
ICANN71 | Prep Week - ICANN Board Members and CEO with Fellows and NextGen@ICANN Participants
Tuesday, June 01, 2021 - 17:30 to 18:30 CEST

CHERIE STUBBS: This session will now begin. Please start the recording.

[Recording in progress]

CHERIE STUBBS: Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Hello and welcome to the joint meeting between the ICANN Board Chair, members, ICANN President and CEO, and ICANN71 Fellowship and NextGen@ICANN program participants. I also hope that some newcomers has joined us as we announced it a bit earlier during newcomer session.

My name is Siranush Vardanyan, and I'm ICANN Fellowship Program manager. I'm the remote participation manager for this session as well.

Please note that this session is being recorded and follows the ICANN Expected Standards of Behavior.

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.

During this session, questions or comments submitted in the chat will only be read aloud if put in a proper form as I have noted in the chat. I will read questions and comments aloud during the time set by the chair or moderator of this session.

Interpretation for this session will include English, French, Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Arabic languages. Click on the interpretation icon in Zoom and select the language you will listen to during this session. If you wish to speak, please raise your hand in the Zoom room. And once the session facilitator calls upon your name, kindly unmute your microphone and take the floor.

Before speaking, ensure you have selected the language you will speak from the interpretation menu.

Please state your name for the record and the language you will speak, if speaking a language other than English.

When speaking, be sure to mute all other devices and notifications. Please speak clearly and at a reasonable pace to allow for accurate interpretation.

To view the real time transcription, click on the closed caption button in the Zoom toolbar.

Having said this, let me introduce the agenda for today's call.

Can we have the next slide, Deborah? Thank you.

So we'll have Göran Marby, ICANN President and CEO, to welcome all of you. Our next speaker will be Maarten Botterman, Chair of ICANN Board of Directors. And we'll have Leon Sanchez, Vice Chair of ICANN Board of Directors and Lito Ibarra, member of ICANN Board.

Both Leon and Lito are the Fellows -- ICANN Fellows, so they will speak about their perspective, how they get to the Board.

And at the end, we'll open the floor for Q&A. So if you have a question, as I have noted in the chat, please post them. Or if you want to speak, raise your hand.

With that, I would like to welcome all our Fellows and NextGeners to the session and give the floor to ICANN President and CEO, Göran Marby, for his welcoming speech.

Göran, the floor is yours.

GÖRAN MARBY: Thank you, my friend.

Thank you and welcome, everybody, to this call. I am going to stay short because I know that you're going to -- you want to ask questions, and I want to give the opportunity to do that.

But I want to give you something for the mind going into ICANN71, especially to the newcomers. You might think that the Internet is done. Now you will see learning from this week is that the Internet is not done and participating in ICANN you will be part of making it more done.

We are entering something -- you will hear the word or expression of "sub pro" or "the next round" coming into this one. And I just want to give you a little bit more flavor of what that's all about.

That is actually about increasing equality and the fairness of the Internet itself. Think about it, there are about 5 billion Internet users around the world. There are about -- in the ICANN remit, it's about 1300 ways for you to identify yourself. We call them domain names, top-level domains. And you can add the country code operators and you're maybe up to 1500, 1600 ways of actually putting out communities on the Internet with 5 billion users and 6,000 languages. And most of those names are actually happens

to be in English. You read from left. You go to the right, or somewhere in the middle.

The next round is about changing that. The next round is about making sure that people around the world, regardless of what kind of language, what kind of narrative, the context has the ability to build local communities, private or commercial communities, for themselves on the Internet. To really make sure that the Internet, the next generation of the Internet, becomes not only interoperable for computers as it is today but also to make it interoperable for people, that is what the next round is all about.

When you enter this, you will hear a lot about technical things, about -- and a lot of acronyms about it as well. But always think about this as a really large peace project which we are now entering into. It's going to be a long process. It's going to be a devious process. It's going to be a tough process.

