
BUENOS AIRES – GAC Plenary 8
Tuesday, November 19, 2013 – 09:00 to 10:30
ICANN – Buenos Aires, Argentina

CHAIR DRYDEN: Good morning, everyone. I think we can get started.

So great.

Some of you came to the breakfast with the business constituency, so thank you for that.

There seemed to be quite robust discussion going on, and we had quite a good discussion at the table I was at, so glad to see many of you taking advantage of the opportunity to meet with our colleagues on the business side of things.

So we have another busy day today; a few meetings.

Before we start with the ATRT2 draft report discussion, I'll just go over the meetings that we have lined up for the day.

So first of all, we will discuss the ATRT2 draft report and recommendations. So this is our chance to have a discussion within the GAC about those recommendations, and also to anticipate what kinds of things we want to raise with the ATRT2 when they come to meet with us a bit later, and to formulate any questions we may have. And I've heard from a few of you that you have questions or even concerns about some of the

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recommendations. So we can certainly focus our efforts on getting straight to those, I think.

Of course, we can also discuss other recommendations that you consider to be significant in that report that don't relate to the GAC, but we do tend to focus a bit more on those things that have been identified for implementation here.

So then following that, we'll spend a bit of time on the question of the high-level meeting, which is also an ATRT, Accountability and Transparency Review Team, recommendation as well. And then we'll discuss generic top-level domain directory services, and the Expert Working Group will be here again to help get us introduced to that topic, and the aim here is to have a discussion on that and to understand what are the next steps with that track of work. It raises a range of interesting policy issues for us.

And then we have our joint meeting with the ccNSO. And then, as always, we have our meeting with the Board. So if we can be thinking about what kinds of things you would like to raise with the Board at this point. We are expecting a briefing from Fadi Chehade, the CEO, to talk to us a bit about some of the efforts he's been making with the other Internet organizations and that sort of thing. But we may have other topics that we still want to raise with them. And then that will conclude our day.

As far as the communique is concerned, you'll see that there's a draft being circulated. There will be another draft compilation

circulated this evening. And please flag early on if you think there is something significant that we've missed and this sort of thing, so we can get as far ahead in finalizing the communicate as possible, so that we're not trying to address everything on Wednesday, and to limit the surprises, if you will. So give people a chance to think about what's in there and formulate a view, if needed.

So just briefly, I think the key things that we've identified now to reference in the communicate, to provide either comments and/or GAC advice, relate to new gTLDs. We've got a few things. We may want to reference category 1 and 2, and the effort now to implement GAC's advice, and there may be things that we want to clarify in that -- in that section of the communicate, but I do hope we are sharing an understanding that that work is moving ahead, and we want to contribute to progress continuing on category 1 and 2 and all the applications and strings that are impacted by the GAC's advice on that.

As well, we have three strings where we had some discussion the other day related to Shenzhen, Guangzhou, and spa. And we have a working group looking at text for wine and vin, as communicated to the GAC list yesterday.

As well, it's not clear whether we would have advice on Red Cross and Red Crescent. Some of you have raised this issue, but it's not

clear to me whether we're at the point of having further text or comments on that. So that's pending.

So this is the -- this is the list I have of key things. If there's anything significant missing so far, then do let us know, and obviously we'll be adding to this following our exchanges on the Accountability and Transparency Review Team effort. So we may have comments or advice on that to offer, for example.

So I think at this point we can move into discussing the ATRT2 recommendations.

The report that we have is quite large, but there are sections that pertain specifically to the -- this committee, and so we may want to focus there. And, as I say, have a bit of a discussion among ourselves and then, as well, prepare a bit for our exchange with the review team tomorrow.

Okay. So would anyone like to get us started on this? Otherwise, we can maybe go through the recommendations.

Italy, please.

ITALY:

Okay. Good morning, everybody.

It is interesting, certainly, concerning the ATRT2, the part that is referring to the GAC. And we received a correction on the text that was issued on November 7th with the justification that the

session regarding the GAC was not added in the executive summary. And then the text that is reported here is very similar to the one that was issued on October 15. But this is the last, say.

And basically this text describes sort of an ideal GAC, let's say, at least as seen from the ICANN accountability and transparency review panel. And so, also, the first recommendation is, of course, a recommendation to the Board of ICANN to improve as much as possible, also with the (indiscernible) by ICANN, the performance of the GAC. Of course, these recommendations will be conveyed to us as soon as the final document will be prepared.

I had someone thinking that -- someone in the Board thinking that -- or at least there was a discussion if such recommendations should go directly with the GAC, but this is not feasible. So in any case, it is important that we, from our side, comment to the review panel when we meet with them and convey our opinions.

Of course, we are now -- we have our external secretary that is -- has been engaged, and then there will be some of the actions that ICANN describes here that could be -- certainly will help us independently, let's say. And there is not everything on charge of ICANN.

