
ABU DHABI – Board GAC Recommendation Implementation (BGRI) Meeting
Monday, October 30, 2017 – 12:30 to 13:30 GST
ICANN60 | Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

THOMAS SCHNEIDER: I was told to get started, but I'm not sure if I'm told to get started to eat or talk. So we will try to find a way to be innovative as usual. So this again is the meeting with the BGRI. And I'm very happy that actually I will hand over fairly quickly to Markus and Manal for the time being so everybody will be watching them. But of course no jokes aside, this is an important issue we are dealing with which is procedural but is something we should take serious and get from discussion of procedures to implementing them. It's about the effectiveness of GAC advice. Actually, it's not only about GAC advice. It's in the end about effectiveness of all kinds of advice.

In our case, it's the GAC advice and to see how we can improve the effect of the GAC advice in the sense that it is understood, it is taken seriously, if accepted by the Board of course is implemented in a way that follows the objectives that are behind the advice, and there's some let's say mutual joint quality or sustainability check from the Board and the GAC side on implementation of GAC advice in order to maybe put a final sustainable hook at the end of the implementation process on a particular piece of advice.

Note: The following is the output resulting from transcribing an audio file into a word/text document. Although the transcription is largely accurate, in some cases may be incomplete or inaccurate due to inaudible passages and grammatical corrections. It is posted as an aid to the original audio file, but should not be treated as an authoritative record.

So I'll stop here and hand over the floor to whoever wants to start.
Manal or Markus.

MARKUS KUMMER: This is my last meeting as co-chair of the BGRI and we are in transition of changing the guard a bit of the Board members to the BGRI. So the incoming members of the BGRI are also here with us, and Martin sitting there on the dais will be the incoming chair that will take over from me. Now we have started in Helsinki working on a definition of GAC advice and it is our ambition to come to closure on that. We have made progress on that. It has taken us far too long, but I think we are in the process of finding a good solution. With that, I'll hand over to Manal who will also give us some background and context. Please, Manal.

MANAL ISMAIL: Thank you, Markus. If we can go directly to the next slide for the interest of time. I do apologize to those who have been hearing this introduction every time. But every time we have new members, so we need to put things into context a little bit. I try to squeeze everything in one slide.

In Dublin, the GAC raised the need to periodically review whether and how effective the Board has taken GAC advice into account. The GAC secretariat ACIG was tasked with analyzing and

preparing a review report on the issue. The report revealed that, in some cases, it is extremely difficult to determine whether or not ICANN Board has accepted GAC advice, and where there is clear evidence that advice has been accepted to what degree it has been implemented, and whether or not the GAC feel the implementation adequately meets GAC's original intent.

The Board referred the issue to the BGRI working group to analyze the review report and develop its final recommendations to the GAC and the Board.

Next slide, please.

So those were the agreed actions that we identified as actions that need to be addressed. We were working on actions 1 to 3. We were able to finalize 2 and 3. I hope we can adopted today the definition of what constitutes GAC advice and then agree on the next set of issues we want to tackle. And we will have this slide again so we can go directly please to the following slide describing what we need at this meeting, which is adopting the description of what constitutes GAC advice and agreeing on the following set of activities as I mentioned.

So the following slide has the text that we need to adopt at this meeting.

This is the agreed short concise description of what constitutes GAC advice. It has been built mainly around text extracted from Bylaws and difference in GAC operating principles, so it's very high level and all based on previously agreed text.

I'll go through it quickly. It has been circulated on the GAC mailing list and the BGRI mailing list as well, but let me go through it very quickly. GAC advice is advice on the activities of ICANN as they relate to concerns of governments, particularly matters where there may be an interaction between ICANN's policies and various laws and international agreements or where they may affect public policy issues.

And as I said, this is direct extract from ICANN Bylaws. Then GAC advice is embodied in a written communication where the specific advice is clearly marked as such, has a clearly stated proposal for action or actions by the Board, and explains the underlying rationale for its advice.

