Transcription ICANN Buenos Aires New Meeting Strategy Update Saturday 20 June 2015

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Volker Greimann: Could you restart the recording please? Okay we're now at this final session before lunch which is the ICANN meeting strategy report. I will try to keep it short. There is not too much to report. As you recall next year ICANN will embark on a new meeting schedule; which I would summarize as a long meeting, normal meeting and a short meeting.

The short meeting being the most troublesome for the GNSO in effect to continue its work in its current shape and form because, as you know, our meetings take up a lot of time. We have started a discussion group from the GNSO council - the discussion group has met since the last meeting a couple of times. And we've found that as a first step it does not make much sense to have the discussion of how to schedule our meetings within the short and the long meeting within - in a vacuum.

So essentially we have sent out questionnaire or better say requests for information to all the ACs SOs, stakeholder groups and constituencies to give

us a brief input on their plans for the new meeting structures so that we as GNSO council may orient upon those inputs and see how they line up with our thinking of how to arrange our meetings for these new meeting structures.

While there is no deadline essentially for the feedback, we would appreciate a certain expediency. We have received some feedback already but some groups have not provided any feedback so far. So I would like to urge all groups that have receive their inquiry and even those that might have not received the inquiry to just provide feedback on what their plans for the new meeting structures are, what their time requirements are.

And what are their thinking is of what slots to put their time meetings in so that we also as the GNSO council may orient ourselves on this thinking and bring forward our proposal for the meeting structure, of how to meet in these meetings.

We have an informal meeting planned for this Wednesday, the 24th of June. I apologize for this time - 7:45 to 8:45 in (unintelligible) A; which is right next door to this room. I would appreciate everyone who has an opinion on how to schedule the timing of the GNSO council and the GNSO meetings in general during the short and other meetings to come to this meeting and to voice their opinions so we can have an informal discussion and use that in discussion to inform upon our plans for the future, for the next year going forward.

Now just to brief - opening the floor to questions or comments. Marika is first. Please go ahead.

Marika Konings: Yes this is Marika. Maybe just to add that, you know, the drafting team did prepare a skeleton version of how meetings A, B and C could look both for council as well as stakeholder groups and constituencies as we did have participation from the different stakeholders and groups and constituencies and in that effort as well.

So indeed, you know, the idea is now as well to compare notes with other SOs and ACs to see how they are planning to run their meetings. Because of course there needs to be a level of coordination to ensure that there's no obvious conflicts. For example if we're carving out Tuesday afternoon for joint sessions but, you know, the ALAC or the ccNSO are actually doing that on Wednesday morning, we obviously have a conflict.

So the idea is indeed to get together on Wednesday morning and even though it may be difficult to get all the groups there at least start that conversation and then likely follow up after the Buenos Aires meeting as I know that several of the other groups, you know, have either just started or are about to start a conversation.

So I think that none of them have actually progressed to the level, I think, where the GNSO is (out) with a skeleton schedule but I think the hope is that there will be some kind of, you know, final agreement around that in the next couple of months as this new meeting strategy would enter into force for the upcoming year.

I think one thing to keep in mind is that as this has been developed by the community, you know, it was adopted by the board. I think we're all committed now to try to, you know, at least try out the new schedule. And I think especially for meeting B it will require a kind of culture change of how we deal with meetings. You know, I think both on the council level but also at the stakeholder group and constituency level as people will need to think through how can we, you know, what do we want to focus on in those four days.

And I think the meetings team has been quite clear as well that there're not going to be any meetings before or after as part of that meeting. So again we shouldn't think oh but we can still do our weekend session then on the Sunday, Monday or the Saturday, Sunday before and then just do our four days. No, it's really the intent to be in those four days.

So I think it will require everyone to think outside of the box and make the best of it. And I'm sur as well that there will be some kind of evaluation or if people really believe that it's not working and it really doesn't meet the requirements of the GNSO or other groups that that is a topic that can be raised with the board to see if that can be reviewed or discussed, what the changes may need to be made.

Volker Greimann: Thank you Marika. (Heather) is next in the queue.

(Heather Force): Thank you, Volker. (Heather Force) for the record. I'm picking up on Marika's comment. I'd like to take the opportunity to raise some concerns. While I recognize that there is work that's been done to put together a draft in the GNSO and we're farther ahead I suppose than other groups. Where we are now, at least in the draft, seems to be largely business as usual.

It's how do we take the current meeting schedule that have now and put it into this new program instead of thinking out of the box, we've used the phrase a number of times this morning about how do we really seize this as an opportunity.

One thing that's come up within the IPC, Greg has taken on the initiative of putting together a schedule for IPC members for the course of the week. And in the process of creating that schedule and I'll turn to Greg if he wants to make any further comments is the insane amount of overlap that we have, particularly as the work that we're doing as an ICANN community is increasingly cross-community.

I appreciate the fact that we need to have this dialogue with the other SOs and ACs - I think that's absolutely imperative. But frankly I don't see how we can continue given the volume of cross-community working group activity that's going on. It is now impossible to attend, in person, all of the meetings that you're actually intended to be in.

