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COPENHAGEN – At-Large Public Interest Working Group  
Saturday, March 11, 2017 – 17:00 to 18:00 CET  
ICANN58 | Copenhagen, Denmark

WOLF LUDWIG:

Welcome to this last At-Large ALAC meeting of the day, which is the working group on the public interest. Some of you may recall that we had bigger meetings which were broadly announced and inviting people from other parts of the community. We had a very big and successful one in Marrakech a year ago, and we had another very successful one in Hyderabad in November last year. In between, there have been unfortunately not many initiatives or meetings of this working group, and we I think have to discuss the reasons why this working group hasn't been more dynamic over the last couple of months. We have to discuss this again. I think we should be frank and clear to analyze any handicaps we had so far.

There was a lot of enthusiasm about a year ago when we had confirmation from all sides, "Great idea." "Great topic." "Please do it." "I'm interested." "I would like to be part of this working group." So the problem is not to make people hot about the issue but to get or keep them involved. We are a volunteer community. We are all dealing with very limited capacities.

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There are so many other working groups in our community alone, and there are a lot of possibilities for any sort of distraction. If then you come up with just another working group, you may immediately reach the limits of capacities. I think this was one of the reasons why we had during the meeting always some great discussions and exchanges with people from the community, and then we had this sort of backlash breakdown in between, which is nothing dramatic, but I think it should not be taken as a usual dynamic of a new working group.

So we should elaborate today if there may be potentials for any improvements. I think there is potential for improvements, and I would like to get some more feedback from you who have gathered here for this meeting. But before we go into this discussion, I would like to give others the opportunity to make a short summary from what you usually do and what you think. Thanks.

ERGYS RAMAJ:

Thank you, Wolf. Ergys Ramaj from staff. I've prepared a few slides here in hopes of getting to a common understanding of all the developments that have taken place to date. Then we can have an open discussion, a Q&A session, and in particular address some of the questions that you raised, Wolf. Next slide, please.

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This is just a roadmap of the discussions that have taken place to date. A little bit of history, in 2014, most of you are aware that the panel on public responsibility framework came up with a proposed definition of the global public interest as it relates to the Internet, not ICANN. I have that definition on the next slide for those who are interested.

In 2014, in March, the IANA functions stewardship transition announcement was made by the NTIA, and the entire community's bandwidth was shifted toward that particular assignment. That went on for about two years.

Fast forward to March 2016, the very first cross-community discussion on the public interest took place in Marrakech. Subsequent to that, this working group was created. Then at ICANN 57, we had another cross-community discussion. At both of those events, the community had an opportunity to take a look at how the concept itself is understood. We looked at the European context. We also looked at the Indian context when we were in Hyderabad and also some ideas about how this could be potentially operationalized, how it currently works at ICANN, and things along those lines.

In terms of next steps, there have been no agreed upon next steps from the community. What is needed is, in fact, what Wolf has been advocating for, and that is a lot more active

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participation from members of the community. This group is the only active group that is looking at this specific issue across the community, so the importance of continuing and keeping this conversation going in this group is actually quite high.

I also wanted to touch here on the resources that are available for the community, and that is we've already done a lot of desk research on how the public interest is both understood and applied again across the world and in different contexts. There is a wiki space that's dedicated to this and has all of that desk research outlined there.

There's also a mailing list, which unfortunately hasn't seen a lot of activity over the past few months. Even before coming to this meeting, there were quite a few calls on whether or not we should have a dedicated cross-community meeting on the particular topic, and the silence was somewhat deafening, if I can say that. Of course, another resource is staff support from my department. Next slide, please.

This the proposed definition from the panel that I mentioned earlier. I'll just leave it up here for a few seconds so those of you who have not seen it before or need a refresher can take a closer look at it. The main story behind this is that there were segments of the community who were okay with it. They said, "Okay, well, let's use this as a working definition." Then there others who

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said, “Well, this is fine, but the way in which the community arrived at this definition was not necessarily bottom-up” because it was a part of a panel that was set up a few years back and the engagement from the community wasn’t necessarily there. Some parts of the community felt that they didn’t necessarily have the right level of input into this process, and therefore there was a need to revisit this issue. Next slide, please.

