
BUENOS AIRES – GAC Plenary 5
Sunday, November 17, 2013 – 10:30 to 12:00
ICANN – Buenos Aires, Argentina

If everybody could please take their seats. The GAC is starting their next session. If everybody could please take their seats.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Okay. Let's get started. I think we can get a couple more things out of the way before we break for lunch today. So we have a bit more time that we can use for working groups, and a couple of things might be beneficial here. So, first of all, we had identified the multistakeholder strategy meeting working group. I'm sure I haven't got that title exactly right for hearing an update for activities. We have three GAC representatives that are participating in that. And I know at least Portugal is ready to update the GAC about those activities. So, if we could spend a bit of time to have an update on that. And, then, if we could make sure we have clarity about next steps and how to organize ourselves for the other two working groups, in particular, the working group on working methods because we did run short of time yesterday. And we were a bit rushed in that discussion. So that we have clarity on this work. I've had a few questions from colleagues about how that will be proceeding and how to be involved. So it is, I think, useful for us to spend a few minutes on that before we go and have some lunch.

So can I ask Portugal if you can start us off by talking about the meeting strategy working group.

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PORTUGAL:

Thank you, Heather. I don't know whether Suzanne or Tracy that is not here, if they want to start. But, as you gave me the floor first, I would like to tell you where we are and what we are doing. So, as you might know, we are 16 members from the different constituencies from the GNSO, ALAC, ccNSO, GAC, and SO. And the point is, after 15 years of ICANN, it is interesting that we are assessing what has been achieved, what can be improved in the governance setting. And we are discussing whether the supporting organizations and advisory committees are working in the most effective way intersessionally during the three global sessions or not.

So we are discussing things like should ICANN meetings as we know them currently continue; should they continue to rotate geographically; if so, in which modalities? We are also discussing the logistics associated with each venue for the global ICANN meetings which comprises -- which is the most appropriate venue? Which are the costs associated? The visual issue is also part of these discussions.

We are working on a weekly basis through conference calls with a tool that is Adigo. We've improved the quality of these conference calls, of course. But still we're not having face-to-face meetings. We will have a face-to-face meeting on Monday in the afternoon. And I hope that we will move forward with that meeting face-to-face.

This is to tell you that, for the time being, there is nothing ripe to present to the community. We would like to have something to present and for public comment. But the idea is to engage the community as

soon as possible. But there is no document for the time being available to do so.

The bottom line in these discussions, I think, for everybody is not to lose the multistakeholder ambiance, to continue to attract more and more people for these meetings but in the most effective way.

So I was really too generalist, but I don't have more details to present for the time being. Because nothing was agreed until now. We are brainstorming. And, as we are working even on a weekly basis, every Thursday for two hours, you know, that is very difficult to move fast if you're working only through conference calls.

But I think that everyone in the -- in this working group would like to present something for public comment by -- well, I don't know -- but maybe between December and February. Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you very much for that introduction, Ana.

I know that there have been earlier efforts to look at the issue of how the ICANN community meets and organizes its sessions. And so I think this is going to be of interest to colleagues here to contribute to that process, and it's great to see that we have three representatives from the GAC that are participating in that effort. So would the other representatives like to comment? I see United States and Trinidad and Tobago. So U.S., you go. And then we'll move over to Trinidad and Tobago.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I appreciate it. I won't take too much time at the microphone. And thank you to Ana for this extremely helpful overview.

The work to date, as one of the three of us, has been very, very interesting. And a lot of very creative ideas are being advanced in this meeting strategy working group.

One issue that I have had in the back of my mind -- and now that we are here it's in the front of my mind -- is how do we three best get information to colleagues on the GAC and how do we prepare GAC comments or individual GAC member comments? We need to give some thought as to when the draft proposed report or set of recommendations comes out. I think we want to be sure that, as sort of representatives from the GAC, that we can put down a marker as to how much time we think the GAC might need that this -- we see this as an issue of extreme importance to GAC membership. And I -- but I don't have a clear sense myself, as a member of the meeting strategy working group, as to the timelines. So I just -- I'm glad we've surfaced this. Because it is something that we would want to defer to colleagues as to how we best handle getting GAC views and getting GAC attention to this sort of important set of recommendations, whatever they are ultimately. We don't have anything to share with you at the moment. But I just wanted to flag that. Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you. Trinidad and Tobago, please.

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO: Thank you, Ana, for a very helpful and comprehensive review. And thank you, Suzanne, for raising that concern.