And finally, GAC advice is provided in accordance with the GAC operating principles and is duly considered, accepted, or rejected by the Board in accordance with section 12.2 (a) (x-xi) of the ICANN Bylaws.

Can we considered this adopted and move to the following set of activities and having out of our to do list?

So it is agreed. Yes, thank you. Thanks to everyone.

So can we go to the following slide please?

This is back to the set of activities. We saw some logic behind linking the activities 4, 5, and 6. They all have to do with logging GAC advice, tracking it, having it easy to access and easy to search and review the features of this new platform or portal and also see if the GAC records are full or need to be completed if possible.

I think there's already efforts in that respect. And in relation to this I think, Christine, you have a presentation for us to present us where those efforts stand. I think from our side we need to make sure first that all aspects that GAC would like to see in such a platform are there and ultimately that this portal or platform is linked and synchronized with the GAC new website, I guess. So with this, over to you, Christine. Thank you.

CHRISTINE WILLETT:

Thank you, Manal. Christine Willett, ICANN organization staff. In support of items, 4, 5, and 6 on the BGRI list of action items, while they group I think they have another slide presentation to load here. ICANN organization staff undertook an effort at the direction of the Board and with their oversight to go back and review advice from the GAC dating back to 2013 and the Beijing Communique.

This was very similar to efforts similar efforts undertaken for SSAC advice, RSSAC advice, and ALAC advice last year. Yes, that's the slide.

The effort was to create a comprehensive inventory of advice, to understand the status of each of the advice items where they sat, to ensure what that all items had been appropriately and fully considered by the Board, and to understand which of those items were still in implementation and where some of those items had been fully implemented.

The results of that effort were that 154 individual items of GAC advice had been inventoried since ICANN 46. All of those items have been considered by the Board since then. The Board most recently considered the Johannesburg Communique, and 14 of those items are currently open or pending community action. Next slide, please. Next slide. Thank you.

This chart identifies where each of those 154 items is from a status perspective across five phases. These phases are the same categories of status that the Board and organization uses for what has come to be called the action request register or Board advice register. So again, these are phases consistent with RSSAC, SSAC, and ALAC advice. As you'll see, at present there are currently no items in Phase 1, in the receive and publish phase; no items in the Phase 2 understand phase, 14 items in the

evaluate and consider phase which I'll go into in a bit more detail in a moment. There are 4 items presently in the implementation phase, and the remaining items have been deemed to have been fully implemented at present. Next slide.

Specifically for those Phase 3 items which we could call open, the Board has considered all of these items, meaning the Board has adopted a scorecard and passed a resolution on each of these items. However, there's ongoing community work for each of these items. The 14 items fall into 4 categories: a number of advice items around ccTLD string similarity, several on IGOs, a couple on Red Cross/Red Crescent, as well as one item advice for the .ram string. These are ongoing community actions that the Board may be waiting for and choose to take further action on these items or on further advice, depending on that community action.

I'll pause there and turn it back.

MANAL ISMAIL:

Thank you, Christine. Before opening the floor for discussion, let me just ask is this online operational accessible to colleagues to try to have a look? Thank you.

CHRISTINE WILLETT: There's an Excel inventory. There's a lot of content. This spreadsheet references all of the links to the advice items, the resolutions, the adopted scorecards. The intention it would be for if the Board and this BGRI group agrees, that the Board would share that inventory and this analysis summary through the BGRI. Then the BGRI GAC group could choose to share that with the constituency. We could certainly also after this meeting or after this presentation publish this to the ICANN.org website.

MANAL ISMAIL: Thank you Christine. Yes, Kavouss.

KAVOUSS ARASTEH: GAC representative from Iran.

MANAL ISMAIL: Yes, I'm sorry. Iran, please.

KAVOUSS ARASTEH: No, I'm not criticizing you. Something has happened. I have to say that. Could we have some explanation what is meant by 154 items of GAC advice among which 14 items belong to Johannesburg and the total from GAC 46 in Beijing are open for public comments? What do the public comments there? Thank you.