But especially you, we need you to be the eyes and ears for us, to help us to make the Internet more fair for everybody.

I welcome you to this call. I am looking forward to your questions. Thank you very much.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Göran. And thank you for joining this session.

Next slide, please.

Next, I would like to give the floor to ICANN -- Chair of ICANN Board of Directors, Maarten Botterman.

Maarten, please.

MAARTEN BOTTERMAN: Okay. Also from me, a welcome for everybody. And many of you will have heard that welcome already in the first call.

This is really why it's so important to have this Next Gen program, to have you as Fellows join ICANN and seek your way in the system and see how you can contribute best because your time commitment to us is a fair sign that you're interested.

Our commitment to you is to help you find your way. And I think we believe that when you do, you will be committed to helping make this happen.

We are a public interest pursuer together, as a community of all stakeholders that are to make this happen together. So we realize

very much that the Internet was built by people that we are so very grateful for. And it's evolved and it continues to evolve. And as you have seen with all this pandemic crisis, it changes -- it evolves its role in society, too. We can't think of a world without it anymore.

Now, ICANN just contributes a little but quite an important part of that, and that is the unique addressing, and to get this right across the world to serve the world.

So for that, it's not only to serve those old people that start building it in the past but for the people that are currently helping to make it happen, but also for future generations to be able to use it to their benefit. And that is why it's not good enough to just say "We're open, you're welcome." This is why we invite people in, why we are trying to attract you in and try to get you on board to bring your perspective.

And the good news is when you're new, any question is a good question. So you may feel less hesitant to ask the stupid question that in the end turn out to make a lot of sense than we who have been around for a little bit longer.

You will find that we are willing to listen, and we are interested in your perspective and we are willing to share and bring you up to

speed, maybe not always at a standing -- at a specific meeting but if that's not the right time, then for sure you'll find us and other people around to ask questions to. Don't hesitate to reach out.

The program will give you an excellent start in that, but the Internet is made by people. We are all people, and we welcome you in the community and are happy to do what we can to help make this happen.

So it's a real pleasure for me to introduce my fellow Board members who actually found their way to where they are today through this program. It wasn't the only thing they've done to get here, but this is part of their story, too.

So, Siranush, can I ask Leon to speak up?

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Definitely.

Leon, please, the floor is yours.

LEON SANCHEZ: Thank you very much, Siranush.

And welcome, everyone. I'd like to speak in Spanish to take advantage of translation services, if don't mind. So if you want to switch to Spanish -- or to English or whatever language you are listening in, I will switch to Spanish now.

Okay. Let me welcome you, as Maarten did, as Göran did. It is always a pleasure to be with the Fellows.

As we always say, once a Fellow, always a Fellow. There is no point in time when we stop being Fellows.

So Siranush has also been a Fellow, and many other members of the organization have also been Fellows. The Fellows and the Next Gen Programs are extremely important, therefore, to attain this continuity in the execution and accomplishment of ICANN's mission. It is through these programs that we are able to acquire new talent to introduce new people into our ecosystem but above all share knowledge, our knowledge, with you but also learn from you.

You should feel proud that you are bringing new perspectives into our ICANN ecosystem. And why probably at the beginning you might feel rather confused or a little bit lost but let me tell you that that is how we all started. You're not the only ones. We have gradually started become members of ICANN and participated in

this multistakeholder model. And we've always felt confused and couldn't find our way.

I remember my first meeting in the city of Mexico, where I come from. When I arrived there, I had absolutely no idea about what was happening around me. I was very keen and very curious and interested in following the discussions.

However, as many newcomers -- or as all newcomers, I had absolutely no idea at all about what they were talking about. That was not an obstacle for me to learn and to have this desire to become involved in ICANN. So I applied for the Fellows Program. And let me tell you, I was not accepted in my first try. I had to make several attempts.