I'm just going to intervene quickly on the particular issue that I think the GAC could contribute to. We're talking logistics as well as the meeting strategy working group. Logistics also includes things as how the meetings that the GAC, as an example, would conduct, would happen. Not working methods, but more things like what do you need to have a more effective meeting? Is the meeting room itself perfect, or do we -- can we adjust the meeting room's logistics, with your materials, your presentation, facilities, your remote participation facilities, et cetera. All of those issues are part of the discussion. And, given that it's been raised, I guess, for the first time formally in the GAC, maybe what we could do is on the list have some sort of compilation of some ideas as to how we can best represent the GAC's interests, I mean, through the chair of the GAC as well.

And make those requests and representations to the strategy working group. And, as an example, is this room too small? Too large? Is the layout exactly as it should be, the horseshoe? So simple things like that that could improve the meetings.

As well -- and particularly Ana raised it -- we are discussing the rotation of the meetings. I think that's very important to -- for members and the GAC especially those from countries who are not used to traveling significantly. There are discussions relating to whether we move to a hub model, which means that, as you're familiar with the ICANN hubs that are being established, Istanbul, I forget where the other two are,

but -- Singapore and Latin America. Somewhere in Latin America, I believe. Whether we're going to have meetings in those hubs alone? Are we going to rotate the meetings, as we have them today, among the geographic -- the five regions and so on? So those are the kinds of things that are being discussed as well with a view to, as Ana referred, to visa issues and so on. So your input is very important. And, given that it's being raised here, it may be very useful to have some members contribute on a list to some ideas as to how we could best represent those thoughts and views. Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you, Tracy. And I know that in some of the discussions that we've had among the chairs at ICANN, there has been some effort to think of ways to allow for time for the various organizations to meet on their own to do their own work and have their own discussions as well as meeting with other parts of the community. And all of you will know from the GAC's scheduling just how enormously challenging it is to be meeting all those different needs within one week. And we're all doing the same. So all of the supporting organizations, all of the advisory committees are trying to identify what topics they need to talk about and which topics they want to talk about with others and which others need to then be built into a schedule. And, you know, unless we're going to meet for three weeks or something like that when we come to ICANN, we have to find a way of building the right structures to allow us to spend the time in the way that we need to.

So it is an interesting challenge. And it's great to see that there is this working group working on moving on these discussions along.

Can I ask how far into the future is this working group looking? Are we talking about trying to make changes to the way meetings are held, you know, two years from now? Five years from now? Or is it a shorter term kind of thing? I see a hand.

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO: If my understanding is correct, I think the meetings are locked until 2015. And so this will come forward from 2016. Any recommendations that we make will be effective on 2016 going forward. So the current approach will retain itself until 2014, given the planning that needs to go into the meetings, et cetera.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Okay. Thank you. That's a useful perspective. Are there any questions or comments from anyone on this area of activity? No. Okay.

All right.

So I think we can safely say that updates are very welcome. And, if those representing us in some capacity on this working group, if you can identify for colleagues when you need inputs or when you think it would be useful for the GAC to consider its -- some of the issues under discussion, just let us know.

Okay. So let's move on, then, to discuss briefly, as we need to, next steps for the other two working groups, in particular, the working methods one.

And, following that, I think we can conclude. Just as a reminder that we're not going to have the IGO discussion as initially scheduled at 11:30; because there's still discussions going on informally outside this room to come up with some sort of solution that can be presented to the GAC. So we will keep working on that, and I hope we will be able to bring something to the GAC a little bit later in our meetings.

Okay.

So let's go right to the working methods working group then. I know, Spain, you were speaking to secretariat support about how to move our work forward and organize our work. And I wonder whether we could ask Spain to comment on this or even invite secretariat support to comment.

So, from our discussions yesterday, we talked about how to move the working methods work forward. And as well it was noted that there were relationships, linkages in some cases overlap with other areas of work. So, if we can maybe look to secretariat support to help organize that information to allow colleagues here to see how we are going to deal with the various issues moving forward, I think that would be useful. As I mentioned earlier this morning, I received a few questions from colleagues about how to contribute to that or how we're going to address that.

And I understand that Spain had a chance to talk to Tom Dale who will be providing support to the working methods group. So, if you could give us some idea about how we might move forward, that would be really welcome.

SPAIN:

Sure. Thank you, Madam Chair.

