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ICANN71 | Virtual Policy Forum – GNSO - NPOC Membership Meeting  
Tuesday, June 15, 2021 – 10:30 to 12:00 CEST

MARYAM BAKOSHI: Hello, and welcome to the NPOC Membership Meeting. My name is Maryam Bakoshi, and I am the remote participation manager for this session.

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With that, I'll hand over the floor to Oreoluwa Lesi. Thank you very much.

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OREOLUWA LESI:

Good morning, everyone. Good morning, Maryam. Thank you so much. I believe that Raoul is in the room. So, Raoul, whenever you're ready, please let me know. But in the meantime, I'd like to welcome everyone to our NPOC Membership Meeting. It's great to have you all here. And this a time for us to share information about what NPOC is doing, and also to talk about moving us forward as a constituency. We have an agenda. Okay, great. I see the agenda is up. All right.

So, the first thing we were going to do was introductions. I'm not sure how many of our EC members are in the room, but I can start off by introducing myself. And then I can hand over to any other EC member who's in the room and they can introduce themselves.

Okay. So, my name is Oreoluwa Lesi. I'm the communications chair of NPOC, and at my day job I work in a nonprofit. I run a nonprofit called the Women's Technology Empowerment Centre, focused on closing the gender digital divide in Lagos, Nigeria. And before I was Communications Chair, I also served for two years as the secretariat.

All right. So, do we have any other EC members in the room, please?

EMMANUEL VITUS:

Hi. Good morning, Ore. This is Emmanuel for the record. Thank you very much for the introduction. My name is Emmanuel Vitus. I'm the current secretariat for NPOC, and I'll actually join the other EC members in this meeting to give you updates about what we're doing. And if you have questions, we'll be available to also respond. Thank you.

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RAOUL PLOMMER: Hello there. My name is Raoul Plommer. I'm the chair for the NPOC constituency. At the moment, I've been teaching little kids, but otherwise I'm part of Open Knowledge Finland, an NGO that aims to open all kinds of governance, really. But, that's me. Anyone else?

OREOLUWA LESI: [inaudible].

JUAN MANUEL ROJAS: Hello, everyone. Sorry.

OREOLUWA LESI: Sorry. I was just saying that we have Juan in the room—our councilor. So, maybe he'd also like to say something.

JUAN MANUEL ROJAS: Just to introduce myself. My name is Juan Manuel Rojas. I am working in the GNSO Council. My day job is, I am a teacher, but a virtual teacher right now. Also, I chair a foundation, an NGO called [Minca Digital], and we are working on digital literacy. And that's it. I think that's all for now. Thank you very much. That's me.

RAOUL PLOMMER: Okay. Well, I think that's enough introductions. Second on the agenda, we have membership engagement and survey. Now, I'm not sure if our membership coordinator is here.

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MARYAM BAKOSHI: Raoul, we don't have Caleb in the room. Oh, Caleb is here right now, actually. Caleb, if you can hear us.

CALEB OGUNDELE: Yes. I can hear you. Good morning.

RAOUL PLOMMER: Morning, Caleb.

CALEB OGUNDELE: Yes.

RAOUL PLOMMER: So, if you can tell us a little about our current membership engagement. And I think you had a survey in mind.

CALEB OGUNDELE: Yes. So, good morning, everyone. The membership engagement has been very, very low in the last one year since the COVID-19 started, and we all are aware of the fact that we need to improve more on that.

Now, a breakdown of membership that we've seen over the time is that we see that we are having more members coming from Africa, but we are having less members who are signing up from other parts of the country. We are also looking at gender. Sorry, we are looking at

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diversity at this point, and we see that this also something that is very challenging.

And we'd like to see some of our members still, other members around other NGOs. Please sign up to NPOC and see how they can engage actively with us.

An earlier survey which was done, I think a year or more ago, and some of the things that members did raise as issue. Take, for example, on language diversity when addressing. We try to address some of those issues, but we know that we have not addressed them perfectly well. But we also got help from our secretariat who has also been very helpful in translating some of the minutes of the meetings to members in French.

