KOBE - ICANN64 Welcome Ceremony
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ICANN64 | Kobe, Japan

BRAD WHITE: Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome ICANN's vice president and managing director of the Asia-Pacific region, Mr. Jia-Rong Low.

[Cheers and Applause]

JIA-RONG LOW: Good morning. For those joining us for the first time and if you are from Japan, there is Japanese interpretation available. If you haven't gotten yourself an earpiece, please do so.

Ms. Yukari Sato state minister of internal affairs and communications, Mr. Kizo Hisamoto, mayor of Kobe city, thanks. Colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, good morning. I'm Jia-Rong, your emcee for this morning. It is my pleasure to open ICANN's 64th public meeting here in Kobe, Japan.

Applause]

Welcome to the region and welcome to Japan. Thank you for making it here in person and also to those joining us remotely from all over the world. Thank you for taking your time.

Also to our Internet sister organizations, the Internet Engineering Task Force, ISOC, Internet Society, the regional Internet registries, and many others, thank you for being here with us.

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.

I'd like to also take this opportunity to thank the local host committee. Thank you for hosting us. The local host committee itself is a multistakeholder grouping comprising 18 organizations here in Japan and supported by the ministry of internal affairs and communications.

This is a remarkable showcase of Japan's longstanding support of the multistakeholder model, taking place in action right here.

I would go on to name every one of the local host committee, but unfortunately, I'm only given three minutes for this opening. But do check out their booth, and you can find out exactly who is in the local host committee.

Now, the last ICANN meeting in Japan was 19 years ago in Yokohama. We have come a long way since, and the ICANN community has grown both in size and maturity. The number of top-level domains in the roots has grown, as you may know some 1,200 more.

ICANN itself has matured and the stewardship of the IANA functions was transitioned to the global multistakeholder community. As this meeting is in the Asia-Pacific, or APAC, region, as we call it, allow me to say a few words to acknowledge the APAC community. When we first established the ICANN APAC office six years ago, our region was known to be underrepresented in ICANN. Today our community has grown and is represented in every one of ICANN's supporting organizations and advisory committees. We also have a stronger presence in ICANN's PDP working groups. Further, more of our community members are taking up leadership positions. Congratulations, Asia-Pacific community. Please join me.

[Applause]

Now, we still have a long way to go. And I'd like to thank you, the global ICANN community, for being open and inclusive in embracing diversity and that we could work together towards accomplishing ICANN's mission as one. Thank you very much.

So, what's in store for us next? I believe this is a good time for me to hand the floor to our Board chair, Cherine Chalaby, who will be sharing his vision with us. Please join me in welcoming Cherine.

[Applause]

>>CHERINE CHALABY: Thank you, Jia-Rong. Ms. Yukari Sato, state minister of internal affairs and communications, Mr. Kizo Hisamoto, mayor of Kobe, ladies and gentlemen, ohayogozaimas, dozo yoroshiku, Chalaby des.

[Applause]

I can continue in Japanese, if you want.

[Laughter]

I lived here in Tokyo for a year and learned a little bit.

Anyway, as Jia-Rong said, it's so good to be back in Japan. It's been a very, very long time and we are really grateful to our host for welcoming us here in Kobe.

Yukichi Fukuzawa, acclaimed by many as the true founder of modern Japan, completed his best-known work, "Encouragement of Learning," in 1876. He wrote: "Those who do not proceed shall go backward, and those who do not go backward shall proceed." These words ring true today as they did 143 years ago.

Simply put, organizations that do not evolve are left behind. ICANN's role is key in the expansion and evolution of the Internet, so it cannot allow itself to be left behind. In the next five years, ICANN will face more external challenges than ever before. We need to plan for these challenges now, not only because we must but because our bylaws mandate that we have a new strategic and operational plan in place by July 2020. Together, we have been working on these plans and together we need to embrace the conditions upon which their successful implementation depends.

