHER ESMAT: May I ask everyone to take their seats? We’re going to start in a few seconds.

MAN: For the transcript, turn it down, thank you, turn it down. For the transcript, Middle East Strategy Working Group. 15:00 to 16:30, Monday, April 8th.

BAHER ESMAT: Okay. Good afternoon everyone and welcome. This is the session on ICANN’s engagement strategy in the Middle East. My name is Baher Esmat. I’m ICANN’s regional VP in the Middle East, and I’m joined with a panel representing the working group, the strategy working group. To my far left, I have Sarmad Hussain. Sarmad is with the University of Engineering and Technology in Lahore, Pakistan. We have Fahd Batayneh. Fahd with the [J-O 0:02:05], Jordan. And Manal Ismail from [Telecommunicate 0:02:10] Authority of Egypt.

And before we start with the draft strategy, I’m going to give the floor to Tarek Kamel, the senior advisor to ICANN president for governmental engagement, who will say a few words about ICANN engagement, global engagement strategy. Tarek you have the floor.

Note: The following is the output resulting from transcribing an audio file into a word/text document. Although the transcription is largely accurate, in some cases may be incomplete or inaccurate due to inaudible passages and grammatical corrections. It is posted as an aid to the original audio file, but should not be treated as an authoritative record.

TAREK KAMEL:

Thank you Baher for the introduction. Good afternoon everybody. I'm glad to welcome you on behalf of ICANN's management in this session about the Middle East strategy. Actually it is a working session because the strategy is still in progress.

But before the panel starts, I would like to say a few remarks about the overall engagement strategy, regional engagement strategy that ICANN has been preparing within the last couple of months.

It started with Africa when Fahd, even before he joined ICANN officially, has triggered an initiative with some African leaders, to have an African engagement strategy for ICANN. We work together during the summer of last year, met at [? 0:03:30]... and have established the strategy together, and announced it in Toronto, and started implementation at the beginning of this year.

And we had a meeting at regional event, a successful regional meeting as has been mentioned this morning and [? 0:03:46]. Latin America is also following now the same steps, and they are on Wednesday announcing, Wednesday afternoon, announcing their draft of the strategy after four or five months of very intense work, again in a bottom up approach, as we did in the African case.

Middle East is now also joining, and we're glad to see it going forward. We had some overview during regional event, the regional engagement event in Dubai in early March, but we have also wanted to present the first results of this strategy here in Beijing before it's going to be formally announced later.

Why are we doing this regional strategy? Simply because from an ICANN perspective and an ICANN point of view, there is a need for further engagement to address ICANN specific issues in the regions, and specifically in the developing countries.

So we started with Africa, but Asia will also follow up, and even Eastern Europe can join later on. There are questions about the GTLD program and the lack of participation from the developing countries for the GTLD program. This is a question we need to address, and this is a problem we need to diagnose.

There is a question even why do we have very limited applications, actually very few unfortunately three, who is in the joint application support program, the JAS, even has provided financial assistance for the developing countries in order to participate in the new GTLD program.

And again, the participation has been very, very limited. It is the problem of awareness, it is the problem of engagement, is it the problem of presence on site? Is it the problem of lack of industry players? What is needed to be done? These are one of the questions that we need to address really as ICANN community and make sure that we are working on it.

But not only that, but also other issues that are related to [? 0:05:49], area of delegation, empowerment of ccTLDs, and other issues related to security, DNS [SIC 0:05:55], and other challenges that we have in the various regions as ICANN.

Many questions, and it happened, unfortunately all over the year, that the answers in the different regions have not always been, according to

the satisfaction of the regional players. However, I also have to say that we are not starting from green field. There has been engagement work that has been done in the regions, either in Africa, or in the Middle East, or in Asia, or in other parts of the world.

And we are working very closely also with our [I-Socks 0:06:26]. We are fully aware that [I-Sock] has been there in Africa, and in the Middle East, and in Latin America, and in Asia doing a lot of work in capacity building. And we're planning when it comes to the implementation to work fully and in full coordination with [I-sock], when it comes to capacity building and other programs for the implementation.

Actually this week we have a meeting together for our two executive teams in order to coordinate our plans, our – both boards, the Board of [I-Sock] and the Board of ICANN, will have on Friday morning a joint meeting also for further qualification. We are also working very closely with the [I-Starts 0:07:03] [? 0:07:04] NCC [? 0:07:07] other RIRs that exist in the region.

So we are not unaware of the activities that have exist, but there are certain parts of the overall ecosystem for certain parts of the puzzles that are missing, and we are there in order to compliment, in order to add, not to duplicate, or not to interrupt any existing world. But it was clear from the diagnosis and from talking to the community that there are puzzles that are missing, and therefore the ICANN management with the full support of the ICANN Board, and through the regional vice presidents, decided in a bottom up approach to work with the community to develop these strategies.