And so, perhaps if there are still some other things that all the members can perhaps speak on in language diversity to also help NPOC engage, or you feel that there are things that we are missing out that we are not doing, please, we will be glad if you will reach out to us. We knew we are not perfect in trying to understand what you might want that might help us with the engagement. But, sure, we're glad to have you help us pick through that as well. More importantly, we would like to see members engage more on the policies that are coming up within the NCSG. And then the ICANN At-Large, as it were.

So, we'd like to see more engagement here, and if there are things that you feel, that support that you need or mentorship that members need that can help them grow in this space, we would also be glad to have

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them. Send them to us, and then we will be able to give all the supports we can give to them. Thank you very much.

RAOUL PLOMMER:

Thanks, Caleb. Could maybe Ore tell us about the webinars we had?

OREOLUWA LESI:

Hi, everyone. All right, so we had a set of webinars all about the DNS system specifically designed for NPOC members. We had seven webinars in total, and the attendance was quite good. We would have liked to have more people attend, but we also recognize that not everyone's schedule allows them to join a webinar in real time.

So, the webinars are available on the NPOC Wiki, and we have shared the links before but we can also share the links here in the chat. But it was really interesting. It took us from the very ground level, the definition of what the DNS is and especially how it affects nonprofit organizations. We spoke about some of the different challenges that can happen related to the DNS. We spoke about transferring your domains. We spoke about DNS abuse. We spoke about domain hijacking. We spoke about things that are important for nonprofits to do to safeguard their domain name.

So, it was a really comprehensive, encompassing webinar series, and if you were not able to join us in real time, we highly encourage you to look for the links and catch up on all the videos.

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So, that was one of the major things that we have done this year to really educate NPOC members because one of the feedbacks that we've always gotten is in terms of the need for creating awareness, especially about domain name issues. There's certainly lots of, I guess, mystery around it, and not everyone necessarily understands what the domain name is, what the Domain Name System is, and especially why it's important for nonprofits to have good information about it.

So, this was something that had come up in some of our previous engagements with our NPOC members. And so, we're very happy and excited to work with the ICANN team to develop this. So, we're looking forward to more the rest of this year and next year.

So, if the link hasn't been shared now, we'll share the link to the webinars so that you can all take a look at it and watch them. They were fantastic. So, thank you so much for that.

RAOUL PLOMMER:

Great. Thank you, Ore. I suggest that if you haven't seen any of these webinars to go and have a look They were really expertly well made, and they're all in-store so you can use them at your convenience.

And I think we can move up to the next thing, which is the policy update. So, luckily, we have a GNSO councilor here. Juan Manuel Rojas will hopefully tell us about the policy at the moment.

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JUAN MANUEL ROJAS:

Thank you very much, and your Spanish is improving, Mr. Raoul. Okay, well, to talk a little bit about the policy. Okay, we are going to talk about what we are discussing right now—or tomorrow. Tomorrow morning from [inaudible]. And the first thing that we have, it's that we are going to initiate the GNSO Framework for Continuous Improvement pilot. This is a project that needs to, of course, improve this work assignment and structure of some groups and chairs.

The idea is to improve these frameworks of some representation of some groups. This is to improve some groups as WS2, policy implementation, the PDP 3.0., and the empowerment community or ATRT3, and the GNSO Review that's coming in the next month.

This is just a pilot project, but in the meeting, we are going to initiate maybe these. We will vote for initiating this project. So, for more [inaudible] improved to, as I said, to provide a managed non-PDP-related effort that we have inside the SOs and constituency chairs in some cases.

I have also, in the agenda, we have an international IDNs, International Domain Names operational track. What we are going to do with that, because this has been a very long discussion about this and we have to develop the guidelines from these revision processes. And this also always is comprised of members from ALAC, [ccNSO, GNSO], and SSAC.

And this proposal operational track was proposed a long time ago in 2018, and now we have a proposal that was presented by the Contracted Party House, and these will be discussed in our session. And this is part of the discussion.



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Another team, the Accuracy Scoping Team, [it is] just for about registration data, specifically on just some groups inside the Council as BC, ISPC, registrars, and IPC, and GAC. They have showed they have interest in this working group and relevant knowledge and expertise in these in this group. This group will be discussing about requirements and progress of the impact of GDPR. So, they are very interested in that.