In order to have enough time to prepare for implementation, by July 2020, we need to finalize these plans by December 2019, nine months from now. Time, therefore, is of the essence. We have a lot to do in the coming months to give us the best chance of success and take ICANN where we want it to be.

It will not be easy and our volunteers on whom we depend have a very busy workload, but I'm confident we can do it. This is the focus of my remarks this morning.

Our history shows that progress is not possible without change. Our founders -- and one of them is here today -- understood this because they set up ICANN to be a living organization with bylaws, structure, and processes designed to evolve.

It is not surprising, therefore, that change is the law of life at ICANN, whether we look to the past, the present, or the future.

And when we look to the future, we can see strong winds of change coming our way, such as the rise in cyber-sovereignty, the exponential growth in security threats, the rapid evolution of disruptive technologies, and the increasing risks of Internet fragmentation.

The community, the Board, and ICANN org have recognized that these winds of change could have a significant impact on ICANN. If we allow them to sweep over us, ICANN could be blown in a direction that is inconsistent with our strategic plan.

Our strategy is defined in the following documents. First, a new strategic plan for fiscal years 2021 to 2025 was published for comment last December. A new operating and financial plan for the same fiscal years will be published for comment this coming December. And work on our governance plan to improve the effectiveness of our multistakeholder model started in Barcelona and will continue here in Kobe.

These three plans, once completed, will be comprehensive and far reaching. Executed well, they will evolve and improve our approach to security, governance, unique identifier systems, geopolitics and financials.

Now, let me share with you where we are on each plan, what we need to do to finalize them, and the conditions for success. First, the new strategic plan. I mentioned earlier that the plan was published and the comment period has closed. It is likely that some changes to details could result from discussion with the community here in Kobe on the comments received.

Notwithstanding these changes, our overarching strategic direction is clear. It consists of a new vision, an unchanged mission, and five new strategic objectives.

Our new vision for ICANN is to be a champion of the single, open, and globally interoperable Internet and the trusted steward of its unique identifiers. Our five strategy objectives are: To strengthen the security of the DNS, improve the effectiveness of our multistakeholder model, evolve the unique identifier systems,

address geopolitical issues impacting ICANN's mission, and ensure long-term financial sustainability.

We will finalize the strategic plan at the latest by ICANN65 in Marrakech, having considered the community's comments. We will also allow for later adjustments that could result from the operational and financial plan once completed.

The Board believes that this new strategic plan is bold and decisive. As a condition for success, its implementation will require an unwavering commitment from all of us to see it through.

The strategic plan has to be a living document and not forgotten in a drawer. It must be revisited at planned intervals and adjusted when necessary. To succeed, we must believe in the strategy and follow it with our collective strength and will.

Next, let me update you on our second plan. Since the beginning of January, ICANN org has been working on a five-year operating and financial plan that will show how and at what cost we will implement our chosen strategy. In order to engage with the community at a digestible pace and finalize this plan by December 2019, ICANN org will release the plan for public comment in two parts. There will be a high-level version by June followed by the fully developed plan by December 2019. As a condition for success, we must make sure that collectively, we have the leadership, management, technical know-how, and financial strength required to implement the five-year roadmap laid out by this plan.

It will not happen by default. We're going to have to work together as a community to identify and address any resource gaps. While the success of this operating and financial plan lies

primarily with ICANN -- excuse me -- we all know that ICANN does not operate in a vacuum.

Collaborating with our partners, the regional Internet registries, the root server operators, the Engineering Task Force -- Internet Engineering Task Force, and others and working with them to achieve common goals will become important to our success such as when addressing security threats and when evolving the Internet's unique identifier systems.

For this collaboration to work, we must be flexible and recognize that sometimes ICANN will take the lead while at other times our partners will take the lead.

Finally, let me update you on our third plan. If you recall, one of the five objectives of our new strategic plan is to improve the effectiveness of our multistakeholder model.

To be clear, our multistakeholder model is working as evidenced by the recent success of the ICANN community through the EPDP. Our community delivered a consensus policy recommendations under tight and unprecedented deadlines. A big thank you to all of those who got involved with the EPDP.