What have we been talking about? The first and one of the most important parts of this is the everlasting debate on whether or not we need a strict definition or no definition of the public interest. Those who argue for a strict definition claim that it just gives structure. It makes sense. If we know what the definition is, we understand it. Those who don’t want a definition say you cannot have a definition of the public interest because the public interest itself is highly context-driven, and therefore any one definition is not any good.

Then the other part is, how is the concept itself understood and applied in different contexts? As I mentioned earlier, we’ve explored the European perspective as well as India to date.

At ICANN 57, at the panel, one of the main discussion points was how the concept and the idea that everything that ICANN does, ICANN itself, is rooted in the public interest. A couple of things

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that were cited there were how ICANN or the community develops best practices in multi-stakeholder systems. That's an example of how ICANN meets and furthers the public interest as well as how ICANN tries to enhance continuously diversity and stakeholder participation. Again, that's another way in which ICANN furthers the public interest.

A fourth element of this is the stability, security, and resiliency of the DNS or its diversity. What ICANN does, in fact, is just one element of the public interest and the notion that the aggregate of all special interests make up the public interest. Because the public interest is an abstract concept, it needs a process that's adaptable and not a fixed definition.

What I want to leave this group with is an observation that was made at ICANN 57, which was along the following lines in terms of how the concept itself is carried out at ICANN. That is, if the bottom-up multi-stakeholder process is followed, and that means that the outcome of that process is consensus-based, then that is the articulation of the public interest in the context of ICANN. I'm only mentioning this because this received a lot of support both at the meeting and in subsequent discussions, and many have said that this could potentially be an interim solution until the community picks this issue up again. Next slide, please.

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A couple of questions, again piggybacking off what Wolf was saying earlier: what can we do to make sure that there is some active engagement across the community? What I would like to highlight here is that this is a community-driven effort. This is not a staff-driven effort. So we will look at you for your guidance as we move forward.

At ICANN 57, there was a call to create what was called a loose structure of sorts to help guide this work, but to date there hasn't really been any uptake. We've had conversations with a few individuals, in particular those who were in India who had expressed an interest. But again, because of time commitments and other issues, we haven't been successful in securing the time and participation of many people to date.

I will stop here, but I would love to engage in a discussion and hear some thoughts on how we could potentially move this forward in a way that's constructive but at the same time we keep the conversation going and not have any missed opportunities. Thank you.

WOLF LUDWIG:

Thanks, Ergys, for this excellent summary and recapitulation of what has been done over the last year. At this stage, I would first want to ask the participants, are there any questions or comments from your side? This shouldn't be a panel discussion

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here. I would like to encourage anybody for some further input.  
Yes, Tijani?

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: Thank you very much, Wolf. Can you please display or read the mission of this working group?

HEIDI ULLRICH: The current mission statement is: “This working group will discuss issues related to the public interest in the context of ICANN and the manner in which end users are impacted.”

WOLF LUDWIG: Yes, please.

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: So it is only for the At-Large working group on public interest. What I understand now is that we are going toward the cross-community working group about public interest.

WOLF LUDWIG: Thanks, Tijani. Actually, we had a broader discussion already in Hyderabad last time. There were some people suggesting let’s keep the whole issue restricted [on] the ICANN remit. So how it can be translated and what its relevance in the ICANN context.



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There were people [including me] saying, “Okay, let’s take both options.” There are some people who may concentrate on the ICANN specifics. It could be easily a subgroup of a working group. There are other people who would like to follow up the broader perspective or the broader angle. There was no binding conclusion afterwards, but it was my feeling that we said whatever moves into this direction may be constructive, productive, help to get off the ground.