So, there will be another topic. We have another topic about the GNSO interaction with GAC. This a common topic inside the Council agenda because we are going to talk about how the liaisons inside the GNSO is working with GAC and what are the interests from GAC and always is EPDP and some issue related. So, because there is a question, okay, how does the GNSO liaison to the GAC work? What is their role. So, that's part of the discussion, also.

Of course, we will have a status from EPDP. In this case, we are going to talk about EPDP Phase 2A. The EPDP Team is working very hard to develop this, and the EPDP has received responses for Legal Committee's question. And this is a feedback. This is still discussing about natural and natural person and this kind of topic that some of you that are following EPDP can know better.

And finally, we have the discussion about EPDP Phase 1 Recommendation 27. This has been discussed for a long time now, and we are identifying possible next steps to review what determines [what are] next. In this case, what we are going to talk about with GDS is Global Domain Division from ICANN to know what is the level of effort

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to complete this implementation of the IRT implementation. And maybe, if necessary, to reconvene the IRT.

And I think that the big picture of what we are discussing in GNSO Council, here from NPOC side because I am GNSO Council, but I am identified from [inaudible] NPOC member also because I am from a long time. We are working with Ioana in IGO PDP Working Group, working team.

And this is in our working group that we are discussing about what important things about IGOs (intergovernmental organizations) to this PDP and how these organizations can or cannot register a domain. We are checking some things that it was not clear from RPM Working Group, and we just discussing the basics. We are just putting the things in order, and that's what we are doing right now with Ioana in this IGO Working Group.

I think that's it. I hope no miss anything. I don't know if maybe you have any questions. So, thank you very much.

RAOUL PLOMMER:

Thank you, Juan. That was a very comprehensive list of things, what's going on in GNSO Council. Yeah, does anybody have any questions to Juan? Okay. No questions, I assume. Well, I guess we can move on to the fifth agenda item. I'm actually really glad that you're in that—was it the IDN group that you and Ioana are in?

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JUAN MANUEL ROJAS: IGO Working Track.

RAOUL PLOMMER: IGO, that's right. Yeah, yeah. Intergovernmental organizations. Yeah. At least that's very NPOC-relevant. So, yeah, we want to keep close tabs on that.

So, I wanted to talk about, as the last item, about the lack of leaders in NPOC at the moment. So, we're basically lacking a policy chair at the moment and nobody stepped up, either as a vice-chair candidate for the coming term. So, I really wanted to just reiterate that call to NPOC members who have some idea of what's going on here, and would really welcome them to step up for either of these positions.

And, well, even if you don't want an executive position in the constituency, it can be very good to join a working group or one of these PDPs as an NPOC member. And, yeah, we'd be, of course, helping as much as we can that kind of initiative.

I don't have too much to add to that. Does anyone else have? I think this has been something that has been problematic throughout this coronavirus—is really participation. So, yeah, if anybody wants to say something about that or any other business, really.

PONCELET ILELEJI: Hello, Raoul.

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RAOUL PLOMMER: Hello there. Yeah.

PONCELET ILELEJI: Yeah, I think it's been challenging. I see you have really worked hard to try to reverse this trend of getting leaders. But what I want to suggest we should do, we should look at the crop of young people that have come through not for profits as fellows into and have joined NPOC. And see, because, though the ICANN Fellowship, they have really gone through a very good process. And I think that is one way you can do is reaching out to fellows that are really affiliated with NPOC. I think that is one way to do it.

And also reaching out to some certain individual members from our membership from certain organizations that maybe have been quiet. Because sometimes that reach out is important. Not everybody, and some people are very reclusive. They read everything, but they will not comment. So, I would just encourage you more to try to [keep] your reach out policy so that we get new faces. It's very important when you get new faces. New ideas come and it builds up the constituency. That's my strong belief about it.

And then you shouldn't relent to your effort. We should all do the same, you know, so it's not a one-person show [inaudible]and do this thing. Thank you.

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RAOUL PLOMMER: Thanks, Poncelet. There were some good ideas there. I think we've had a good few fellows join us for our webinars, and I think that's also a good way to get some people in to introduce them to NPOC issues.

CALEB OGUNDELE: Raoul, my hands are raised.

RAOUL PLOMMER: Okay. Go on, Caleb.