MARKUS KUMMER: If I may, and Christine can fill in. This is a very high-level overview. As Christine said, detailed spreadsheets are available we can go through. What we are talking here, the open items, they are not closed as such. Work is being done on these items in the community. The Board has considered them, but they are not done with. I mean, they are listed here and they fall into these broad categories. They are – and Christine can go more into detail – but they relate to these groups of issues like IGOs, Red Cross/Red Crescent. They are not solved. They are still under consideration by various groups of the community, but it's not that they are open for comments. They are open as opposed to closed and implemented.

But, Christine, maybe can you go more into the details?

CHRISTINE WILLETT: Certainly, Markus. The 154 items count comes from work to have parsed each individual item of GAC advice to its discrete components. It's very similar. Each row on a scorecard which the Board adopted is essentially equivalent to one item of advice. So I believe that in total there were approximately 13 or 14 recommendations on IGOs. So that over time in four and a half years, there have been multiple items of advice. So this is a very granular level of detail.

MANAL ISMAIL: Thank you, Christine. Thomas?

THOMAS SCHNEIDER: It has been said what I was going to say. We have in the course of time learned that we need to be more explicit when we give advice and less diplomatic because this is a multi-stakeholder environment and also structure our advices in a way they can be operationalized and put in into a database. So we have started in the past years that every piece of action that we expect to not the put this in one paragraph but to give basically one figure or number or listing mark to every piece of advice in order to help this to be processed in a database with a goal as has been explained that we have a more easy access and overview, not just us and everybody, on where a particular piece of advice is in the process: whether it's accepted or not, whether it's in the implementation, whether it has been fully implemented.

The thing I would like to see, and we discussed this already, is a final checkmark whether the GAC also thinks it has been fully implemented and not just the Board. That would be then to us the final, the end of the production chain, if I may say so, the process chain with regard to GAC advice. Thank you.

MANAL ISMAIL: So any other mediate reactions to this? I'm sure we need time to look into it more thoroughly, and we will be having it probably on our agenda of future meetings. But if there are any immediate questions or reaction. Christine, please go ahead.

CHRISTINE WILLETT: Thank you. I would echo Thomas' effort to agree that we would expect the GAC to come back and confirm that there's agreement on the status of these, what the Board and the organization deemed to be implemented, items of advice. That is the process that has been followed with the SSAC and RSSAC, and we are in process doing the same thing with the ALAC. So it would be wonderful to follow the same process, and we can work with the secretariat to do so.

And to the point of publishing this, I think creating this inventory is a first step towards having the right tools in the right online presence, whether it's on the GAC website and other transparent community wide presentation of this data. This is the first step in that effort, and I know there are multiple other initiatives to integrate this to the right set of tools over time.

MANAL ISMAIL: Thank you. Yes, Iran, please.

KAVOUSS ARASTEH: GAC representative from Iran. We did not understand. They said they will come back to GAC and us whether they are still in the proper context, whether they are what? What was the sentence they used? Why we should come back to GAC for these 154 cases? Are there some unclarity? Or we should be very careful about the wording. So could you kindly, could the distinguished lady repeat what is we come back to GAC to what? To ask them what? Thank you.

THOMAS SCHNEIDER: The idea is that we have a common understanding. If the Board thinks this is implemented, this is one thing. But we would like the GAC to agree and to be on the same page. But, Christine, maybe you can expand on it. As Christine said, this is the procedure used with the other SOs and ACs to see whether there is a common understanding whether the advice has been listened to and implemented. We think in this case 136 pieces of advice have been implemented, but the GAC may have a different view on that. So it would be good if both sides sign off on that.

Yes, please.

MANAL ISMAIL: Can I?

MARKUS KUMMER: Yes, Manal.

