

---

ICANN71 | Virtual Policy Forum – GNSO - NCSG Membership Meeting  
Thursday, June 17, 2021 – 12:30 to 14:00 CEST

MARYAM BAKOSHI: Hello, and welcome to the NCSG membership meeting. My name is Maryam Bakoshi, and I am the remote participation manager for this session.

Please note that this session is being recorded and follows the ICANN expected standards of behavior. During this session, questions or comments submitted in chat will only be read aloud if put in the proper form as noted in the chat. I will read questions and comments aloud during the time set by the chair of this session.

If you would like to ask your question or make your comment verbally, please raise your hand. When called upon, kindly unmute your microphone and take the floor. Please state your name for the record and speak clearly at a reasonable pace. Mute your microphone when you are done speaking.

With that, I will hand the floor over to Bruna Martins dos Santos, chair of the NCSG. Bruna?

BRUNA SANTOS: Thank you very Much, Maryam. Hello, everyone. I guess it's about normal to say good morning, evening, or afternoon by this time. I'm really happy to see a few of you here, our members, and happy to be hosting the NCSG meeting at ICANN71.

---

**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.**

---

Just for introduction purposes our agenda for today is a rather short one. We have a just one hour and a half meeting. We will start with some policy updates. That will be presented by both Tomslin and Tatiana. And then some SG updates. I just have a few things I need to bring up with you guys. Then we'll bring on our constituency chairs, our leadership representatives to tell us what NPOC and NCUC are doing over the course of the past year. Then I want to wrap up this meeting with some debate on our position on the future of ICANN meetings.

So that is it in terms of agenda. I guess I can hand over the floor to Tatiana and Tomslin. I'm not sure which of them wants to speak first, but the idea is for them to go through a little bit of the GNSO Council agenda for this week, what they have done as well, and some of the policy committee news or even things they want to bring up to the membership. So, Tatiana/Tomslin, you have the floor.

TATIANA TROPINA: Tomslin, shall I go first?

TOMSLIN SAMME-NLAR: Yes, please.

TATIANA TROPINA: Hi, everyone. I am going to cover the GNSO Council agenda, and I'll try not to rehash what we discussed during the NCSG policy committee meeting because it was only yesterday. So I do hope that I will rather

---

provide you with a bird's-eye view on what was going on, what is going on, and what is going to happen.

On the GNSO agenda we had this week, first of all we had GNSO working session with all the stakeholder groups and constituency chairs where we discussed various things. Mostly it was focused on, of course, the future of the ICANN meetings as well and also on the resources and workload.

Following this working session we had the GNSO Council meeting yesterday where on the agenda we had—as you probably know because I see the names who already attended the NCSG policy call. Anyway, it's already past. You know what happened yesterday at ICANN is already a bit of a distant past.

So what we did yesterday, to me the main important thing and perhaps also for us was the adoption of the motion on the framework for continuous improvement which, first of all, moved some of the items that were on the GNSO Council agenda but they were more of cross-community work items like Work Stream 2, ATRT3 review and some other items which GNSO had no real capacity to deal with. And also as it's cross-community work, a lot of efforts had to be aligned with some others.

So the framework for continuous improvement moved these items sort of on hold and at the same time launched the project where some of the items on the council agenda are going to be dealt with. Like for example, statement of interest changes and [work] group review, policy development work group reviews as a pilot. So in the future, the council

---

can decide if we want to continue with some structures or we rather want to do something else. I do hope that the GNSO will continue, however it is all in the pilot now and hopefully this is going to be launched quite soon.

So this is the first one. The second thing is, to me, and I think that this can follow the discussion we had yesterday during the policy committee meeting, is the GNSO relationship with GAC and GAC's role in the PDPs and communication between GNSO and the GAC. So GAC is Governmental Advisory Committee, just to remind you.

The question here is when the GNSO GAC liaison role was introduced to GNSO through ICANN the relationship with GAC and GAC participation in PDPs was very different. So right now we are discussing the potential implications of these differences and how to build this [role] going forward and what are the borders of what GAC liaison should and should not do. So this discussion just started yesterday and I'm going to bring this issue a bit later.

Among other things the GNSO Council discussed such issues as IDNs and how to align various efforts which are going on with regard to IDNs—internationalized domain names—because during the last meeting in May we launched a charter for the policy development process the IDNs. However, in addition to policy development processes the various efforts going at ICANN are not only in the GNSO but also, for example, in the ccNSO. So it was discussed how to align these. We discussed the next steps concerning accuracy and some of

---

the EPDP Phase 1 recommendations which are now in the implementation phase.

So what other things to discuss? Today later, and I hope that you will be able to attend at 2:30 Central European Standard Time, we have the GNSO Council wrap-up meeting. What's on the agenda there? First of all, the council is going to prepare for the meeting with the Board which is going to take place next week. So I do hope that also you can attend either in listening mode or, if you're a councilor, in participation mode.

By the way, what I completely forgot to cover, and I'm sorry because I don't have any speaking notes so it's absolutely free speech, I forgot to say that yesterday the GNSO Council also had a meeting with the GAC. So that was quite a good meeting, I believe. I believe that as the council leadership, Philippe Fouquart, Pam Little, and me, were able to convey some messages from the council to the GAC [regarding] council position.

