

PANAMA - GAC Onboarding and Travel Support Discussion
Thursday, June 28, 2018 - 09:45 to 10:15 EST
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MANAL ISMAIL, GAC CHAIR: We will proceed now with agenda item 23 on GAC boarding and travel support. It's scheduled for 30 minutes; I hope we will be able to finish in time for the coffee break.

ROBERT HOGGARTH: Thank you. We will definitely make sure everyone gets their coffee break. The purpose of this session is to provide you all with an update on the onboarding activities that we are engaging in as some of the previous comments in the last session indicated. There are a substantial a changes that we've been experiencing in terms of participation within the GAC. And one of the things that became evident to us fairly early on in the last year is that with these changes, with the workload for the GAC continues to -- if not continue but grow in this new empowered community environment that there needed to be systems in place to help you with your colleagues with the work you are doing.

The first slide is an overview of the some of the changes that we're experiencing. The first period of time is the period between the Johannesburg and Abu Dhabi meeting and then

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between Abu Dhabi and San Juan and then San Juan to now. And in that time we've had 100 new participants in the GAC. We don't see all in the room at every meeting. Generally I think the experience is around about a third of GAC members participate in any particular face to face meeting, for all sorts of reasons in terms of your other work, the location of the meeting and the rest. But we're experiencing, as you see, many new people coming on board and many veteran participants departing.

So again, and now this year's snapshot, 100 new, 43 departing. Not great at math, that's why I became a lawyer. But somewhere around 25-27 percent as you see change rate on an annual base. If you were a strict mathematic, you would say in four years none of will be here and would be another group. We understand it's not exactly the case. Some of the additions not directly related to 43 people and 43 arrived, but the overall message is more people are participating, more people need to be onboarded and understand the issues. So a general theme from a support staff perspective is how do we provide the tools to allow you to onboard new members and how much faster can we help them connect. As a veteran, many know there is a lot of work involved in this, and if you can spread the work there's less burden on the few doing it. So that's the general theory.

If you go to the next slide. And more for illustrative purposes, one of the things I talked about with Julia early on, let's sit down

and see all the various aspects of the work that we do that involve onboarding a new member. The purpose of showing this map is not to have you read the little bits, just to give you a concept this is something we're trying to map out to understand the connections and the rest. Something like this with the help of the GAC leadership and just with the five of us with Tom and the four GAC support staff members, obviously we can't tackle all of this at once. This map reflects it's not just the five of us that interact with you. One of the things I learned and appreciated, in many cases you have more interaction with the ICANN global stakeholder team or the ICANN government engagement team than with us, so it's trying to find out where are all the touch-points that the interactions take place that we can improve on.

Pua, a greater leader in terms capacity building workshops, sees one piece. Tom sees another piece. And other members of ICANN staff involved. But what I challenged Julia on was let's look at a big way and try to pick areas where we can provide immediate value and that's part of the discussion today. Julia will talk to you a little bit about the effort we engaged in on the introductory pilot series of webinars -- and we've just begun to start -- that we will probably do for at least another two inter-sessional periods to get information and feedback from all of you. She will talk a little bit about the work we're doing in terms

of travel support, also a critical element of engaging in providing opportunities for more participation at ICANN face to face meetings.

And that's probably all the time we have, but we wanted to give you some targeted feedback, a view on what we're doing and also basically use this as a commercial to encourage you, particularly some of you who are new and this is your first meeting, getting feedback, perspectives on what we do right now and what you would like to see more of. So comments on the website, on some of the other work we're doing, always to be encouraged. I will turn the microphone over to Julia to talk about a little of our targeted work.

JULIA CHARVOLEN:

So as Rob previously noted, there has been a high rotation of GAC participation and GAC participants since ICANN61, actually, there have been 22 new representatives. For this reason we really thought it's essential that they get a proper onboarding. In order to start this process we, after several discussions we had at ICANN61 with the GAC support with the GAC leadership, decided to launch what we call the GAC webinar pilot series program, a set of three webinars. The first the transparency initiative, an introduction of the goals and benefits for the ICANN community. The second webinar gave an introduction on the

GNSO and was very well attended, more to get the GNSO and its work as well as a case study with the policy development process, and the third ICANN compliance office with the role and objectives of this compliance office. Overall there were 29 GAC members who attended the webinars with three observers.

So among the attendees, not only were there several recent newcomers who attended the webinar, we also had what we called veterans who participated, and we understood that this program was actually beneficial to all GAC memberships. We took into account the number of members who confirmed their attendance and accepted the calendar invitation through different things, and those who actually attended the webinars. And on average, 30 members accepted the calendar invitation and 10 attended the webinars. Seems a little low for a participation rate, but it's a pilot program and we really believe that there can only be improvement for future projects.