So at an early stage, I would not impose any limitations or [thinking edges]. Let’s be open, free, dynamic as the Internet evolved and not be restrictive. Surprisingly in the course of this discussion, I realized by some direct discussions I had with GAC members that there is a lot of interest among certain people, certain GAC representatives. They came to me, [“Well, we have heard] ALAC created a working group. Is this restricted, limited to ALAC?” I said, “Well, at the moment, let’s say we are the initiators.”

But it was never my idea ten years when I worked for At-Large that we are the pushers of restrictions and limitations. For me, a good example is always the ICANN Academy Working Group. What started as our initiative and suddenly we realized rather soon it would be another silo again to limit it to ALAC, so we made a cross-community working group out of it. This was finally how it got off the ground.

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So for me, I see we need more dynamic forces, new start up. We created in Marrakech, there is a lot of potential what is at the moment not used for different reasons, lack of capacities. I tried to explain. But there are many more potentials around us.

In the same way, in my opinion it was a great step forward. We've discussed over the years. We never did it. Lack of opportunity. Sometimes you need to do something at the right moment. When we created the ALAC-GAC liaison many years ago if we would have tried it, we would have failed. Suddenly, there was a new political [constellation], a new window of opportunities, and we tried it and without long discussions it suddenly worked.

For me, this is a big step – politically – a big step forward. Therefore, I was thinking my very personal conclusions after discussions with GAC members, why not open our working group to other communities? We could start with particularly inviting GAC people because from GAC people I know when we talked about the public interest in the past. I remember some very funny situations when suddenly a GAC member showed up and said, "It's not your business. We are the government, and we are in charge of the public interest. Don't step in our front yard."

So, okay, this was years ago. I would think nowadays nobody would put it that way anymore. So everybody in the GAC has

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understood public interest is much broader, and of course Internet users or those who are supposed to represent the interests of the users more or less must necessarily act or should act in the public interest. So it is not an issue anymore. It's just an idea I would like to put on the table here and ask for some more. Yes, I just see the flags now here. I don't recall who was first. It was Kaili you or it was Seun. Kaili, go ahead.

KAILI KAN:

Thank you. I agree that as a matter of fact this public interest actually is the core issue of ALAC. Also, I've been with ALAC for about a year and a half. Well, time flies. But anyway, I've learned that we have spread a lot of effort over all of ICANN for outreach, for capacity building and engagement to encourage participation, however, not always getting the ideal results.

I feel that what we have been doing is we are thinking from ICANN itself and see how to outreach from ICANN. What if we reverse the way of thinking from the overall society, from the end users? We talk about billions of end users. From their point of view, how would they look at ICANN?

I'm from China and also I have been introduced on many occasions about the ALS of China which is Internet Society of China (ISC). Not only it has a multi-stakeholder structure that includes both the end users but also the industry in receiving the

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support for the government. As a matter of fact, it does a lot of work for the government. So there's not fighting against each other. However, to cooperate, that is one character of ISC.

Another issue is that it takes care of the overall Internet governance issues. From spam, from any kind of abusive Internet activities and whatever, they take care of it. Within its responsibilities and issues, the DNS and domain and Internet address is one small, tiny little topic. Okay? So I think it's no wonder that so many ISOC chapters around the world are natural ALSes for us because the ICANN business is only a very small piece within the overall Internet governance.

So ICANN, we need to reposition ourselves, starting from the early days 30, 40, or even 50 years ago. During those years, Internet address, domain names, that is the core of Internet governance. But after that many decades, it's not to say it's not important. It is important, however, that is not the focus, not the center of all the Internet governance. So therefore, how to reposition ICANN and how to reposition ALAC? Also, together with the review process, how do we restructure the ALSes, the criteria for ALSes and so forth?

I think putting all the public interest topic into this overall perspective, and then probably we come up with new ideas, new approaches. Thank you.