And here I can say that council position can be quite watered down because of various stakeholder groups and constituencies with their own interests. But some important issues like DNS abuse, like EPDP, like accuracy and also on CCT-RT review recommendations. So that was the meeting with the GAC.

Now back to the GNSO wrap-up session. The first agenda item is preparation for the GNSO meeting with the Board. Rafik, shall I pause here and take your question or comment which you have? Please, go ahead.

RAFIK DAMMAK:

Thanks, Tatiana. Thanks for this brief summary. I think you covered a lot of points for those who could not attend the meeting. In fact, my comment was between what you presented and also about [inaudible] in the agenda. It's about the discussion regarding the interaction with the GAC. Listening to yesterday public meeting for the council I have the feeling that it didn't go in the direction that I think it should. Which it's not really about defending the current holder of the GNSO liaison to the GAC but really it's to rethink the whole interaction with the GAC.

Also, I kind of felt that it was strange to see how that maybe some parts in the GNSO are pushing for more GAC participation. Of course, we want the GAC to be involved and in the loop, but I think we should have concern about how the participation at the different stage while they have that mechanism which is enshrined in the bylaws which is giving advice to the Board.

So I know we have to find the balance and they should be involved from the beginning in the PDP, but I think that yesterday's discussion didn't go really in that direction. And it's unfortunate that also maybe the GNSO liaison was kind of indifferent if it's not really about him. Even we can maybe discuss about some points, but I am asking if you have any idea how you would manage this discussion at the [wrap-up] session and how we can really push to maybe overhaul the interaction with the GAC in a different way.

---

There was evolution in the last five years, so that should be taken into consideration. So just looking forward to hearing from our councilor about this. Thanks.

TATIANA TROPINA:

Thank you, Rafik. And, Stephanie, if I may put you on hold because I was going to open this item which Rafik just raised after a short overview of the GNSO Council wrap-up agenda. So if you can bear with me for a minute because I'm just going to briefly say that we are going to discuss GNSO Board meeting preparation. So perhaps there would be preparation team established [to oversee.] The questions to the Board preliminarily will include probably the ODP timeline with a new gTLD subsequent procedures, IDN guidelines, and DNS abuse.

Then we are going to cover PPSAI. This is probably what Stephanie knows much better than me, next steps there. GAC communicate review and what are we're going to do with this to the council. Last time the small team was a bit late. You might remember there was some controversy about this.

And the fourth agenda item is exactly interaction with the GAC, and the discussion is going to continue. This is where I will refer back to Rafik and open the floor for any thoughts of what we are going to do about this as councilors, because I do think that the discussion yesterday went to a very wrong direction because we talked about this yesterday at our policy committee meeting that let's not make it personal. But at the end it went personal to a very different direction because it revolved about

---

how good, how amazing, how awesome the current liaison is and whether he is doing right or wrong.

This is very wrong in my opinion. Whoever is going to take this position later, we have a lot of GAC pressure on the GNSO, and I believe that this role is also turning somehow into the tool of—and I’m going to be clear here and frank—I do think that this role is turning, first of all, into an ad hoc councilor somehow. And secondly, it turns to yet another point of pressure from the GAC to the GNSO. I want this role to be defined clearly.

With this, Stephanie, you had your hand up. Please go ahead.

STEPHANIE PERRIN: I can wait if you want to discuss this later, Tatiana.

TATIANA TROPINA: No, it’s open for discussion now. I’m done with the council wrap-up agenda, and I think that this is the item where we have to align our positions and do something about it.

STEPHANIE PERRIN: Yeah, I mean, I’m looking at this kind of with a long view. It’s not like GAC has not always had a kind of overcontrol of ICANN, overarching control by coming in at the end with the advice. And certainly when ICANN was vulnerable, i.e., before the IANA transition, I would say that it was a slightly different kind of control.



However, now we've got them basically coming in in large numbers on not just PDPs. I mean, when I was on the WHOIS review team that Alan Greenberg chaired, we were totally outnumbered by advisory committee members. Between ALAC and GAC that formed a united view there was one registrar, Volker, you know, this is nuts to decide on an issue that basically impacts the entire industry. So there was no balance there, so it's not just the PDPs.

Now in terms of the EPDP, they've had certainly quite a presence. And I think maybe we'd go off on a big, long discussion if we talked about the GAC presence at the EPDP. We should maybe focus on the liaison. It became a little personal yesterday in the discussion. I had promised that I would raise the issue of Jeff's activity, and I tried to without making a personal attack on Jeff because I've got nothing against Jeff other than that he's not fulfilling the role that we think he's in. And the same thing could be said of some of the other advisory committee oversight folks that are in there. They've not oversight folks. They are elected representatives, chosen delegates.

But Jeff is on every committee speaking more than anybody else. If you did a speech analysis of our meetings, you'd find Jeff was more than the chair and more than most other members. So is that what we want, and is that what we need in a GAC rep?

The contrast between the role he played and the role that Julf played before him and I'm having a mind blank on the guy who came before Julf. But nobody has ever been this active. It has always been a

---

reporting role, which is what I think a liaison is, not necessarily chiming in with positions all the time.

Now Jeff had good recommendations on his slides yesterday. But also, it was very difficult fighting off the BC and the IPC who were in there supporting Jeff and what a wonderful job he's doing and how helpful he is. And basically, those guys want the GAC right in there because it certainly suits their agenda on both of the big files that we've had lately, the EPDP and the RPMs and the other one. I'm going to have a complete mind blank here. The one that Kathy and Jeff were co-chairing.