So in addition to the participation, we took a look through the Google analytics on our website. Overall we think the participation was pretty good and was actually all regions attended the sessions. What we did as well, we sent a questionnaire for feedback purposes to all GAC members who attended the webinar, and good feedback, focused mostly on logistical aspects and sharing the material in that advance.

Another feedback we got was for future topics, if GAC members would be interested in having other webinars, such as ICANN bylaws, ICANN board and its role, as well as get to know more about contractual compliance. The next step would be to have GAC leadership and support discuss future webinars, how they can be facilitated.

I just wanted to go back to another tool we discussed at ICANN61, and that is the ICANN learn platform. If you remember, at ICANN61 we discussed this with the public responsibility support team as well as with our GAC representative from Cambodia, Rapid Sun, and now since yesterday we have GAC platform on the ICANN learn that is live, so not only available to GAC newcomers but to the whole community. So that was for onboarding and newcomers. Are there any questions?

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO:

Keral Douglas. I just wanted to compliment the work done by others before, including Rapid Sun and [indiscernible] for doing this, and I want to strongly join you when you indicated that there is from the numbers what would appear to be a very high turnover. And we've all recognized that that high turnover has certain challenges attached to it, that being the ability to participate becomes more and more difficult if you are a new member. And I do recall in ICANN61 a brilliant suggestion by

Manal as to how to break the ice, how do we get persons to come to ICANN, come to the GAC and feel confident enough to make a contribution. Not just to be aware of what is being discussed -- which by itself is a significant a work if you read all the documentation -- but having read all the documentation, the next step is to contribute and feel confident that you can make a contribution that you are comfortable with. And that is an issue in addition to which if English is not your mother tongue, then you have what may be another hurdle. So those are things that I'm glad you indicated in your presentation all the different steps, all the different avenues for persons to become engaged. And I applaud the work that you've been doing, that the staff have been doing, and I certainly look forward to even other initiatives.

Even the ice breaker, I don't know, when a person comes to the GAC for the first time, he's going to come into this room. It may be a sterile room, sterile environment, microphones, not necessarily a chance to meet your colleagues, and you are now thrust into a room with maybe 60 or 70 people you've never seen before, deal with topics you've not heard of before, and then you are asked to say something if you feel confident enough. So I'm thinking maybe in addition to those you've mentioned already, we could also see some initiative so that just before, make somebody feel more welcome when you have that ability to talk

to somebody or just like a mentor or like a buddy, who could say these are the issues. You sit down so you feel that you are amongst friends. And that to me would go a long way. So thank you.

JAMAICA:

I wanted to endorse the comments made by my colleague from Trinidad and Tobago and in particular to put on the record that as a participant in the capacity building workshop that took place before the ICANN62, and as a newcomer to the GAC, I found that particular workshop to be particularly useful. And apart from just learning the basic information about GAC and proceedings, what I found interesting was the discourse that happened in that particular session in relation to pertinent issues which were discussed in the meetings -- the GDPR, for example, the role of the GNSO and the GNSO council. What it did certainly for me -- of course you have lots of emails and lots of groups before in the webinars, but the face to face session made you very prepared for the discussions that took place in the GAC during the meetings.

So my recommendation would be in light of Trinidad in terms of suggestion is that persons coming to the GAC for the first time, even if it's not called capacity development, there could be a pre-workshop where some presentations are done on some of

the key issues and discussions that will take place. Certainly if it's your first time you have that six-hour advantage that allows you to understand issues that may come up and allow you to formulate views that would make you more confident when time to speak in the larger sessions.

PUA HUNTER:

Thank you, Julia, to both you and Rob for the great work you are doing. Just looking at the whole picture on the ICANN, we've got so many stuff out there useful for newcomers. We've got our own capacity development workshops and in addition to that, ICANN has the ICANN learn platform and within GAC we have the onboarding program. One important program I really enjoyed that I participated in this year was the leadership program. And I think within GAC we need to promote that and also allow members to see that we are not limited with the programs we have, the workshops we have within GAC. We have our materials out there on the ICANN.

One question I have is you mentioned about the participants and the webinars. I'm interested in the number by regions because I think from my region we're pretty quiet and we have our own session in the region and I think we can help at that level GAC members in the regions and actually provide support. And within the ICANN meetings, and I think it's useful, just one

recommendation that -- what was the word you used? I would say seasoned GAC members should have something on their badge to say I'm available to help so that newcomers can see where they can go to GAC members for support. Thank you.