However, as ICANN continues to evolve, as our environment becomes more complex and higher in risk, aspects of our governance must also evolve whilst avoiding any compromise of our deeply valued, bottom-up, and inclusive decision-making process.

You would agree with me that this objective is not new as over the years we have often expressed the need to improve both the efficiency and effectiveness of our governance. That said, evolving our governance cannot happen in a haphazard way. We

need a plan, and we need all of us to be engaged in developing it gradually and carefully.

The Board, therefore, proposes a two-step approach. Step 1, identify the issues and, step 2, map out the responsibilities and time line for addressing them. It is worth emphasizing that the scope of step 2 is just limited to the development of a work plan. We are not, and I repeat, we are not at this stage looking at finding solutions nor at implementing them. These will come later, beginning fiscal year 2021. I want to talk about each one of these steps now.

The Board at ICANN63 in Barcelona initiated step 1 when it started a community-wide dialogue to obtain initial inputs on this topic. Discussion with the community in multiple fora revealed several common threads. We will share with you these threads and these comments this week.

Here in Kobe, we want the dialogue to continue to make sure we hear all stakeholders and have a fuller understanding of the issues. The dialogue will take place in a face-to-face session on Thursday. Our discussions will be bottom-up and will be facilitated by Brian Cute, a long-time member of our community. My Board colleagues and I look forward to participating in these discussions as part of the larger community.

After Kobe, an issues paper reflecting the discussions will be published for comment. And based on the feedback we receive, an approach to step 2 for mapping out the details of our governance plan will be proposed to the community.

The plan should answer three questions. First, which of the issues identified in step 1 have broad community support. Two, who will

be responsible for addressing them? And, three, when will they be addressed?

Work on this plan should proceed at a digestible pace. We should, for example, begin in Marrakech, continue in Montreal, and ideally, we would all agree to produce a draft plan by December 2019 in time for costing and integrating it within the operating and financial plan, which I mentioned earlier.

We should also be aware that there are dependencies to consider and respect as a number of activities that are currently under way will contribute inputs to this governance plan including, for example, the GNSO work on PDP 3.0, some of the Work Stream 2 recommendations, as well as any ongoing third accountability and transparency review.

The Board understands that developing this governance plan could have its challenges because there could be a natural resistance to evolving our governance as changes could affect the processes, culture, and working methods that we are accustomed to; in other words, changes to our DNA. And because we need to prioritize this plan and find a way of developing it over the next nine months without overburdening our volunteers, who already have a busy schedule.

As a condition for success, we must address these challenges. At the same time, we cannot ignore that for ICANN to remain relevant and successful, we will need to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of our governance in a timely manner.

In closing, let me sum up. By December 2019, we will have in our hands three plans to shape ICANN's future. We will begin implementation of these plans in July 2020 as mandated by our bylaws. Time is of the essence, and we have a lot to do in the next

15 months to prepare and give ourselves the best chance of success. Our CEO will lead the implementation of most of these plans, but we cannot lay the entire responsibility for success at his doorstep. The Board and the community will work hand in hand with our CEO and share that responsibility.

Over the past 20 years, our community has demonstrated its resilience and its ability to pull together at decisive points in our history.

We are now at another decisive point. Strong winds of change are blowing our way. We must take change by the hand and continue to evolve. It will not be easy, but we will succeed as we have done in the past. We owe this to the billions of Internet users and to future generations.

I want to thank you all for your participation in ICANN. The Board is aware of the relentless demand on your time and appreciates the sacrifice you make. Without your support, we could not make our plans a reality. Your work here in Kobe is key to our success, and I wish you a very productive week.

Arigatou gozaimasu. Thank you.

[Applause]

I now have the pleasure of introducing Goran Marby, President and CEO of ICANN org.

[Applause]

GORAN MARBY: Good morning.

I don't know about you, but I'm really excited to be here in Japan. It's a fantastic country. And, unfortunately, the food is excellent and I'm going to gain some weight.