So I mean, I see this as a large foot right into the GNSO Council, and we have to figure out how to manage this without being unfair and without making personal attacks. But it certainly upsets the delicate representation that is part of the GNSO structure. And I would say that too for some of the other reps.

Like for instance, we had a non-commercial NomCom appointee who did absolutely nothing and barely showed up at the meetings, and Rafik always used to say, "Well, relax. At least he's voting the right way." I can see the wisdom of your words, Rafik, because now we have Carlton in there—and don't get me wrong. I love Carlton. Again, these are not personal attacks. But very active on many committees, including the appointments committee.

The development of more and more small committees also is a move that I think influences this upsetting of the GNSO structure that we have to study. What's going on in the small committees and why don't we have greater transparency of what's happening in the small

---

committees? I'd like to at least listen to the recordings of their calls, and we don't always get that.

So this is just purely structural, and I think we need to figure out our position prior to any discussion of GNSO review. So that's enough out of me. I hope that was clear. I tried my best to focus on the job description and the structural elements yesterday. But like I said, I actually had to get out there and say, hey, it's not about Jeff. He has been doing a good job. And in fact, I did like some of his recommendations.

TATIANA TROPINA:

Thank you, Stephanie. So a few things from me here. There are a number of huge issues, and [I must admit here] yesterday I kept silent in this discussion because I felt like the vice chair from the non-contracted parties house I am representing as a vice chair both commercial stakeholder group and non-commercial stakeholder group, right? So I'm appointed by both. I'm trying to keep this delicate balance here.

However, at our meeting I can say definitely that I'm not very happy, neither with GAC pushing, neither with the role of GNSO councilor GAC liaison as it is now. However, I do think that we have to separate several issues here.

First of all, the fact that GAC is getting involved in PDPs. There is something that many, not only us, I know that from contracted parties house many wanted this, like early involvement. So then when GAC

---

produces advice [in contrary] to PDP results one can say, look, you took part in this.

So this is one point here. Another point is how it is going on now and what is GNSO GAC liaison doing in the absence of a proper description of this role? And this is where I think that we have to define this for the future. I think that it's not about the current liaison. It's not about the future liaison. It's what changed compared to what we had with the GAC at the beginning.

Because I'm sorry, we have to admit that GAC participation in PDPs is [what] is already happening, and we just have to have a proper communication with them as the council. It is not something that we can change. It's not something that we should moan and moan and moan. Of course, if we are talking about the bigger balance at ICANN, of course we can do something about it. But the GAC involvement in PDPs is somehow crucial for many right now.

This is one thing. This is not what is discussed here. What is discussed here is communication between the GAC and the GNSO via liaison and the proper definition of this role. Because I do believe that the obstacles we have now and the bumps at least on this road is just because we do not have a proper definition.

What current GAC leaders are doing is trying to be very active, is trying to help. And there is no definition of this role and this is what we have to do for the future.

---

And as I said I probably will not be actively involved in these discussions, so I rely on Stephanie and other councilors during the wrap-up session. Because I do believe that it is a bit of a balance for me here because as a vice chair I'm representing the non-contracted parties house and I see the divergence of views here. So let me be frank about it. Thank you.

BRUNA SANTOS: I think we have Rafik with his hand up.

TATIANA TROPINA: Oh, sorry, Rafik. I saw your hand up. Go ahead, please.

RAFIK DAMMAK: Okay, thanks, Tatiana and Bruna. Okay, I guess we have two points. So about the GAC engagement, because I am also [seeing] the questions and comments, I don't think we're advocating to prevent them from participating. We want them to participate. So I think to be more concrete or constructive I think we need to think about what kind of rules of engagement to make things clear. Because I do believe all we are trying to figure out, even the GAC, because the EPDP was the first time for them to participate formally with a representative. So maybe some rules of engagement, in particular participate or how they maybe express their opposition and also how they will engage with the Board. I mean, it's tricky but probably it's more to think about some rules of engagement to make things more clear.

---

Regarding the GNSO liaison to the GAC, I guess one thing you can use or mention is we have some job description but I guess you can [refer] that even for the other liaisons like in particular to the PDP like in the GNSO operating procedures or the charter and so on, it's quite clear that the liaisons are not there to express their opinion. It's really about the kind of communication channel between that working group and the council. And it makes clear about what a liaison is supposed to do or not. And the PDP 3.0 even went into more details.

So I think you can leverage that and say that when the liaison to the GAC but also the liaison to the ccNSO should be something that we work on to go into details about what is expected and what's the job description. So that's really regardless of the person, but we are learning and based on what we are seeing we can improve. I don't think a few years ago we envisioned like what can happen, and so this is an opportunity to review and to improve. So I'm just suggesting to be more direct on this and leverage what exists to go in terms of process and maybe to make a proposal so if that can help.

TATIANA TROPINA:

Thank you very much, Rafik. Indeed, that can help and that's a very, very balanced approach from you and very good advice. And I also think that there is no way here to make everybody super happy. There is only way to make everybody super unhappy. And I think that we have to find this balanced approach, and of course it has to be based on the job description.

