

ICANN Dakar Meeting
Geographic Regions Working Group Update- TRANSCRIPTION
Saturday 22^d October 2011 at 16:45 local

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Rob Hoggarth: ...numerous workshops, public comment opportunities and the rest. The Working Group has now produced a draft Final Report with a number of recommendations for potential changes.

The recommendations broadly are what I've got up on the screen there right now, that ICANN adopt its own independent set of standards for geographic diversity in a geographic framework; that the model that be used as a foundation for that work is the RIR framework, the Regional Internet Registry and how they apply it.

A key element of the recommendations are to give individual communities, individual Supporting Organizations like the GNSO, flexibility to set their own standards and procedures.

A concept that I think has been employed in some of the constituencies or - were Stakeholder Groups in the GNSO an opportunity for subgroupings. In this case the Working Group is looking at recognizing the potential for unique cultural language or other characteristics.

There are proposals from the community for a region of small island nations for example. And then finally recognizing that if the Board were to accept the recommendations to move to the RIR framework, that there would be a number of countries that would change allocated regions.

Right now the way the proposal is drafted for those of you who've seen the Final Report is around 64, 65 countries would actually change regions. And it was critical from the Working Group perspective that government sovereignty was respected.

And so, you know, if there's a country that potentially would move to a new region, that they would have the opportunity to say, "We're more comfortable staying where we are."

The next steps and why I approached Stephane about giving you an update on this issue today is that right now there's a public comment forum open. The Working Group's sense was before producing and formally submitting a Final Report, that they would circulate to the community their draft Final Report, so that's been published.

There's an open public comment period. I think when it's all said and done it will have been an 85 day public comment period, so comments are due the 14th of December.

After that Working Group members are going to look closely at the comments. The anticipated date is sometime early in 2012. They'll have looked through that, agreed or disagreed with some of the suggestions and produced the formal Final Report with their recommendations.

At that time according to the charter of the Working Group, then individual SOs and ACs will have the opportunity to formally comment to the Board on what they think of the recommendations.

Timing - mid-2012 for a presentation to the Board and probably late next year, maybe around this time, actual Board review and action or non-action. We've got, you know, the public comment forum link produced right there and the group has maintained a wiki page.

So for those of you who aren't familiar with this issue or want to start to get familiar with it, it's up there. I guess right now you've got Zahid and Olga representing you guys.

They've done great work and been good contributors to the group, so presumably you'd have them continue but I think that's potentially something you guys just want to look at. And I'm happy to take any questions.

Stephane van Gelder: Thanks Rob. Ching.

Ching Chiao: Thank you Stephane and thank you Robert for the presentation and update. I just have a quick question and just a clarification needed. So when you say on Page 4 about the ICANN adopt - it's only depending on locations.

Then are you actually referring to the Montreal Board Resolution or is there any other standards that you're adopting?

Rob Hoggarth: Well if I recall correctly the Montreal Resolution basically called upon ICANN to follow the U.N.'s SD, Statistical Division model. What the Working Group found out in its research is that ICANN had departed from that model.

And as part of their sort of mission from the Board, it was to take a really broad look since it had been over seven years, to look at the whole perspective.

And so part of what they did is they looked at international norms and standards, and what they discovered is that with all the various international groups out there, there is no set standard.

You look at even within the U.N. various groups classify countries into different regions. Some groups have more regions than others, and so the determination where the Working Group is right now was to say, "Gee, there's no international model and if it wasn't really possible for ICANN to follow this U.N. SD model, then maybe we could look at another one."

And the logic they went through is that the RIR seemed as closely linked, so that's the background there.

Ching Chiao: Sure. Thanks. Okay a quick - very quick follow up. So do you envision that this type of review will be done like every three years, every four years? It just seems to me, I mean, I see the Montreal Resolution says that every three years such review will be done so...

Rob Hoggarth: Yes the - and the - it's in the Bylaws that it'll be reviewed every three years. In 2007 it hadn't been done yet and I think because of that time and the thoroughness of this review, this review by the time it's done will have taken more than three years.

I'm not sure - I can't recall at the moment. I don't know Zahid if you remember. I think the recommendation going forward is to look at - if the Board accepts the recommendation to look at it within a three-year period, and then reexamine every five years just because it seemed to be a very compressed timeframe.

And based upon the research of the Working Group it - seven years, substantial change in, you know, the growth of the Internet - not really clear that would continue in a three year period. Marilyn has a question.

Marilyn Cade: Thank you and thanks to the Working Group for putting together this material. I got a chance to look at some of it and I just - I'd like to ask Rob if you are able to, is there a list of the groups and decisions at ICANN that would be affected by a geographic region realignment?

And what - if there is I'd like to be sure that I've looked at it and that we think about the timing of other decisions and activities that are influenced by geographic alignment.

So I can think of several, one being the number of Board members that are - that cannot be seated in a particular region, another being the rotation of course for geographic alignment within the Councils.