So I think this is a point, certainly important.

So there are sentences where it say that the GAC is not sufficiently transparent. And on this, we could at least provide

our opinion, and it is clear that we are doing our best in order to be more transparent. Especially thinking, for example, to have many open meetings.

But here there are also some recommendations concerning the intersessional work and teleconferences that we are having between meetings that should be open in the opinion of the review committee even to other constituencies. And this is ideally, perhaps, also appropriate, but we can understand that it is very difficult to be realized because we know all that in our teleconferences, the number of participants is never over one-third of those that are here in the room. And then so opening to other constituencies will render even more complicated than to rely on the result of these calls.

So I think that there are even other articles where that was relevant to me, like the problem of conflict of interest, that the membership of the GAC should have rules of conduct. And this is okay, of course. Anyone has rules of conduct, but stressing the problem of conflict of interest when the delegates are nominated by ministries or state authorities, then this is a little bit strange.

So then there is a part of that that speaks about in order to do something like that, maybe some part of the ICANN bylaws should be changed. That is also this, another -- a not easy problem.

By the way, as soon as this report will be finalized next month, because the engagement is that will be ready before the end of

the year, then ICANN has -- the Board has six months in order to declare how to implement the recommendations of the review panel.

And then after this six months, there should be actions in order to make effective all these recommendations. And I want to stress this because it is very important for the GAC to be an important part in this exercise. And we have also to be ready to comment some of this -- of these sentences that I tried briefly to describe.

Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you very much, Italy, for getting us started. So you've touched upon a range of issues, and I would invite colleagues here to perhaps comment on some of those points.

For any of you that are following the report, either online or in hard copy, the list of GAC-related recommendations from the second review team is on page 34. So that's the page you can see projected on the screen. So that can help guide you in this discussion.

So I see Iran. Please.

IRAN:

Thank you, Madam Chairman. Thank you, everybody. Good morning to all. Good morning, interpreters. I think we need to be very happy with you because you facilitate our work.

Madam Chairman, I would like to touch upon some of the important point that my distinguished colleague from Italy raised.

First of all, we are grateful the ATRT2, all the recommendation provided. Perhaps at this GAC meeting we may need to possibly review them to see whether we properly understand them. But I don't think that at this meeting we would be in a position to reply to them. We need some time to reflect. Some of the issues, quite important, that we should not rush into any conclusions because both conclusions, saying yes and no, may not be appropriate. So we need time to have -- to examine them and perhaps reflect on that and come back.

Nevertheless, we could make a preliminary analysis, a study of that. If we have questions, we could raise the questions, and so on and so forth.

And perhaps -- let me be honest with you. I have not studied that at all. Sorry for that. It's my fault. I apologize. But it doesn't mean you just rely on one person. That is another issue.

But I think some of the wording perhaps is not to be as such. Those attending yesterday the strategic meeting of the ICANN, they remember what I told in one area. When this report

mentioned that the GAC must have or should have a Code of Conduct means that we don't have Code of Conduct at all, that is not correct. We don't want to be represented as such.

We are representative of government, and according to this section, I think we have, all of us, a sort of Code of Conduct that we have been given by our governments. Whether we need to further work together and further improve the situation in order to be better understood, that is different. But saying that we should have Code of Conduct means that we don't have any Code of Conduct at all at this stage, which is not correct.

Therefore, I suggest that without going to the details of any particular conclusion at this meeting in a written form, maybe we just look at them to see whether we have any point of clarification or any general comments, and we come back at later stage and we act on the recommendation. In particular, recommendation already very important. And about being open or not open, I think it is an issue. It's already in the working method. It is discussed. So I think that will be taken from that.

So this is my first reaction to that, and I am open to a further review of the comments by colleague. But in that sense, I support delegate -- or representative of Italy.

Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you, Iran.

I see Italy asking for follow-up. But just to note to you that the aim of the review team is to gather inputs from this meeting, and then there will be perhaps another public comment period. But the aim is to have the report finalized by December 31st. So even though we may only have preliminary questions or things to raise, I think it's worth us doing that in order to influence that final report as appropriate.

Italy, please.

ITALY:

Okay. The first thing you said is what I was going to answer, but I want to add a little bit.

So it is clear that this review team is preparing recommendations to the Board of ICANN, and not directly to us. But since this chapter, let's say, is regarding the GAC, it is appropriate that we give our feedback.

And I mention another one of the points that is an example, is that the GAC advice normally goes through the communique or through -- through the letters, communications, and so on. And it is requested here that the GAC prepares for each of the advices a written explanation, considering who we contacted, what we did, what led to this kind of decision. That is a behavior normal with the Board.