We are going to be around 2,000 people coming here and from Japan, it's about 200 and I understand from Asia -- thank you, Jia-Rong -- it's going to be in the range of 3- to 400 people. That's the reason why we travel the world. We want to have local people coming to ICANN meetings.

 And here we are again in the morning.

[Laughter]

There is only one person to blame, and that's me actually because for logistical reasons, I decided to have the opening session in the morning. Yeah. Sometimes my ideas doesn't work out, as my team knows.

But next time we have an opening ceremony it is going to be in the afternoon because I'm not allowed to make any more decisions about that going forward. I hope you're going to join me in that.

Another more personal thing is that this is my tenth ICANN meeting.

[Applause]

I said that to my team earlier this week and then I had some people coming up and saying, hey, I was here in Japan the last time we were here.

[Laughter]

So I think I have gone into the freshman status now, but I think I'm starting to know my way around. I always treated working at ICANN as an honor. I actually have never had a better job in my life. This is one of the most fun things I ever done, with some exceptions going up in the morning. But apart from that, it is a real honor. And I know the team I am working with at ICANN org also feel it's an honor. It's not always easy, but -- and we are always trying to do our best, but it's been fun so far.

Take a step back, as I usually say. Over the last 30 years, 4 million -- 4 billion people more or less has come online. The Internet -- we always talk about this, that the Internet has changed the way we do things, everything from our banking to our love life. It has a real profound effect on the way we live. And one of the amazing things with this technology is it wasn't really done from a telco or a product company or anything else. That people got connected to the Internet was something that people decided to do. That makes this technology very, very unique because it wasn't packaged the way other products is done.

And the other thing that's very, very rare with this is the fact that the way the Internet governance, or the governance of the way we're doing, is a pure multistakeholder model. And I think that's a part of its success, from the people to the people. We also reached a point where because of the impact of society, not everybody is happy with it.

We see many legislative proposals around the world. And ICANN is a technical organization. We don't go into politics, but we see technical -- we see sometimes they can have an impact on your ability to make policies or to have people disconnecting from the Internet.

And one of the things we see, there seems to be misunderstanding what the Internet actually is and platforms on top of the Internet. Many of the discussions about hate speech and other things is actually on platforms on the Internet. You use the Internet to reach that platform. That's not the Internet.

One of the things we need to be better at is to inform and educate legislators around the world about that difference so with good intent, they don't block people coming onto the Internet. That is one of the reasons why you saw that a couple weeks ago we came out with a new shorter -- a proposal for a shorter how to engage with governments around the world to educate and tell where actually the Internet itself could be at risk.

It's also on that note that you have seen that we applied for membership of ITU-D because we want to be in the room with our own flag when things like this are discussed, joining our friends in ISOC and RIRs in that arena.

It's not only legislative things that are happening, we also have technical. I had the pleasure of being in Barcelona a couple of weeks ago for the GSMA World Mobile Congress, where there are many discussions about how 5G is going to save the world. I'm a little bit cynical because I was there when 2G was going to save the world and 3G and 4G and now 5G and apparently also 6G.

As I said, don't make any jokes about 6G.

[Laughter]

In that, the presentation given said there is a best-effort Internet, implying there is another Internet, another Internet not using the identifiers we talk about that makes it possible for people all around the world to connect to one single network. And we have

to watch out not only for the legislative proposal, which often are for good intent but also technology solutions that actually can harm people's ability to join the Internet.

Because the thing for me, this community, you, more than me, has been able to do very good solutions on some of the really hard-pressing problems that have existed to create this ability. And I happen to believe -- and I'm stubborn in that -- that this multistakeholder model is much better of taking on some of those pressures than local governments around the world. And I believe that because we have proven Internet works. And Internet is boundless, and there's a risk. If we see too many local legislations or technical development, we can actually fragmentize what I believe in, which is the Internet.

And especially now when we enter discussion about cybersecurity, for instance, many of you are aware of an increased pattern of attacks on the DNS over the last couple of months. And I'm happy to see we're going to have many sessions here about that.