CALEB OGUNDELE: Yes, thank you. So, just some few responses to/reactions to some of the things Poncelet mentioned. If you look at the Fellowship, I see a little bit of issue with the way the Fellowship selection is structured. There is so much focus on those coming from the student angle and those coming from the technical and some from the academia. But then, I'm just doing some quick assessment on the breakdown. We've not seen ...

We have folks specifically from NGOs really, really having much shot at getting fellowship slots which, if we [didn't do a tracer] study, [it would then lead] that, naturally, your natural constituency will be NPOC. And so, finding it interesting from the level of the Fellowship is also one thing that perhaps we need to put some messages across. Perhaps we need to start seeing folks from NPOC also participating in the Fellowship Selection Committee. Like, we usually have, when

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nominations are being put out, that they want folks from certain SOs/ACs to join the Selection Committee of the Fellowship.

I think this is one where we can also actively participate when there are calls for this. Perhaps it helps us put into consideration all things possible, folks from NGOs who have valid applications that can survive the test of time with what the Fellowship is all about, and can also participate in the Fellowship space as well as end up coming to NPOC.

So, that is one thing I think we should consider moving forward. That we should start having at the back of our mind now .Thank you.

MARYAM BAKOSHI: Hi, Raoul. We have a queue forming. Wisdom and then Juan. And then a question in the chat from Olivier. Thank you.

RAOUL PLOMMER: Yes. Please go ahead.

WISDOM DONKOR: Thank you very much. Yes, looking at NPOC from an organizational perspective, I think we have good members. But what I think we are lacking is capacity building. We need to look at that and see what we can do to grow the capacity of our members.

And also, I don't know why people are not interested that much. Maybe it is because their interests have not been awakened. So, we need to

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find means and ways of coming out with some program and see what we can do to kind of revive our members.

I can see that a lot of our members, should I say or use the word “sleeping” because they don’t see that vibrancy within the NPOC community. So, we need to come out with interesting programs. And, again, looking at a fellowship program. Yes, we have some good fellows of are our day. We just need to be attractive to them. We need to find ways in reaching out to some of these people and bringing them on board.

And I’m sure when we are able to do that, we will see some of these individuals coming up, taking on some positions and also joining some of the working groups and helping policy development. This is what I have to say.

[RAOUL PLOMMER:]

Thanks, Wisdom.

MARYAM BAKOSHI:

And we have Juan next. Juan, please. And then back to Caleb.

JUAN MANUEL ROJAS:

Thank you, Maryam. I think that, yeah, we have a lot of ideas here, and that's great. And I think that all of you have of the NPOC EC here have done a great job with these webinars. I think, also, that we need to step forward.

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Okay, we have webinars, so we have some people who maybe know now what NPOC does and how this can be useful inside ICANN's ecosystem. But also, we need to understand how to do more outreach inside ICANN as NPOC. Because we have also a lack of people working in working groups, in big working groups. We have just one or two of us working in those groups. So, the visibility from NPOC in ICANN's ecosystem is minimal because we are just a few in one part.

Another part is we have the webinars. So, we need to step forward. How this can be possible for our members. I mean, we have the capacity building for them, but now how they can ... Now we need to teach them or show them how they can be useful or they can add value for NPOC in another group or in another working group. Do they feel part of it? Not just, okay, I am an NPOC member, but I feel alone because I don't know what they do. And that's it.

I think that's not the point. The point is, okay, we have webinars. We have a base. What are the next? I think the next is empowered people to involve not just in NPOC position leadership that we have. Talking about that, we have a lack of this this But maybe we need to identify this leadership, the persons, to know their ability, their strengths, and their knowledge to bring them here and they can apply for the good of NPOC.

And I think we'll have a good visibility and we will have, also, a [strong] constituency. I think that's all for me. Thank you very much.



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RAOUL PLOMMER: Thanks for that, Juan. So, one more in the queue. Sorry, I can't see this.

WISDOM DONKOR: Yes.

RAOUL PLOMMER: Oh. I think Caleb. Caleb had something to [inaudible].

WISDOM DONKOR: Okay. I have a bit of background noise. I apologize for that. Yes, and just [adding to] Juan, I think what we can also do to be attractive to more people is to kind of look at our communication strategy. I don't know if we have one. Maybe it's because we are not appealing the larger community enough to attract more members.

