
[background conversation]

Mike Silber:

Good morning, all, let's kick off. The purpose for this morning and the reason for the deviation from the usual PPC public meeting is that we really wanted to focus on a single topic. Up until now and for a majority of this year the PPC has had a focus on the implementation of the ATRT recommendations as they relate to public participation and language services.

I really wanted before I leave as Chair of the PPC, because it would appear by some occurring slides that are circulating that I won't be chairing the PPC next year, that I would really like to leave with at least some direction going forward on the mechanism and structure and layout of meetings.

Now, we've circulated a summary document. It's been circulated to invitees so if you are here and you haven't received a specific invite or designation from your SO or AC you are most welcome to be here. We welcome your participation but you may not have seen the document. And I think it was a very good summary of some of the discussions that have been taking place over the years within ICANN, but what it also makes clear is that we haven't come to any decisions and that we haven't really actioned the way that we run meetings.

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What that means to me is that the growth that we've seen has been relatively organic growth, which is not necessarily a bad thing. What we've also seen is in the last three meetings, four meetings, because of specific issues around the introduction of the New gTLD Program and specific pressures on the Board and the GAC in particular around the launch of the New gTLD Program, we've allowed the meeting structure to change; and we're then running with those changes and we haven't gone back to the old format.

So the intention here today is really to try and kick start a process regarding future meetings. And there are a couple of things that we wanted to look at: the first is the physical location of the meetings – where are they held in the world? It's been a discussion and there was a paper when Jean-Jacques Subrenat was chairing the PPC regarding a hub concept that Nick put together and circulated, and there were some people certainly within some of the more developed economies who were very positive about that.

I think there certainly are some potential benefits to following that hub concept notion, but there are some potential downsides and I haven't heard a lot of feedback coming through from the developing world regarding that hub study concept.

The second issue is, so one is where in the world do we hold these meetings? The second is what do we need for a meeting? At the moment, Nick and his team keep getting additional requests: more meetings, the meetings tend to start earlier. We used to start the meetings on a Monday; now we have preparation. The Board used

to come in and have some preparatory meetings on Sunday – now we’re seeing SOs and ACs preparing on a Saturday and a Sunday, the Board coming in on a Friday and when we arrive here on Friday and we do some training we find that there are a whole lot of people who are already here and they’re starting to do preparatory work.

We push all the way through and we start seeing attendance dropping off from Wednesday onwards, so some people may leave on a Wednesday evening, many on Thursday and by the time it comes to the Board meeting on Friday we get a far smaller attendance than we used to and there’s a significant number of people who’ve gone. So the question is how should we structure that meeting: the number of days, the number of rooms? How do we overlap the rooms, because we’re getting to a stage at the moment where there are fewer and fewer convention centers who can actually accommodate our needs.

A couple of years ago we could go almost anywhere. Now, we’re kind of limited by our specific requirements. Then the issue is how do we structure a meeting to most effectively allow you to work within your SO and AC? How do we structure it to make the most effective use of cross-constituency time that you have available, so talking to the other SOs and ACs. And then not to be too arrogant and suggest that we’re the center of the meeting but what’s the most productive way for the SOs and ACs to engage with the Board?

For example, given the dwindling attendance at Friday Board meetings I'm guessing you're not that keen on watching talking heads on a stage taking decisions which have pretty much been communicated largely during the week and you know where it's going. People kind of want some drama and surprise in order for them to come and watch the stage show; otherwise, they'd rather sleep in on the Friday morning or do a little bit of tearing around.

So these are some of the issues we want to get to. We want to look at a comprehensive approach to the meetings, not just the hub concept, not just the Board structure but all of the impacts across that structure. So I'm going to ask some leading questions, but given my rather lengthy and rambling introduction I was wondering if there's anybody who wanted to start off and respond to that and then we can start dealing with some of the specific issues.

Marilyn, please. And by the way, we are being transcribed so if you wouldn't mind introducing yourselves. And the other thing is I'm assuming that while people have been sent here by their SOs and ACs they are speaking in their personal capacity because we're trying to get personal views, so not referring to you specifically, Marilyn, but I don't think you need to indicate unless it's very necessary whether this is a constituency view or if this is a personal view. We will take everything as personal unless otherwise designated.

Marilyn Cade:

Thank you, Michael. My name is Marilyn Cade. I will speak first as the Chair of the Business Constituency and then I will make comments as an individual participant. So let me first speak as the Chair of the Business Constituency.

I've been asked by my members to share a concern about the meeting at the present. I'm not going to go into detail but I am going to say that we are significantly disappointed and stressed about the experience that some participants, including some of our members but primarily others, are having in relation to a particular housing situation.

In order to better support the prevention of such experiences in the future, it may be important to invest additional upfront resources in assessing the true capability of a particular facility such as a hotel to deserve to be listed on the ICANN website. Now, I will end my comment as the Chair of the Constituency and speak about meetings. Thank you for that accommodation.

My view of the purpose of the meetings is that it is a convening of the community, and that instead of my thinking about this as how many meetings we have or where we hold them, I like to think about this as the place where the community comes together to engage in the bottom-up consensus-based work it needs to do. I note with regret that many times when I look at the ICANN documents, including the strategic plan drafts, the words "bottom-up consensus-based" sometimes drop out of the editing; and for those ICANN staff who are new, I've just mentioned how important that is. Even though the words "global multi-

stakeholder” seem to have emerged in many documents we must also remember that this is a bottom-up consensus-based organization.

So the convening of the community of stakeholders and the ever growing and deepening participation of stakeholders in the organization, whether they engage in policy development or they engage in other things that happen, to me are very important. Sometimes we use the word “policy development” as though that is all we do at the ICANN meetings. That is a very small part of what we do. It is a critical part of what we do. It is what makes us into the quasi standard-setting body for the unique indicators.

But we do so much more. We do technical training and collaboration. I note the words here “pursue business” but I wanted to add an elaboration: people pursue the exchange of technical knowledge and skills and experiences by coming here. So much of what happens in these workshops is a presentation by experts that others who are not so expert can then establish relationships that they leverage and continue. And to me that is so important because I have seen that happen over and over and over.

I’ve seen it happen when a cc manager who didn’t know other cc managers throughout the life of ICANN has become a part of a network that sustains them and supports them. I’ve seen that happen with other experts; I’ve seen that happen with individuals who have a particular concern and by participating in a meeting, their network expands whether they ever come back to another

meeting or not. That is why I think that we have to examine the full range of the impact of our convening the community.

I do think, I am typically not so nostalgic but I am nostalgic for one thing. We used to have single sessions of some depth on particular topics – that might be the budget and the operating plan, or the strat plan, or something like that. I think it would be better to return to, at least try returning to the larger meetings rather than sending our expert staff into many capsules of meetings in many of the groups.

I get 30 minutes or 45 minutes on the budget but that just means somebody comes in, makes a cameo appearance, does their best they can; five members get to ask questions, the team has to leave the room before all of my members are satisfied. Let's consider going back to... I think it's a more efficient use of everyone's time and it's certainly a more efficient use of the experts' time.

On the question of doing away with the public Board meeting, I would urge you not to do that. I think that's a commitment that ICANN made. The rest of your Board meetings are conducted by conference call. They are closed; we read minutes. We're reading now more documents that go in but this is your only chance to appear on camera in front of the full community. And I understand a lot of people don't stay but a lot of people do. You also have a very important session preceding the Board meeting which is the Board reports and the community reports, and those again I think are very valuable.

As to the question of reducing the number of meetings, my own view is we cannot yet get our work done in fewer meetings. I do think, I will say one other thing about the SO and AC meetings: actually it is the GNSO Policy Council that meets on Saturday and Sunday – it is not the GNSO. However, in Costa Rica it is my intent to ask for two to three hours back from the Council so that there could be a GNSO working session, meaning the full leadership of the GNSO.

It could be that we should start convening the GNSO but we don't right now. Our Policy Council does a huge amount of work, preparatory work, and the community of the GNSO sits in a room and participates. I'm done.

Mike Silber:

Marilyn, sorry, we're really starting to get into a lot of detail and I wanted to break it down. I was just hoping there'd be some introductory comments. I think your point is very well taken about the Board meeting, by the way, and the intention is not necessarily – there may be based on some other discussions – to do away with the meeting; but my question is rather what's the most appropriate way to do it? How does the community want to do it?