So I'm making this clear so that the overall positioning of this strategy becomes clear. Why are we doing it? In order to respond to very specific needs, ICANN related needs in the region. With whom are we developing them? In a bottom up approach completely, as you will see of the work that Baher has been putting together.

When it comes to implementation, we will work in full partnership with the players that exist in the region that I have mentioned, and in other regional players as well from other parts of the areas. So I wanted to say some highlights in order to make the right positioning of this regional strategy engagement.

Not each region is like the others. We are not necessarily going to take the temperate of Africa and apply it in Asia. This would be very difficult. Or in Latin America. So every region has its specific parameters, and we would like to listen from the regional players to tell us what are the specific parameters that we are facing.

But ICANN will put together, with its sister organization, its full commitment in order to work and full partnership for the implementation whenever you come with the plan. Thank you very much for joining us this afternoon, and I look forward to a fruitful discussion of the panel and fruitful results. Thank you very much.
[Applause]

BASHER ESMAT:

Thank you Tarek. So we're going to go straight to the presentation, and before... I'm just going to say two things before I turn it over to my

panelists. The scope of this group was to develop a three year strategy for the Middle East, with one year action plan or implementation plan.

So the working group has been working for the past three months on the strategy part. They posted a draft document last week, and they're going to walk you through this document today. The countries that are covered under this strategy include the 22 Arab countries, in addition to Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan.

The group as Tarek said, was established in bottom up fashion. It has a presentation from old stakeholders, including governments, private sectors, [? 0:10:34] society, academia. And I would like to recognize some of the group members who are with us in the room and actually thank them for the hard work, and the excellent work, they have delivered.

So among the audience, we have Doctor [? 0:10:52] from Lebanon, we have [? 0:10:54] from Tunis, Ali [? 0:10:57] from [? 0:10:58], Muhammad [? 0:11:00] from TRA [? 0:11:01], Muhammad [Bashier 0:11:03] from [? 0:11:06] from Iran, sitting in the room.

And I know that there are others, [? 0:11:12] as well, I just wanted to thank them for the excellent work. So over the past three months, the group have had conference calls like once every week or two weeks, met face to face in Dubai during the Arab League meeting in early March.

And, as I said, they posted the draft document on March 28th and you can find it on the ICANN community Wiki. It's available for public comments, and public comments will be received until April 19th. The

three strategic goals the group had identified included fostering two way engagement between ICANN and our community in the Middle East, building strong and competitive domain name industry in the region, and promoting multi-stakeholder processes in the region.

The group had also identified three focus [? 0:12:27] with very specific objectives, recommendations, actions under each earlier. And this is what we're going to hear from them right now. So I'm going to turn it over to Sarmad Hussain, who is going to walk us through the first part of, or the first focus area of the strategy. Sarmad.

SARMAD HUSSAIN:

Thank you Baher. And hello everybody here. So before we get into objectives, I wanted to very briefly take you through the... With stakeholders, we identified, as far as DNS security and stability is concerned, there are obvious players which include registries and registrars, and registrants.

But we also consider that policy makers and law enforcement agencies are a key stakeholder as far as security and stability is concerned. We also realize the importance of network, operation and security managers in the region. And CERTS, Computer Emergency Response Teams who would need to eventually play a key role in the process.

So coming to the objectives themselves, the main objective, or the key objective, is to develop relevant capacity resources and internet infrastructure in the region, in a coordinated and comprehensive way, and in a sustainable fashion. Which actually can focus on the needs emanating from the region itself.

Looking at objectives, basically we were able to divide them in four large categories. The first one was to build awareness, an understanding of stakeholders, specially including the policy makers for the importance of security and stability, availability and resiliency of the DNS.

The second key objective is to once the awareness is there, also strengthen the capacity for technologies and processes through our training program of relevant stakeholders in the region.

The third objective is to develop the internet infrastructure, strengthen stability and security of the DNS in the region. And basically this should be done by involving all the stakeholders, and as I said this critically includes the policy makers and the law enforcement, in addition to the other stakeholders, which we normally engage.

Next slide please. As far as the recommendations are concerned, based on those objectives, we need to undertake awareness activities, basically around policy and coordination, needs for the security and stability. This is mostly concerning policy makers and law enforcement agencies.

And we also need to look at operational and coordination needs for security and stability. And this concerns mostly registrars, registries, and again, law enforcement agencies. We also need to provide technical assistance to law enforcement agencies and [? 0:16:36] response teams for cross border coordination to combat cybercrime.

We want to collaborate one of the key things in this region is that Arabic script is used for most of the languages spoken in this region, so once

we are actually... There are growing number of IDN ccTLDs, GTLDs in the pipeline.

So we need to develop a ready robust infrastructure as far as ideas are concerned, which would include the idea of tools which are presented in the next slide. So that must be done by involving all the community in the region and focusing on the security and stability aspects of things as well as the usability of Arabic domain names.