And this is something we have to deal with. Absolutely have to deal with. If we don't we have completely ineffective meetings. And I just, yes, I think we have a problem that we face. I'm not sure Greg if you want to make any other comments, having drafted that schedule. I'm not putting you on the spot necessarily.

Greg Shatan: Hi Greg Shatan for the record. I do just want to point out briefly I think - I don't have the exact count but I think there was something like - even just trying to figure out which things are of interest to IPC members, so that's not the, you know, total meeting. You know, there were several triple and quadruple overlaps. There were probably in the nature of 30 overlaps so we're trying to figure out how to send different members of our group to cover different things.

We're trying to do the GNSO council's business including some version of these two days plus all of the working groups and increasing cross-community working groups. We're going to end up with the same problem, you know, just got - there's a column noting overlaps above and below or overlaps with this and that. It's just - you can't - you can only thread your way through this by being, you know, if you wanted to focus only on who is maybe you would have no overlaps.

But just trying to do the business of our business this way I think really requires, you know, either a rethink or perhaps a reject. I realize that that's kind of - according to in the meetings tem - that ship has sailed. But I don't think there's been a true proof of concept. I don't think anybody has tried to say what would happen if this meeting had to take place in four days, you take away the public - kind of the plenary sessions at the beginning and end and how do you fit the rest of it in.

There is not proof of concept that exists of that yet. So I'll be very curious to see how it is; both trying to deal with these overlap - if we can find a way to

have fewer overlaps so that we can really deal with policy and do it in four days, that's great. But it will require a lot of creativity or cloning.

Volker Greimann: Thank you Greg and I appreciate the work that the IPC has done in forwarding the thinking on this. I personally agree that the short meeting will probably be a very different animal from the current ICANN meetings that we have at this time. It will require a lot of pruning and cutting. And rethinking of what is absolutely essential for the GNSO to do at that meeting. And we might come out with an opinion that it is actually impossible for the GNSO council to hold a meeting at these events simply because of the time constraints that the four-day meeting brings with it.

And the other meetings that happen in this time frame. This is possible result that we should carry forward to the meetings team and maybe recommend that they change their thinking as well. That may be a possible result. I'm not trying to go forward and postulate that result yet. But I would encourage everyone to come to that meeting on Wednesday, even though it's early and voice their opinion and start the discussion and let's see where we get there, how we get there.

Greg Shatan: Greg Shatan again just to briefly respond Volker. That would be an unfortunate result although I recognize it's the likely or possibility of it. And indeed that's why I'd like to see a true proof of concept as opposed to just these abstract squares that say, you know, we're all getting together.

Given that this meeting has been called the Policy Forum, the four-day, their meetings committee folk called this the Policy Forum Four Days. I have the manager of all gTLD policy be unable to meet at the Policy Forum meeting, would seem to be a hyper-fail.

Volker Greimann: I agree. That's why I said that the outcome may just result in certain cuttings that may be undesirable to us now but be a consequence of time constraints that we have. I'm cutting the queue at this point because the session

following lunch will not be able to push too far into the future. So we have to kind of start in time and considering that there's lunch I would like to ask all those speakers that are still in the queue to be brief. Michele?

Michele Neylon: Thanks Volker. Michele Neylon for the record. I'm just, you know, I'm just interpreting around the new meeting strategy. Essentially we have to give it a go. I mean it's - that ship has sailed. If you don't like it, tough. But we can't go back and just undo a decision that was made that was open for multiple public comments, etc., etc., etc. So we have to give it a go.

Now if it's a total and utter unmitigated disaster and we all end up wanting to kill each other or kill ourselves, we'll find them. And you say we tried this, it didn't work. Let's rethink it. But deciding in advance that due to having to make changes to schedules, cutting this and cutting that, that it is a disaster even before we've tried it I think is a bit ridiculous.

I mean it's a bit like I don't know the introduction of the motor car and various other things. Nobody will want us. Well, yes, they do. Around the (intake) and the planning and input I believe that we as the registrar stakeholder group haven't really done anything about that. But possibly that's also due to the fact that our officer terms are annual so we wouldn't - until we've actually gone through our election cycle we don't really know who the hell is going to be drawing up a schedule in - well June of next year or whatever because we haven't finished the action cycle yet.

And as for the being in multiple places at any time, as a contractive party, pretty much every policy affects us in some shape or form so much as I'd love to give the IPC sympathy, they're not going to get much from me. Thanks.

Volker Greimann: Thank you Michele. Donna?

Donna Austin: Thanks Volker. Donna Austin. So I guess I wanted to just take this back, being a member of the meeting strategy working group, just to take this back to one of the reasons that we have a middle meeting; which is four days, is to accommodate the ability for the ICANN meetings to rotate through some of the regional locations that don't have facilities like Buenos Aires or Singapore or some of the European locations to host a meeting of this size.