Do you want it on Friday morning? Do you want it on Monday morning as we did in Singapore? I think there are multiple ways of doing this and that's what we're trying to throw open here. So maybe let's go a step back but Thomas, you had a comment?

Thomas Narten: Yeah, I mean I don't know how best to run the session. I was hoping it would be a bit of a brainstorming or people just sort of throwing out some ideas – that we didn't rat hole and go back and forth too much. But just on the topic of Board meetings on Friday, I'm one of these – truth in advertising – I'm pushing to do away with it because I think it's actually a significant drain on staff resources during the week that I think would be better spent interacting with the community.

I think the same goes for the Board itself where we lock ourselves in a room and we try... So there's a tradeoff. And one comment you made was that it's the only time that the Board is in front of the camera. That's actually not necessarily true. We are also in front of the camera for the public sessions and we have started using the Public Forum also to do a little bit of communicating with the community on stuff that we had previously done during the Board meeting.

So there may be other ways to sort of slice this so it's not necessarily all black and white about do away with the meetings or not do away with the meetings.

Marilyn Cade: I just need to correct what you heard me say. I said “in camera” – I didn't say “in front of the camera.”

Mile Silber: Lesley?

Lesley Cowley: Thanks, Mike.

Thomas Narten: I don't understand. I mean if we need to be physically present in the room and presumably the Board can figure out whether that's necessary and helpful, right?

Mike Silber: Yes. Let's move on, Lesley?

Lesley Cowley: So on Board meetings themselves, my personal view is that it's really not a good use of either Board time or community time. I think there is a need for the community and the Board to interact and maybe that time could be more constructively used with the Board giving some thoughts on what they have heard during the week and what they are going to take away to work upon as a Board. So I think it's a key thing for the community to express views, to feel that they have been heard, and then for the Board to have some time in between meetings to further reflect and develop thinking.

Mike Silber: Bertrand?

Bertrand de La Chapelle: Bertrand de La Chapelle, Board member. To go a little bit in the direction of Thomas' suggestion that this is drilling down on a specific topic on this question of the Board meetings on Friday, one of the things that I believe is tiring for everybody is the adoption of resolutions, most of which are not particularly either consequential in the big term or particularly controversial.

So the adoption of the resolutions could be split like publication of the resolutions, and maybe the Board can decide whether there is one or two topics that deserve some additional explanation. And the point I want to make is that what the community misses is the interaction that happens within the Board to reach a decision. And as a matter of fact, it's one extremely important element in terms of explaining the rationale.

One of the best ways to understand that a decision is a fair decision, that it has been correctly weighed, is to have a way to follow the path and the line of thought that lead to exploring a very large landscape and narrowing it down to one specific solution. And what the community is missing, and I must confess that when I was on the other side that I was missing – I didn't know whether the Board had considered the whole landscape or if they just rushed to one specific conclusion. And this will never be incorporated in the rationale written form – otherwise it will become an extremely lengthy document.

What the community is probably interested in is to have a presentation by the Board members on one very specific topic that is of importance, of how the decision was arrived at – like what

were the elements that were taken into account? What the community wants and the accountability is, is not only to make the right decision hopefully but to demonstrate that we have taken all the necessary measures to make sure that the whole picture has been taken into account, the consequences, and that explains a lot.

Then people say “Oh okay, my argument was taken into account,” and sometimes it’s enough that a Board members says “We examined this question, we didn’t take it into account because...” Fine – the person knows that his or her argument was taken into account.

So as a conclusion, having the Friday meeting devoted much less if at all to the adoption formally of resolutions and voting, and being dedicated maybe to two elements like a better oral and on-record explanation on why a decision and a particular choice has been made. And second, as Lesley suggested, a feedback on what was taken up during the week, like sort of a wrap-up – “There were four topics and this is where we moved forward” – is probably a better use of the Friday. But I wouldn’t suppress completely. We need to make it useful.

Mike Silber:

Valid points all. Jean-Jacques and then I’d like to take, I believe we have some remote comments. But let’s take Mr. Subrenat first.

Jean-Jacques Subrenat: Thank you, Mike. I agree with all the things which have been said on detailed aspects of our exercise, all of them actually, but I'd like to suggest here or present to you another view perhaps at another level. Now that I'm with the ALAC, a constant preoccupation is of course in what way do these meetings have an impact on the internet user, the general internet user?

And in this sense I feel that there is one thing which is cruelly lacking – whatever way you organize it never mind, but there is one perspective actually which is lacking, and that is a high-level presentation and discussion on how ICANN and indeed how the internet fits into the larger picture of social evolution in general.

I think that apart from perhaps the CEO's statement at the beginning of the meeting, there are very few opportunities to give an overall view, for instance, of what is the significance of the internet going to be in say 2015 compared with 2011. It is situating ourselves, our trade, our user experience in the wider context of human evolution.

This may sound a bit lofty but I assure you that as a general internet user and no longer as a Board member, I feel this need very, very strongly whereas when I was on the Board I was taken up into the mechanics of it all and of course I could argue, even with authority, about the usefulness of not having that component in a Friday meeting. But that's no longer my (inaudible).

Mike Silber:

I think that's a (inaudible), if you don't mind, not specifically as having every meeting focusing on that topic but rather a situation of feedback to the community which includes feedback on specific items heard during the meeting, feedback on a possible way forward that the Board will contemplate and take action on, and possible action items that are being contemplated; but then what I'm hearing is you'd like feedback on what the organization – and maybe it's a summary of what we've heard during the week of what the organization believes the impact will be or may be on the ultimate internet ecosystem. I think it's a valid point. It's lofty but if we don't aim for it we're never going to get there.

Janice, I believe we've got some remote comments. Janice, are you able to deal with the remotes or should we pass over? I've got another hand if you prefer.

Then let's move on. Carry on.

Ayesha Hassan:

Thanks, Mike – Ayesha Hassan speaking in my personal capacity as you said. One of the things that I've been reflecting on is how the schedule allows for broad stakeholder interaction, and I think it might be helpful to think about how the GAC members, for instance, are able to or not able to participate in some of the workshops on substance, interact with other parts of the community during their meetings which are open.

It was also I guess frustrating to me that many times the GAC meetings end on Wednesday and certain very useful sessions

where having GAC members present to interact on Thursday take place but they're all gone, because their funding is used up and they have to get on the plane. For instance, today there is the IGF Workshop and one of my membership's preoccupations is to raise awareness about how ICANN fits into the broader international landscape of internet governance processes and forums. And every time it's very frustrating that there are actually no opportunities for many of the GAC members who really should be coming to that session to be there because they've gone.

So I think it would be interesting to perhaps have a dialog with the GAC about how their schedule can be adjusted and they can be encouraged to participate in discussions which would go also to the goal that has been stated of getting GAC input earlier in the processes on many subjects. Thank you.

Mike Silber:

I think a very valid comment. I know that when we talk to the GAC we talk to all of them and they don't like to split, but is there anybody from the GAC here who wants to respond to that? Thomas, please?

Thomas Narten:

Right, so maybe I'll rant a little bit but what I thought I heard you say is that the GAC thinks that the ICANN meetings end on Wednesdays and they go home.

Ayesha Hassan: Can I clarify? My understanding from discussion with certain GAC members is that their governments budget for them to be here so long as there is a GAC meeting, and so if the GAC meetings technically end on Wednesday evening their government basically says “That’s when you take yourself out of the hotel and go home.” Now, today I understand there is a bit of an overflow, they might be working this morning, but that’s a different story from most meetings.

Some of them do stay but not every government’s budget allows them to stay beyond – If the schedule says there’s no more GAC meetings they need to go. So they’re not actually being sent for the ICANN meeting; they’re being sent for the GAC meetings is what I’ve been told. Thank you.

Mike Silber: Bertrand?

Bertrand de La Chapelle: Actually, this is a very interesting exchange. I can testify from the ex-inside what the problem is. The underlying problem is a very interesting distinction of whether, as Ayesha said, government representatives come for a GAC meeting or come for an ICANN meeting? And the distinction is very important because it is connected also to another question which is whether the GAC is within ICANN or a separate entity. It is connected to the tension at the moment of whether the Secretariat of the GAC is helping the GAC be outside of ICANN or being inside.