But sometimes, especially for the GAC that is work for -- working for consensus, it is even hard to find a consensus on a single sentence. And if we try to describe all the reasons where and why we reach this, it's not work that is quite relevant, and I made some example of possible request or explanation to the review panel.

Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you, Italy.

So another note on the issue of the ATRT2 and how their recommendations get forwarded. You're absolutely right. They do get sent to the Board. And I would just remind colleagues that the formulation we came up with with the first review team was to form the Board/GAC Recommendation Implementation Working Group so that when we were looking at implementation that allowed both the Board and the GAC to work together on implementing, and that was aimed to help address some of that -- that awkwardness with making recommendations about the GAC but the Board still being the receiver of those recommendations.

Okay. So I have Norway and Australia. Please.

NORWAY:

Thank you, and good morning.

Thank you, and good morning.

We think that we should start when we meet with the ATRT review. We should, of course, start with mentioning that we are very grateful for the work that they're doing showing us how the GAC has been seen from the outside. It is very useful. And we actually asked for it also in Durban to go ahead and give us advice on how we're being seen. Because we sit here, as we said, we might need that view.

Also, we think it is a critical point that has been made also by Iran that we actually don't work without a code of conduct or without any framework of what we're doing here. We are, as you said, representatives of governments. And, of course, we have strong both rules and procedures on how we're doing our work and what kind of positions we are taking in this meeting.

So we think it is useful that we might have to need to have some wording in our working principles on how we work. But we think we should be very careful about having ICANN as such or GAC as such telling how we should do the procedures at home. It is national business. And, of course, we work with what we must -- we make sure that we have sufficient resources that we do the -- we work with other parts of government, the community at home before we come here and so on. It is useful that I mention it, but just to say how we work as governments.

Another thing I would like to ask them is something about they say that GAC must reflect the fully coordinated domestic government position, which, of course, we do. And that -- make sure that this is consistent with existing relevant national and international law.

National law goes without saying. If we sit here and say something that goes against our national law, we will have problems. International law is also -- we work within so many jurisdictions. We give policy advice. And sometimes different jurisdictions will have different way of regulating that advice if it was going into the actual formal procedures. It is -- we cannot go beyond that. We cannot every time we give policy advice make sure that this has been checked with every jurisdiction we work in.

So each and every one of us take care of national jurisdiction. And we give the view that we have them measured together in GAC, and that is the policy advice for most of the cases. So I just want them to explain a bit more if that has been a problem, if they see any problems with international law towards GAC policy advice, that is okay. Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you very much, Norway.

Australia, please.

AUSTRALIA:

Thank you, Chair. And thanks to those colleagues who have spoken before. Again, I find myself agreeing with much what has already been said. Obviously, welcome this report. Critical review of ICANN's accountability and transparency. And I think it's particularly interesting that this report focuses so explicitly on GAC transparency. As my colleague from Norway said, I think it's interesting for the GAC to reflect on why that is. Usefully, of course, the GAC is already working in these areas. We have our working methods working group which picks up a number of the issues which the ATRT2 has picked up. Some, such as open meetings, we're already effectively doing. We're already looking at the criteria for exceptions where it may be necessary to have closed meetings and so on. So we're already working in that space; and, I mean, that's great to see.

Some of the other ones, I think, are going to be more interesting. And we'll have to have further discussion within the GAC. I agree with my colleague from Iran. I think here we're at quite an early stage. For example, the one about recommending to the GAC about scheduling its meetings, making sure it's with the community when it's in its face-to-face meetings instead of, as the report says, not sitting in a room debating itself. Whereas, one of the things that's been talked about in the working methods working group is, in the face-to-face meetings, also having

sufficient time for the GAC to do its own work. So I think we're going to have to find a balance on some of these recommendations, and I think they'll need a little further discussion. Unsurprisingly, I think each of my colleagues is probably focused on one of the most challenging and interesting of these recommendations, which is this code of conduct. And I, of course, agree. So one question -- I agree it will be useful to potentially ask some questions of the ATRT2 group when they come to us to see if we can get some more clarity on what the thinking behind that is and the rationale and what exactly has gone into formulating that recommendation.

If it seems likely that this recommendation is to come out of the ATRT2 report, then we, as a GAC, may also want to start giving some consideration about how we take a position on this one. I'm not sure it fits neatly in the working methods working group, but it's a pretty interesting and potentially challenging area that we'll have to focus on. So we may want to think of a mechanism to start thinking about it in a more focused way. Those are my preliminary thoughts. And thank you to those who set it up for me.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you, Australia. Iran.

IRAN:

Thank you, Madam Chairman. I'm sorry to ask for the floor again. But something should be very clear to our distinguished colleagues from the ATRT is that they are doing the accountability and transparency review for board and ICANN and so on and so forth.