---

And also a bit of a note here. My disclaimer that I'm not going to go into controversies, it doesn't mean that I'm going to remain silent. Actually, my position right now focuses on the clarity of the job description of the GNSO GAC liaison and, as Rafik said, on something that we cannot foresee a few years ago when this role was actually established.

Stephanie, you go ahead, please.

STEPHANIE PERRIN:

Thanks. In many ways I think that the overactivity of Jeff, the character of the current incumbent, is a bit of a distraction from the larger structural problem.

I noted yesterday that Ashley who is normally very quiet as leader of the Registrars Stakeholder Group and who we must remember was the U.S. GAC rep on the EPDP only just a few short months ago, she weighed in and interrogated the IPC on the fact that they are demanding things for the SSAD and the latest EPDP 2A process whilst not supporting the development of the SSAD because, of course, they don't like the payment options and they don't like the ease of use that they foresee coming with the SSAD and they don't like not having formulaire—whatever the word is in English—web forms.

So I thought that was quite interesting because we have a concerted attack here on the actual output of the PDPs. I mean, the multistakeholder model itself is failing if people don't participate in good faith. In other words, if they don't get their own way, they won't support everything. The whole thing. Throw the cards on the floor. In

---

many ways, GAC has always taken that approach that they sat in the background, watched it happen, and if they didn't like it, they went to the Board, right? So this has been evolving. Now they participate in a big way, but they still get to go to the Board.

So at some level we have to say, okay, part of the reason we had such a slow time on the EPDP has to be said it was the advisory committees. Between ALAC and the GAC I would remind you of the activities of Kavouss the first time around nearly drove poor [Kurt] nuts. We were really making extraordinarily slow progress. We got no help in actual explanation of the legislation that we were trying to implement. We got blocked on every turn. I mean, I have gray hair trying to explain what the GDPR does to folks who hail from Europe. It was quite frustrating.

So I think we have to call people on whether we're actually...we're moaning about how it takes four years to get a thing through. Well, of course it does if people are working nonstop and bringing in their best lawyers to slow down the procedures. So again, these are structural elements that we can address and say, okay, are we actually producing a functioning multistakeholder model here or are we doing some kind of UN security council where everything gets blocked? Thanks.

TATIANA TROPINA:

Thank you very much, Stephanie. You are raising a lot of very important issues which I believe ought to be discussed not at the GNSO wrap-up session but a few months, years ahead.



---

So with this if I may wrap up, let's be realistic here. Let's be clear here. During the GNSO wrap-up session, let's focus on the description of the GNSO GAC liaison role. Nothing personal. Nothing about current incumbent. Let's look at the future. That's what I would suggest. And also following what Rafik said, let's define the borders of what is expected from this role.

Bruna, I believe that we have been on this for half an hour.

BRUNA SANTOS: Yes.

TATIANA TROPINA: And it's only the second agenda item. I will wrap up my intervention here. If Tomslin wants to take it because I see his hand up, fine. But I believe that let's wrap up my whatever update it was because it turned into a discussion. Thank you very much everybody who participated here.

BRUNA SANTOS: Thank you very much, Tatiana. I'm going to hand the floor to Tomslin right now just so we can wrap up on the policy updates. Tomslin, please go ahead.

TOMSLIN SAMME-NLAR: Thanks, Bruna. I had a comment [regarding] the role of the GAC liaison. I just wanted to say that if we're looking at that, I think the current

---

definition of the responsibilities is not so bad. However, it doesn't say what they cannot do in council, and I think that's where I find issues with that. It doesn't define what they cannot do. It does say what they can do, but it doesn't say what they cannot do. So that's it for that point.

With regards to policy committee, I'll try not to or I'll avoid repeating what we discussed yesterday. But a quick summary is that we do have three working groups or PDPs that we have members participating in currently. One has a report that is open for comment which we are inviting members and their organizations to please submit comments on it. And that's the EPDP Phase 2 initial report. The review of the transfer policy has just begun, so that's ongoing. And the IGO work track is also ongoing. So those are the three things happening.

I've mentioned already we have a comment proceeding open which we would really like members to comment. Then the other thing is that we'll be setting up a small group for the IDNs. And the reason for this is to increase knowledge on IDNs because that working group PDP is about to start. And we realize we don't have skills in the group in that area, yet our members do live and come from countries or areas with non-Latin scripts and that is a working group PDP that affects that. So it's important that we do participate in that, so we'll find some way of developing skills in that area. So we'll start with a small group which we hope to share information from the PDP to that group so that people who are not participating can learn from it.

That's it from me, Bruna. Thanks.

---

BRUNA SANTOS:

Thank you very much, Tomslin. In moving on to Agenda Item 3 and reading this discussion with our policy participation, my first update to everybody is that on next Wednesday we will have another edition of the policy writing course. The idea is to once again give our members the opportunity to improve their skills in policy writing and in other PDP participation. So this webinar will take place next Wednesday on 30 June and will be mostly led by ICANN staff but I will also be joining that one.

So please make sure that in case you want to join on one of these PDPs or help write one of these policy comments and if you have the time, attend this webinar. We do want to convey more and more opportunities for our members to be able to participate further, especially in light of maybe our comeback to face-to-face meetings and then that is one.