One of the problems that Ayesha is raising, which is a question of funding, is also connected with the way the GAC uses its time, and in particular the amount of time that's needed to produce the communique. And so in many cases, there are a certain number of actors in the GAC who are coming for a GAC meeting, not an ICANN meeting, who because of the workflow are spending a lot of time just in the room of the GAC and interacting with only the actors who come in the room of the GAC for joint meetings; and spending a lot of time overlapping, for instance, on the Public Forum also on finalizing a communique or drafting.

So the whole debate is not – and I was reacting a little bit to what Thomas was saying. You can take an approach, saying “Well, what the GAC members decide is basically fundamentally their question,” and there's some truth in there. What I just want to highlight is the other dimension: it's part of a larger picture, which is how integrated the GAC is in the structure or not.

And I want to make one concrete suggestion here that is slightly unrelated, but on every day I would suggest that ICANN organizes at the end of the sessions a one-hour social event for everyone – just drinks – so that everybody can just mingle during that one hour and choose to go have dinner separately. I was struck the other evening: a lot of people were having dinner in the restaurant here but the tables were mostly formed by constituency groups which is natural, but intermingling and fostering intermingling is very important. So that's just a suggestion.

Mike Silber: Thank you, Bertrand, I think a valid one. Marilyn, you wanted to respond?

Marilyn Cade: I'm going to make a comment about how quickly the governments are changing their interaction here. I particularly see these concentric overlapping circles of governments between those who are increasingly active at the IGF, some of whom have come to the IGF because they've been at the GAC and they've associated with others from the community as well as governments; and now we're seeing some flow backward. We're seeing some pull backward.

I guess what I would say is I really support what Ayesha said. Ayesha gave an example of one particular workshop which I think would be helpful to all of us, but I think that actually other workshops that I've heard GAC members complain they can't go to because they are otherwise writing their communique includes some of the more, if I could call them lighter-weight technical sessions or technically-oriented sessions – the DNS Fraud and Abuse Forum is very interesting to them.

So perhaps we could think about going to them and asking them what they could use to justify broadly to their governments to help to extend their participation time – just a question that perhaps could be considered.

Mike Silber: Okay. Janice, can we just confirm is the remote participant is finished with the comment? Because otherwise we've got a couple of direct responses in the room.

Janice Douma Lange: Right. Raquel Gatto of Brazil is desperately trying to write everything. I'm going to go ahead and just start with where she's at and go-

Mike Silber: If you prefer to keep it we've got Thomas and Chris who wanted to respond on this topic.

Janice Douma Lange: Okay, that's fine. She's just finishing so Mike, that'll be fine.

Mike Silber: That's absolutely fine. Chris, you wanted to respond directly then?

Chris Disspain: Yes, Marilyn, I agree with you but we've actually kind of been through that with the GAC already. When we used to have a group of the Chairs of the SOs and ACs, and in fact I think there probably still is one, but at one point we had a discussion about the law enforcement sessions. And there was a huge debate because the law enforcement session had been scheduled for a Thursday, and the GAC's response to that was not "Well, we'll extend our

time,” it was “You have to move it to Monday.” And in the end it got moved to Monday.

And so the problem is that you’ve got to first say “Will you stay?” because if you just put sessions on, if they want to be there they’ll just say “Move it please, we can’t do it if it’s on Thursday.”

Mike Silber:

Thomas?

Thomas Narten:

Yeah, so a couple things. First of all, I’m extremely supportive of the GAC and I want the GAC model to work within ICANN – we’ve got a lot of work to do there – so don’t take any of my comments negatively in that fashion. But I think we actually have now shifted the discussion to what I think is a better way rather than sort of down in the details of GAC in a particular problem.

What I would like to see is stepping back and saying if you look at the way ICANN meetings as a whole operate, from Saturday all the way till Friday, are they laid out the way they ought to be or are there changes that can be made? Are there changes to be made that actually benefit the community as a whole?

And one of the things that I feel pretty strongly about is that there is a need for certain timeslots early in the week that are plenary sessions where everybody’s expected to go to and nobody’s allowed to have a private meeting that has conflicts against it. And that’s where you do things like... We do this on Monday with the

CEO search, with the ATRT; it could be on law enforcement, it could be on things where they are of community-wide importance and we want to get back to a model where there's one presentation that's focused, everybody's in the same room and not going around to various constituencies saying different subsets of different things.

But in order for that to work the community as a whole has to get onboard, and that means also the GAC because there have been issues where GAC can't attend a meeting for whatever reason and then it defeats the purpose of having these meetings in some sense.

Mike Silber:

Lesley?

Lesley Cowley:

I'd like to support that. We had some similar discussions in the ccNSO on this issue, so revisiting the amount of time each constituency needs and then also separating that from the cross-constituency stuff I think would be invaluable. Can I add to that point that the week seems to have expanded to a ten-day week, that seems to run from at least 7:00 in the morning onwards; and I think some thought as to how we best structure the duration of the event to make it work for people. We're just killing people with the time, and I'm sure that applies to ICANN staff, too.

Mike Silber: Very much so, and I think that's a very significant reason for doing this – partly because no, we're not killing people. They're killing themselves and each other and I think that's a significant problem. Sorry, gentleman next to you – I don't know your name.

Roy Arends: Roy Arends. I am sitting in for Patrik Fältström from the SSAC. Within SSAC we have similar ideas that the work parties that we're all involved in, they should actually converge to a minimum set of days; and also the public meetings – you see for instance SSRT, DSSA giving reports to GNSO, ccNSO. It would make much more sense if those reports can be done once in a larger public meeting where everyone needs to attend. Thank you.

Mike Silber: Thomas, I see you shaking your head. Maybe you just want to respond to that? Oh sorry, I was getting the motion wrong – apologies. Sébastien?

Sébastien Bachollet: Thank you, Mike. It's more a question for the participants. We talk about the time each subgroup cycles their SO, AC, constituency needs but there is another... In the time that we can have a full meeting or almost everybody in the room together with the same type of presentation. In between there are the interactions, one-to-one or one-to-many – however you want to name that. But for instance, the constituency, the Stakeholder

Group of the Commercial, there are three and they meet together. But there is also interaction between GAC and ALAC, between GAC and ccNSO and so on.

Then I think it will be very useful to have a full picture of the interaction, to know... And what time it's needed. Not to say that we will be able to accommodate all that but it could be a better picture and I would like very much to get – not now – but to get this information of the interaction on two bodies of this organization, to try to set up a graph and to see how we can feed that into the days we have; and not 24 hours but maybe even less than 12 hours. Thank you.

Mike Silber:

Okay. Just maybe a comment from the Chair, not wanting to direct too much, but I get the sense from Lesley's comments the same frustration that many of us are feeling which is in order to try to keep within the budget, given the increasing complexity of meetings, we're trying to make the meetings more dense and we're making them thicker.

So we're scheduling things in parallel which makes Nick's job more difficult because then he has to find a venue which can accommodate all of those parallel rooms; and the rooms need to be able to operate in parallel with each other and there's got to be able to be flow; and we've got to actually try and run a schedule which allows meetings to run in parallel without massive conflicts for each other.

The other option is to create a flatter meeting. Spread it out over time and say “Well listen, if you don’t want to come here for the Wednesday to the following week Monday-type meeting, well, you don’t need to be there for the entire time.” But we flatten the meeting out, we allow certain critical entities to overlap and certain critical functions to overlap but it then really is a ten-day meeting.

But then we’re going to have, even though it’s flatter and it’s going to be easier for Nick to find a venue, we’re going to have massive budget issues around that because the core support is still going to be here. Network is still going to be here for the entire time and it’s going to create unfortunately a (inaudible) for Board and others who are then going to be expected to be here for the entire time.

So we need to see if we can find a reasonable compromise. The first thing that I’m seeing here is that our first question which is “Is it possible to shorten the face-to-face meetings?” the answer seems to be a most definite no. What I think we then need to do is say to the people here “We’re going to be calling on you,” and we need to just work out the specific questions and how to ask them, but as Sébastien indicated “We’re going to need time to understand a little bit better what you do on the various days, what you need them for – not because you have to justify them.”