We were just informally talking about how to move forward with the working group and how to implement the different actions that were developed in the first stage of the work.

That was just an informal first contact. We introduced each other. We didn't know our faces. So we haven't for the moment agreed to anything. But work will continue on the premises that were agreed upon yesterday, which were, of course, to try and find synergies and different interactions with the actions that had been as well foreseeing in the ATRT2 and the BGRI, as well as trying to move forward with an action plan that could implement the different actions for salient points A through D of my yesterday's presentation. And setting aside points E and F, which are the controversial ones and would have to be further discussed in the future GAC meetings as well as in the working group. Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you, Spain. And, since the work is so comprehensive and covers really a range of issues, I think we would all benefit from having better

clarity on how to organize the different issues that are there and relate them to other areas of work in the GAC. So I think that sounds positive.

So, with that, unless there are any questions or comments on that -- I see two. France and Australia.

AUSTRALIA:

Thank you, Chair. And thank you again to Spain. Just as question as a member of this working group, so the intention will be to leave here as the working group work with Tom. Go down to -- yesterday we saw like -- or the GAC saw, I guess, the relatively high-level presentation. But, within each of those points, role of vice chair, meeting planning, et cetera, there were subpoints. So the intention is to go away and look at each of those subpoints and how they can be implemented. And then next step do we then -- I assume we will come back and discuss that with the GAC. Is that -- is that going to happen intersessionally, Singapore, or just whenever we're ready? I mean, it's just a simple question. And, if it's to go back to the working group and we'll plan that next step then, that's fine. I'm just wondering what we walk away from here with exactly.

SPAIN:

Thank you for that question. My first intention, if you agree and we're comfortable with this, would be to try to elaborate this working plan and try to set a deadline so kind of try to implement those first quick wins, as we said yesterday. So that many of those things could be already set up and practical implementation for the next meeting in

Singapore so we can take advantage of this agreement and these things that we have seen that can be easily implemented in the next GAC meeting already.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you. France, please.

FRANCE: Thank you, Mrs. Chair.

My question will be quite the same, in a way. I perfectly understand that we don't want to do two times the same work. But I just would like to understand when the BGRI is supposed to release a paper or a conclusion so that we can make the most of it, first.

Second, it seems the ATRT2 has already provided some guidance. So maybe we should make the most of it already and try to move forward.

Otherwise, I understand that the next step will be in Singapore. So that makes five months from now. April? From November, December. That's quite some time.

And, plus, we have the other question, yesterday's question raised by the Peruvian delegation that we need to address. So that is quite some work we have to do. And I would very much encourage us to find a way to move forward as quickly as possible.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you, France. And, if I'm hearing correctly, there might be a concern that we're not going to allow the work to move forward. And I think, my being clear about the next steps, it's so that the working group can make good use of the intersessional in the next five months and move forward as quickly as possible.

So Australia. And then I had U.K. and EU Commission and U.S.

AUSTRALIA:

Thank you again, chair, and sorry for taking the microphone again, but I agree. And I think that was the point I was interested to get to, how we keep this progressing.

And the reason that I was pointing to the presentation yesterday in that there's a lot of detail that we need to keep the GAC across as well as the working group.

So I think if we can agree here that the working group will keep the GAC appraised of its progress. So there's going to be the slightly more complicated ones, which will require a bit of work and then some updating, and some simple ones, as we talked about yesterday.

And potentially if the working group can map out processes or an implementation path for those, and we take the step of informing the GAC what we think and so on intersessionally, we can potentially keep this moving. So that some of the easy wins, assuming the GAC grows or doesn't disagree, can already be implemented for our next meeting.

And that I think we, intersessionally, can keep the discussion going. We just need to keep the whole GAC informed of what's happening in the working group. So the working group is the conduit to keep things rolling along but we must remember to keep the GAC apprised of our thinking. So I think we can get some good progress intersessionally.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you. Okay.

So I have U.K., EU Commission, United States, Egypt, and Netherlands.

UNITED KINGDOM:

Yes, thank you, Chair. Very much on the same theme. What I suggested yesterday, as you may recall, is that perhaps by the end of January or late January, we should be in a good position to take stock on what is already implemented and part of the mapping out, if you like, of the work program. We could do a stock take, perhaps with a teleconference, involving the whole of the GAC and then we can consider what is left to be done in good time before turning up in Singapore.

So really keeping the momentum going quickly, is my rationale for that.

Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you.

That makes a lot of sense.