I also see Nigel's suggestion in the chat that I'm just going to put on the record just so we can discuss in our future meetings. But what Nigel has suggested was for us to maybe think about a session with GAC at ICANN72 for us to discuss GAC role, GAC participation in PDPs, and so on. So just reading that out loud for us to put it on the record.

And last but not least from me, our election is just ending. On 21 June will be the last day for voting. Please make sure to send in your votes if you haven't yet. Maryam has sent the [tallies] to everybody who has [checked in]. And next week on 21 June we will announce the results.

So I think, I mean, for NCSG we had three GNSO Council positions open and also the chair position. I think NCUC did not have any candidates

---

for the APAC position at their executive committee. And I'm not sure if NPOC also had the same issue, but just wanted to bring that up for everybody because I think that from the end of June until October it will be pretty good for us to work on leadership transition and also to put myself at your full disposal if you guys would like to hold some more meetings about transition and so on. So that is one.

And I think we can move to Agenda Item 4 because I really wanted us to focus on Number 5 if we had the time. The idea for Agenda Item 4 is to have some constituency updates both from NPOC and NCUC. I think we have Raphael and Ore here, right. I'm not too sure who wants to take the floor first, but I'm going to defer to Ore. Maybe a woman can speak first this time. Ore, you have the floor. Are you listening to us and can you speak right now?

MARYAM BAKOSHI: Hi, Bruna. Ore is not on the call anymore.

BRUNA SANTOS: She's not on the call anymore? Oh, she was just five minutes ago.

MARYAM BAKOSHI: Yeah, she had to drop off for another call. We have Juan here and then Caleb is joining soon. So maybe Juan could [help] NPOC. Juan, if that's okay.

---

BRUNA SANTOS:                    Yeah.

CALEB OGUNDELE:                Hello.

MARYAM BAKOSHI:                Oh, okay. Caleb, thank you.

BRUNA SANTOS:                    Oh, Caleb, go ahead.

CALEB OGUNDELE:                I'm sorry. I had some issues with my connection. My apologies. Just a few updates from NPOC. Raoul asked me to step in because he has some work emergency and he asked me to stay back and help him fill in the gap.

Now quickly for some of the updates of things we've been doing at NPOC, basically we've been working on our charter which has been lacking some annex only. And it is our hope that before the end of the year that we will probably have a more adopted charter, but it is [okay] for members and perhaps it will be passed onto ICANN for approval.

Basically, we've also been having some webinars specifically targeted at NGOs. This is to help [with] the capacity that has been lacking, that has not also been helping to push for participation over time. We've been trying to work hard on that. We just completed some series which

---

I believe by now is on the ICANN Learn and also the NPOC community page as well.

Additionally, our elections are ongoing and during the period of nomination we seem to be lacking candidates, specifically for the seat of vice chair and our policy chair as well. That has been noted earlier during our membership meeting, and we are also trying to have some internal conversations perhaps to put out an additional call on that when the elections are over.

We also like to talk about some of our members' participation at the IGO working group. We have Ioana and Juan also assisting and working at the IGO working group track, and they've been doing a very good job there and we'd like to commend them on that.

Raoul will also want us to note that the Nextcloud which we've been able to centralize some of our documents, [central working] documents in Nextcloud. It's more of a cloud service that we reviewed internally ourselves to see that we have something that can help us use and reuse documents that we may want to use over time. And that's basically that.

Outside that, we did get some recommendations at our last NPOC meeting about some of our onboarding process that might also help to improve active participation, specifically for new members. And we have taken note of some of this onboarding process that has been recommended to us, and we are going to work on them.

---

So basically these are just some quick feedback from our last NPOC membership meeting and some of the things that we have been doing so far. At some time I do think maybe Juan might want to add one or two things given that he is also an internal member of NPOC as well. So I yield the floor. Thank you.

BRUNA SANTOS: Thank you very much, Caleb. I'll hand over the floor to Raphael right now.

RAPHAEL BEAUREGARD-LACROIX: Yes, of course, Bruna. On the side of NCUC since the last meeting in March we prepared in April the webinar that took place early in May. It was the webinar on civil society participation at ICANN which involved not only us but also NPOC and ALAC as well. We got relatively good feedback on this. I think it was appreciated, went pretty well, and so I would also like to thank everyone for their participation and also thank you for [EC] members of NCUC for stepping in and organizing and delivering the webinar as well. So internally we discussed how we can try to capitalize on that for future editions of webinars and other ways to engage our membership.

So since the last meeting, that has been pretty much all for us. So I guess I'll just end with this and leave the floor for the discussion on the future of ICANN meetings. Thank you, Bruna.

---

BRUNA SANTOS: Thank you very much, Raphael. Just to also put this on the record, I understand you guys did not have any candidates for the APAC region executive committee representative, right? So I understand this is something....

RAPHAEL BEAUREGARD-LACROIX: Yes, that is the case.

BRUNA SANTOS: Yeah. You guys will be issuing another call once the election is over just like NPOC, right?

RAPHAEL BEAUREGARD-LACROIX: Yes. We will basically proceed the same way that we did last year when we were also missing candidates for North America. Once the election is over, we will issue a call on the list and we will basically decide internally at the [EC] if we...you know, hopefully we'll get people who will step up and we'll do a selection internally at the [EC] on the candidates that we will hopefully get to fill the APAC spot.