WOLF LUDWIG:

Thanks a lot, Kaili, for this interesting intervention. Before I give the floor to Seun, let me just add a sort of anecdote. When I started getting involved in ICANN about ten years ago and I was discussing with people who are interested in Internet governance, they asked me, “You at ICANN? Why? Are you crazy?” I was a bit surprised. There were voices telling me ICANN, to their perception, was completely business-driven. Completely business-driven.

They asked me, “Are you so blue-eyed that you can think if you enter or participate in ICANN, you can change anything? You can bring ICANN on another track from less business-driven but more political/public interest, blah, blah, blah?” Then we had discussions around the GAC, etc. What we know, ICANN has changed the last couple of years. It has considerably changed in some respects. Not in all, but in some respects. I would be more optimistic today. I think we achieved more than I thought we could achieve, so I’m more on the optimistic side in this respect.

Seun and then Andrei.

SEUN OJEDEJI:

Okay, thank you very much. I can’t remember if I actually attended this working group’s meetings before, but I have to say

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I'm lost. I have no idea what is being talked about. I think it would be good – I'm looking at the mission of the group, and it says that it is to discuss issues related to public interest. So I would like to hear what is the issue on ground right now which we're actually discussing so that I can contribute meaningfully to the discussion itself. So I would like to know what are the issues.

And then in relation to the cross-community working group, I think there's a process of setting up a cross-community working group. I personally think if we are looking for other constituencies within ICANN to join such CCWG, I think that would be a very good candidate to actually consult with to see if we can actually [co-start] if that is a better word the CCWG.

I mean GAC obviously also have significant interests in ensuring that the public interest is observed by ICANN, so I think we have that too. Perspectives may be different, but I think if those two stakeholders within ICANN actually set up and start up that cross-community working group, then maybe there can be some progress in relation to this topic. But overall, in this current working group now, I'd like to know what is the issue on ground to discuss other than the CCWG. Thank you.

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WOLF LUDWIG:

Well, what are the issues? I think what we shortly described as a mission, there are two tendencies. There's one tendency to say some people want to discuss it in the narrow remit of ICANN, and there are other people who would like to discuss it also in the broader context. We will never come up with a unique, single definition about the public interest. This should not be understood as the aim of the working group because we will never reach something like this. This would be more sort of a miracle.

But contributing to a clarification, when we mention public interest, what we understand. How are our interpretations. It can also be different from different regions with cultural backgrounds, historical backgrounds, etc. Whether people are coming from a business angle or people have always worked in the public sector may be completely different approaches. So I would suggest let's keep it open to whoever wants it to discuss it from this side or let's look from another side. But I would like to have some more dynamic, some more inputs from working group members, so this was just a short reply.

Whether we have immediately, this was the second part of your question, do a cross-community working group or we start with the cross-community committee, less formal. I think to me it's not so much important how we call it. For me, it's much more important that it works. That we're coming from the content

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level, from the dynamics, that we are getting a step forward. Then we can see the best way it develops. Then it could in a half a year, in a year become a cross-community working group.

So I have so many different, at the moment you allow me, Andrei, that I go to this side to the Latinos and then I come back to you and then I go back to the Latinos? Is this okay?

ANDREI KOLESNIKOV: Yes.

WOLF LUDWIG: Okay, Alberto, you would like to start?

ALBERTO SOTO: I wanted to be part of this working group, but I just had to sleep also and I couldn't. I just had no time. There were two members of my ALS that I enrolled them, I signed them in, and unfortunately one of them had to abandon because he had to study and the other one had to work. So I didn't really know until I could finally [read] that.

I agree in maintaining this dynamic. And in agreement with that, I also agree with the people who say that we should not attach to a single definition that is a very closed definition of what is the public interest. This is also because I believe that the public



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interest is defined based on the interests of the environment where it is being considered, and we should not lose sight of the fact that our interest is the interest of the end user.