And I think Marilyn, your point taken about GNSO Policy Council as opposed to GNSO Council is all good and well because I don’t know that level of detail and I think it will be useful for that level of detail to be known as to what meetings you really want and how

you want to run them. But we've got to then try and make this more efficient.

Sorry to interject my own views. Katim, you had a comment?

Katim Touray:

Thanks, Mike. I think some very good points have been made beginning with the point Thomas was making, that the idea of the Board basically having separate sessions with the various stakeholder groups should be relooked at again. I was just discussing exactly the same thing yesterday with somebody, that I thought that maybe what we could do to borrow your term, Mike – “flatten the meeting” – is to have the Board basically meet probably with everybody and rather than just having these individual meetings that just get drawn out.

It takes a lot of time and by the end of the day you end up in a situation where you talk about the same things with people over and over again, and somewhere you might actually end up getting off the script so you might say different things or slightly different things to different groups. But if everybody is in the same group and is in the same meeting, this is like the Board having a face-to-face meeting with stakeholders. And I know this might sound very similar to the Public Forum, but the idea would be that you'd talk about issues on a one-off basis and that will be that, everybody will get the same message.

I think the other issue that also we should look at is the matter of remote participation, and this is something that I think could be

quite a significant tool for enhancing the participation of people from developing countries. I'll give you the case of The Gambia as an example. Just before I came here for the Ministerial meeting, the AU Ministerial meeting, I was in touch with our Minister and basically he told me that he was not going to be able to attend.

And I asked him "Well, can you send somebody?" He said "That's not possible either, because we are just basically stretched too thin." And I'm sure our story is not unique to many countries in Africa and indeed the developing world. So I think in those circumstances, what we can do is to try to see how we can strengthen remote participation; and in that regard I'd like to remind us that that was an issue that was the subject of a discussion at the Internet Governance Forum last year in Vilnius.

The IGF had a session on remote participation and one of the things we talked about was the possibility of exploring ICANN collaborating with IGF as well as other UN agencies to enhance remote participation for ICANN meetings.

Mike Silber:

Katim, very valid points all, but we're getting off the topic which is the physical meetings. We do as a PPC do a lot of work on remote participation and I think-

Katim Touray:

Yes, I understand that, Mike, but let me just finish and I'll be just very brief here. I bring in the remote participation perspective as a

way toward actually streamlining and increasing the effectiveness of the physical meetings.

Mike Silber: Alright, Jean-Jacques?

Jean-Jacques Subrenat: No, I'd like to continue hearing this detailed discussion. My remark was of a more general nature so I'll come back to that later.

Mike Silber: Okay. Ayesha?

Ayesha Hassan: Thank you. A couple of points: I hear Katim's suggestion about not having the same conversation with different structures between the Board and that structure, however I would say from my perspective that individual time with the Board for the CSG has been really greatly appreciated. It's just different to have an interaction with the Board in a smaller setting even though we know that they will have to have that conversation with different people. Sometimes it really also allows people to speak to the Board in a different manner than they may in the Public Forum – that's number one.

Number two, I would just say that I think that the stress issue, the issue of how much time is needed for a particular topic during a meeting can also be addressed by evaluating what kind of

preparation is being done. Is the preparation adequate? Is it helping people to come to the meeting and be effective and efficient or is it actually making it mandatory to have a discussion in person because the preparations were somehow hampered along the way in whatever process? I would just sort of put that up there.

I like Tom's idea of the plenary sessions so that we pull everyone together for certain topics and reduce some of the repetitive or small group discussions where some are left out because they're not able to make it. So I would support that. I also think maybe taking a look at the schedule and saying "Okay, in Costa Rica we're just not going to have this topic. We're going to leave that topic for Prague," or whatever the case might be, to see if maybe that doesn't work... I haven't analyzed it but I think looking at it and saying "Do we really have to have everything every time?" might also be a way to address some of that.

I would also say, I mean I know that the logistics issues are really complicated and only become more and more, and Nick and his team have a lot on their plate. I would say that one of the things that helps meetings to flow is if the logistics are flowing along under the surface and it goes seamlessly. So we look to them and it's a lot of pressure; at the same time that is an integral part of making the meetings work effectively. So I think paying real attention to that is critical. Thank you.

Mike Silber: Well, that's topic #3 and I think we need to start jumping off this first one pretty soon. But I had Bertrand and Sébastien. Bertrand, I do apologize – your hand was up before Ayesha but just I get to hear you far more frequently than I get to hear her.

Bertrand de La Chapelle: I think there are lessons, and maybe that's one thing that could be discussed more at length in the IGF session. There are lessons to be taken from the way the IGF has evolved over the last few years, and the fact that a sort of standard format has emerged with typologies of sessions – plenaries like Thomas was mentioning, the workshops and so on – helps people basically have a sort of repeat pattern that they can refer to.

This is already what ICANN is doing, there is an element of that, but having a typology of sessions in a more clear manner, and maybe a program that is structured almost the same way all the time really is helpful. Going in Ayesha's direction, the notion of having themes, threads, things that are related more to the technical questions or more related to law enforcement type of problems, or related to more the contractual relationships would help structure and avoid potential overlaps.

The last point is the IGF has also seen this sort of tendency of piggybacking additional meetings, and various constituencies have said "Okay, the day before the IGF we will put something for our group." I think we need to distinguish more clearly what is ICANN's interaction and the purpose of ICANN as a structure is to

bring people together in a multi-stakeholder format, making them work together. And what constituencies are doing on their own to develop, it is part of it but distinguishing more clearly the core of the ICANN meeting which is the common work.

And what constituencies or separate groups do – this includes the communique of the GAC, this includes the meetings of the various constituencies – maybe they should be before. Maybe that’s something that is a distinction of importance. The communique of the GAC mostly is not a result of what is being done by the ICANN meeting; it’s just that they need to be physically together. I’m convinced that they could almost do that before and then have interaction during the week in a different manner.

Mike Silber:

Just if we pay for their alcohol maybe they’ll be nicer to us. I think it’s a valid point and that was what I was suggesting about flattening, is push all the SO and AC meetings to a week ahead of it – it’s just going to turn it into a massively long roadshow. The other problem is many of the SOs and ACs have internal work to be done but they want to interact with each other, the Board staff, in order to get that done which means this turns it into a two-week roadshow and it almost doubles our budget. Gonzalo?

Gonzalo Navarro:

Thank you, Mike. I think that Ayesha is suggesting something that is really positive and is going the direction that we can move on. It’s just as I see it, just basically saying that as a matter of principle

it's really important for the community to keep time or to have time with the Board, and that's essential; and the rest of the things are workable. And we need to adjust the time, maybe of the other meetings, about non-issues or mingling and things like that which are not essential.

I think that we need to reflect on what is essential for the community and we need to ask the community why they think and they consider this essential; and try to elaborate this scheme of meetings in that regard. Thank you, Mike.

Mike Silber:

Thanks, Gonzalo, and I hope your cold clears up soon – it sounds horrible. Sébastien?

Sébastien Bachollet:

It was just to support the idea of Ayesha to look into more detail on how we can plan some topics, not just at the next meeting but in a more longer round. We are working on a three-year plan for the strategic planning, for the operation planning – we will go through a three-year plan for the budget. Can't we go through a one-year plan for the topics we will discuss at an ICANN meeting?

And my second point: can we have some differences between the three meetings? We already know that at the so-called AGM, the General Assembly meeting – this one, the last one of the year – that we are doing some specific, one additional meeting at the end to vote for some organizational issues. Can we specialize one

meeting or the other on one topic or one way to interact? Thank you.

Mike Silber: I think a really interesting one. Thomas, you had a comment?

Thomas Narten: Yeah, I guess this is a couple summary things. I think we absolutely can and have to shorten meetings. What we've done in effect is just let them creep longer and longer without actually thinking about it, and it's killing us from a budget perspective that we don't talk about it very much. If you talk to staff they are worried about it, not just from the money perspective but from the logistics – finding a venue that can actually handle us for the time periods we're involved with. So that's a real problem.

But the other thing is I'm not actually calling to say "Let's just shorten the meetings because we have to." What I really want to do is work at being more efficient so that it becomes clear we can shorten the meetings without actually impacting us. And let me, getting back to the topic we started with for example, the Board meetings on Fridays – are they important, are they valuable? Yeah, they have some value. But if we didn't have them we could shave a full day off of our ICANN week. So you have to put it in the context of is the value we get out of that Friday session worth a full-day addition to the weekly schedule?