And that is one of the primary reasons why we tried to find a way to accommodate requests from certainly this region and other regions that just don't have the facilities available to putting on an ICANN meeting of this size. But it was recognized that outreach is still an important element for ICANN.

So I take Michele's point. Let's suck it up and see what we can do. See if we can make it work because there are, you know, others out there that still think that outreach is important for ICANN. We did discuss hubs and that was rejected. Hubs would certainly get around this issue. We could still, you know, have meetings of this size in three places and just rotate through that.

But if we still think that outreach is important then that's one of the reasons that the meeting strategy working group came up with the concept that let's have a middle meeting which can accommodate the smaller regions and we'll restrain it to a policy meeting. We'll take out - try to take out - a lot of the peripheral, what we considered to be the peripheral meeting.

So, you know, let's go in with an open mind and see what we can do about this. Thanks, Volker.

Volker Greimann: Thank you Donna. And I still have Michele, but I think there's another hand so James?

James Bladel: Hi, thanks. James speaking for the record. And I'll just be fairly brief. I think (Heather) touched on a very important point, probably on her way to making a different point but about the proliferation of cross-community efforts. I think

that that's something that we ought to take a look at just generally because it is starting to crowd out, I think to Greg's point it is starting to crowd out everything on the calendar as we talk about shortening these meetings.

Look, this is the GNSO. Everybody wants a piece of what we're doing. Everybody wants to be involved. Everybody wants a seat at the table and that's fine. And I think we can accommodate that through liaisons and through opening up the working groups. But I think continuing to take what are in my opinion strictly GNSO issues and broaden them into cross-community issues is resulting in a lot of overlap, a lot of duplication of efforts; and a very crowded meeting calendar.

So I just wanted to highlight what (Heather) said and reinforce it a little bit because I think - I don't know if that was exactly her point, but I said it was an important element of your point that needed to be raised. Thank you.

Volker Greimann: Thank you James. Last two are Stephanie and then (David).

Stephanie Perrin: Thanks very much. Stephanie Perrin for the record. I'd just like to be brief and request any risk assessment that might have been done by the meeting strategy group prior to coming up with this because I can see some of the risk if GNSO members have to take three or four hot trips to get to a four-day meeting they're investing more time traveling than they are in being there. So they probably won't come. That's just one example.

Have we looked at the risk and the mitigations? I think there's ways to get around some of these problems and I amazingly agree with Michele that we've got to give it a go and see what hits the wall. Yes, I know, right that down will you?

Michele Neylon: Yes I just want to say for the record this should be recorded.

Stephanie Perrin: Right. And on to lunch then, thanks. But if there is any risk assessment it would be good to see it.

Volker Greimann: Thank you Stephanie. Last word (David).

(David):   Right. Look the one thing that really strike me is we had the great work from policy implementation working group. I just kind of want to somewhat reject with Michele said about, you know, the business of process that's being done and now we can't, you know, we've gone through the meeting strategy process and we can't change it.

I think what we're seeing now is we had a policy process and we are now trying to implement it and finding that it's working out a lot worse than we thought. It's making, you know, in very early stages of just trying to implement it by making a schedule we're going wow, this is terrible. We're going to have to, you know, this has a lot of unintended effects.

We should go back and go this isn't working as well, if one of the, I mean if one of the stated aims of the shorter meeting was to get us to focus better on SO and AC work and policy work and that process is going to make it harder for us to do SO and AC work and policy work then clearly this is something that is running into problems in the implementation phase and we need to go back and take a look at it.

I thoroughly agree with the idea of a meeting with less of the peripheral stuff that can be taken part in a smaller venue. That's not the same as squishing it into a shorter timeframe, especially considering along with that process we've had a lot of things that had the tendency of pushing out that timeframe. Such as cross-community working groups, working group face-to-face meetings and so on.

So let's, you know, let's not treat it as this was a process that was done; now we cannot change it. Let's go - we are running into some implementation

problems with this policy, what's the broad, open-mind about what we need to fix to get back to the original goals of the policy. Thank you.

Volker Greimann: Thank you (David) and just to remind everyone the remit of the group is not if we do it but how to do it. So agreeing with Michele, the ship has sailed. We have no voice in changing that but we have a voice in how we use that time. And if we find out that it doesn't make sense for us to meet or it is not effective for us then that's something we have to take forward as a lesson learned.

If we find it works, perfect.

(Jonathan): Okay great. Let's call that session to a close; which puts us just about at lunch time. I've got one quick remark to make there. We've got our next session that begins at 1:00 o'clock, is an operational update from (Xavier) and (Carol) on ICANN staff. So we need to be in a position to receive them in 10 minutes.

So I would appreciate you please - we have ordered lunch for 60 or more people so there should be enough to feed everyone in the room. But if you could please just defer for 5 or 10 minute to let the counselors get in the queue, get their lunch, get reseated and then there should be enough to go around for everyone. So everyone's welcome to stay and obviously participate.

Thank you very much we'll be picking up in 10 or 15 minutes. Thank you.

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