BRUNA SANTOS: Thank you very much, Raphael. So if anybody wishes to be part of the NCUC in representing the APAC region, please make sure to reach out to Raphael. And also in case you want to get more involved with NPOC leadership teams, please reach out to Caleb and Raoul on that. And I think, Caleb, we had two questions in the chat for you. I don't know if you want to address them via chat or if you want to take the floor and



---

reply to them. But I guess we have time for that. If you wish to do so, just please let me know.

Otherwise, I think we can move on with Agenda Item 5. Okay, so I think we're moving on with Agenda Item 5 then. Let me get this discussion started. The idea by with this topic was to have some discussions on the future of ICANN meetings. This is an open discussion, so everybody is pretty much invited to join. Just raise your hand. And I really would like to hear from some of you about this issue.

But giving a little background, ICANN Org has put out a survey a few days ago in order to find out the community's opinion on face-to-face meetings. The survey has just closed, but the main idea was to understand whether or not we would be willing to go back to face-to-face meetings [in light of] the Seattle one.

The Seattle meeting is supposed to take place in October, and one of the things that I think ICANN is considering is the fact that the city has gone over 70% of people vaccinated. So it would be a rather safe place to go. But then this survey also asked us a few things about what health and restrictions were we willing to take on. Did we really feel safe by going to meetings that wouldn't have a vaccine requirement, or do we wish to have meetings allow only attendance that were filled with vaccinated people. There were also opinions around only allowing leadership to come to those meetings and starting to develop what they're calling the hybrid model.

So the results, I don't have the full results, the full [link] of results to them, but I do know that over 665 people have responded and the vast

---

majority of them have did say yes to going back to meetings. It was around 70% or something like that. Yeah, 75% of people said that if they would be allowed to travel to the U.S., they would attend the Seattle meeting.

And I do know that for a lot us borders are still closed. A lot of us, including myself, still face a lot of traveling restrictions or would have to go a really long way in order to be able to attend this meeting. But what I really wanted with the discussion right now was to welcome some of your thoughts and views around this. Because we do have a plenary [community] session starting in a few hours, and they want community leaders to present some of their thoughts around this topic as well.

So just to wrap up I think that at the council working session I have pointed out that nothing in Seattle would be fully...it would really be a hybrid meeting because we are not yet at the place that the majority of countries can travel. And maybe [facing] in meetings that would only allow for either Europeans or North Americans to attend might be a mistake because there is no multistakeholder model if only a third of us can participate.

But I just think that this is also a complicated decision and I know that ICANN should be able to give us the feedback, the final decision around September to October after the Board meeting on that. So I will stop talking for now. I would like to know if any of you would have any thoughts or comments on this or anything you would like for me to

---

highlight at the community session later on. And I guess I'm opening the floor right now. Yes, Raphael, please go ahead.

RAPHAEL BEAUREGARD-LACROIX: I have a problem with this kind of system, and I'm just going to use an argument that I've seen. I don't remember who put this out and when it was. It was a few days ago, maybe on Monday or something. The argument was basically that, oh, but ICANN meetings have always been hybrid. There has always been remote participation so what's the problem of reopening now? So there was substantial opposition to that kind of statement.

But my idea is that participation in person ICANN meeting there's already plenty of layers of inequality in that. Maybe in financial capacity to travel, the fact of having the time to travel as well, visa problems and so on and so forth. And now because of COVID and the vaccination restriction and the fact that we're at 15% of the global population who is vaccinated right now, that adds yet another layer of inequality in participation. And to me it's a pretty big one when we're considering that there are certain...like, of course, the U.S. is pretty advanced in its vaccination and some other countries as well.

But even in Europe it's not everyone who is at the level of the U.S. And also, even I think that was brought up—if I remember, Stephanie, you brought this up—even the Canadian-U.S. border now they're saying maybe we're going to reopen it, but it's not clear. And who knows what can happen until October. So what if we decide, oh, yeah, we're going

---

to have this meeting but in the end only Americans can attend it in person. I mean, that's also a risk, and it's not a negligible risk.

So then, yeah, sure, it's hybrid. So Americans can go to the meeting in Seattle and everyone else is remote. That's kind of weird. Yeah, so I just feel that it's kind of compounding all the issues that we already have in terms of equality of participation, and I would rather they keep this one online fully despite considering all the Zoom fatigue and all of these things. But that's my very personal view. That being said, I don't claim to represent the views of NCUC on that. Thank you.

BRUNA SANTOS:

Thank you very much, Raphael. I see Stephanie on the line as well, so please go ahead, Stephanie.

STEPHANIE PERRIN:

Thanks very much. I did bring this up at the GNSO meeting when Nick Tomasso came. I realize it was just a Doodle poll, but the methodology in this survey was not great at all. All the risks were muddled up together so that you couldn't tell what question you were actually answering. I think that the fairness issue is primordial in this whole question. I don't see how, for instance, African representatives are going to get out of Africa to come to a meeting. I just don't see it. Ditto India. We haven't...I mean, we're discussing opening the border between Canada and the United States. That would be the biggest unmanned border in the world, apparently, and we still haven't opened it. So really the concept, we're way to premature on this.