And finally on the topic of sort of getting things, you know, planning a meeting and trying to have a holistic approach, I would really like to see us have the equivalent of like a Program Committee that is a group of people, including people from the SOs and the community, that are working in advance trying to identify “What are the key issues? How can we actually structure the meeting in a way that benefits all of ICANN and that we can actually make work better?”

Mike Silber:

Marilyn?

Marilyn Cade:

Thomas, I like how you – it’s Marilyn Cade speaking. I like how you caveated you don’t want to shorten the meetings just for the sake of shortening the meetings, because I understand you’re not going to be acting as the liaison in the future but we hope you’ll continue to participate. But shortening the meetings, I think, designing the meetings does have to be around what the needs of the work are. So I like the fact that we agree on that.

I don’t think, and we have in the past proposed a Program Committee. We had been unsuccessful in getting agreement to that. Things have changed; the organization has matured and it could be that it would be possible to try that in a more effective way, both to better understand the needs of the different groups – and I want to use that term broadly now because there’s a group of

participants who are coming and they're not affiliated with any particular group but they are participating in ICANN.

So I think we need to be sure that we're able to take input from the organs, so to speak, but also the groups that may be beginning to shadow around ICANN and want to be convening there to learn, but they may not have yet formed a formal group. And I think there's a way to do that through doing some kind of exit questionnaire or something; and maybe we could take an approach of piloting a change and evaluating how it works.

Thomas Narten:

So let me just jump in since nobody's taken it back. In effect, we have a Program Committee today because somebody's making these decisions. I'm just suggesting that we change the way it's done and try to do better.

Mike Silber:

Go ahead.

Marilyn Cade:

I think, just my understanding of a Program Committee from my long years of experience elsewhere is that a Program Committee typically would be drawn from the community who would advise. I think we are making decisions as best we can right now.

Mike Silber: We're getting into a bit of a debate and a bit of detail which is possibly unnecessary. I think the critical issue at the moment is we get requests from SOs and ACs and we have staff who try and manage those rather than the community who then manage each other. That being said it works to some extent like a Program Committee but maybe not as Marilyn described it. Kuo, you had a comment.

Kuo-Wei Wu: Yeah, I think every time in these PPC meetings we continue to receive a lot of wishing list and I hope maybe the staff can go through those sort of wishing lists to see which one can be done and which one might be that we need to add an extra cost. And also it's to justify the negative side and positive side, because I think the wishing list is so long – I really wonder how we can make everybody happy.

Mike Silber: I think a very valid point. Just to follow up on Thomas' previous attempt at a summary, and let's see if we can conclude: there definitely is a need for SOs and ACs to do their own internal work. There's a need for them to interact with each other. There's a need for them to interact with the Board in a way which is not just in the Public Forum.

There is also a need for an organization as a whole to go into plenary at some times to learn about things that they may not be that familiar about or which may have a cross-constituency effect

and we need to bring in experts, hot topics if we want to call it that. There also is a need for specialist sessions to be able to take place and there must be time to do that.

The Board is trying to move far more into listening mode at these meetings rather than locking itself away various days and late into the nights trying to craft resolutions to cater to the vagaries of what's being discussed. But I still take the point, and I think Marilyn's point is a very valid one – we need to be seen to be doing certain things in public and it may be sufficient for us to do a summary report back of what we've heard and interacting with the community on that basis rather than passing resolutions crafted late in the night, because sometimes I feel that we're acting like puppets on the stage because it's the closed-door sessions that have taken place during the week that have led to the voting that you see happening on the stage.

It's not an open debate and discussion that takes place in the public and maybe it would be better for the transparency of the organization for us to have our debates and discussions with the community in public; and then when you see the votes happening at a later stage, whether they're in front of the public at the next meeting or whenever they may be, it may be more useful. Maybe the Monday morning of the meeting we start off by voting on all the material that's been left over from the last public meeting. The problem then is you create a cycle and a rotation where we only really take action three times a year.

But still I think the points made have all been valid. At the same time we need to try and decrease the amount of tension within the meetings by making them more efficient rather than on focusing on making them longer, which comes into topic #2. And I think the answer is going to be clear, when we ask it anyway, which is “Is there any way we could move to a two-meeting schedule?” Is that even vaguely possible in the current environment, and if not possible in the current environment is this something that we should be aiming at?

Jean-Jacques, please.

Jean-Jacques Subrenat:

Yes, here again with my short experience on the ALAC, I’ve been doing my rounds and asking members of the ALAC how they feel about this and members of At-Large in general. Although it’s a constraint and people have their day jobs, I found that there is a very strong demand for this type of frequency, about three a year; and not only to remain informed of policy matters but also for the opportunity to interact. So that in sum is a general feeling I took away from the user community.

Mike Silber:

Thank you. Any other responses? Marilyn?

Marilyn Cade:

We visit this question every time a new group of people get involved in talking about meetings and participation, and I think

it's interesting that we keep asking the question. And at each of the times I've commented I have said "I don't think we can do it yet," and I'm going to say that again but I am also going to say that as you talked about making some significant restructuring decisions, Michael, as you went through the summary of what I would consider significant restructuring – returning to a plenary approach and making some of the other changes that you've talked about – perhaps then it becomes the right time to ask the question again in about a year after three meetings, to say "Where are we now in the question of does the full community need to meet three times a year?"

I'm going to say that until 2015, that takes us past the [IGU Wicket] Treaty Conference and takes us to the Digital Millennium Goal Conference – until 2015 I think three times a year is going to be important for geopolitical reasons and for strengthening the interactions with the governments and the community.

Mike Silber:

Thomas?

Thomas Narten:

Yeah, I mean agree with what Marilyn's saying. My comment on this as a topic, I think it puts the cart before the horse, basically – it's something we can't do now. And I think if we frame the question the way it is then, then we basically have an unproductive discussion. And I think actually quite frankly the same could be said for the hub city concept, because again it puts the cart before

the horse and the fundamental premise there is that there's benefits there as opposed to fixing the real problems we're having of making ourselves work more efficiently.

Mike Silber: Alright. I think a valid response, please.

Male: (inaudible), Registrar Constituency. I think the whole world is going to change with many new TLDs, many new actors in the ICANN world so I don't really think it's the time to make that kind of change because you will have to integrate many new entities. You'll have to change many bylaws and I think that's exactly the kind of timing where you will have to keep three meetings or even four or ten.

Mike Silber: Thank you. I think it's a valid input. Can I ask a question then? If we're keeping to the three-a-year structure, does it have to be the same structure that we're running now? Because there seems to be this impression that there's preparatory work done on the weekend by various groupings. Monday are the plenary sessions but many people seem to find other meetings that occupy them on the Monday.

Tuesday is the Constituency Day at least for us as a Board, so the constituencies are meeting but then there are a lot of cross-constituency meetings. Is there a possibility that cross

constituencies can happen on Friday and people can explain to each other what they have done during the week rather than it having to take place on the Wednesday or whenever currently people are working? Can we make this more efficient in your view?

Yeah, I'm putting you on the spot because I've heard the same comments from the same old people over and over so it's nice to hear new input.

Male:

Well, I think at some point it would be really helpful, coming to what Bertrand said earlier – sometimes we just come to the meetings, get ready a bit and then we have on the same day suddenly some input from the GAC and then a few things have to change. And so it gets, you have to get organized again. So maybe getting more ready in advance, even integrating a bit more the GAC into this kind of preparation would be kind of useful. And then we would be able to do some job and be able to report between the constituencies.

Mike Silber:

I believe, and I'm sorry to pick on you, that we have a newcomer with us in this session. So Celia, can I pick on you and ask you if you've got a view, whether it's on the structure of the meetings or the number of meetings? Because I think that some of us are such old hands that we accept the abuse and the torture that goes on at these meetings, it'll be interesting to hear your views.

Celia Lerman:

Well, thank you for giving me the chance to speak. First of all I wanted to say that it's my first meeting and I've been told that this is a bit of an unusual meeting. So what I was telling to Janice is that it might be not the best to compare or not a good basis to compare. But I do think logistics is important. I do think that something like a hub city would help everyone. For me, a twenty-hour travel, a little bit more is like... Actually if the week starts on Monday for me it starts on Friday, because preparation for me, even if it's my first time and everything. So that might be one thing that's a good idea.