When it comes to the government, I think that we should be very, very cautious. No advice is required by any entity or any government to any other government with respect to its national and jurisdictions and sovereignty how to act on this and what to act and what to not act.

That is a sovereign right of each individual country. They should not confuse the ICANN and board with the sovereign countries. We are GAC. And the first word of that is "government."

And government, they have these sovereign rights. And I don't think that any government or any entity, no matter what level is that, has the right to intervene with internal affairs of any other government in any things.

So the message I request that we put in the proper text and be communicated and conveyed that, while we fully appreciate all of the good advice which is aimed to improve our work, but we should be very careful in the area that we should not expect any intervention from ATRT. Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you, Iran.

Would anyone else like to comment on either the issues that have been raised so far or perhaps make a point on some of the other recommendations that have been put forward? Denmark, please.

DENMARK: Just practical information. The deadline for comments, if you want to comment individually on the report, is Friday -- this Friday the 22nd. There's a reply period. And I think the deadline for that reply period is the 13th of December. So I hope many of you will also take the opportunity to give individual comments on the report. Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN: U.K.?

UNITED KINGDOM: Thank you, Chair. And good morning, everyone.

I just note that there are -- there's a review in the draft report about implementation of the recommendations relating to the GAC from the first accountability and transparency review.

And there were, I think, with regard to recommendation 10 notes incompleteness -- and this is recommendation 10 of the original first

report -- a sort of caveat with regard to recommendation 11 and further work relating to 12 and 14.

So I think we have to articulate some kind of response from the GAC side. Some of these relate to board responses to recommendations. So I wonder what we should do. I mean, should the GAC perhaps in its communique capture the sense of where we are on completing these -- the implementation of these recommendations? Or should we just do it through dialogue? I'm not sure what the process might be. But I think it's important for us to react in some way to the points made in the report about completing -- the need to complete, perhaps, matters of detail. But, nonetheless, the need to complete implementation. And our commitment to do that I think is very important for the whole process of the ATRT to ensure that we're mindful of that and we articulate that undertaking from our side. And, if there are points we need to raise with the board, perhaps we have to do that at our meeting with the board later today.

It's just an immediate thought as to how we might do that. Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you, U.K. So the recommendations that you've listed from the first review team -- 10, 11, 12, and 14 -- do they all relate to the board? I mean, if you can just help us, kind of guide us on what is the nature of those recommendations?

UNITED KINGDOM:

Thank you, yes. First of all, 10 concerns the advice provision, if you recall, from the ATRT1 and the development of database and so on and the processes for ensuring that advice requests from the board and so on are done in writing and so on. That's the nature of recommendation 10.

The review team notes that significant steps have been taken with the GAC register and the board responding to GAC input, but further work is needed on the board seeking GAC input at the outset. That's the comment in the review team report.

12 was concerning the setting up of the GAC/board joint working group about engaging the GAC early in the policy development. And the comment in the report discussions remain ongoing. I mean, obviously, we can relate and give an account of our discussion with the -- with the GNSO on Sunday relating to that.

And then 14 is increasing the level of support and commitment of governments to the GAC process. This is all about outreach to governments that are not participating, in particular, countries in developing countries. And the report of the ATRT2 is saying action is taken but further work is needed on -- further work is needed given broader geopolitics and the concerns of some governments.

So I don't have ready formulations of how we might respond to the completeness of those particular recommendations from ATRT1. But, as I say, I think we ought to give them some attention and perhaps give them an opportunity to articulate how we might underline our commitment from the GAC side in a timely manner. Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you, U.K.

Egypt, please.

EGYPT: Thank you, Chair. And, just to follow on what U.K. has just said, I think we also should be cautious to differentiate things or recommendations that can be enhanced more from recommendations that are incomplete.

To me, I see that the early GAC engagement within the PDP has been incomplete. But, for example, the online register. I see that this recommendation has been implemented. Yet, it can stand -- it has obvious room for improvement. It can be made much more better. It's not perfect, but it has been completed. So -- and a third category would be the outreach. This is something that is ongoing and probably we might not be ever able to take it as complete.

So I would be just cautious that we don't mark everything as incomplete, because this is not accurate description of the case. Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you, Egypt. And thank you for reminding us of your discussions in the Board/GAC recommendation implementation working group where you did discuss, I believe, what had been completed and what -- where there was further improvement that could continue afterwards and this kind of thing.

Okay.

So I don't see any further requests. Italy.

ITALY:

Yes, just to follow on the intervention of Iran. It is clear that there should be not an external body that is dictating what the governments should do. But it is really interesting to note that this review panel is addressing the board of ICANN. And then the sentence that is speaking about the behavior of the GAC is very good to understand that. Because it is -- the board should suggest to the GAC that it has developed a code of conduct for its members that could include issues such as conflict of interest, transparency and accountability. And then something that I like to see there, adequate domestic results commitment. But it is the board that should say to the GAC, look, we're in a

multistakeholder organization, bottom-up or whatever you want. Then the GAC should be inserted into a certain organization that is giving to all the parties -- private sector, at-large -- and then the governments in equal, let's say, contribution to the suggestions that were made.