And then to ensure that this is actually done in a sustainable way, we need to, and effectively we actually need to coordinate these activities, and therefore we need to develop a regional mechanism to follow up around these recommendations.

Going into specific actions which need to be taken place, next slide please. So what we actually recommend is that we need to conduct awareness training on challenges with DNS security and stability, and policy and practice, to address these challenges. So we need to not only conduct training on policy and practice aspects, but also on addressing any security issues across borders and therefore develop training and conduct training multilateral agreements and cross-border collaboration in combating some of the issues which arise.

In addition, we need to have training on tools to assess the health of the DNS for the different players, including the registries. We need to identify tools and processes to manage DNS resilience so... And we also need to have training, and basically exercises to deal with any emergencies and threats when they occur.

So to prepare the local stakeholders to address such threats. In addition, we also need continued training in the region for some of the technologies which are protocols which have been developed, and are relevant to the DNS, which include DNS and PKI. And then there was a strong feeling that local capacity actually needs to be developed for managing these training, managing some of these exercises, and therefore we will considering the trainer program in the region, which will develop a pool of people inside the region who can address some of these areas.

Next slide please. As far as the infrastructure is concerned, DNS infrastructure is concerned, a lot of ccTLDs will do secondary hosting, but most of the secondary hosting is outside the region. So we want to engage inside the region and develop secondary hosting mechanisms within the region itself.

We would also like to see roots of instances in the region, and as far IDN infrastructure is concerned, there is upcoming work within ICANN to develop label generation rules for Arabic domain names. There has been work going on in this area in the region before as well, but that needs to continue so we can actually have a label generation group for Arabic, for implementing the TLDs in the region.

We also need to engage the region in the debates which are continuing at ICANN and ATF around domain name registration data and services around that data. So that needs [? 0:21:48] from the region can also be incorporated in those processes. And finally, once the IDNs are enabled through the infrastructure, we also need to look at the usability issues at those IDNs for larger acceptability by the community.

And look at the application which enable internationalized domain names and see what the gaps are, and work with the technical community to develop solutions for accessing those IDNs and that group specifically.

And in, basically, developing and engaging with the community, we need to have a mechanism to see how we are doing, how we are progressing. And to enable that, we need to first to define objective and pressure details for a regional mechanism, local regional mechanism, to see how those strategies should be implemented, how basically to define further details of this strategy, actions of this strategy.

And then work with the ICANN to see how effectively that strategy is performing within the region. And in a way, work with ICANN to make it more effective as it is implemented in the next three years. Next slide please.

So we've actually been... This is a slide which is still not ready, discussed in detailed. This is just a first kind of metrics. So we've been discussing how to evaluate ICANN's strategy because that should be actually an equally significant part of the process, to see how the strategies – where the strategies are meeting objectives, outlining for the strategy itself.

And then get some feedback to ICANN in that context, some complete feedback. We've actually been looking at possibilities of outcomes, whether we have been able to achieve the desired change in behavior in the region, but that something which is later down the road.

To start with, we are looking at things which are simpler to track, so basically looking at number of NS trainings, number of – with policy makers and law enforcement agencies, trainings with technical community, number of trainers trained for this purpose, includes [roots of instances 0:24:45], and other metrics.

This is an incomplete list at this time. And see whether our engagement has been effective in this context. So that's all from me for now, and I will take some questions afterwards. Thank you.

BAHER ESMAT:

Thank you Sarmad. Fahd, would you go ahead?

FAHD BATAYNEH:

Okay thank you Baher. Good afternoon everybody. So the next main issue that the working group is tackling is actually the domain name industry in the Arab region. I mean, in a nutshell, if we look at the statistics, we managed to pull out some statistics from the region and I think we only have like 250,000, close to 250,000 domain name registrations and the 22 ccTLDs in the region.

Of course, we are excluding Iran, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. That's a low number. So there are several... We found from our study that there are several reasons behind that, and we hope that the strategy could assist in improving that, not just the numbers, the entire process itself.

So in terms of objectives, one key objective is to raise awareness among the stakeholders from among the local registries, registrars, and

registrants, and policy makers in the domain name industry in the region. Another point is to force the collaboration among TLDs, TLD operators in the region to exchange best practices and discuss issues of relevance that could further develop the industry in the region.

And the third and final objective is to stimulate innovation and entrepreneurship in the domain name industry and auxiliary industries in order to grow the overall internet economy in the region.

MAN:

Can we take them at the end? Or... Thank you.

FAHD BATAYNEH:

Okay. So some recommendations that the group agreed upon, is to create awareness campaigns on the potential opportunities of the domain name industry, highlighting its impact on the further promotion of online services as well as e-commerce in the region. E-commerce is quite shy within the region, and we believe that improving the domain name industry could assist in actually lifting this industry, or e-commerce in general.