Then I thought it was a really good idea on the interaction. It is true I think in general, in conferences in general that many, many interactions happen outside every meeting so I do think that every night meeting, not even paid by ICANN but just giving a place. For me it was really hard this time not to have a common ground, a common place to just bump into people and you know, have that energy all together.

For me, the Fellowship Program gives me a credential to basically go and talk to anyone even if they don't know me, and it's a really good thing because you never know. The first time is "Okay, how is your first time? Is the hotel working?" but then the second time I meet them I can really get into substantive conversations and that can be productive for newcomers. So that's basically it.

And one other thing is that preparation I think is really important. It will make things very efficient. But then for newcomers, what I found for example going yesterday to the GNSO was that there was so much preparation going on and all the motions had been before – it's really hard to discuss everything when you're in public. So on the one side for your preparation, it's true – it's great for efficiency but then it leaves a lot of the discussion out if everything is already set up. So maybe just a question of focusing on less topics that can be discussed in more detail to give more opportunity for participation in meetings. So I think focusing on less subjects, if that can be done that's a good idea. So that would be my thoughts.

Mike Silber: Please.

Judith Vasquez: Good morning, I'm Judith Vasquez. Like you I was a newcomer and in fact I would like to take the opportunity to bring to the table an activity called DNS for Women in ICANN. And it was really most useful because as a female, there's nothing like walking into a room where you feel somewhere where you can be comfortable. It starts with women feeling comfortable around their gender. And today, it's not officially in the schedule and in fact the other day I was requested if I could please bring it to the Board and put it as an optional possibility for the first day of the official ICANN week. That's it, thank you.

Mike Silber: Does that mean that the men can have the Monday off? Marilyn.

Marilyn Cade: I'll make a quick comment about events that are organized for a special purpose, and that maybe the question is how they get noticed on the schedule as opposed to they become a formal part of an ICANN function and ICANN takes them over because sometimes there's an organic value, too. We have certain guidelines at ICANN about being multi-stakeholder and open and inclusive, so when we do special events like this maybe we could have a special category where something can be noticed on the schedule so that it's available for awareness but it's still not required. So let me just park that thought and come back to it.

I wanted to make a different comment that's about the needs of the stakeholder groups, because I think, Michael, that was the question you asked. I'd made this perhaps obscure comment earlier where I said that it was my intent to try to recover two to three hours on Sunday for a CSG meeting as opposed to the Council working in camera, which is what happens right now on Saturday and Sunday. It's called GNSO Working Groups but it's really the Council trying to work through various policy topics and having exchanges then with other groups.

If we could move by agreement the CSG meeting, the cross-constituency meeting – I need to use a better term – the stakeholder meetings to Sunday afternoon for preparation purposes, for the

constituencies that I'm involved with, the three that cut across that, that would be incredibly valuable because then we would recover time to work with our members on Tuesday. But I think what we have to do is work within the broader GNSO to put forward that proposal.

Now, that means we need different room sizes; that means we would need different room sizes so we will have to plan ahead. If we were to ever convene the GNSO, what people need to understand is that would mean all of our members and all of our leadership, and that would be a large room. It might be a good idea, and we used to do it – it was called the General Assembly. But it will take some structural changes and planning.

Mike Silber: Bertrand.

Bertrand de La Chapelle: Two points: one, regarding the two meetings, to come back to this notion of two meetings or not two meetings. Should we move to two meetings or not?

Mike Silber: Sorry, I must insist that you make three points.

[laughter]

Bertrand de La Chapelle: I actually will. [laughs] Okay no – whether we move to two meetings or not, there are different elements in that. One is we have a very important program that is going to structure a lot of the interactions. And this program – the New gTLD Program – is not the only thing of course, but it is going to provide milestones of various sorts: when something closes, when something opens; when something is treated, when something is revealed; when the first things are processed and so on and so on.

There's no way we can logically envisage the sequence of meetings in the next two years without putting in parallel the various milestones of this New gTLD Program. It makes no sense, and this is the direct connection with the whole issue of what is plenary, what are the themes, how you structure it and so on. So I would encourage to make a sort of parallel track regarding this.

The second element is that what I take out of this meeting is the only way to get out of having the same meeting over and over again is to go in the direction that Thomas has suggested and do this Program Committee, like something that involves the community in a multi-stakeholder group that will treat those issues instead of having the staff be exposed to requests from all sides.

The PPC is within the Board. This is an extremely useful interaction between the PPC and the community. What is the solution or an element of the solution is to have a group that is composed of a few people – it's the SO/AC Chairs' core that we

had expanded a little bit, so that each of the discussions and the points we've raised can be sold, addressed, and decided instead of explored.

Without making comparisons again with the IGF, which is absolutely far from perfect, within five years a general understandable structure has been set up that makes a distinction basically between what is plenary sessions, what is community-generated activities that are part of the program; what is community activities that are not part of the program but that are mentioned – that can be before or after; and a new category that is emerging, which is the workshops or the roundtables that facilitate the transition between what is done in a smaller group and what is being done in the plenary.

I think this is important to make the connection and form this group. I don't know how it could be called but it needs to be formed with the community. And no, there is no third point.

Mike Silber:

Such a pity. What I'm hearing though, and I think it's a very valuable lesson for us to bear in mind is that there's a huge difference between the massive amount of policy work that is ongoing and the detailed integration of specific action items that have been taken through each SO and AC, and topics. And especially for newcomers, to bring them in, exposing them to the intricacies of complexity of the inner working of the SO and AC is

not necessarily helpful. Their real interest is in the topics – what’s being discussed in the issues.

And I’m not saying that we shouldn’t expose them to the plumbing but there’s a quote which is misattributed to I think Von Bismarck, that laws are like sausages – if you want to retain your respect for them you shouldn’t watch them being made. Gonzalo, you had a comment?

Gonzalo Navarro:

Yes, Mike. I strongly support what Bertrand said before. I think that we need to create that commission or working group and we need to work with the community to hear the community. We can work on the details but otherwise we are going to have this exact meeting twenty times and we are not going to get anywhere. Thank you.

Mike Silber:

Thanks, Gonzalo. Ayesha?

Ayesha Hassan:

Thank you. Is it okay if I address the third bullet?

Mike Silber:

Please, we’ll get back there soon.

Ayesha Hassan:

I think overall I would agree with flipping the question on the hub cities issue. From our perspective, over the years we've talked about this and tried to give input from ICC, etc. What is the purpose of that? I think thinking about the fact that once a year, if it's really easy for people to come, very affordable, accessible. There's no place in the world that will make everyone happy but thinking about a few places in the world where you could do repeat meetings once a year so that it becomes perhaps even more cost effective, you have special contracts, etc.

I know from many of my members and from my own Secretariat, once a year I would like to be able to bring someone else from my staff, and if there is an affordable place I would be able to bring that person. And I know that's true for other companies. You could at least bring somebody for part of the times. I would say let's maybe adjust talking about hub cities and turn it more towards the purpose and what we're trying to achieve by that. Thanks.

Mike Silber:

Sébastien?

Sébastien Bachollet:

Yeah, just to remind that we are also receiving outside organizations who take the opportunity of our meeting to meet themselves. And when there is a possibility to have them within the organization it's easier. I can take one example – it's ISOC. ISOC has its Board meeting during the previous weekend and two meetings of ISOC were organized in two different evenings, and

that's an important thing that happens also. And I'm not taking this as the only one, thank you.

Mike Silber:

Judith, you had a comment? No? Alright, so I think we've certainly got the clarity on the overall question but some of the detail on bullet #2 as to who comes for which days, opportunities for restructuring, purpose of the meetings, what are we actually doing here. We've covered in some detail and I think in enough detail to warrant pushing through to the third issue, which is this question of the hub cities.

We've had one response so far. Anybody else want to grab it and run with it? Lesley?

Lesley Cowley:

So ccNSO colleagues I've talked to support hub cities. They also, and this is probably an appropriate place to bring it in, were thinking about the need for us to be a bit more environmentally friendly, to hopefully be able to walk a bit more which then of course brings in safety and security and well-being of participants, which I think really is the point that Marilyn made right at the start of the day.