As you know, this is a highly competitive program. And many people apply to become members of this program. And once we're in it, we feel privileged. We are privileged of having been accepted and taken virtually by the hand to be into this ecosystem and be recognized as this new generation in the ecosystem.

In my experience, whenever I went -- at all meetings I attended, whenever I said I was a Fellow, the doors were open, and I was very warmly welcome. And I was helped becoming familiar with

what all parts in the organization were doing. So this is an advantage in itself, and I think you should take it and always ensure with pride that you belong to this generation of Fellows.

As I said, and let me repeat it, in my experience, the community members who know that we are Fellows are always very kind to us. And as Maarten said, this is a question of continuing building the Internet. This is an effort to develop a more inclusive, sound, diverse ecosystem where with respect and with diverse perspectives, we are able to reach consensus on the different issues and problems that could be our concern and our interest, this interest in the continuity of the domain name system.

So actually I think that the most important part is for you to make questions, take this opportunity. You should leave this meeting without no doubts. There are no stupid questions. All your questions, I hope, that either myself or my colleagues here will be able to answer. And here on the screen, you can see my email address. So feel free to contact me at any point in time.

As I always say, I'm a click of a distance and I'm always open to answer all your questions. I might take time, but I always answer. Thank you again.

Siranush, back to you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Leon. Thank you for your warm welcome.

And next slide, please.

And now I would like to give the floor to another proud of the Fellowship Program, my dear Lito Ibarra.

Lito, the floor is yours.

LITO IBARRA: Thank you, Siranush.

And welcome, everyone, Fellows, Next Gens, and newcomers, as well as my colleagues here in the panel.

I will also speak in Spanish, so I will change to my channel.

Hello, everyone, from the Spanish. This is one of the languages into which ICANN meetings are translated into. So these are very good sessions because at these sessions, we have the opportunity of exchanging ideas with newcomers, Fellows, members of the Next Gen Program, everyone. We are together at the same meeting. So we may exchange ideas, comments, questions, and everything related to the soon-to-be held ICANN71 meeting.

This is really very enthusiastic, very interesting in knowing that many people is willing to be involved with ICANN. As Göran said, the Internet is a work in progress. There are lots of things to be done. We may think that around half of the people around the world has no Internet connection. And the reasons are various, connectivity, infrastructure, but sometimes, some of the things may be in our hands.

I'd like to touch upon one of the topics that will be discussed during ICANN meetings, IDN -- IDN means internationalized domain names -- and universal acceptance, or UA.

What does this mean? The idea is to, from a technical perspective, develop a facility so that domain names and email addresses may be written in the set of characters that each of us have been using since childhood and use in their daily lives so that this may feel close to our culture, close to ourselves, close to our way of living, to a way of expressing ourselves. This is very hard from a technical point of view, but certainly we're making progress in that respect.

This is one of the areas into which each of you, once you know what we do at ICANN, may then decide to join, to strengthen, to work at and so from your perspective, from your place, and from your position help us move forward.

This is the trick of being a Next Gen, of being a Fellow, of being a newcomer: Learn, listen, and at one point in time join a working group. You will notice that there are many working groups. At the very beginning, as Leon and others said, perhaps you do not understand quite well the ecosystem, the ICANN ecosystem. But little by little, you will learn how it works and you may also add your effort, your work from your local perspective, from your national perspective.

I'm the honor of being the first Fellow appointed to ICANN's board of directors. This happened in 2015. I was a Fellow in 2008 and 2009. And so after following this path and decided how ICANN works, how it has an impact on the Internet, what is the benefit that each of us may contribute for the better development, after learning of that, suddenly, I was incentivized by another person. I applied for being a member of the board of directors. And I've been in that position, as I said before, since 2015. So I tried to do my best and contribute my best effort. And I certainly urge you to do the same.

You don't have to be in a position of authority or have resources. Perhaps you may hold some events, some exchanges in our own -- in your own community, I mean, your family, friends, your local community: What is the Internet? What is the best use of

Internet? What are we lacking in interest? What has to be done in the Internet?