MANAL ISMAIL: Just one more thing that may clarify. The report that was done, one of its findings was that sometimes it's difficult to determine whether or not the GAC feel the implementation adequately meets GAC's original intent. And I think this is the point that we are trying to meet here. We are trying to make sure the advice is logged, the advice was accepted, the advice was implemented. It's just the different stages of the GAC advice.

Sometimes the Board may see that GAC advice has been accepted and implemented, but the GAC feels something is missing with the implementation. So this is the kind of acknowledgment I think, and I stand be correct.

Any further comments or reactions?

U.K., please.

MARK CARVELL: : Yes, United Kingdom, Mark Carvell. I'm just not quite clear on the practicalities here. Are we contemplating a process of reviewing historically a lot of elements or issues to determine whether we understand that all of these items are implemented or there's still action in the community and the GAC is engaged in such action?

Is that the kind of exercise we are contemplating? It seems quite a big exercise, but I may have misunderstood. Thank you.

MANAL ISMAIL:

My understanding, but again I stand to be corrected, is that sometimes it's clear that things were accepted and implemented and it's just history but other items are still vague or still open. It's not clear that they were fully implemented to the GAC's expectation. I guess so. Can this be confirmed please? Then Iran next. Just a second.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE:

Yes, Manal, that is correct. The process was to extract the GAC advice on the one hand and the Board's responses on the other hand and then a detailed implementation where it stood. That's how we recorded the historic elements. So there are no word changes in that sense. It was exactly from the GAC advice and exactly from the Board response and then just notations of what happened after that.

MANAL ISMAIL:

Thank you, David.

GAC representative of Iran please.

KAVOUSS ARASTEH: Thank you, Manal. You don't need to repeat that. I said that because of one reason. I make it for the chair of the GAC. Either he react or we don't react or we take other actions. You can call me as my first name, no problem.

The situation now give us some concerns. We are building up backlog. Every GAC meeting, we have advice. Each item and this item will be added. So it is some concern for us that from Beijing up to now we have 154, and maybe at this meeting we have another X and so on.

So when we have some clearance, what we have to do? Perhaps the type of work that you are doing maybe resolved some of these problems problem perhaps. But at least I think that something is missing. Something doesn't work correctly. I don't think that we should build up this backlog from the meeting to the other meeting and so on and so forth.

Either our advice is not correct, wording is not correct, text is not correct, language is not correct, or maybe the other side is the Board has a different understanding and different interpretation. So we need to work together. Thank you.

MARKUS KUMMER: If I may, it will not be on my plate any longer. It will Martin that has to work on that. I would not exaggerate the difficulties. It will

take some time to look into the material, but I suppose there may be just a few cases where you want to dig deeper if that really meets our intentions and there you may need a discussion. But I think most of these cases you can just click the box yes, yes, yes, I remember that. That is dealt with. But there may be a few cases where you think we may need to look at it a little bit more.

But I fully agree with you. We should not spend too much time on creating a backlog and spending countless hours of going through it and soul searching. But it is a question of increasing also the accountability of the Board just to you check whether their work has been done properly and whether you agree with their work. I think that should not be a contentious issue as such. There may be some contentious issues hidden in all this backlog, but then you have to discuss. But I would suggest, if I may, that Christine continues with her presentation. Thomas, sorry.

THOMAS SCHNEIDER: Sorry to step in. Two things with regard to Iran. You refer to me. I'm not aware of anything that has happened. So if you can kindly inform me, that would be helpful. But let's do this later.

And with regard to the substance of this, the idea behind this is, as it has been said, to raise accountability from the Board not just to the GAC but to the people we are representing and so on and also to make it an easier assessment of our advice to learn which

advice was, let's say, easier implementable and which advice was difficult to implement. It's also a tool for us is that should help us to give advice that is clearer or easier implementable. And by no means we should develop an overengineered, super sophisticated, formal, ten-step system to validate the implementation of the advice by the Board through the GAC. This is not what we mean.

We should go for something very simple. For instance, like we have the GAC advice. Then we have the discussion with the Board. Then we get the written scorecard from them saying we say yes or no to this piece of advice. This is how we are going to implement.