With that, I also want to join and thank the expedited PDP, both the people in it but also my team. The amount of work you put into that one is absolutely staggering. It's easy to say that I'm grateful. All the discussions, everything you did, remember that during a very short period of time there were actually -- we were actually doing something to close off a discussion that had been existing within ICANN for the last 20 years. I applaud you for that.

I also want to thank my own study group, the technical study group, under the leadership of Ram who during this meeting is going to present a technical solution that potentially could diminish the contracted parties' legal responsibilities, which will

give the opportunity for the ICANN community to potentially create the unified access model for WHOIS data.

I'm not going to be long, usually because I don't like to speak very long. So my final job is to do this, is to announce formally that this is going to be the best ICANN meeting ever. Thank you very much.

[Applause]

JIA-RONG LOW: Thank you, Goran. Now please help me to invite our next speaker on stage, Ms. Yukari Sato, State Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications.

[Applause]

YUKARI SATO: Good morning, Your Excellencies, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen. I am Yukari Sato. Welcome all to Kobe.

As a State Minister for Information and Communications of Japan, I am honored to welcome all of you who support the stable operation of the Internet.

The Internet has dramatically changed the world in the last 30 years. There has never been such technology which revolutionize the world greatly during a short term. The Internet has been operated by multistakeholders who own the principles of autonomous, decentralized and interconnected operations without any big technical problem. So allow me to pay my sincere respects to all of you here as well as the people who have been supporting the One Internet for over the three decades. I am assured that the Internet continues to change the world

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dynamically, and it will become even more important going forward.

The Internet has achieved significant developments, such as a high-speed and an inexpensive communication means and has contributed to the development of democracy. As Prime Minister Abe mentioned in Davos in January, data is going to drive our economies forward. In a data-driven society, by utilization of data, we can address social challenges, we can make people happier, and we can make our lives more convenient.

In order to realize better society, we should safeguard One Internet as an engine of innovation and as a free marketplace for speech.

In Japan, we are studying network neutrality rules to protect end-users' right and to promote innovation. We should globally share the vision and harmonize the rules over network neutrality to sustain the One Internet.

Tomorrow is just 500 days before the Olympic and the Paralympics games in Tokyo 2020. In 2025, the World Exposition, Osaka, Japan will be held. I am assured that further progress in the Internet will achieve marvelous work beyond the wildest imagination.

Finally, as you can see, various participants meet together in this Portopia hall, and ICANN is supported by this multistakeholder mechanism, not to mention ICANN64 this time around that is also supported by Japan's Internet community.

As you know, Professor Jun Murai, who has been leading the world's Internet from the dawn of the Internet age, ICANN Board member Mr. Akinori Maemura and each of the community

members established their Local Host Committee and prepared for ICANN64 meeting.

Please let me express my sincere gratitude once again for Japan's Internet community. I am proud that we are contributing to the operation of the world's stable Internet sharing this time here together.

Now, Kobe City has developed as a port for international trade since ancient times. I hope that you will fully enjoy Kobe's hospitality, omotenashi, and that your stay will be comfortable.

We have also prepared a gala dinner in Hotel Okura tonight. We look forward to having you join.

I hope ICANN64 will be a successful one. Thank you very much, and thank you, ICANN.

[Applause]

JIA-RONG LOW: Thank you, Minister Sato.

Now, please join me to welcome the Mayor of the City of Kobe, Mr. Kizo Hisamoto.

[Applause]

KIZO HISAMOTO: Good morning, everybody. My name is Kizo Hisamoto, the Mayor of Kobe City.

I would like to begin by offering my congratulations on the opening commencement of ICANN64. It brings me great pleasure to know that one of the most significant meetings held by Internet

domain stakeholders is taking place in Kobe. On behalf of the citizens of the city, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all of you for coming to Kobe.