So this is the spirit that is not in a dangerous direction as you described before.

And, concerning the suggestion that you had enough resources in the countries is also something important that I always recommend the president when he goes and finds the ministers in the countries just to give value to the importance of the GAC representation inside ICANN. Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you, Italy. Okay.

So we're coming close to 10:00. So we have a few points to raise, among them the issue of the code of conduct and what it should cover and what the GAC should really take away from this proposal from the review team considering that, first of all, we do have national preparations relative to the work that we do here and also this aspect of our work where we work within a community. And it is useful for us to know how our efforts are being perceived.

Also, the focus on transparency is notable and something that we can raise when talking with the review team tomorrow.

So we also have some recommendations from the first review team that may have been implemented but where there is, perhaps, still work -- further work to undertake. And some of the issues raised in either review team may or may not be covered by our working group on working methods. And the issues that perhaps are of greatest interest to us from the first review team relate to early engagement in the policy development process, which is a significant aspect to the work of the second review team. As well we could increase our processes around the register or make changes to the register itself, perhaps to improve it. And also the issue of outreach is another area that we may wish to touch upon from a GAC point of view.

So I hope I've hit upon some of the key points there.

So what I suggest is that, when we meet with the review team -- a few of you have spoken this morning, and I would invite you then to raise these issues and ask these questions with the review team and others. A few may wish to contribute to that exchange as well.

So okay. With that, I think we can have our break. Iran, please.

IRAN: Yes. Thank you, Chairman. I don't want to delay your break, but I think we may think of using another term in the placement of conduct -- code of conduct.

Code of conduct is very strong word. Has a particular meaning and particular connotations. And then you associate it to the government may be interpreted differently. Perhaps, in the meantime, we should think of some other alternatives. And then, when we're discussing with the ATRT2, maybe we propose that alternative. Or, if you don't find any alternative, perhaps we should mention that there is a risk of misinterpretation in this code of conduct when it refers to the government. Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you. So there may be alternative ways to express the thought from a GAC point of view. And as well we can also, perhaps, explain or describe what we do have, what processes, what procedures, what rules we do have currently in place already. That may go some distance to answer this point about a code of conduct.

All right. So a 30-minute break, please, until 10:30.

[BREAK]

CHAIR DRYDEN: All right. So let's begin again.

Before we get to the next agenda item for today, there are a couple of things to note.

So first of all, a note on the working group looking at drafting for wine and vin and there was a note sent out to the GAC email list but just to confirm those details and provide a few more on that activity, just for the information of colleagues here.

The working group members are as follows: Argentina, European Commission, Spain, Italy, France, Switzerland, Netherlands, U.S.A., Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. And we have asked Mr. Arasteh from Iran to chair or lead that effort, and I trust that colleagues around the table will welcome his willingness to serve in this capacity. So the working group will be meeting, I understand, at lunchtime today. And just to note that is from 1:00 till 2:00 today. And the room is Italia, which is in the Sheraton part of the convention center on the 24th floor. So that's today at 1:00, and the room is Italia and that's in the Sheraton on the 24th floor.

So I assume that this is satisfactory from the point of view of colleagues in the GAC.

And EU Commission, please.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION: Thank you. The countries that you enumerated, I think when I've talked to other people, I think both my mother country, who is not a wine-producing country, Sweden wanted to be on it. If I am not mistaken, Norway maybe also wanted to be on it, and I think also Morocco wanted to be on because Morocco is also a wine-producing country. This is what I heard in the room, but maybe we could discuss that later, but this is what I heard.

Thank you, Heather.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Okay. So the basis of -- just so you are aware, the basis of identifying working group members were those that intervened in the discussion that we had about wine and vin, and so this is how the list was formulated. But, Iran, please.

IRAN: Thank you, Madam Chairman.

It is the wish of the colleagues that I take this mission, I could not reject that. I agree with that.

What I would like to mention, we are not looking for counting heads at the meeting. We are looking for having an agreement, no matter how many participate, and so on and so forth.

There are two views, and we have to find a middle ground between the two views, satisfactory to everybody. And I appeal here for the close collaboration of the colleagues within the general sense and spirit and environment of international consensus-building approach. That is what -- The message is that.

If the colleague do not agree between 1:00 and 2:00, unfortunately we have to continue in the evening. So they have to compromise their dinner or whatever arrangement they have. If they have appointment, they have to be cautious of that. But hopefully we would try to do something. And I think the deadline that you have established is for tomorrow morning. Am I right? Or you have another deadline for the completion of the work of the group?