Then at some point, half a year later or year later we should just basically receive by the Board once a year or twice a year an information saying we consider these and these pieces of advice implemented. This has been marked in the register as considered to be implemented by the Board. Do you agree? Then that can be forwarded to the GAC with the default position of basically yes we agree.

And whenever there's opposition in the GAC and people think that, no, actually don't agree on particular item, then the discussion would start in the GAC. But that would not be an additional discussion because then I don't have to mention the

two-character code issue that we are discussing for quite some time now because some people at least in the GAC feel this has not been properly implemented.

So we don't have to invent additional big processes. We all know which elements of advice we are not satisfied with the implementation, so we don't have to do big research. We just need to send out a communication and tick boxes where everything is clear. Where things are not clear, we know it and the discussion will continue anyway.

This is just a mirror that we and everybody sees where discussion is continuing because we think this is not satisfactory. So it's just trying to make things easier, more transparent. It should not try to make thing more bureaucratic and more complicated. To make that point very, very, very clear. Thank you.

MANAL ISMAIL: Yes, please, Iran. Kavouss, please.

KAVOUSS ARASTEH: Thank you. Thomas, I fully agree with you. While we have to be very careful of what we are doing in the language and in the terms, nevertheless you put it in the proper context saying that we should not overengineer that. Those people like you, Markus, and others have worked internationally, they know that. When

you come to achieve a consensus, you inherently put some sort of ambiguity because you can't get a consensus. If the language is clear, there will be some problem. At the end of the day, we sit together and we try to find some consensus. This consensus brings some degree of ambiguity.

If our Bylaws ask us to have consensus advice to the extent practicable, this is inevitable. There is some degree of that. So we are not going to be asked by the Board that please give it clear cut language, then we would be difficulty, we never have any advice.

So, please, I think that the other side should do some work as well. Try to understand that and try to read between the lines what is meant. It should not send back to us 154 cases clearly and so forth. So, Thomas, you said quite right. We can't do better than we have done while we try to improve that. But we could not stop because of this consensus advice GAC to see language clear cut 100% clear. We cannot. Otherwise there is no consensus, thank you.

MANAL ISMAIL:

Thank you, Iran. And maybe when we get started with some hands-on discussion, things can prove to be much easier and less complex. So do we have further slides? Okay, Christine, please go ahead.

CHRISTINE WILLETT: Thank you. If we could advance to the next slide, the general timeline for GAC consideration. Next slide, please. Perhaps there's a difficulty scrolling in the Adobe room.

While the technical staff get are coordinated, I'll speak to this. This is attended to address I believe it's Recommendations 7 and 8 from the BGRI list of action items. This is a first step in capturing and reflecting the process that the Board and the GAC have in effect implemented and been operating against for the last ten months now regarding how the Board considers GAC advice.

In week zero, coming here out of Abu Dhabi this week, we anticipate the GAC will issue a communique. Then as many of you will know, in approximately week four after that, the Board and GAC have a call to discuss clarifying questions should the Board have any regarding the GAC Communique. Internally, the Board then meets to discuss, either in a small group or in their entirety, the Board working group reviews a draft scorecard in response to the GAC advice. And typically approximately in week 12 the Board has been adopting that scorecard. And then at the following ICANN meeting, at approximately 16 weeks, the GAC then has the ability to consider that scorecard.

This is a general timeline. Clearly, there are not always 16 weeks between ICANN meetings. But the Board does endeavor to

consider and adopt a scorecard for GAC advice four weeks in advance of the next ICANN meeting. I have one more slide. Next slide, please.

This slide is intended to reflect how this type of timeline would apply to an Abu Dhabi ICANN 60 Communique. For instance, assuming the communique is issued at the end of the week, then approximately estimated approximately the week of December 8th the Board and the GAC might have that consulting call to discuss clarifying questions. The Board working group would review in early January. The Board would likely targeted adopting a scorecard at the end of January, depending on the time of the next Board workshop. And that would be several weeks in advance of ICANN 61.