Another recommendation would be to create more awareness pertaining to the new GTLD program, including financial support mechanisms, and encouraging more applicants in subsequent rounds to actually apply for new GTLDs. Another recommendation would be to engage with the relevant business community in the region, and encourage them to expand into business related to – which includes like registries and registrars, mainly accredited registrars.

Slide please. Another recommendation would also be to facilitate best practices, to share, let's say, best practices among ccTLD registries, both [ask key 0:28:02] and IDNs on issues such as policy development, marketing and promotion, technical infrastructure, DNS [SIC], IPV6. You mention it.

A fifth recommendation would be to help develop regional expertise and know how they are related to the different components of the domain name ecosystem, such as policy making, legal aspects and dispute resolution. Next slide please.

In terms of actions, we manage to conclude nine actions regarding the domain name industry. Many of these actions are related to creating road shows, and workshops, and seminars, and different training programs. So we think that conducting road shows, workshops, seminars, and training programs on registry/registrar model is needed on resolution, policies, and WHOIS.

On the new GTLD program, on ccTLD operations, both [Ask-y and IDNS 0:28:57], and on promotion of online services and e-commerce. Of course, since the strategy expands to three years, we just – from within our discussions and brain storming sessions we decided that each one has a different priority, so they all actually expand from year one to year three.

Slide please. We also believe that carrying out a baseline survey and an economic study, would be helpful. Establish strategic partnerships with governments and SME incubators in the region, and study the possibility of financing initiatives in this field. Also provide guidance and support

to current ICANN accredited registrars, introduce the sustainability issues.

Final point is to work on tackling financial, legal, and technical challenges faced by new registrars passing through the ICANN accreditation process, in order to facilitate and speed up new accreditations from the region. Slide please.

So our metrics would be to increase the number of [ask key] ccTLD registrations, increase the number of IDN and ccTLD registrations, increase the number of Arabic script IDN and ccTLDs, increase the number of ccTLD registrars. Increase the number of ICANN accredited registrars in the region.

At the moment, we only have six ICANN accredited registrars in the region. Number of successful new GTLD applications from the region. While there have been a lot of applications coming out of the region, I think there are 54 applications, not all of them have been applied by entities actually residing in the region.

Some have just established their companies, or existence, in the region and applied. And the final metric would be to increase the number of registrations and new GTLDs from the region. Thank you.

BAHER ESMAT: Thank you Fahd. Manal?

MANAL ISMAIL: Yes thank you Baher. Now this the third identified pillar of the three pillars of the strategy. We've been through the DNS security and

stability, and the domain name industry, and now it's the internet governance ecosystem.

Objectives identified for this pillar were to promote multi-stakeholder internet governance mechanisms, foster healthier representation in ICANN constituencies, and strengthen engagement and effective participation in various constituencies in the overall governance ecosystem.

And it's worth noting here that participation is not only a matter of attendance, but it should be more of an effective participation which needs awareness of the discussed topics. A [comfortness 0:32:04] of the format of the discussions, awareness of the language which I have to admit the transcripts, translations, and the interpretations are playing an instrumental role to facilitate this.

And also it's very important that all stakeholders are aware of their stake and the effectiveness of their participation and their role in order to spare the time, the effort, and the money to participate in such venues.

The group has also come up with the following recommendations, bearing in mind the objectives listed in the previous slide, and those are: to strength ICANN representation in the region, fostering relationships with regional and national stakeholders, and most importantly, also building trust in ICANN's structure.

We need also to stimulate engagement in global and regional internet related forums, which includes even more than ICANN. It should be

IGFs, [I-Sock], ARIs, and many, many more. I don't want to list, not to forget any of those.

Also promote and support national and regional multi-stakeholder initiatives, and those include national and regional IGFs, [I-Sock] chapters, and others. And finally, improve ICANN outreach and raise awareness of ICANN within the region.

Nailing those down into concrete actions, we would like to see an increase in ICANN fellowship opportunities, establish ICANN ambassador program, support existing internet governance mechanisms, develop and sponsor outreach programs and initiatives.

Of course, in partnership with national and regional stakeholders, and this is important that ICANN should have strategic partnerships with local players from the region. Develop and sponsor capacity building programs, to stimulate multi-stakeholder, bottom up, consensus driven policy development processes.

And again, it's important that people get to learn more about the model, have simulation formats, try it, so that to be comfort when they come and participate. Support the creation of remote hubs for participating to ICANN meetings, similar to those of IGFs.

We frankly think those are very successful. Also, train the trainers programs, and help develop material that ultimately would be integrated in academic curricula within the region. Again, it's hard to have some quantitative metrics for this pillar, but we tried to come up with some.

And again, it's all subject to our discussion today. So it's an increase in participation of various stakeholders from the region. This could be of course, in terms of numbers, frequency of attendance, as well as effectiveness of participation which, again, could be measured in terms of rolls, responsibilities, contributions, and involvement in working groups and other work of ICANN.

Then increase in ICANN outreach to the region, and this could also be in terms of number of events, numbers of trainings held in the region, as well as number of staff present in the region, ambassadors and so on and so forth.