---

I did agree...I noticed that Volker in the GNSO discussion—Volker Greimann, for those who don't know him from the registrars—said we're suffering without face-to-face meetings. That is definitely true. Definitely. We are particularly suffering and we can't do proper outreach with our people. But I think that there's a risk. Again at a meta level, ICANN in my view is always vulnerable as a multistakeholder experiment. And if they hold a U.S. only meeting, that's just going to blow a whole lot of credibility. Particularly as a global entity reaching out to in particular poorer countries.

Also, we have no idea what airline tickets are going to be. I'd love a briefing. I see Joseph is on our meeting today. I'd love a briefing on what's happening with all that travel money. In the case of Canada, the airlines finally agreed to give money back, so I hear that there's a credit coming to ICANN for a ticket that we had to cancel for Cancun.

You know, where are we in the travel budget and how much does it cost to get someone out of Africa now if you have to fly through Barcelona to leave South Africa? You know what I mean? This is a mystery to me. A lot of regional airlines have gone out of business in this country, and I'm sure it would be the same in other countries. So where are we? I'd like to know that before I fill out a Doodle poll on this matter. What's it going to cost?

So I think we should focus on the regional hubs. I think that may be our only possibility. And maybe some brave souls can try to get special dispensation on essential business to fly in so that we at least get some

---

cross fertilization. Maybe ICANN staff can fly in, I don't know. But I think it's premature.

And just speaking personally as somebody who is supposed to be in a vulnerable group even though I'm fully vaccinated, if we do start having open meetings, then I would feel obliged to say no to them and give up my seat for somebody who can actually travel. Because there's no point in hogging a travel spot if you have no intentions of making use of it. And if I won't even go to Seattle, I sure as heck won't go to—I don't know, pick any other country—Singapore. Thanks.

BRUNA SANTOS:

Thank you very much, Stephanie. I see Rafik with his hand up. Please go ahead, Rafik.

RAFIK DAMMAK:

Okay, thanks, Bruna. Yes, I think one point that maybe [will be] mentioned that it seems that there is a trend that many want to face-to-face meeting. But I think some of the questions were designed in a way that I don't think they give really a nuanced answer because it's asking sometimes just about one measure. Of course, if I want all the measures, we respond yes to all. But the problem is the interpretation will be different because of the design of the questionnaire.

Saying that, I think maybe one request that can be done to the ICANN Org is really they can check to get really concrete data about the complexity of traveling right now. Because I think there is some

---

shortsightedness unfortunately of many of our community members because they see only around them. It's not easy to travel.

Even if you are vaccinated and so on, there is now a new complicated, complex logistics, rules changing all the time regarding the different countries. And even for those who need visas, getting visas is also becoming complicated. Some countries still they don't deliver any visas. So technically they don't accept anybody if they are not a national citizen or resident. And for those who accept the visas, it's becoming difficult and you need really good reason to come. So they need to have that in mind, all the logistic things which means insurance, the tests ...

Some countries also have different format and requirement which means also [inaudible] quarantine. It's not just in the country you go but also when you come back you might have to go through quarantine. So there are a lot of new complexities and it just takes it to be taken into account. It's not like traveling before.

So I would like that if we can request or ask the travel team they really do some survey about the different situations and what can be requested for any traveler to go to different country hosting an ICANN meeting, what will people really face when they have to travel and to see really the level of difficulties. Not just about the measures need to be taken at the face-to-face meeting itself. The traveling will be enough complicated.

So again, I understand the people want face-to-face soon, but I think it will be premature to have it this year. Of course, we can see some events

---

like sports events and like now in Europe and so on, but we need to have in mind that it's basically for those living in those countries where they have rate of vaccination enough high. It's not about people traveling coming from abroad and attending. So the situation is getting improved, but I think we are still far from a situation that we all can [freely] travel without problem. So we need maybe more data. The survey is just giving some feeling from people, so we need more data to explain how the reality on the ground...or in the air if we are talking about air traveling.

BRUNA SANTOS: Thank you very much, Rafik. I'm going to hand the floor to Caleb right now.

CALEB OGUNDELE: Thank you so much, Bruna. I'd like to agree with some of the thoughts that Rafik has actually raised which were some of the issues I was going to come up with. But then the question then start arising when there is no equal consensus as to those who might want to even travel in the first instance, the kind of vaccination passports that are globally accepted. So the question is I got vaccinated in Nigeria and then I'm currently living in Kampala at the moment. And then Kampala is facing a third wave and I also [can't] use my vaccination card from Nigeria to get out of Kampala because they are on lockdown now. This is just a real life example I'm giving to you.



---

So for me I personally agree with the fact that we need more data. We need to analyze what the issues are specifically. It's not just about getting onto the plane and getting to see your old friends at ICANN meetings that really should be our concerns now but the whole idea of having to get to do the work. Even though I know it's difficult for us to do it remotely and it's usually not very convenient, at some point in time I do feel that we should rise above the traveling slots and [inaudible] and then try to see how we can get as much into [inaudible] despite the fact that I know that the Zoom fatigue has actually set in.

So it's just a proposal. This is not me voicing whatever NPOC leadership is saying. But then it's a proposal, but I strongly feel that we should be cautiously optimistic at this point. Although, I do share the sentiments that Stephanie said about the Canadian border and the U.S. border. But I do also think that an announcement will be made on June 21 which is about a few days from now. So let's be optimistic, but then let's also be cautiously optimistic. This is just [a counsel]. Thanks.