CHAIR DRYDEN:

So Wednesday midday is the deadline. So there's a bit of flexibility as to what "midday" means. But this is clearly something that we want to be able to conclude on as early as possible tomorrow.

So best of luck to you, and thank you for agreeing to take on this role. I will expect that colleagues will remain as constructive as possible and work very hard at finding a way to come up with some text on this issue so that we can bring something back to the GAC from the working group that has been agreed within the

working group. And in this way, quickly move along with our wider task of concluding on the communique overall.

So another note. U.K., you had an announcement. Yes? Please. Go ahead.

UNITED KINGDOM:

Yes, thank you, Chair. This is for commonwealth GAC colleagues. I'm convening a meeting of commonwealth GAC colleagues at 12:00 tomorrow, Wednesday, here in this room. We will stay in the room, basically, after the conclusion of the full GAC committee discussions.

The main focus of our meeting -- it will only be half an hour, prior to the African Union Commission convening their meeting. So it's an adjunct to that, if you like.

The main purpose of that is to provide information about the Commonwealth DNS Forum which will be held in London in June next year as part of the ICANN meeting in London. It will be a two-day forum. We'll have Martin Boyle from Nominet who is leading on the organization of this forum to talk to us, to explain to us the preparations for this, the main purposes and so on, the scope. And we'll also have Nigel Hickson from ICANN's global program team, because ICANN are supporting this initiative.

So I hope colleagues from commonwealth countries will be able to stay on for that half hour session tomorrow at 12:00. It will be

open, so if there are commonwealth stakeholders who are not government representatives here who wish to attend, they, of course, are very welcome to join us.

Thank you very much.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you, U.K.

And one other item. We've had some new colleagues join us since we made our introductions on Saturday, and I am aware that we have two new representatives here from Nigeria. So I would like to warmly welcome them to this meeting.

And if there are any other colleagues that would like to introduce themselves, this is a great opportunity to do that. I know a few of you have joined us since we first started our meetings on Saturday.

Okay. All right. So welcome again to our colleagues from Nigeria.

All right. So our next topic concerns the proposal or the possibility to have a high-level meeting with a host country, much as we did in October of last year when the GAC held its meetings in Toronto, Canada.

To remind you, this is an Accountability and Transparency Review Team 1 recommendation. It was also something, I think, that we referenced in the earlier Joint Working Group report as well. The

idea was to conduct outreach at more senior levels of government, and to also invite participation from officials not ordinarily coming to GAC meetings to know more about the organization and about this committee in particular and some of the kinds of issues that are addressed here. And all of this is to strengthen the work of the GAC and to ensure that we have good regional representation in the meetings and this kind of thing.

So this is why we held a pilot or experiment by holding the first one last year in October.

And so we can, as a committee, consider holding one in 2014. And what I would logic to do is seek your thoughts on whether we would, in fact, like to work with a host country to hold a high-level meeting in 2014.

So the floor is open. If I can have any thoughts on that or if anyone has any questions, in fact, about this arrangement, this would be the time to raise.

United States, Egypt.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: Thank you, Madam Chair. And I believe I would also, then, probably be extending a thank you to my U.K. colleague. This would be the June meeting, hosted in London.

We would be very much in favor of a follow-on high-level meeting and would be proposed. I know my assistant secretary, Larry Strickling, would be more than happy to be there representing the United States.

So thank you for that.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you, United States.

So we have a proposal to hold the meeting in June, which you will be aware is going to take place in London in the U.K.

So Egypt, you are next, please.

EGYPT: Just also to welcome the idea that we have a meeting, and to stress the importance of preparing early enough for this meeting to make sure everything is in place early enough. And it would be also good to have some measures after the meeting how this impacted the GAC work, if we can come up with some metrics or measures so that we can see lessons that are learned, things that we could do better in future meetings, also.

Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you, Egypt.

I have Portugal next.

PORTUGAL:

Thank you very much.

Well, very much in line with what Manal just said, I think that this meeting is a very good idea, but I would like to discuss the agenda for this meeting because I think that it should have a certain impact. Otherwise, our high-level delegates will come and they will be there, sitting down and just reading some speeches. And so I don't think that is the purpose.

I'd like to see a more interactive meeting, and I think it will be very fruitful for everybody.

So my point is to prepare the best we can the meeting, and to have a discussion about the agenda.

Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you, Portugal. I have EU Commission, then Turkey.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION:

Thank you, Heather. I just wanted to also, of course, follow everybody else congratulating, saying it's very good to take the decision to have it in one of the biggest capitals of the European Union, and it's a pleasure to have it in the U.K.