And finally, increase in participation in other relevant forum, again such as the [? 0:36:40] and so on. This definitely even [? 0:36:46] but again, would have an impact on a well-balanced participation form the region in ICANN's different SOs and ACEs. Thank you.

BAHER ESMAT:

Thank you Manal. So in terms of next steps, as I said, document is available for public comment until April 19th, and the group plans to finalize the strategy document by May 10th, and then we'll be working on the implementation plan to be ready for execution starting FY 14.

And the document is available on the community Wiki, the link is here, the email address. So we look forward to receiving feedback and comments and suggestions from the community. With this, we come to the end of the presentation part. And now it's time to take questions.

I can see Adrian right here. Yeah, thank you Ali.

ADRIAN:

Thanks Baher. My name is Adrian [? 0:38:14] from ARI registry services. First of all, congratulations on this initiative and the presentation that you've just done, it's fantastic. And having spent a long time in the region, working alongside the governance, these are the things that have absolutely been missing.

So I'm buoyed by the fact that there is some effort going on. Sorry for my notes I took while you were talking. This is your thought [? 0:39:39] [laughs]. I bought time to think.

So first of all, I love the fact that we use the terminology domain name industry. I think that's great that we're getting to identify exactly who we are and what industry we represent, rather than this unknown DNS industry, what we've sort of normally called ourselves. Congratulations on taking that vernacular.

More specifically, I'm encouraged by the fact that you're using metrics to measure your success. I wanted to contribute a couple of points to that. I think what would be important is to find out – your [dollar 0:39:17] is king, right? And if we can get a baseline instead of a [dollar] or benchmark and then we can work and measure ourselves against it.

What I think would be great would be the number of registrations per capita in the region, and compare that to, for example, some of the western society, or communities. Just because I think that that's where you'll see the real impact straight out of the gate, if indeed you're being successful.

Potentially also want to run that against the number of businesses. We found that that's a successful metric as well when measuring number of

domain names per businesses online. And then the last one you might want to do is, of course, CC versus G. So of those businesses that are registering domain names, for example, in the UAE, how many of them are registered are com versus how many are registered the local dot AE name?

That may be beneficial. Then of course, the drivers as to why we go online. And I notice the way you are using the number of domain names as a criteria for success. But, of course, the domain name does nothing on its own.

And so, can I suggest that, and we did discuss this at the Arab Internet Governance meeting in Dubai recently, the content is important, and to promote content, local content especially, such that that drives people to want to get online and therefore ergo they get a domain name.

So some initiatives around driving content and piggy-backing off of some of the work that's being done there, may well be beneficial. My last point is that I would want you to consider yourself part of a wider domain name industry, at all times.

And that is whilst your needs will be specific to the Arab region, and you are part of a localized domain name industry, there is some good work being done globally that I think you can also piggy-back on. I know that ICANN is particularly interested in pulling together in somewhat of a domain name expo.

I think it would be important to ensure that when ICANN does decide to do these initiatives, that they are taken globally and it indeed stops in your region. So whilst we can consider ourselves a domain name

industry within the Arab region, and we look to pull everybody together there to do localized activity, keep an eye out for what's happening on a bigger picture and make sure that you're dragging that in to what you are doing, because some of that effort will assist you and also make your efforts much more efficient, by way of messaging and so on and so forth.

The last part I want to do is actually an advertisement, and that is for the Domain Name Association that has been developed. It's in a very embryonic stage at the moment, something we're working with ICANN for. I have, as of yesterday, been voted the Chair of the interim Board for the Domain Name Association.

And this is really a subset of the domain name industry globally. And the association itself is there to... For the purpose of highlighting the utility of domain names, and to ensure that they remain relevant, and positive utility in the market, we all have an invested interest there.

And I would ask that once that solidifies a little bit more, and it's still a work in progress and we're hoping to come out and actually launch on April 23 to piggy-back off of the DNS summit that Fahd is organizing in New York, if we can get together then, I would hope that we can present to the Arab region and it be embraced by the Arab region as well.

Governments, CCs, Gs, it's everybody that's within the domain name industry. So I think that will also assist because some of that work will be able to bleed out into what you're doing. So I hope that's helpful.

I know I've taken up a lot of time, but thank you.

BAHER ESMAT:

Thank you Adrian. Actually, this is very, very helpful. First congratulations on your appointment as a chair of the Domain Name Association. And I think one point I want to emphasize, and it was mentioned by previous speakers, by Tarek as well, is that fact that in implementing this strategy, ICANN would be looking for partners to work with from the region, from the international community, as well as businesses, as well as internet organizations, [I-Sock], ARs and so on.

This will help in areas like content. So ICANN is... I mean, content is not our area, but we can partner with others in that area, same with the domain name industry to learn and to sort of cooperate with international experts in that regard. So thank you very much for your remarks. I see another question.