So I don't envy your job of trying to choose locations and hotels and so forth but the hub city and the contract, and hopefully the value you might be able to get, the cost savings you might be able to get might support that better.

Mike Silber: Good point, and I long for a day when there are two or three flash drives that are handed to me with my t-shirt rather than a bagful of paper which I'm simply going to dump in a bin. But be that as it may, Thomas, you had a response?

Thomas Narten: Yeah. I just want to say that I don't actually like the term "hub cities" because I think it kind of frames the debate wrong, and I tried to reword this as changing it to "sites that work." And what I mean by that is I think we should be open to reusing sites that work, and what that means is a combination of the airfare is reasonable, it's not too hard to get to; and most importantly of all, the venue works. People like the venue, there aren't issues with having to take shuttles from hotels and things like that, you can walk to restaurants – the kinds of things that facilitate the meetings itself working well.

And likewise, the hub cities contents have been talked about – like go visit a hub every year which again is kind of a radical change. Why don't we just start simple with reusing a site that's worked, and if it works out that we start going to one of these every year – great. But ease into it and focus on all the issues about why we want to go to a particular site in the first place.

Mike Silber: Marilyn?

Marilyn Cade: I'm trying to understand – because of the acoustics I'm not clearly understanding the reuse of a site that meets certain characteristics as one of the three was what I thought Ayesha was proposing generally. And I'll just say generally that I personally consider it incredibly important that we continue to hold our meetings in a distributed fashion in the regions of the world, and that we do spend time in at least one emerging economy, developing country at least once a year.

Smaller meetings of various groups in the community can be developed at a regional basis as well such as the registry meetings or others but...

Mike Silber: There's only been one of those. I know we talk about them quite often but if I'm not mistaken there's only been one of those in the last three, four years. It doesn't seem to be a concept that's taken on particularly well.

Marilyn Cade: My real point was from my perspective, choosing one location out of the three and making it repetitive and meeting these characteristics, but I feel myself strongly that we need to hold at least one meeting a year in a developing country.

Mike Silber:

I think that's a fantastic idea and as resident of a developing country I'm very pleased to hear that. I suppose my critical question is how do we work that rotation? Do we take the site that works as Thomas was calling it – and I agree here that an STW is far better than a hub city – but do we then regard the STW as outside of the rotation? So we still have the five regional rotation in addition to the STW or does it count as being within the region?

That's some detail I'd be interested to hear some responses on. Chris, you had a comment?

Chris Disspain:

Thanks, Mike. I agree with Thomas about the name, etc. The only thing that you lose... It doesn't matter what you call it but the only thing that you lose if you don't hub consistently is the ability to negotiate a longer-term deal. So just as an example, if you were to say – and I'm just picking Singapore out of the air. If we say “We will have one meeting a year in Singapore or three meetings in the next five years in Singapore,” you've got the ability then to do a deal which you don't have if you're not sure when you're coming back.

Mike Silber:

Well, I suppose the other option is if you go to the [Stalwart Group] and you say “We'll do three meetings over the next five years in your locations X, Y, and Z; or X and Y and if you identify another site that works we'll look at that one as well,” you can do a deal with a group rather than individual ones. Katim?

Katim Touray:

I think one thing we should also consider as we think about this whole hub city concept is the impact it will have on our local hosts, because clearly if we expect the local host to bear the brunt of organizing, for instance, the Gala – in some countries this might not be a big deal but for a developing country, to consistently year in, year out have to fork over money to support a gala could actually threaten the long-term sustainability of the meeting. So that's something.

Mike Silber:

I think a great point, and personally I would suggest that we also get rid of the Gala if we're doing it at a site that works. We can also possibly get rid of the drumming and the Opening Ceremony and we simply have a summary of the work that needs to be done during the week.

Let's go from this direction and we have two comments on this side.

Roy Arends:

Again, for SSAC, when I solicited the views on the questions of the three bullet points, this was by far the one that solicited the most emotional reactions basically. And I'm trying to gather that up into summary, and I would say that rotating a set of hub cities in North America, Europe and Asia-Pacific where facilities and

travel arrangements are simple to make twice per year, that would for us be easier.

And the third meeting, the remaining rotating meeting on the RIR basis we currently have, you'll still include more far-flung regions but in a more lower frequency. If we want to include a wider range of internet users, law enforcement folks and security professionals dealing with e-crime whose primary paycheck's goals, metrics and responsibilities do not depend on the domain name industry and our main (inaudible), they need to be held in areas where they can more easily attend meetings without incurring heavy financial, time, and logistics costs.

Attendance matters, and attendance by key groups really matters, and we need to update the meeting structure and choice of locations to reflect that. Now, I've got some further thoughts. There's a very nice example from the Law Enforcement and Operational Security Committee perspective – we had a great turnout for a special law enforcement and operational security meeting in San Francisco, and we had a decent follow-up in Singapore. But now we have lost momentum on that effort given the difficulty of getting people from those communities to be able to attend the meeting here.

It's not always easy and affordable to get to with a lot of downsides logistically. You simply cannot get law enforcement folks to travel that far unless they can justify it, which usually means that they can tie it to something else that's productive for

them as well. So a US/European/Asia-Pacific hub destination makes for those folks a bit more sense. Thank you.

Mike Silber:

Thomas?

Thomas Narten:

Yeah, just two points on this. So following up on Chris' point, I've heard the assertion made that if we use a hub city it will reduce costs – that's great. I think what we need to do is actually take that to the next level and find out whether we're talking about \$100,000 or \$500,000 so we can basically do the cost/benefit tradeoff.

The second thing is I think one of the problems with the sites that work/hub city discussion is we really need to drill down and understand what it is that people think a "hub city" means to them. I mean Roy's description here is excellent because it gets to what they think are the critical elements of being an acceptable hub and without having a shared understanding of that we're going to pick the wrong approach.

Because fundamentally, if you want to have three consecutive meetings that basically have to be in Europe or North America to attract people, that fundamentally violates our rotational criteria. And so there's par tradeoffs here.

Mike Silber:

Thomas, thank you and an excellent point. And I think I really appreciated Marilyn's intervention. What I hear her saying is Europe or North America may have to relinquish its turn in the rotation or may have to accept a different rotation and we may need to change the bylaws with regard to rotations. So if, for example, we're doing two meetings a year in sites that work or maybe we'll start off with one meeting a year to test it and then move to two meetings a year, there still will be a third meeting which will then far more frequently be in slightly more difficult-to-get-to sites in Africa, South America, and those parts of Asia-Pacific that are not necessarily sites that work.

Roy, you wanted to interject directly and then I know there are hands on the right here so I'll get to them shortly.

Roy Arends:

Just an additional point here: we do have to watch out for a big of fragmenting or fragmentation, sorry for my lack of use of the English language. What I mean is we've already seen for instance, during I think last year there was a meeting of the GNSO separate from the ICANN meeting; next to that the SSAC Annual Retreat meeting. We seem to do much more work than we actually get to do at an ICANN meeting because there are far less SSAC people there. Thank you.

Mike Silber:

Alright, Chris? Your points have already been made, I'm glad to hear that. Ayesha or Marilyn?

Marilyn Cade: I'm going to make two quick interventions. First of all I'd like to propose a substitute phrase in the interest of geopolitical sensitivity and credit one of our very capable staff executives, David Olive, with contributing to this thinking: I think we could call them "convenient conference centers" because perhaps "sites that work" may actually be viewed by some as a bit offensive, so maybe we could try that.

And secondly, rather than immediately changing bylaws maybe we could propose a two-year test to consider and then assess how that would affect rotational, just an idea to consider.

Mike Silber: Absolutely, and I think what we'd want to do is create a bit of flexibility in the rotation where potentially, instead of at the moment where it says it must rotate we should rather create a situation where we can go clockwise and then counterclockwise and we don't necessarily have to follow a strict rotation as long as on average over a period we at least get to a reasonable geographic diversity.

Janice, I believe there was a remote comment on this topic that maybe would be worthwhile.

Janice Douma Lange: I just want to note that Raquel Gatto of Brazil did have a comment before regarding hub, but her hub comment was in regard to

physical locations and I let her know that the Remote Participation Team and the PPC would take those notes under consideration later.