I would like us to say also, stress that there should be some substantial outcomes of that meeting, possibly something which could actually improve the work of ourselves. I think that is something that I think all the Europeans are looking forward to. So I think we would have to start relatively soon to work hard on something, together, together, all of us, to see to it that we take on -- further on the working methods, further work on a number of issues that I think is essential for us to, in the future, work much better.

Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you. I have Turkey next.

TURKEY:

Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'd like to thank first U.K. for hosting that high-level meeting because I believe it's very important for understanding of what's going on in ICANN for those high-level attendees.

Just to share a little bit of experience, in Toronto our regulator came as high-level delegate, and he was quite impressed. And after, he start following each one of the ICANN meetings. You know, he attended the Beijing, Durban, and he was even here for

very short because he had to go back to Turkey for budget talks at parliament for his agency.

So I believe it's useful. So -- for them to understand what's going on here.

But I also believe that we need some kind of an introduction or orientation or some kind of presentation. Not just a general GAC talks, but some so that they can understand how ICANN is functioning. That could be very helpful and useful.

Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you very much, Turkey.

So I think it's Gabon near the end, is it? I'm having trouble seeing, but I think it's Gabon asking.

Yes, please.

GABON:

Madam President.

I'd like to know how ---

Our colleagues, the colleagues are concerned about the agenda so that this meeting should be fruitful for our high-level representatives from our government. Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN: So I have Iran and Netherlands, please.

IRAN: Thank you, Madam Chairman. While we have no difficulty with any mechanism that facilitate our further work; however, it is not at this stage what is the status of this high-level meeting, what is its relation to the GAC, what is the output expected from this high-level meeting, how the output, if any, would have impact the activities of the GAC, whether it would be in the working method of GAC. Does that high-level meeting -- it's some sort of higher organ than GAC that provide guideline? These issues is not clear. And we need to, perhaps, at London meeting, while agreeing with the approach, but we try to be quite constructive and clear. Otherwise, we have no problem that the people at any level, whether high level or not high level, getting together and put forth together in order to give some guidance, how more -- how effective, more effective it would be.

But I would like to know the relations, the status of that and the place of that in the organogram of the GAC, and so on. It's just not quite clear. Some idea, high level, and so on, so forth.

Whenever they put high level, it could be interpreted in many way. Whether high level from the government, for instance, you need the ministers to come, you need the deputy ministers to

come, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to come, and so on and so forth, because they will ask you the questions when you put "high level." And this word "high" has been used now since few years in the entire U.N. family and elsewhere, and that would have not been quite properly understood by the colleagues.

This is sort of invitations that this is not for ordinary people, this is not for the specialist, this is not for expert. It is something for the policymakers, and so on so forth.

So let us at least think it over to have something. But I have no difficulty. And I like very much London. So -- Whether I would be in that crew or not, that's not the issue. But the problem is the situation is not clear, Chairman.

Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you, Iran.

So I have a couple more requests to speak from the Netherlands and Italy. And we have a few minutes. And Egypt. We have a few minutes left in this session, and we're meeting with the ccNSO. So we do need to conclude.

So I think that the main question for us today is whether we can agree in principle to hold a Hans Petter Holen meeting at the June

meeting next year and to confirm that we will look to the U.K. to comment on that.

And then as far as working out the details, we will need to put some thought to how we're going to organize ourselves and how the host will want to, you know, conduct the preparations for the meeting to, you know, appropriately involve the GAC and also undertake the preparations that are the responsibility of the host. And of course there are implications for ICANN, as well, more broadly because we do expect to involve other parts of the community and the Board and so on and they contributed to a significant degree to the organization of the first high-level meeting that we held.

So I'm looking for some indication from the U.K. about this proposal to have a high-level meeting in June next year. And so I will keep moving through the speaking order, and then perhaps we can turn over to the U.K.

All right.

So then I have Netherlands, Italy, and then Egypt and Turkey as well I think have a comment to add.

So, please, Netherlands.

NETHERLANDS:

Yes. Thank you, Heather. I think two comments. First, maybe erecting on our Iranian colleague, I think it should be a high-level meeting. I think we have had this evolution of the high-level meeting in preparation. Also we had the Canadian high-level. It was in the ATRT recommendations as being a high level. So I would say it should be a high-level meeting.

Second, I would say I would second very much what our European Commission colleague that it should be very good to have a very direct outcome. Meaning that of course we had, in Canada, a very good report of the meeting, but to be very effective to the community, to be transparent about what we did, a kind of declaration, some, let's say, press release should be very -- very effective for that purpose.

Thank you very much.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you.

I would remind the Netherlands that those meetings were transcribed and open. And the output, as well, was a chair's summary. And that doesn't mean that for this upcoming event that you would do precisely the same thing. I think continuing to evolve the high-level meeting and organizing it in accordance with the expectations of both the GAC and the host country is very important.