Okay. EU Commission, please.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION: This is in the same vein as the EU Commission. So I support the U.K., of course, what he has just said. I think also it's important that we track on the different tracks that is happening in ATRT due to our working group, and also other discussions. Obviously the discussions that we had previously on dot wine and the need to shape up a little bit some of the rules so that there's no room for confusion or misunderstanding or different iterations of it.

So I think that is what we would like to see.

I just wanted to plant again the idea of having something around this in London. I mean, I think that that is also something that, if we can have some new text which ministers, if we now have a minister in London, that the ministers can actually agree or maybe endorse such -- such text.

Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you. Okay.

United States, Egypt, and Netherlands.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: Thank you, Madam Chair. And thank you to colleagues for sharing some ideas.

I do think it does appear that certainly with the additional secretariat staff, we now have more manpower to try to map out immediate steps. And I think there are several things in the proposed paper that can be tackled fairly, fairly quickly.

I have a slightly different impression about ATRT2 and BGRI. I think what is in this paper just needs to be tweaked a little bit to be more reflective of those discussions. And I think in fairness to our counterparts on the Board, as board members of the BGRI, and certainly in fairness to our colleagues in the GNSO, the GAC has not been able to devote very much time to these issues in the past few meetings because we have concentrated on developing GAC advice on new gTLDs. So it was not a question, I think, of a lower priority. We just had to shift our - the focus of our work.

But my only concern in raising this is I don't want us to lose sight of what we have already accomplished. And I think there is a lot of good work that's under way. We are meeting with the GNSO at this meeting to discuss some of those concrete ideas.

So I would just like to suggest, and I'm happy to contribute to refining the draft. I do think we need to understand that early engagement in ICANN's policy development processes goes well beyond simply having a briefing paper. I do think we need to be really careful, and it would be helpful if we lay out all of the options that we have already identified.

And so tackle those with a little bit more deliberation, but I think it's all doable. And so I think this initiative can actually help boost the work that we'd already identified and agreed on.

Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you for that. Next I have Egypt.

EGYPT:

Thank you, and thank you all. I really concur with much of what has been said.

I just wanted to respond very quickly to France's question about a report from the BGRI.

Actually, I have already circulated some sort of a progress report or a status report of where the BGRI is so far in terms of what has been accomplished, what's ongoing or pending.

I have already shared this, but, I'm sorry, I can't recall whether I circulated this on the GAC list or the working group list. But I would be willing to circulate it again if not all members already have it, and would be more than happy to answer any questions or inquiries that we may have. But it's already with the working group, at least, if not all the GAC membership. But I can surely circulate it again.

Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you, Egypt.

Okay. I have the Netherlands next, please.

NETHERLANDS: Yes, thank you, Heather.

I have two remarks. I think I will not go into length because many, probably, U.S. -- sorry, U.S., Australia, and Spain and U.K. already said something about this. And there are a lot of new proposals or proposals which already have been taken on board. But at least they are proposals which are put down on paper and put down also, I saw, in a matrix by (dropped audio).

I think concerning these proposals, I agree, they are differently targeted. They have targeted to participation -- sorry, to increase, let's say, our own participation and preparation through GAC Web site, GAC secretariat, et cetera, and there are things targeted at, let's say, the vice chairs and the role of vice chairs which need our discussion.

And I perfectly agree with having, I think, suggested by Spain a kind of implementation plan in which we see all these proposals, how they been taken on board already, how they will be taken on board and prepared for Singapore, and which are still for discussion. So just a very comprehensive matrix.

So I think basically we're all on the same line. And concerning the link with the BGRI and the ATRT2, I think I don't see a problem in

duplication. I think many of them are really based on the same premise and the same background.

For example, the ATRT2 recommendations are talking about increasing participation, increasing also transparency very much, increasing our own professionalism and preparation. So I don't see a problem in duplication. And having duplication should not lead to having discussions about not or, yes, implement something. In fact, they, let's say, reinforce each other.

So I am very much in favor of, I think others have also said this, in just having all these proposals in a matrix, and this can be done directly by the secretariat, this can be done such and so, so we don't have to wait for any discussion on these proposals for Singapore.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you, Netherlands.

I know Spain as the lead wants to speak. Australia is also asking. So did you want to speak before Australia speaks again? And then we can maybe conclude with your remarks? Okay. Australia.

AUSTRALIA:

Thank you, Chair.