So, if we can look at the communication part of our community, that will also help bring new members on board. And we need to be very attractive, if possible, we can come up with newsletters and what have you. I mean, that would help attract more people into NPOC. Thank you.

PONCELET ILELEJI: Raoul, can I please just add [a voice]?

RAOUL PLOMMER: Yeah, sure.

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PONCELET ILELEJI:

Yes. What I just want to say, I mean, serving in policy membership when NPOC was started, I can remember our leads chair, what he did at the time. We had this outreach document and we had to do something. I think that was what got a lot of members involved in the early days, 2012, 2013 and stuff like that. [inaudible] people during global [IGF.]

For us to start as a block talking to individual members. So, using our chair, Raoul can do it with the membership chair, okay, we are going to reach out to look at our membership. Just people have applied to become members of NPOC and say, okay. So, there are all the people that are members on NPOC in Latin America. We are going to do a one-week onboarding process of maybe two sessions each, and just two sessions in that one. So, there will be an onboarding process.

People in Asia, there will be an onboarding process. People in Africa and North America, there will be an onboarding process. So, I think we should revert to that outreach that we are looking at individual regions, and we do an onboarding process. Because there's one thing. People apply. They didn't just apply. It would be wrong to presume that they just applied or they just wanted to be NPOC or they saw it as, "Oh, it's cool, we are not for profit, blah, blah, blah."

No. There's a reason they applied. They read the stuff. So, let us do an onboarding process and let's introduce an onboarding process for any new member of NPOC. So, once you join, your membership has been accepted by the NCSG and stuff like that [inaudible]. There's this onboarding process that will happen that introduces you to what we are doing and everything—our policy delegations, how it works, and

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stuff like that. I think it's very important. And I think it's something that we shouldn't dwell on too long for. It should be initiated by the upcoming EC. And I'm sure if you do that, use your positions—whether you do this onboarding process starting with those positions of vice-chair, of policy chairs—you will see in the different regions NPOC [going to see people] who come and say, “Oh, I'm definitely going to join and learn the ropes.”

And personality, people like me who have been in a leadership position, I'm ready to help volunteer to help NPOC EC to do this onboarding process, get new people on board. It's very important that we get new faces on board because not-for-profits is different from those being an individual member. For not-for-profits, everybody has ...

Their schedules over the time become bigger and bigger and bigger and bigger and bigger. So, you have to accept that you are working in a one-man not-for-profit, which is not the case in some cases. So, let us do this onboarding process, and I'll be the first person to say [inaudible] some you have to walk the talk. My hands up to say if the new EC decides to call me to help in the onboarding process and reach out programs [inaudible], I will help. Thank you very much.

CALEB OGUNDELE: Sorry. Can I speak, Raoul?

RAOUL PLOMMER: Go ahead, Caleb.

CALEB OGUNDELE:

Yeah, thank you. Thank you very much, Poncelet, for the tips that you've given. We've taken note of this, and we will act on it. But probably not so much in defense of what we've been doing before. Throughout this COVID period, we have not had any membership application or approval that has been done yet. So, I want to believe it's been some difficult time for NGOs to survive, and joining NPOC will probably not be one of the priorities at the moment.

Speaking of the onboarding process. What has been a tradition—which I think we've gotten some new tips from you which will improve on—is that what we've been doing traditionally is sending all the information, sending the link to new members, sending all the materials and videos in one complete message. Sending it to them as a package and telling them that if they were to have questions and feedback, that they can reach directly to the EC.

We've been doing that, but I think I also do see some logic in what you said about the onboarding. That we should have some form of regional onboarding process as well as having an onboarding process for new members, perhaps a webinar for them. This also a good initiative. We [inaudible] and we'll try and improve on it. Thank you so much for the feedback.

Yeah, the final one I'd like to speak on, and I think it was based on the reaction on membership participation. I think one of the things that we are currently lacking is diversity, even at the level of leadership. We'd like to see diversity across board whereby not one particular region is

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having a higher number or the other probably in leadership or even in membership. We'd like to see an equal playing field for everyone.