I can think of several more but those two I think. There's also of course the question of geographic presence of ICANN Staff and the impact on the budget, which I would hope would sort of be - could be perhaps driven by a different decision which might be what the face of the worldwide Web looks like.

But the other two decisions are pretty important structural decisions. My second question, and I'll just do all three of them, is because I was present and involved in the discussion in Montreal, my second question is what is the thinking of the GAC at this point on such a proposal?

And my subpoint to that would be I'm not actually sure that - I'll go back to the first point. I'm not sure that a shift in geographic regions on a five-year basis adds any kind of stability to this organization.

Rob Hoggarth: The first one had three parts so I'll address that one first. In terms of impact what the Working Group has produced up till now is a listing about what countries would be impacted by the potential allocation switch.

In their first report they identified the complete list of areas within ICANN that currently apply or utilize geographic regions in a variety of ways. And their analysis broke those up into I think three areas: participation, representation and operations, recognizing that geographic diversity was applied in all those different areas.

And so depending upon whether it was as you indicated Staff and operational issue, that would have some impacts. If it was a participation issue, an outreach type thing or representation.

One of the things that drove this recommendation to let individual communities assess how to actually put this into practice focused on just the issue that you're raising, a recognition that - and one of the examples I think was the Registrars.

You know, the fact that if you have a smaller or more homogeneous community, how will that impact geographic diversity? And the Working Group had the opportunity to look at some of the GNSO Council experience, some of the Stakeholder Group and constituency challenges and how the GNSO resolved those in terms of, you know, who participated as Council members and the rest.

So the bottom line on that first question is individual communities will have the opportunity to assess and decide whether they're going to follow this new model.

Now it's an important piece to clarify that I didn't get to in the overall presentation, and that is that we are looking here at again giving individual opportunities to countries and to the individual Stakeholder Groups whether to put this into place or not.

And when you look at the RIR model the concept doesn't change the regions as they exist today. What it'll change is some of the countries that are allocated to those regions, but doesn't change the existing five-region model.

The GAC participated in the first reports, but there has not been an active member of the Working Group through the second two reports participating from the GAC.

The way we had set it up early in the process was that - and this was back with Janis - the email list gets delivered through the GAC process or whatever.

In other words there's an automatic dump but there's not an individual who's actively participating in the group. And third I think I already addressed. It's not a shift in that the regions stayed the same, but it does present different allocation of countries to other regions.

Marilyn Cade: Sorry, I just had a quick follow up. I think you said - I hope you didn't say but I think you said if we change the model, each individual group within ICANN could decide whether to adhere to the model or not. Is that what you said?

Rob Hoggarth: The foundation that - or the framework, and maybe model framework is not the right answer. Framework is - the better way to look at it is that the framework that would be established would be the RIR framework where those countries are allocated to regions.

So there would be a change in that regard, however individual countries could opt out of those changes.

Stephane van Gelder: Thanks, and I have Carlos next.

Carlos Aguirre: Okay thank you Stephane. The question is related with this slide, the last point. My question is what about the territories in this period, not countries

because in the particular case Argentina have with UK some territories in this period, like Malvinas Island and Sandwich del Sur and (Porgatas) del Sur?

There are three islands in dispute - are - in the Latin American region, not Europe.

Rob Hoggarth: I don't know if you're aware of this but Malvinas has already submitted comments in the comment period to address that issue I believe. I - my recollections, and I don't know if you can fill in any blank on this, but I - part of the aspect of the Working Group so far and the key of that final bullet was to say there may be situations where there are territories.

And I don't think that they had looked directly at the issue of disputed territories. There are issues where I think they recognize through their research that you have somebody geographically situated in a particular region, but their sovereign nation happens to be elsewhere geographically and...

Carlos Aguirre: Sorry, sovereign - we discuss? No.

Rob Hoggarth: Okay. Yes, I mean, I don't know Zahid if they got into - if you guys got into that level of detail. I don't recall.

Zahid Jamil: There's nothing on disputes.

Stephane van Gelder: Anything further on this? Marilyn.

Marilyn Cade: Yes, when we talk about what you're going to talk to the GAC about, I think it would be helpful to have some kind of a even informal understanding of where the governments are in this.

Geopolitically this is a big issue in every one of the international bodies that it comes up in. It is not without warts so to speak, and I'm not suggesting

they're going to be able to give you an answer but this debate is going on right now in some other settings, because it comes with the allocation of resources and this does too.

Rob Hoggarth: Because of timing and scheduling, Dave Archbold who's the Chair of the group wasn't able to attend this session. But throughout the course of the week he's going to be briefing other communities, and I'm sure would be delighted at any, you know, appropriate time to fill you all in.

So you all have certainly opportunity as well before December 14 to submit individual or collective comments.

Stephane van Gelder: Okay, looks like there are no further comments on this topic, in which case we will bring this to a close and I suggest that we restart immediately...

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