Let me now give you an example. If a government – if this government, I don't know if it has here in this country – declares that the Internet is public interest, we will all applaud. But if in another country where there is no democracy they declare that the Internet is a public interest thing, everything that is related to the Internet in that country will depend on the authority that wants to exercise that government on whatever is related to the Internet. So look at what a very quick difference that you can generate on a public interest declaration considering two governments, even though this should be a similar idea.

However, I do not oppose to working with different groups, especially in the government field. Governments determine measures that affect or impact negatively or positively on end users. If we work with governments with our own interests on end users, then maybe we can cause the multi-stakeholder model work and even reach consensus on certain policies that may be related to the public interest without really needing to define it beforehand.

WOLF LUDWIG:

Thanks a lot, Alberto. I entirely agree. The next one is Andrei.

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ANDREI KOLESNIKOV: Thank you very much. For the past few days, I've heard a lot about the public interest, and I think we should make it a dogma. I'll explain why. If we take an example from the Christian religious dogmas, there is a Father, a Son, and a Holy Spirit. So we can have like a multi-stakeholderism bottom-up process and the public interest. It's easy to [quantify] the multi-stakeholder model because it's mathematically calculated. It's also easy to understand the bottom-up process because it is a process. And it is a broad thing called the public interest. It's broad. It's really broad if you open the Wikipedia, open all the materials.

So it will be easier to us to say it's a dogma. So it's like a kind of thing which we're not asking the questions, but we just live with it and go forward. It will be much easier for all the stakeholders in the ICANN community to deal with it. Thank you.

WOLF LUDWIG: Okay, thanks, Andrei. Harold?

HAROLD ARCOS: Thank you, Wolf. There are two ideas here on the table. One is to maintain this space as a space for reflection being fully aware that it will feed the discussion on public interest inwards. And then we need to say whether [inaudible] will be broadened. I

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agree with Alberto. I don't really want to repeat about whether we include other players in this discussion.

Then we also need to define the road ahead for the different thoughts. That is to say GAC will assume certain criteria, the ALAC will assume other criteria, of course, based on the user's perspective, and any other group within the multi-stakeholder model.

Now on the first question, the first slide that was still pending, well then we would perhaps solve it by starting to ask questions and decide, as you said, if we want this to be the aim because the initial idea had a purpose and now it has a different status. So if this is the road ahead, then we need to vote on that and make a decision.

But if we try to have so many opinions and so many groups, then that may be the reason why the effort or the initial energy dissolved into trying to discuss and to debate on whether this is a concept that prevailed over other when we actually want to agree that there should be no concept. So there should be an agreed thought, and this should serve ICANN when it comes to facing other scenarios.

This situation is similar to a think tank group where an issue is crucial. Right now, there are several issues on the table, on the global table, from WikiLeaks to [block sharing] issues to issues

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such as state regulations in different countries in Europe that all of them affect these issues in different manners. They affect what an end user could consider its interests. We as stakeholders should define what their interest is.

So I think we should agree and want to vote in favor of continuing as a group for reflection and we should start looking or mechanisms so that this is continued and not to turn the page and move from the initial experience. It should be from now on an enriching experience so that the decision is not exhausted. Then we need to say whether this definition will be universal or just for the 15 people sitting here. Thank you.

WOLF LUDWIG:

Thanks a lot, Harold. The next one is Satish and Tijani.

SATISH BABU:

Thank you. I think one of the reasons why we have not been seeing much activity after the initial spurt of responses from the community had to do with the fact that we could not converge on a single, forget definition, even the broad domain of what this covers. From the previous interventions, we have defined a global public interest, an ICANN public interest, an At-Large public interest, and maybe a GAC public interest. Now these are all reality and there are these things.

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Now this working group if it becomes a cross-community working group, we have the challenge of deciding the scope of the particular public interest with going to talk about. Is it going to talk about all these different public interests, or is it going to be confining itself to some of them? I think this requires some working and some clarification.