So Recommendations 7 and 8 were about standardizing the process, documenting the process. This timeline and phase is one aspect of that. There have also been efforts in the process documentation effort and the process manuals that the ICANN organization and Göran has termed the Hubba Bubba project. So there are process flows and there is a manual as to how the Board and organization execute that. So the BGRI may wish to look at those materials to see how they fulfill the intentions of Recommendations action item 7 and 8 and what further work the BGRI might like to see towards those items. Thank you.

MANAL ISMAIL: Thank you, Christine. Any further reactions or comments at this stage? Thomas, please go ahead.

THOMAS SCHNEIDER: If there's no other comment, first of all I think the timeline is a very useful thing to do because it allows both sides to plan things. There's one issue based on past experience. The most important deadline for us is the number 12 for the list, that is week 12, the Board adoption of the scorecard. If we receive the reply to GAC advice, the later we receive it – once we received it after the next meeting, but I consider this a unique exception according to the transition and things like that. We need to consult and organize ourselves based on the reaction of the Board. So that has a big impact on the next meeting. So the earlier you can provide us with that scorecard, the better the quality of the interaction between the Board and the GAC will become.

Knowing from going to have been on the Board as a liaison, I know the process also from the other side. I think it's not trivial, but I think it is really important that we try to identify a minimum number of weeks working from the next meeting where the scorecard should get to the GAC. I would say something like 4 or 5 weeks would probably be the absolute minimum. So for this meeting where you have 5 or 6 months between one and the next

meeting it's, of course, easier. The meetings in June and in October are more difficult because there is less time in between. But just these two points: acknowledgment of establishment of a timeline that helps, and the urge to be aware of not being too late with sending the scorecard to the GAC. That is fundamental. Thank you.

MANAL ISMAIL: U.K., please.

MARK CARVELL: Yes, just to add to that, exactly right. The timeline is quite critical. The time that we need before the GAC can consider the scorecard, we need substantial time. Individual representatives that may have to consult internally within their administrations, sometimes outside their government immediate government ministry or network. Individual reps might wish to coordinate regionally with other representatives in the same region before getting ready to do the GAC considerations. So I can't emphasize too strongly allowing sufficient time for that. Thank you.

MANAL ISMAIL: Thank you. Any further comments?

Yes, Vietnam, please.

[LE THI NGOC MO]: Firstly, I highly [appreciate] ICANN Board [proposal] today. I think it has been very helpful for us to do [start].

Secondly, I very much support Mr. Chair's comment that we need to make the timetable probably shorter so when we have more time to think, to study, and to prepare our comment and discuss with ICANN Board.

[Lastly], there is one thing that come to my mind at this moment. As my understanding, ICANN Board will set priority to the most recent communique. So far we have made a lot of communiques, and as I understand ICANN Board will set high priority, for example, Johannesburg communique. So probably GAC from this meeting we will [inaudible] our advice in [inaudible] communique and we will put in our advice of this meeting that week 1 we need ICANN to set high priority. So that's it. Thank you very much.

MANAL ISMAIL: Thank you, Vietnam. I have Iran. Kavouss, please go ahead.

KAVOUSS ARASTEH: Thank you. Perhaps I have not properly understood what our colleague from U.K. mention about the regional coordination, at

what stage that coordination needs to happen. However, there is some deficiencies to that. Some regions, if you call them regions, they have a better mechanism, how to coordinate their views. Some other regions, there is no such mechanism or it is impossible to have mechanisms.

If you take Asia Pacific, Middle East, 75 countries. I don't see any mechanism that you coordinate in that region for many reasons: state of development, view that are quite different. I don't think that we should create another regional GAC to do that one. And sometimes physically when we meet we have problems. What happened if you don't have [electricity and electronics]? How we coordinate? I don't understand that. We have faced this difficulty elsewhere. It didn't work again even in those other countries. So we have to bring it here. Suppose as we want Asian Pacific. Who takes the coordination? How the coordination is done? Where the coordination is done? I don't think that this sort of idea would work. Thank you.