JOY:

Thank you. Joy [? 0:44:20] from the Non Commercial Users Constituency. Great to get the update, thank you all. I have sort of question for each of the panelists, if I may.

Just firstly in relation to security and stability and the internet infrastructure in the region, this is of particular interest to the networks and groups that I work with that are Human Rights Defenders, who particularly are concerned that one of the greatest risks to security and stability in the region is of course the actions of some governments, and their interference with, and monitoring of, and trying to manage DNS traffic in the region for various political reasons.

So and not least of which might be the interference with and stopping of the internet itself, as we've seen so famously in Egypt for example.

So I think it would be important and reassuring of the community to be assured that these were also factors that are being taken into account by ICANN.

And these are also thing which you should be aware of course, with the quality of your working group, I'm sure you will be. Being watched very keenly by some society groups in the region. So comment on it please.

In relation to developing infrastructure at country level, there are of course, a number of ccTLDs that have alternatives to the UDRP for dispute resolution. In particular, we've got countries whose registrations are numbering in the tens of thousands, rather than the hundreds of thousands.

These may be better options at local level and growth capacity in the region rather than contracted out. So I think that I'd appreciate perhaps a comment on consideration on that.

And then finally, in relation to the internet governance outreach, I'm really delighted and I'm really pleased to hear about that, and really happy to offer association for progressive communication networks with human rights defenders and [so 0:046:15] society groups.

Particularly woman's human rights defenders to support that ICANN outreach. Thank you.

BAHER EMAT:

Thank you. Any feedback from the panel? Sarmad?

SARMAD HUSSAIN:

So as far as accessibility and privacy concerns, I think what is... These are things that we actually discussed in the group, and what it needs is a more... In our discussion with policy makers, and bring these issues.

We also need to engage the community in the process, so eventually this is more relevant to the internet governance area. And, again, there are concrete steps in which we want to engage with the community and bring an awareness of these issues, and probably have a mechanism to drive this in a bottom up approach.

And, as I said, in [? 0:47:41] we also obviously want to bring these issues to policy makers in a top down approach, and try to see what challenges exists and what are possible solutions. It's a little, I think, it's too soon for us to, at least, to comment on what exact actions will be derived in this context.

As I've said, we actually talked about privacy concerns in the group. We've also talked about the dispute resolution issues, and the idea is to engage the community, bring these issues on board, and then let the community engage in the process to find out what the solutions are.

MANAL ISMAIL:

Yes, thank you. Actually I'm glad to hear that you are excited about the multi-stakeholder thing, and you're mentioning outreach and women and so on. In fact, I frankly believe that we have to outreach to all different stakeholders, and include everyone, and try to maintain the balance.

Because this would indirectly promote the multi-stakeholder models that we would like to see nationally. I mean, you cannot really impose a

multi-stakeholder model nationally, but if you empowered the different stakeholders, a multi-stakeholder would implicitly be in place.

And the difference stakeholders have to be outreached separately, and each in their own language. I mean, I'm sure governments would like to know that their views are being considered, and the fact that the business sector needs to be aware of the business support units, and the stake, they might have from participating.

And [Servant 0:49:52] Society, women, other participants also need to know that this is a venue where their voices may be heard. So it's very important that we outreach to each and every stakeholder differently and try to bring them onboard. Thank you.

BAHER ESMAT:

We have another intervention. Please introduce yourself.

MAN:

Yes. My name is [? 0:50:16], I'm with the GNSO, and I'm actually one of the vice-chairs of the GNSO. I also would like to join the others because – congratulating you to this strategy.

From my present perspective, I would just start to implement it as early as possible. It's not easy, it's not easy. It's where the problems are going to start. But I would also like to come back to one point you mentioned, the outreach, it's participation and the GNSO, especially is the body who is represented so its constituencies and the diverse [? 0:50:59]...

And this is from, our point of view, from the GNSO's point of view, is also the problem to get more participation into that. And I would like to welcome, if your strategy in your area and your region, would lead to that, that we could come together and could have more participation, I would like offer to offer the constituencies that I'm sure that all the others as well would like to give support to you, and to discuss ways, how we could come together and get more participation.

One point is specifically here in the ICANN meetings, as usual, we have so-called constituency days, which is tomorrow, Tuesday, all of these different constituencies have their own meetings, and we would like to welcome you, everybody, you, on the different people here, from your region to participate and to look at what is going on in those constituency meetings.

What are the items to be discussed? I understand it's not easy to dive in as a newcomer, but that is where the collaboration could start. Thank you.

BAHER ESMAT: Thank you very much.

MANAL ISMAIL: Yeah, thank you again for the offer. And if you ask me, but of course you would be in a better position to tell us, I really feel that we have a weak point from the private sector in our region. I don't think we have enough participation.

And of course, coming from the GNSO, you would be in a better position to give us your insights. But, again, yes the offer is most welcome. I feel, in the region, we need badly to bring our private sector here to the venue. I think we have quite a number of membership, and I won't say active participation, but again, we have a number of government that are members of the GAC.