Raquel's comment regarding this is that "It would be nice to associate in the discussion some numbers, that it's not only cost but attendance. When you talk about perspective, the number of attendees brings in a different picture about the accessibility of places."

Mike Silber:

Sébastien?

Sébastien Bachollet:

Yes, thank you. I think we may not have the same metrics for success of a meeting. If law enforcement are not here, so that's one metric. The number of people from the country and from the continent is another metric; and from my point of view, this meeting is the best ever organized by ICANN but not because of ICANN – because of the commitment of the local host to bring people from each and every constituency within the meeting.

We get Ministers, we get At-Large, we get other end users, we get businesses, we get a lot, a lot of people. And it's remarkable more than anything else. Then we have to take that into account as a success and if I have to say where we need to come back, let's come back here because we know that those people are able to bring new faces, new blood to the ICANN.

I am pushing a little bit and saying “Let’s come back here” – there are other places in this world but I am not sure that this question of where we are going and where... Sorry, but if it’s convenient for me it’s inconvenient for the Africans for some trip and then we have to balance. And the way it was balanced today, it’s not too bad from my personal point of view. Thank you.

Mike Silber:

Sébastien, I think that’s a very useful intervention and I think your point being made about the local host bringing people in, many first timers, ignoring the question of convenience for people from other locations but their willingness and engagement in bringing people in – I agree with you is exemplary. In terms of trying to do away with that by finding convenient locations, I certainly don’t think that’s what’s being suggested with this but I think the bigger issue is that we can give people the opportunity to focus more on that part of hosting the meeting by taking some of the pressure off and moving some of the other meetings to convenient locations.

And again, maybe convenient locations is not the best word but sites that require far less effort to make them hum, while here there’s been an enormous amount of effort that’s been put in to make the meeting as successful as it has been. And I think that’s one of the distinctions, that in a place like Singapore the setup is a lot easier, the amount of support staff required, the network staff required to keep the network up and stable – those sorts of things are a lot lower, associated with lower costs.

Nick, I don't know if you have a gut feel that you're willing to share or if you'd rather do a bit more work when Chris asked the question, I think it was Chris, as to what sort of savings are we likely to be looking at? Are we looking at \$100,000 a meeting, are we looking at a bigger, smaller number? What's your feeling?

Nick Tomasso:

When we think about ICANN meetings we think about them in two buckets, and those two buckets add up to about \$2.2 million and evenly split. The first bucket is the logistical aspects of the event, the things that you have to put into it to make it run; and the other is the travel costs associated with people who we pay for to come to meetings.

So a city that offers better airfares to the location could save us on that \$1.2 million travel line upwards of 10% easily; and a location that has lower meeting room charges, lower food and beverage charges, etc., would be approximately another 10%. So I would think that we could take about 20% out of the expense if we can find those facilities that satisfy those two criteria.

The other thing that we need to do is to look to... I have already had discussions with Hilton Hotel Properties, the chain, who said if I were to give them meetings over the course of the year or years they would for the first one give me a 10% discount on the expenses for that meeting. So that would include hotel rooms, not only for ICANN but also for those people who stay in that hotel from the community, as well as some food and beverage expenses

and those sorts of things. So those are the types of numbers we're speaking about.

Mike Silber: Okay, useful to know. We are somewhat over time. Any closing remarks by anyone? Alright, I see a number of requests for closing remarks... Let's take them round the table.

Katim Touray: I just wanted to add something on what Sébastien said. I think if we start to really look at hub cities then we might lose some of the worldwide feeling of ICANN, the ability to meet people from the local country, different cultures; and as we are supposed to run one internet, one world that may be a problem. And just to add, I mean for me Dakar is really close – five hours – it's much closer than Singapore. So “convenient place” is a really... And Sydney was really a nice venue but it's really a long way, so we shouldn't forget that.

[background conversation]

Mike Silber: Yeah, point taken, Chris. Marilyn?

Marilyn Cade:

I now return to speaking as the Chair of the BC with a formal request from my community, from my members. It has to do with ensuring that there is a single hotel – not that there’s a single hotel for everyone but that there is at least one hotel which is large enough that it includes a significant number of the community and not just the Board and the staff, and that it is not booked up before it is noticed publicly.

I know that adds to the criteria but the convening of the community together for the social purposes, and I have very strongly expressed concerns on that point to share.

Mike Silber:

Got you. Chris? Sorry – David, Janice, anything from your side?
Chris?

Chris Disspain:

I just want to pick up on the talk about hubs, the difficulty, bringing local people, etc. I think it’s really important that we remember that this stuff we’re talking about now is long-term planning, and that if you assume that ICANN meetings are only likely to get bigger – bigger in the sense of the number of people – that becomes more and more restrictive of where you can go and what you can do. The more people the harder it is, and the advantages of finding semi-permanent homes that you can plan over the next five years, you can build in growth because you can build in growth in the venue if you need more space; you only take the space if you need the space. There’s actually much more

flexibility in the inflexibility of going back to the same place on a fairly regular basis.

Mike Silber: Filiz? Stefan?

Stefan: Thanks. Just a quick word going the same place that Chris has just been, really. I think as ICANN meetings grow the only thing that really, the basic criteria we should look at is practicability. We have to... It's going to be impossible to make everyone happy, and I think the point about outreach and going to different places is a very important one. However, it may turn out to be less practical as ICANN attendances grow.

So if the idea is to say with the same level of attendance we have now then I think it is practical to put the onus more on outreach and changing venues regularly. If the intent is to make ICANN meetings grow in attendance significantly from where we are today I think we will find that very challenging, just purely on practical issues. And I want to stress that this is in no way any criticism of going to what we might call non-hub cities. I'm just trying to look at this from a very practical standpoint. Thank you.

Mike Silber: Point taken. Jean-Jacques?

Jean-Jacques Subrenat: Thanks. I won't speak at all about the physical constraints such as location or calendar, or frequency of meetings. I'd like to come back just for a moment on the content. As I said earlier, I think that what is missing in the ICANN meetings is the opportunity to situate ourselves – ICANN – but also to situation the internet phenomenon more largely in a wider context of where the world is going, politics, the economic opportunities but also constraints, what is governance, etc.

I'm struck by the fact that one of the greatest movements on today, the Occupy Wall Street movement, is about actually the failure of some self-regulation methods. So I think that it has some relation with what we discuss in ICANN about ethics, about conflicts of interest, etc., so we should have in each of these large meetings at least one presentation with a real debate about larger issues into which we can then insert ICANN. Thank you.

Mike Silber: I think a very valuable one and some of what we've been touching on in terms of topics versus day-to-day business. Lesley, any final comments?

Lesley Cowley: Yeah, just some closing points. I mean I think many of us here are veterans of quite a few ICANN meetings and I think it's important that we give our perspective from that position. But it is also vitally important that we think about three to five years hence when there will be many more participants and probably much

more geographically and other diversity in the community; and how best we can work with that.

Mike Silber:

Thank you. Rod, anything final? Thomas? Katim? Thank you all. I think that's been very useful. What I'd like to mention in particular to the SO Chairs who've made the time themselves as well as representatives from other SOs and ACs who've come through, thank you very much for your inputs – they're greatly appreciated. I think we will need to do a little more investigation in terms of how you use their week and to whether there are any changes to the way your week is structured that would work for you and that could possibly help make it more efficient.

I think the idea of a Program Committee, whether it makes all the decisions or simply helps with some high-level structuring and Nick's team still gets down to moving bits of paper around to get the final meeting slots in place, I'll leave to those who are more skilled at this than I.

In terms of the hub cities I'm getting a very clear indication – or sites that work, or convenient locations – I'm getting a very clear response that that is something we need to start implementing. I'm also getting a very clear response that we shouldn't use that as an excuse to ignore geographic diversity and visiting locations that are not sites that are convenient. And we need to strike a balance over there.

We need to consider how that's best done but I'm going to suggest to my successor that it's taken forward as some sort of testing phase; whether it's possible to do it next year or the year after, to look at some sort of testing phase for this concept and we see what sort of balance is appropriate before we come back with some proposed rules and some proposed rule changes in that regard. But thank you all for your inputs, much appreciated.

[End of Transcript]