What is more complex is the fact that Ergys presented a slide that said if there is a proper bottom-up transparent participatory process, then the public interest is automatically taken into account. If that is so, then we don't need a working group at all, if that's the case. But as a matter of fact, I think some of us feel that there is a need to raise this as an issue because often it's not clear. Maybe it is taken into account, but we are not very convinced or clear about that aspect.

And finally, do we need a definition? Personally, I don't insist on a definition as long as we can test a particular initiative if it is in the public interest or it is not. If that can be done, then no definition is required. Thank you.

WOLF LUDWIG: Yes, Tijani first. Or you would like to respond directly to Satish?

ERGYS RAMAJ: To Satish.

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WOLF LUDWIG: Do you allow, Tijani?

ERGYS RAMAJ: That's an observation that has actually been made in the past in that potentially a framework of sorts rather than a definition or a set of principles that you could then use to test against whether or not the public interest was met. That idea has absolutely been introduced in the past by the community. Like I said earlier, nothing is set in stone. Everything is on the table. It could be that that's potentially the way to go.

WOLF LUDWIG: Very important point we have to keep in mind for the next steps. But before I will follow up on this, Tijani, please.

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: Thank you very much, Wolf. Why I asked for the mission to be read is to clarify that this mission was done for the At-Large working group about public interest. Now I think that, as Wolf said, as the ICANN Academy started as an At-Large working group it was expanded to be a cross-community working group. It is doing a very good job, and I hope it will be revived now that the transition has happened and we will see better results.

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This group if we want to make it cross-community, in my point of view, should be a real cross-community working group. And any cross-community working group has a charter. So we have to define a charter with a mission for this group. The mission that I read here doesn't give this group any outcome. There is no outcome for this group, according to this mission. It is more or less and IGF about public interest. IGF doesn't have any outcome. It is only a forum of discussion. This is what this working group is according to this mission.

I think that we may have outcome. And what Satish said and what was said now by Ergys is exactly what we need to do. We will not have a common definition for everyone. As everyone said, I think, the public interest for each group of people who have common interests will be different from another group that has another interest. Unfortunately, everyone understands the public interest according to their own interest. We have experienced inside the Work Stream 2 subgroups. It is very clear.

So we will not come up with a common definition, impossible. But we can make some benchmarks, something like this, so that we say if we go here, we will not be respecting the public interest. If we exceed this, we will not be respecting public interest. So we may define a framework more or less, not a definition but a framework. Something that everyone can agree

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on and that can help us at least speak, not the same language, but a language that everyone can understand. Thank you.

WOLF LUDWIG:

Thanks, Tijani. I think we are approaching. Before I give the floor back to Harold, just two remarks. I'm a little bit confused about the format. To me, format is mostly secondary. I wouldn't like to lose half a year with discussing procedures and what the best format would be, blah, blah, blah, somehow distracting from the essence of the working group.

On the other hand, I think I'm very grateful for your contribution, Satish. And it goes back to Seun's question. Perhaps there was a lot of confusion in the community among the members who signed in first about what would be the aim or the outcome. Most probably people thought, "Okay, we will try to find a definition."

We questioned this approach in Marrakech already. We questioned it in Hyderabad again. But maybe some people may still have understood it, and we must be clearer in this respect. Therefore, I think there cannot be a definition as there will never be a unique definition. But if we can help to define the criteria how to measure policy under public interest considerations.



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This can be 5, this can be 10, this could be 15 criteria, but all somehow indicated is there an approach where you could measure like freedom of expression. As an old media journalist, I've been involved in country assessments. I can in 15 minutes tell you right down my 15 criteria how I would measure the situation of media pluralism, media ownership, media organization, etc. And you can immediately with those basic questions come up and assess whether there is more or less media freedom in a particular question.

It could be, perhaps, a similar attempt to define such criteria. Basic criteria to measure public interest could be 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, etc. If we could come up with something like this, it would be in my opinion a big step ahead next.

Harold?