At the dawn of the Internet in Japan in 1994, under the domain name City Kobe JP, Kobe was the one of the earliest municipalities to establish an offshore website in Japan. The following year in 1995, Kobe was struck by the great Hanshin earthquake, experiencing tremendous damage and loss. Subsequently, during this time, the Internet lines were on damages, and the city's website was used to provide vital disaster aid and information to the citizens. It was also inundated with messages from all over the world offering support and encouragement.

The situation in aftermath of the earthquake gave us a real sense of just how important it is to have a reliable information network in place.

Following the earthquake, with assistance of local and international organizations, Kobe established a strong communication network utilizing IoT technology. Able to withstand the effects of disasters, the network was one of the first steps taken on the road to reconstruction and recovery. Now, having fully recovered, Kobe is working towards the next stage in creating a safe and secure city.

As I believe a strong communication network will play a big role in this, I am looking forward to the continued development of information and communication technology and the rules that govern its use.

Surrounded by the mountain and the ocean, Kobe affords safe, secure nighttime; broad panoramas; harbor cruises; and hot springs.

Please enjoy our city while you stay in Kobe. And I'll be glad if you notice that Kobe is not just a city of Kobe beef.

Thank you very much.

[Laughter]

[Applause]

JIA-RONG LOW: Thank you very much, Mayor Hisamoto. Thank you again for hosting us in your beautiful city.

Next let's put our hands together to welcome our next speaker, the chair of the ICANN64 Local Host Committee, Dr. Jun Murai.

[Applause]

JUN MURAI: Good morning, everybody. Good morning, ICANN members, ICANN people. It's very nice to come back in here and seeing all old friends, good friends, new friends in here. So welcome to Kobe again.

Let me briefly talking about the historical of the city. Some of you remember long time ago in '92 we hosted the first ISOC-based INET conference in here. So that was a very important time for the Internet and also the community as well. So Internet community get together here in Kobe and start discussion centered in an organization called ISOC, Internet Society, because that was the very first time that the Internet community

creating and acting as a society and the community to lead the Internet, global Internet. And that was started in here at the Kobe in '92. So this is very special place for the origin, and especially the multistakeholder type of activities started in Kobe.

And our city mayor mentioned about the '95 earthquake happened in here, but the 1995 is also, you know, the year we don't forget in terms of the Microsoft Windows 95 bundle, the TCP/IP, which is basically the citizens, people, users, you know, started to use the Internet without paying the extra cost for the additional software because it was bundled. So that was '95 as well.

So '95, especially in this country, is considered as a kind of the year one for the people's Internet because of that reason. So as the mayor said, the Kobe earthquake was basically informed, and then a lot of support coming from all over the world. And a lot of friends, network was represented, and that was almost the first time the Japanese people noticed that the Internet is getting for everyone; right? Type of a thing, which was a very important time.

So since then, we hosted the first ICANN meeting in Japan in 2000, in year 2000 in Yokohama. So that was, you know, all the history about Japan and this community of ICANN.

But I was very much surprised and happy that Chairman Cherine mentioned about the Yukichi Fukuzawa. So if you are not familiar with Yukichi Fukuzawa, he was a founder of my university, Keio University, the oldest university in Japan, a little bit older than the University of Tokyo, which you may know. So Keio University people and Yukichi Fukuzawa started up the University of Tokyo. But, so anyway, he is a kind of innovator. He opened up the country, and he see the kind of global aspect. So that's a lot of

amazing things we learn from Yukichi Fukuzawa. But if you have 10,000 yen bill; right? He is Yukichi Fukuzawa.

So, so you're -- I really respect Japan national bank to print our university logo to everybody.

[Laughter]

So anyway.

[Applause]

Okay. So let me share a little bit about Japan. Japan has been doing very well in terms of since the year 2000, we do have an I.T. strategy, and seriously with the government and industries and economics, we work together for the -- having the nice broadband environment in this country. So I think it's been very successful for a while, at least.

We have a lot of issues to solve by use of the Internet in this country. So earthquake was one of the example. We have, you know, (indiscernible) suffering from the earthquake, natural disaster, and every time we learn and we worked a lot about how to save people by the Internet during the disaster time, and then it's been improved. That is all certainly one of the characteristic of Japanese Internet environment.