It's my own personal opinion. I'm not speaking for the EC, though. That is one thing for me. I think I was trying to react during one of the charts. What I don't [inaudible] but maybe I should add it to my comment here. But regional diversity is something that we should strive to achieve as much as possible.

PONCELET ILELEJI: Raoul. Just one question for you.

RAOUL PLOMMER: Go ahead.

PONCELET ILELEJI: Do you have any, off the top of your head, a breakdown of regional organizations in NPOC per region? Thank you.

RAOUL PLOMMER: In our membership registry, we have listed the areas that ... Well, not just the countries, but also by continent. Is that what you meant?

PONCELET ILELEJI: That's what I meant. I think that should be what Caleb should be looking at [inaudible] group regional outreach. I think it will change the dynamics. Thank you.

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CALEB OGUNDELE: Yes. Sorry that I have to [inaudible]. And I'm sorry, Raoul. Yes, we do have it on our website.

RAOUL PLOMMER: Yes. It is probably a good idea to look at it, and I guess we'd really want to be looking at North America and Asia which don't have a representative in the NPOC EC at the moment.

PONCELET ILELEJI: Exactly. Thank you.

RAOUL PLOMMER: Yeah. I think there have been some good suggestions and information on what to do at the moment. Is there any other business? I think we have 10 minutes left. I can, of course, give you back that time of life as well if there's nothing further.

OLIVIER KOUAMI: Hello.

RAOUL PLOMMER: Go ahead, Olivier.

OLIVIER KOUAMI: Thank you, Raoul. Good morning, everyone. And good evening. I wanted NPOC to clarify his relationship with their regional

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representation. In the case of Africa, I wanted NPOC to tell us what is the relationship between AfrICANN and the NPOC and if AfrICANN has, in its strategy, a program for an NPOC promotion in our regional area. Thank you.

CALEB OGUNDELE: Raoul, would you want me to answer that?

RAOUL PLOMMER: Yes, please, Caleb.

CALEB OGUNDELE: Okay. Thank you so much, Olivier, for coming up with that question. It's actually an interesting one. But first of all, I'd just like to call your attention to our current charter which we have, which does not in any way, in quotes, say that we have regional breakdowns just like we have in the At-Large structure. But we have RALOs in the At-Large structure.

Our Charter does not currently support that. We need to first of all put that into cognizance and also try and be guided by it. However, it still does not remove the fact that we are not regionally represented, or we are not putting into consideration the fact that we need some form of regional affiliation. We are doing that, and we are conscious of that.

I'll take, for example, for us in NPOC, I know fully well that during the period when I think the work plan ... Or there is this particular document that was worked on by the African regional GSE Team with some other African members. Right? I actively contributed to that

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document, not just as someone speaking because of my regional representation in AFRALO, but because of the fact that I am also an NPOC member. And so, we were able to contribute actively to the strategy of that document.

So, sometimes if we look at these things when calls are being made out, individuals are supposed to also participate actively to see how they can defend the cause of their region as well as the constituency they represent within the original scope of what the GSE Team is working on, [business strategy document].

I might not have done justice to everything to the question you've asked, but I just decided that it might be good to provide some information that might perhaps help you get some insights into our role. And we can also play that double role, but as NPOC members in contributing through any regional documentation when calls like this are made on ICANN's website. Thank you.

RAOUL PLOMMER: Thanks, Caleb. Any other issues?

OLIVIER KOUAMI: Thank you, Caleb.

RAOUL PLOMMER: Well, I think we're ready to wrap up this meeting. Thank you very much for everyone who joined us today.



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Just a last word about this last point of the agenda. I think I will be sending another two calls for these vice-chair and policy chair positions. So, if somebody does feel like they could be stepping up, please answer in that mail. I'll be sending it to the NPOC mailing list. And probably a little update on where we are at, what we discussed here today.

Does anyone else want to say something? Okay. I think we're done. So, thank you all for coming today and I hope to see you next time.

EMMANUEL VITUS: Thank you, Raoul, and thank you, everyone. Bye-bye.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Bye, all.

MARYAM BAKOSHI: Thank you all for joining. The meeting is now adjourned. Have a good day. Bye-bye.

BIKRAM SHRESTHA: Yes, thank you. Thank you, everyone.

**[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]**