JULIA CHARVOLEN: Yes.

MALI: This is the representative of MALI speaking, thank you. Frankly, the webinars are a bit challenging for non-English speakers. I believe we need to encourage workshops along the lines of the workshops held in Dakar in French prior to the GAC sessions. As my colleague has just said, it would be interesting to hold a meeting with some refresher courses. I see that most of the briefing documents are in English. We're always told that language shouldn't be a barrier, but the reality is totally different. We do have our daily jobs in our countries and we also work at the GAC. So reading all these briefing documents in a language which is not our own, it is indeed a challenge.

I would suggest the following: When you circulate documents among the GAC members, you should take into account the language issue so as to encourage better participation. Thank you.

JULIA CHARVOLEN: If I may, in fact we do engage with them quite a lot and other departments. (through interpreter) we take a lot of care in preparing these workshops, and your suggestion is very well noted.

INDONESIA: Websites and information on how ICANN works. That would be useful not only for the newcomer but also the GAC members as well as multi-stakeholder. What I've found, my own experience when I joined the GAC -- the capacity building, it seems to me that there are many people who come there to get more and more information about ICANN, not only the organization side but also the technical side. For example, people will ask who controls the root server? Who maintains the number, the data in the root server? Does the server in Indonesia for example has the same data as the rest of the root server? Just an example of just root server, not mentioning other questions.

If for the organization we all know there's so much information about the Internet on the web and people may get wrong information on the web. [indiscernible] it can be information which is not complete and people can get a different idea of how it works. For example, is the [indiscernible] still controlling the root server or just [indiscernible] things like that. So perhaps in

addition to the information, I know it will be very difficult, but a place where you can ask whatever you want. Perhaps as now you don't get the result tomorrow, but there should be a place where people can ask those kinds of questions, not only from the organizational side but also the technical side. Thank you.

JULIA CHARVOLEN: Amicia.

ST. KITTS: Good morning. Amicia from St. Kitts, for the record. I just want to endorse the comment of Trinidad and Tobago having some sort of buddy systems. I believe it would work well for the GAC whereby newcomers are paired with existing and seasoned GAC members who can then show them the ropes, more or less introduce them to the current topics of interest as well as the relationships of GAC other leaders of the SO and AC as well as the ICANN leadership. I think it's important that newcomers get this sort of introduction so that they feel more comfortable and get the empowerment to contribute and participate in the discussions not only in the GAC but in other areas of ICANN. Thanks.

JULIA CHARVOLEN: Thank you. Thank you.

Just listening to what colleagues are saying about supporting each other, a plug for the commonwealth meeting we're having at lunchtime today. We had one at the last ICANN meeting and had a productive discussion, I think these are important issues about how we can support each other, and we can discuss that further at the Commonwealth meeting. Thanks.

With time constraints, I will then send you all an email regarding travel support, which is actually a very important topic. So yes, it's 10:15 so I guess I will follow up by email. Sorry. Yes, please.

Good morning, everybody, I come from [indiscernible]

GABON:

This is the representative of Gabon speaking. Dear Julia, thank you for your presentation and sharing this useful tools. I have two issues this morning. On the one hand my mother tongue is French, and on the other hand, I'm a newcomer to the GAC and this is my first ICANN meeting. I would like to commend you on these tools as well as on the GAC website and travel support and ICANN learn. I feel very comfortable in this environment because I attended the capacity building workshops held in Dakar and took online training on ICANN learning platform prior to the capacity building workshops in Dakar, and very useful. But mostly I would like to thank the ICANN staff that supports the GAC, and I would like to thank you, Julia, because you're

always willing to help us and reply to all our questions. Thank you.

MANAL ISMAIL, GAC CHAIR: Thank you, everyone, for the very valuable input we received. We've been taking notes and hope to accommodate all requests hopefully as early as the upcoming meeting. So Tom, before concluding -- please go ahead.

TOM DALE: This is a shameless commercial plug. Many of you know my colleague, Michele [indiscernible] she is now a published author. Her book is a historical biography called Elizabeth McArthur, a life at the edge of the world. The book is available in the usual places such as book depository, ibooks and Kindle, and I have a signed copy here at a cost of \$25 US. But please have a look, it's been well reviewed, and I thank you for your attention.

MANAL ISMAIL, GAC CHAIR: Thank you, Tom. So now we have a 15-minute break for coffee, and please be back in the room preferably at 10:30 so we can start the following session on GAC independent secretariat and other administrative matters. Thank you.

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