BRUNA SANTOS:

Thank you very much, Caleb. I guess I pretty much agree with the majority of points you've brought up on this conversation. And then just to highlight some other things on the chat, I think that Stephanie and also Rafik have put out there the visa issue. That I think has always been a very present issue around this community, but now it's even worse. A lot of diplomatic representations are closed around the world. I mean, here in Brazil they are all closed from pretty much every country, but maybe Brazil is an exception because we are a high-risk area.

---

But it is indeed a complication, and it will be a complication for a lot of us who have restrictions for traveling and have visa requirements for entering in the U.S. And let alone all of the other logistic issues. I mean, for us at least in order to be able to go to the U.S. we would have to spend quarantine in another country. So that adds up to the cost and that adds up to all of the time we can have available for ICANN meetings and for traveling and so on.

But what I'm taking from this discussion is that a lot of you have raised up issues around the survey design. Indeed, I agree that the survey looked like a wish list or either a list of things we would be willing to take on once we go back to face-to-face meetings. Indeed, I think that all of us would be willing to go through social distancing, masks, temperature measuring, and every like that. And that is very much needed still even though we understand that a lot of countries like the U.S. have raised the mask obligation at least for open spaces and so on.

So that is one thing but another reason why I wanted to bring this discussion to this space as well was for us to be able to discuss what kind of hybrid do we want. Do we really want a hybrid meeting or whatever the name of that is that only has people from countries that are vaccinated or fully vaccinated? We all understand and know how difficult the vaccination rollout has been and we all have to be worried that many places in the world will take at least another year to be fully vaccinated. So I don't really think it's fair with everybody or even with this community for only half of the people to go back to face-to-face and then we can just go on and fostering more and more inequalities and differences between this community.

---

So that is pretty much what I would like to say. But I will raise a lot of the points you pointed out here around the survey, around data. I do agree that we need more, like a full-on assessment, a global assessment about what are the travel limitations at this moment for everybody coming from a lot of the parts of the world just so we can understand and just so we are also worried that this is not just a U.S. issue. This is a global issue such as the ICANN community.

So that is it from me. Does anybody else have any points or any thoughts they would like to add? We have discussed very few things around regional hubs, and this is something I would really like to hear from you as well. But if this is something that's still also premature at NCSG, we can move on with the discussion. But I will open the floor for another moment just so anyone can add their views and thoughts around this. Raphael, go ahead.

RAPHAEL BEAUREGARD-LACROIX: Thank you, Bruna. Thank you. Yeah, I think about regional hubs, it's a good idea on paper and it could work. But it's more if they decide to go ahead with that, they should be mindful that their division of the world into the ICANN regions does not correspond to how the world is divided by airlines and in general the [easiness] of traveling within a certain region. Again, that might be a form of assumption that, especially if you're in Europe but even in North America to a lesser extent, that you can travel easily within a region but it's not always the case.

---

And it's not even just the question of visa sometimes or political relations between certain states, but it's also just a matter of how our airlines operate and that you can go into a neighboring country might end up being pretty complicated. And so if they decide to go ahead with that, I think that they would need to think about it very thoroughly. And I don't know if it's worth going that way for what you would get out of it.

Again, the example that was given during the GNSO meeting was all the Americans got together and created a hub ... Because I don't remember what was the context but it's a past meeting several years ago. And, yes, of course, in the U.S. I'm sure it works well, but it's not the case everywhere.

And so I don't know if that's a solution that can be applied across the board, but maybe it's a solution that can be applied in certain regions. But again, yeah, there's that [inaudible]. Like I think it's something that is interesting to discuss in the abstract but I would want to see the plan that they have with that before [inaudible] making up my mind whether I think it's a good idea or not.

BRUNA SANTOS:

Thank you very much, Raphael. Yeah, I'm also taking your points and reminders as well about how regional hubs could be also hard to organize given how huge some regions can be and also the differences between ICANN's division of the world and our own regions division of the world.

---

Yeah, I see some comments on the chat around how we should go back to normal and that it would be really interesting. But I do believe that the vast majority of our members' position is that it would be really complicated for us to go back to face-to-face, at least at the moment. And that doesn't mean we don't want to go back to face-to-face.

I just think that this is one of the parts of the ICANN community that has been facing the greatest volunteer burnout. We have been talking a lot about this, but it has been affecting us really hard and I need to put this on record as well. We saw our numbers go a little lower than usual. We saw membership engagement go a little lower than usual. And this is also not only due to Zoom burnout but also due to all of the health conditions and regional things we're all facing. So it's really relevant for us to think about that and consider it while moving forward.

Does anyone have any AOB or any last-minute idea they would like to put on this meeting or present to the membership? If not, I will then ask Maryam to stop the recording and then we can resume this call. I'll give you back 18 minutes of your day.

And please make sure to attend this community session that's going on later on. I'm going to post the link to everybody here. Because I really think this is going to be an important meeting for everyone to put their views and thoughts on the table. So I'm just having a hard time in grabbing the link. Just one second. Here it is. Yeah, that was the survey that is no longer working, but the first link is the link to the plenary.

So thank you all for attending. Thank you all for yet another NCSG meeting at an ICANN meeting. I do hope that in the near future we go

---

back to seeing each other face-to-face. I do hope that we manage our way out of this pandemic and that everybody stays healthy and safe. So thank you all once again. Bye-bye.

**[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]**