I think also the ccNSO, we may be having some numbers of membership, but I don't think we have the same when it comes to the GNSO. So it's really a point that we would welcome any help in. Thank you.

BAHER ESMAT:

Yes. There is a question, yeah.

MAN:

Good afternoon. I'm [? 0:53:49] from Iran, Iranian ICTO Association. First of all, I would like to express my insight about the issue that you mentioned, about the – actually the low level of [? 0:54:07] involvement in this region.

I think the main problem in this region is that the business part, business part that can be active in this industry, it's very weak in this region. So it doesn't bring an area for everybody to work on this. This is the problem.

To have better involvement, I have two questions. First of all, I know that this is a working group under ICANN, right? This is the first

question. If it is, what kind of membership – what kind of bylaws, what kind of membership are you going to create for this?

And is it open for everybody to come or not? And how we can be more involved in this? And secondly, what is the method of collaboration and policy making and development in this?

Is it going to be like subgroups or committees? What else? Thank you.

BAHER ESMAT:

Thank you for the questions. So on the first question about the working group, it's under ICANN in the sense that ICANN facilitates the work. It's not an ICANN working group in the sense that all members of the group are community members.

The group was established through a call for sort of you know, who is interested in joining the group? The call went to all members in ICANN constituencies from the region, from the different countries. However, during our – over the course of the three months, we got sort of – we heard from other parties that they might be interested in joining as well.

We had a face to face meeting in Dubai that was attended by regional organization like [? 0:56:26] which was not represented in the group, but they showed interest and they joined the group. We also had Sophie Madison from the Internet Society, she joined our meeting in Dubai and she followed our work since then.

So the group is not an open-ended group, because in the end we need to have a group of people to do the work. But at the same time, there is

no membership per se, it was a community driving thing. Now going forward, after finalizing the strategy document itself, and moving to the implementation part.

This is your second point about the method of collaboration, I think this is an excellent question, and this is the, in my view, the most important question that this group has yet to discuss. How are we going to implement this? And what kind of collaboration? And what kind of mechanism we need in place to do the work?

So yeah, I don't have an answer to this second part yet, but if any of the panelists has anything to add?

SAMAD HUSSAIN:

So this is something we've actually had significant discussion on within the group. And one of the things going forward, we definitely need a regional mechanism to engage and make sure, well plan and eventually execute and myriad the impact of this strategy.

What's been discussed so far is that we'll start from an informal layer, where possibly the members of the current team may volunteer to continue in some way to keep engaging with ICANN.

But this is eventually going to be in the details of the plan, and eventually the execution will eventually go into ICANN's effort, not in this group's effort, or this group if it's – to whatever extent it is formed. Well the main concern [? 0:58:52] nature.

As far as what should be the morality of forming this group, this is again something else, Baher said, still discussed, we've not finalized this. But

we should actually have a clearer answer by the time this report is published by 10th May. And you have any suggestions in how this group should be formulated, please feel free to send in your recommendations to the email or talk to anyone of us, either way.

But this is something which we are grappling with, and we are able to get the solution of it by the end of the publication of this document, so by 10th May.

MANAL ISMAIL: Just... For the time being, the way you can contribute is by please providing your comments on the strategy through the public comment period.

BAHER ESMAT: Yeah [? 1:00:10] do you have question? Okay. Any other questions or comments? Yeah? [? 1:00:21]

MAN: I'm [? 1:00:27] from Yemen, I'm also a new ICANN fellow. What is important for me to consider in this strategy is to focus on the trends in the region. I mean, considering the impact of what we do now will have in the future.

And one of the important trends is what happens to do with human rights. So that's where I think we need to push that aspect a little bit further. I know ICANN doesn't involve itself a lot of this, but I'm still convinced that because many of the activists I've been involved in on a

personal level, do not access a lot of content online in the Arab region because of fear of repercussions.

So there's an issue to do with the aspect of access of information. So if you take the extra courageous effort of pushing that region a bit, it could be helpful. Thank you.

BAHER ESMAT: ...to develop and to sort of do something positive for the region, and for ICANN and region as well.

MANAL ISMAIL: Just very quickly to follow on what Baher has just said, we've started with a very exhaustive wish list from the region, and then we try to see where this intersects with ICANN's scope of work. So I mean, we had a very huge wish list for the region, at the beginning, but then it was not all possible within an ICANN strategy.

I mean, everyone has any dream and wish to come true, first for the region and then we had to shorten this within the scope. We have with ICANN and the dates.

BAHER ESMAT: [? 0:01:04] go ahead.

MAN: Yeah, hi. I should clarify I'm part of the group. Because if I say something to say that you did a good job, they might say, "He's..." So one of the things from the private sector, we like the fact that you had

engaged them. I think we need more engagement, but that's true for everybody.