HAROLD ARCOS:

Very briefly because many of the things you have said and Tijani said I agree. We have a similar challenge in the human rights working group. In that working group, we're exactly in the same situation. We are not expecting to have a similar concept. The idea is to create a framework so that we can work, and that is a similar challenge that we are facing when it comes to public interest. That's all. Thank you, Wolf.

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ALBERTO SOTO: Both topics, human rights and public interest, are concepts that have to be created in a bottom-up way so that we can understand them correctly because otherwise we won't have any result. Thank you.

WOLF LUDWIG: Ergys?

ERGYS RAMAJ: Just one very quick comment, and this goes to a lot of the feedback we received in this meeting. I think a key consideration is: how do you reflect public interest considerations in decision making across ICANN? That's core. That is the core of what we are discussing.

Some of the potential next steps here sound as though actually address that. So the idea of a framework and/or a set of guiding principles, something along those lines. And once and for all potentially moving away from the notion of: do we need a definition or do we not need a definition? It looks as though the conversation has matured enough where an assessment can be made about departing from the notion of needing a set definition. Thank you.

WOLF LUDWIG:

Thanks, Ergys. Unfortunately, we are close to the end of the session. Therefore, let me try to come up with a short summary or some conclusions.

I think content-wise how we should reformulate our mission in a way that doesn't reflect the term "definition" anymore but more aimed at criteria could be to avoid further misunderstandings in the discussion. This would be a focus for the next steps content-wise.

The other question was there was not much dynamic in the working group so far. Perhaps this was based on the confusion on the goal, but perhaps it was also based on other factors: lack of capacities, etc. Therefore, let me suggest, I really don't care much how we call the next animal. Whether we call it cross-community working group or cross-community committee, let's try to make a next step to get perhaps some people involved who are always dealing or dealing more with the subject from the governmental side but don't understand it as exclusive but just to have an open format.

You called it the IGF idea, which I would like to see some sort of outcome, by the way. But a dynamic discussion mostly comes up. This is sort of a result. All these new ideas, these new conclusions, these new interpretations, let's give it a form which

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is productive, which is not closed, which is not limited, which is not restrictive. Anybody who has proper interest and a sort of a background to step into this discussion, I would like to encourage him.

I would like to have a sort of a [inaudible] in this round [inaudible] two points. One is content focus, the other one is the format. Whether these two new ideas for the next step is okay for you. Let's give it a trial. I think it should be a work in progress. It should become more dynamic than it was over the last year. This would be my next Christmas wish.

I think sooner or later, as you say in [inaudible] there's a nice saying: [speaks German], "good things need time." So I still believe this public interest working group is a great idea which has enabled a lot of discussions. Now it needs some more dynamics and follow up. I think we still have a chance to get it back on track.

Do you agree with this kind of conclusion, summary for the next steps? I see nobody who directly is opposing, objecting. Nobody hidden in the room. Ah, you, okay.

TIJANI BEN JEMAA:

I'm not objecting, but I have a remark if you don't mind. Can you please, Wolf, since here in the room we are a few people, can

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you please send an e-mail on the list and propose your plan for the future and receive feedback from people?

WOLF LUDWIG: That's a very good idea, Tijani. I think that [there should be a] necessity to make the briefest summary possible to say we had this meeting of the working group and we were talking about some problems we had and we were trying how they could be solved and we suggest the next solutions how we could overcome the deadlock. And then wait for some reactions. Okay?

Any further comments? Yes, Heidi.

HEIDI ULLRICH: Can we just thank the interpreters?

WOLF LUDWIG: Oh, yes, of course. Now that there are no further comments, no further protests, no objections, I would like to close this session. I think you all for being here and having contributed actively in our discussion. And, of course, a very special thanks to our interpreters for staying up and supporting us. Thanks a lot. And the technical staff, of course, as well. Thank you.

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UNIDENTIFIED MALE:           And our staff.

WOLF LUDWIG:                And, of course, our At-Large staff last, not least.

**[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]**