MANAL ISMAIL.

Thank you, Kavouss. I think it was generally speaking rather than specific cases, but if you want to respond, U.K./Mark, please go ahead.

MARK CARVELL: Yeah, I'm not setting any kind of template for regional coordination, but there are consultations. In Europe we have consultations on GAC issues, ICANN issues. And that may apply in Africa. It may apply elsewhere. I don't know. I'm just saying that's something to bear in mind. On the really big issues, there is value in individual GAC representatives talking to others. And if there is a mechanism, that affords opportunity to consult. So I just mentioned that as one thing, a factor that possibly needs to be born in mind across the whole GAC representation. It's something we bear in mind in Europe certainly. Thank you.

MANAL ISMAIL: Thank you. And before handing over to Thomas, I would like to thank everyone for sacrificing their lunch breaks and for being here multitasking. Thank Christina and David as well for the presentation and all Board members, of course, and more specifically thanking Markus very much for our work together. It was a pleasure, and everything worked very smoothly. And I very much look forward to continuing this work with Martin.

MARKUS KUMMER: If I may also say a few words. I would also like to above all thank Manal for her leadership and for her excellent work. It was a pleasure working with her, and it was a pleasure working with the GAC. I think we have moved forward. We have now a common

definition between Board and GAC of what constitutes GAC advice. That may not sound much, but I think it may help us in the future.

Also, we have improved in how to react to GAC advice with a clear timeline and timetable. And let me assure the GAC members who have spoken, I think the Board is very much aware that we need to be in time and give you enough time to digest our reaction. Also, let me assure that for the Board it is a priority to have a proper reaction and take GAC advice very seriously. Relations with the GAC are very important for the organization.

Before handing back to Thomas, I wonder whether Martin as the incoming co-chair would like to add a few words. Thank you, all.

[MARTIN]:

Thank you, Markus. Thank you, Manal. Just to confirm from my side as well that it's a pleasure and honor to step into Markus' shoes. Although my shoe size is slightly bigger, I'll try to make it fit for sure. A lot of work has been done in making the process much more feasible and make sure things come through the cracks because we all know what is happening and the support by the [org] has been very important for that. So full commitment to continue to have a very clear process that can support everything that needs to happen and everything that needs to be

said will be grabbed and taken forward from there. So thanks, Thomas.

THOMAS SCHNEIDER: Thank you, Martin. Even though the Swiss people may not have big shoes, but their feet may be very, very stable inside. Just to tell you that. We will discuss this later.

I also just wanted to thank Markus and Manal for this work because this type of work is work that is not really fancy and presentable to the outside. People don't really love you because you do this work because most of the people don't know or don't care or don't realize that people are working hard on things like this. My experience shows there's a limited number of people who are willing and able to do this kind of work. So I really appreciate highly what you have been doing in the past years and thank you for this.

Because, as I said before, in order to be efficient and transparent and accountable, you need structures that give incentive to a minimal efficiency, a minimal accountability independent of the people that may come and go. But if you over engineer things, there's a curve that starts going down if you go too far or if you don't do it right. These things are not trivial, and the idea is to develop structures that then free time that you don't have to discuss about the structures but actually can spend time on

substance. I hope with these clarifications that we have achieved that this is it for some time on these issues that we can leave them.

We will have to finalize the register of advice, which is also something that has been taking some time now. So I'm looking forward to that is completed rather sooner than later then it's done. And then we use it and we discuss in a few years' time again on how to improve it so that we have time for the substance. Because the purpose of all these processes is to have a stable, reliable, predictable, substantive discussion.

Let me just reiterate the thanks to Markus and Manal and everybody else who was working even less visible than the two of them behind the scenes for this. Thank you very much. That's the end of our breakfast – now it's lunch – BGRI lunch meeting. Thank you.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]