Okay. So next I have Italy. Please.

ITALY:

Thank you. Very briefly.

So of course it is really important to find out which is the height in the -- in the atmosphere. And then it is important that the hosting country decides if to organize some event that is connected to this. Because in order to have ministers, for example, they hardly will move to London to have a one-day engagement. And also, ICANN should be well engaged in helping this and attracting high-level personalities.

For example, it could be close to the Mondays where there is the opening of the meeting in order that there is a possibility to have not only this agenda of the high level.

And then we have to decide the content of the agenda. But I stop here because I think that the delegate from U.K. will be answering these questions.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you, Italy.

Egypt, please.

EGYPT: Just very briefly to respond to the questions that were posed by Iran regarding the high-level meeting.

Very quickly, to clarify the merits behind such meeting that might help us in setting the level and setting the agenda.

The ATRT1 during its work, it found out that not all GAC members are spared enough time for the GAC work or provided enough resources for the GAC work, or even given enough authority to discuss and take decisions timely during the GAC meeting.

So it was thought that it might be a good idea to bring the GAC work to the attention of the higher or the senior official governments of the GAC members through such meetings so that they can provide the necessary facilitation for GAC members for timely and -- for timely advice.

So this is the merits behind the meeting, and this is why it was one of the ATRT1 recommendations.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you, Egypt.

Turkey, please.

TURKEY: Thank you.

Just a very short -- I believe in high level meetings, because I think the decision-makers -- high level decision-makers should be aware of what's going on here. I personally directly -- I'm the advisor so - - minister, so I directly report to the minister. I've seen the benefit of our country's position in Internet-related issues and governance. Yes. High level is good.

But I think, if we can have ministerial level, it could be even better. But ministerial level, I understand, needs different setting and different spot, not just from the ICANN, but also from hosting country.

But, if it's the case, I'll do my best to bring our minister to London. Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you very much, Turkey. Okay.

U.K., please.

UNITED KINGDOM:

Yes. Thank you, Chair. Thank you all colleagues who have responded really to affirm my instinct that this was an appropriate time to convene a high-level meeting, the June ICANN meeting in London. So I'm grateful for comments endorsing this idea that the London meeting is the time to do it.

And I very much note what comments -- the comments that have been made about, you know, the importance of ensuring an agenda suitable for that high-level meeting, which we envisage as ministers, state secretaries, senior director generals. That kind of high-level participation is what we would envisage.

And, please, from this meeting can you go back and consult the private offices of your ministers, state secretaries, the person you think is going to be the appropriate participant, and flag it in the diaries? Because that's the key thing. I've got the green light from you. Really appreciate it. Please flag it in the diaries. That's the first action from this meeting. We all know begging time from ministers and senior officials is a real challenge. The earlier you can get it flagged in the diaries, the better.

And, secondly, the process for preparing for this will now undertake an effective way of doing that that will involve the committee, will involve ICANN and other key contributors to ensuring a successful meeting. I hope, perhaps -- I have to discuss this with colleagues and others here and the secretariat from ICANN. I hope we can inform a team that will have representation from all the ICANN regions from the GAC membership. So we have a complete global collective for the preparation of this.

So thanks a lot. It's a great takeaway, I think. Really appreciate your reactions to it. Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you very much, U.K. Sweden.

SWEDEN: Thank you. Good morning, chair and colleagues. I just want to ask whether it would be possible to already now establish which day we should flag in the calendars? That would be very helpful. Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN: U.K.?

UNITED KINGDOM: I can't, actually, at this moment. We've got a brainstorming session with ICANN and other U.K. leading actors in the preparation for the London meeting coming up in a week to 10 days' time. I, think after that brainstorming session, to prepare for as one of a series -- we have an ongoing dialogue to prepare for London -- I will secure the date at that time. So I will get back to the committee as soon as I can to inform you of the date. But it is, obviously, going to be around about -- during the course or immediately before the GAC meeting starts, would be the ideal opportunity, which was the case in Toronto, I believe, if I remember right.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you. So in Toronto we held it on the Monday of the ICANN week. And, because it will have an impact on how we schedule the GAC meetings, of course, I would be very interested in knowing what options are being considered for holding such a meeting in June.

I would also point out that, when we organized the high-level meeting in Toronto, that there were a lot of requests to have a written invitation. And some really felt that was a requirement in order to get a date into the diaries of senior officials and that they couldn't do it without that.

So try to avoid getting caught in that situation.

Okay. I think we really do need to conclude. And I can see we're already being joined by our colleagues from the ccNSO. So we do need to think about next steps on this. But, for now, I think we have sufficient agreement to proceed. Okay. So let's just take a quick pause. It's the Expert Working Group, not the ccNSO we're meeting with. So just a pause.

[BRIEF PAUSE]