I think it's been a very useful reminder in today's discussion, and I recall it was talked about yesterday of potentially having some package of announcements that could be worked on for the high-level meeting. So

I expect we'll revisit this when we have the discussion about the high-level meeting but I think it's a useful reminder. And I think the implementation plan will probably help us identify ones which may be appropriate for that. Depending on the level of representation at that high-level meeting, we are not going to, I expect, have ministers or senior officials focusing on some of the very simple things. And I'd be hopeful that we wouldn't be holding up their implementation until London. As I said, I'm hopeful that we can get many of these resolved very quickly.

So I think an implementation plan, which the Netherlands has pointed to and highlighted, will usefully help us find those which are substantial enough and which can be ready in time, potentially, to be discussed.

I think it's a useful reminder. I just wanted to highlight it as something the working group potentially can explicitly have in mind as we develop this implementation plan. Some of the stuff about engagement with policy development and so on, if we can be ready for a high-level meeting, I think that would be really useful. That's been really longstanding issue for the GAC, and the timing may work out quite nicely if we can get that.

So a useful reminder. I just wanted to highlight it explicitly.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Okay. Spain, please.

SPAIN:

Thank you, Madam Chair. And thank you, everyone, for your contributions.

Just to answer to your questions and concerns. I fully concur with what Netherlands has just said. So that was what we had in mind.

So we could devise an implementation plan that could be -- could be kind of crystallized in a matrix or something like that, in which we could apart from identifying common grounds or common measures already identified by other groups try to fix which ones can be quickly implemented, so that, as you say, Peter, we can have some of them running in a few months. And as Suzanne has just said, there are some things that really can happen very quickly and that have no major concern with them. And the other issues that could be more complex, like the reverse GAC liaisons or the engagement in PDP process, or the role of vice chairs, which was already discussed yesterday but deserves more discussion, that could be -- could be kind of set aside or even discussed but not -- not decided in this intersessional group but in future meetings, like Singapore or London.

So of course I agree with the United States that the -- the (indiscernible) page document that we produced can be and will be certainly improved. And we certainly welcome any kind of contributions for editing. And this is a work in progress, and we just want to fulfill the gist of this group, which is to enhance our work and nothing more than that.

Of course, everything will be submitted to consultation to the whole of the GAC once we produce outcomes in the working group so that everyone is involved and can contribute to it.

Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you very much. This has been really useful as well to clarify a few things about next steps. And clearly we will need to dedicate enough time at our next meeting in order to talk about these issues and, as well, for June next year where we hope to have some outcomes that we can link to a high-level meeting if we do decide to have a high-level meeting in June next year.

And it's clear as well that having secretariat support will be really important to the working group and, as well, helping us paint the picture in light of other work going on in working groups and at the level of the GAC where ATRT and the BGRI take place. So there are some procedural elements to that in having tracks of work at the GAC level, and parallel tracks happening in a working group.

But I'm confident we can sort those issues out.

Okay.

So, great. So I'll give an opportunity to -- to the other working group on future gTLD issues if there's anything further there that we need to confirm as far as next steps are concerned, or perhaps because we had

a bit more time to go through that, perhaps things are sufficiently clear at this point.

So I'll just look to the lead for that -- for the gTLD working group. Is there anything that you want to raise or are you clear on proceeding on that?

AUSTRALIA:

Thank you, Chair. I think I'm clear on the way to proceed. For my mind, the only question which is outstanding, which we did flag briefly yesterday, is that there is time available Thursday morning if working groups potentially want to meet.

If members of this working group would like to use that time, and they're available -- I know some people aren't always available Thursday morning, so I'm a little sensitive to putting something forward. But if people do want to use that time, please let me or the whole working group know, as there's the working group's separate mailing list, and we can potentially look at having a face-to-face meeting on the Thursday morning. If we do that, I'd probably suggest as early as possible, perhaps 9:00 a.m., so that those who do depart through the day are able to participate, or as many are as around are able to participate. I actually leave during the Thursday as well. So if anyone is interested in the 9:00 a.m. meeting on Thursday, and if the room is confirmed to be available, please let me know if people are interested and we can lock that in.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you very much. Also the same offer stands for other working groups as well. We do have the room booked and most of the services, not all of them, can be available for that.

So it's a great opportunity to take advantage of everybody being here face to face. So take up that offer if you wish.

So with that, let's break for lunch. Please be back in the room at 2:00.

Thank you, everyone.

[LUNCH BREAK]