And I think to just sort of respond to many of the questions raised, this is a beginning. And what's important is that we basically use this as a starting point. It is a wish list, as you rightly said Manal, it's a wish list, and we'll rationalize it as we go over time.

But to have people participate, and I have ICANN for the first time do something like this, to me, coming from that region, is the most important thing. And to have local participation to do that.

We've been asking for it, and asking for it, and asking for it, and I think ICANN has been listening, but this is, I think, the first time we've actually made it a working group and started working. So I just wanted to thank you guys for your hard work.

I mean, I know I haven't spent much time with you guys, but this was wonderful, I look forward to seeing more. Thank you.

BAHER ESMAT:

Thank you [? 0:02:00] ... was one fo the few business people who participated in this work, and we appreciate his contribution. More comments or questions? I see that our senior advisor to the president on stakeholder engagement has just come to the room, and I know that she has a few words to say. Sally Costerton? Well, as you wish.

SALLY COSTERTON:

Oh my goodness, sorry. That's about... Thank you. Am I the only person that's getting electric shots the whole time? It's terrible. It's not

a good way of building and making new friends. I definitely don't recommend it.

I think it's something to do with the carpets apparently. Anyway, I don't know. We'll all have to wear rubber shoes tomorrow. So for any of you that don't know me, and I'm beginning to think there is nobody at ICANN that doesn't know who I am, especially after this morning.

My name is Sally Costerton, and I look after stakeholder engagement at ICANN, and I spend a lot of my time working with quite a few people in this room. Particularly, my very good partner here, Doctor Camel and this wonderful gentleman up here.

I just wanted to make a couple of comments, firstly I wanted to thank very much those of you that are part of this working group. It is sort of uber volunteerism, because you were a volunteer to start with and then we're asking more from you and I think it's really very heartwarming that you're really prepared to give up so much time, so much energy to this very important task.

There is always a difference between staff, this is our job, we get paid, and everybody in the community who is giving their time freely. And I do want to sort of really make that point because it's – sometimes it's often the kind of glossed over, it's kind of assumed that because the purpose and the mission is so important that people have infinite time and infinite energy, and I think what it actually means that for those of you who are get involved in these kinds of projects, you're given more time away from your families, more time away from your...

You have to take that time away from other parts of your life, and I wanted to know, you to know how much we value that. And the reason that we do is because we can't do it without you, we can't even begin. We are here to serve the community, and to help to develop and to deliver what you need, and so it's very awkward in some ways because we're sitting here going, "So we want to go, we want to do this."

We can't actually do it, do anything without that bottom up input from the community members, and recognizing that's a big personal tradeoff for that, so thank you for that.

But once we are moving, and we are now with this strategy, actually it gets much easier in a way for us to contribute resources. So at the beginning, I think this is sort of, as a lot of pressure or demand, or requests, as it were, from you.

But now we're in the movement. Baher, I want to you know, this is the other thing I wanted to say really, was to give you the confidence that we will resource this well. We will resource this properly. Because if I was in your shoes, and I was being, oh good, I'm seeing some nodding heads.

If I was being asked to give my time and my free time, and my family time, and to get on planes, and to have jet lag, even more jet lag, and to be on conference calls in the middle of the night, and all the things that happen, because this is the reality of being part of these groups for many of us.

And at the end of it, I had some kind of, "Well, thanks a lot and we'll get back to you, and we hear you but there is not enough money and

something else has happened, and it's just that. Get in the queue." I would be really, really fed up. And not only would I be fed up, I wouldn't do it again.

So we have to finish the task, we have to deliver on the promises. And the trouble about having a wish list, of course, if you just take the wish list and you cost it all out, you get an enormously big number, and you get, "Oh well we can't really do all of that." But I want you to know, that – and if you have time, if you have an opportunity, on Thursday morning, we have an outreach session, a public session, in the big hall where we were this morning for the opening ceremony, and we're going to dig into these issues in more detail, from a whole community perspective.

So look at how we're organizing outreach across the whole community, and we'll have staff there, Board there, right across the stakeholder group community members. And we'll look at prioritizing, and we'll look at budgeting. So [? 0:06:51], our CFO, will be there.

And I want to try and have a much more joined up approach to this. So the key points I wanted to make now is, one is we're never going to be able to pay for all the things that we wanted to do, no organization can do that.

We do understand and are committed to the magnitude of this task. And so as we go forward in terms of our planning on people, our planning on dollars, two different kinds of resources, we're taking that very seriously and we're making that kind of provision.

So I don't want to over promise, but I do want to make it clear that we're talking this very seriously. So was there anything else you wanted me to touch on Baher? Or is that helpful?

BAHER ESMAT:

Thank you. [Laughs] Thank you Sally. Any more comments, questions? I see none. So thank you. Thank you everyone for coming. I'd like to thank my panelists, and once again, I would like to thank the whole working group for their excellent job. Thank you.

[Applause]