Secondly, the health and the elderly society, we had 70,000 people who are more than hundred years in this country. So my father is 96 years old; my mother is 94 years old. They're both, you know, and working actively. So this is a super elderly society, so that even the elderly society with some difficulty of the move and the, you know, motion, but they have to work in this country. So how? The Internet and the digital environment is the only one who can support that, so that is one way. And, you know,

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agriculture is another important thing in this country, and it's extremely improved by use of AI, data technology, and the Internet.

So the point is the area to cover by the Internet, extending very rapidly. So the government sector, for example, is silos to each of the industries. So we really need to work to combine horizontally and working together as a common platform.

So working on the Internet is really the mission that the entire globe, entire human being is accessing the Internet and the entire section of the industries, and of course all the nations are accessing the Internet. So multistakeholder in a sense that we really need the common platform with this planet. That is the mission of the future of the Internet.

So the ICANN been serving for that role, and that was the first entity and the community to address that kind of issue, and I'm really happy and appreciate and respect as a person who founded, who was -- this organization a long time ago. And I'm very happy to see you, and I hope the continued success and sustainable outcome generated jointly by all the participants of this ICANN in Kobe.

Thank you very much.

[Applause]

JIA-RONG LOW: Thank you, Professor Murai. I had the pleasure myself to visit Keio University and to be speaking at Professor Murai's class. In fact, some of his students are amongst you here at the ICANN meeting as well.

Now, please join me to welcome the next speaker, the chair of the Number Resource Organization, or NRO, Executive Council, Alan Barrett.

[Applause]

ALAN BARRETT: Good morning. I'm honored to give this update on the NRO and ASO activities. And I thank ICANN for the opportunity to speak here during this opening session.

My name is Alan Barrett, and I'm the chair of the Number Resource Organization, the NRO. I'm also the CEO of AfriNIC, the regional Internet registry serving Africa.

The NRO, or the Number Resource Organization, is an association of the five regional Internet registries which allocate I.P. addresses and other numeric identifiers around the world.

Within the ICANN system, the NRO serves as the Address Supporting Organization, the ASO. And some of the ASO's work is done by the ASO Address Council, which consists of five members from each -- sorry, three members from each of the five RIR regions. And some of the work is done by the NRO executive council which consists of the CEOs of the five RIRs

The RIR system was established a few years before ICANN was created, and most of the work of the numbers community is done in the regions, in the regional Internet registry forums, not at ICANN meetings. So each of the five RIRs has an open, consensus-based policy development process, and they each hold two public policy meetings every year.

Within ICANN, an important task of the ASO Address Council is to deal with global policies which are policies which have been approved by all five RIRs and would somehow involve the IANA and eventually they're ratified by the ICANN Board. There are only a few of these. And there have not been any few ones in the past few years, but, nevertheless, it's an important task.

The ASO is also one of the decisional participants in the empowered community, which is new thing that came as part of the IANA transition.

The ASO appoints two ICANN Board directors and appoints members to various other committees. So the two ICANN Board directors are Ron da Silva, the ASO AC's appointee to ICANN Board seat 9, and Akinori Maemura who holds seat 10.

Seat 10 is up for renewal this year. The ASO AC will make an appointment. There have already been interviews, and an appointment will be made in due course. You can look at the ASO website, aso.icann.org, to find the time line for the Board appointments.

Another thing the RIRs do with ICANN is there's a contract for providing the IANA Numbering Services. And that activity is subcontracted to PTI who also handles the IANA name services and the IANA protocol parameters services.

So every year the RIRs review the performance of that their IANA numbering functions. And I'm pleased to report that on Friday last week, the review report for 2018 was published and it found no issues of concern whatsoever. So thank you very much to the IANA team for doing such a good job.

During 2018, there were three ASN requests made by RIRs and there were two IPv4 allocations made to all five of the RIRs in terms of a global policy for post-exhaustion IPv4 allocation. And all of these were fulfilled accurately on time.

The ASO is reviewed every five years within the ICANN system and a ASO review was conducted in 2017. There were 18 recommendations from the review, and we're busy working through them. Some were fairly simple, like improve the website or update a procedure; and some of those have already been done.

Some of them may require changes to the MOU between the RIRs and ICANN, and some may even require changes to the ICANN bylaws. And we're gradually considering those, and we'll continue working on them.

The largest issue was Recommendation 18 which said: The NRO should initiate a public consultation involving the five RIR communities to determine the future structure of the ASO. And so we're doing that. We held public consultations in all five of the RIR communities. And there's some differences of opinion; but, in general, the conclusion was that the ASO's relationship with ICANN is important and should continue.

However, the relationship should be simplified and focus on matters of mutual interest. Some of the regions especially expressed concern about the workload imposed on volunteers and stated that the NRO or the ASO should choose not to participate in some ICANN activities which are outside the number community's remit.

Then there was fairly widespread agreement that interacting with ICANN under two different names, sometimes the ASO and

sometimes the NRO, causes confusion. So we would like to reduce that confusion, and that will probably require some changes.

Then generally there's continued support for ICANN to continue its critical role in providing the IANA services, providing coordination for policy development, and running these public meetings. So thank you, ICANN. The NRO then will work on a proposal for changes to address these issues raised in the consultations in the RIR communities.

On the technical side, the RIRs do many things but the one that involves ICANN is the Internet technical health initiative -- technical health identifiers -- sorry, let me try that a third time.

[Laughter]

-- Internet technical health indicators, ITHI, project. This project was initiated by ICANN, and what the RIRs are doing is measuring and reporting issues relating to the health of the Internet number registry system.

So, finally, let me leave you with an encouragement to deploy IPv6. Since this is ICANN and most of you deal with DNS, please ensure that your DNS servers are accessible over IPv6. Please also ensure that all your other public-facing servers are accessible over IPv6 because, really, there are not enough IPv4 addresses to go around. We will have to deploy IPv6 for the future of the Internet.

Thank you very much.

[Applause]

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JIA-RONG LOW: Thank you, Alan. And now it's cultural performance time!

[Laughter]

[Applause]

We have with us today a drumming troupe called Dadadadan Tenko. Let me try that again, Dadadadan Tenko. In my limited Japanese, "da" means to hit and "tenko" means heavenly drums. So we can loosely translate the troupe's name to be the heavenly drums hit hit hit troupe. Found in 1987, they are a professional drumming group that won the Osaka Cultural Prize, which is within this region. And the group performs using large and small Japanese drums, traditional Japanese three-stringed instruments, as well as Japanese flutes. They have held over 1,200 performances all over the world, most recently completing their tour to Europe.

Three leading members from the troupe will perform for us today. So please join me to welcome from Dadadadan Tenko, Akira Sakaue, Anri Kobayashi, and Katsuyoshi Kojima.

[Applause]

[Music]

[Applause]

JIA-RONG LOW: Wow! Wow! That certainly was a high energy-level performance. I hope that can last us throughout the week and by Thursday we'll still be the same.

Now, before we adjourn, I have a couple of announcements. This afternoon at 2:46 p.m. we will be observing a minute of silence in

remembrance of lives lost and affected by the Great East Japan earthquake, a 9.1 magnitude earthquake and the largest ever recorded in Japan. The earthquake happened on this very day in 2011.

The chair or facilitator of your session at the time will share more details, and I hope everyone will participate in it.

Next announcement is a more light-hearted topic and that is the gala. The gala is tonight. It is offsite at the Okura Hotel, not here. So don't search for where the gala is in this venue. Shuttle buses will be provided from here, the Portopia Hotel, to the gala venue from 6:30 to 7:30. And there will also be shuttle buses sending you back to the ICANN official hotels after the gala.

And this concludes the opening ceremony. Thank you very much, everybody. And have a good week. Arigatou gozaimasu.

[Applause]

[END OF TRANSCRIPT]