So this is the message.

We hope -- we certainly will receive you with open arms. And if you have any questions, please ask them now.

We will try and answer all of them. Thank you very much.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Lito.

And now the floor is open for questions. Please, if you want to speak, raise your hand. You can do this in the Zoom. So there is reactions. You can raise your hand there, or you can find it in "view options." So if anyone wants to speak, please raise your hand.

And there is a first question, if possible, to all panelists from Katarina Gevorgyan from Armenia: What are you most proud of regarding ICANN?

Whoever wants to be the first.

MAARTEN BOTTERMAN: Yeah, sure. I think amazingly that the Internet works and that we've kept it up and running together, even in times where the use increase went up enormously. The fact that there's so many people, so many communities -- from so many communities committed to it from all over the world and actually do care about contributing even when it comes at a cost, personal cost, of time and effort.

Yeah, that we meet time and time again with people who care, so...

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thanks, Maarten.

Göran, would you like to say something?

GÖRAN MARBY: What an easy question. (chuckles)

I mean, I think I have to start by talking about that I'm really proud of the staff working for ICANN Org. Remember, we do the distinction between the ICANN Org, the ICANN Board, and ICANN community and that is for a good reason. The multistakeholder model shows success that the community is the one who makes

policies. And ICANN Board then makes decisions based on those policies, and ICANN Org facilitate the discussion that happens between the community and then is charged with implementing the work -- the decisions coming out of the community.

And I'm often very, very happy and pleased, without people like who is helping you with this call. It's good to have you here, and I'm proud of you.

But apart from that, I would agree with Maarten. The fact that the Internet actually runs, ICANN has a very important part of that. You might not think about it because it's sort of self-evident. It's so self-evident, we never talk about it.

Every time you go online, any type of device, anywhere in the world, you hit something that originates from ICANN. And that is something that's -- sometimes it makes me pause because there's an obligation, a responsibility. But you do, every time you go online, you meet ICANN in some shape or form.

And the fact that the world has decided that the way to manage that is through a multistakeholder model where we bring people from all over the world together, that makes me really proud as well because this is not -- this is not run by governments. This is not run by big private companies. This is something completely

different. And, also, again it's so self-evident, we don't even talk about it.

There's a lot of things that makes me proud of ICANN, come to think of it. So I think I will stop there.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Göran.

Leon, I see you have your hand raised as well.

LEON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Siranush. Thank you.

So I think that what I'm most proud about ICANN, it's the thousands of volunteers that work tirelessly to make things happen and, of course, staff that supports that work.

I think having witnessed the evolution in the relationship between the community and the organization is something that I'm very proud about.

There was a time in which there were a lot of tensions between Org and the community. I am very happy to say that I don't see those tensions anymore. I feel that there has been a positive

evolution in the relationship between Org and the community and that definitely allows us, everyone, to better contribute to ICANN's mission.

So if there is anything I feel proud about, it's belonging to the ICANN community, belonging to the At-Large community which has trusted me with being on the Board on their behalf.

And, again, the tireless voluntary -- volunteers that work so hard and staff that work to make things happen within ICANN.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Leon.

Lito, please.

LITO IBARRA: Thank you. I will try to be brief.

There are many things that make me proud about ICANN, but I will just mention one. I think ICANN is a guardian. And we as part of ICANN, we, everyone, every one of us as part of ICANN, we are the guardians of the principles -- of the core principles of the Internet, being those openness, diversity, inclusivity, collaboration, and so on, with a generous and open heart. So I

think we are the successors of those main principles with which Internet was created more than 51 years ago. Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Lito. There is a very interesting question from Veronica Piccolo, who is NextGen for ICANN71. And the question is for all panelists, whoever wants to take.

ICANN and ICANN meetings can be overwhelming, especially for the NextGeners like me. Do you think that having joined/approached ICANN so young could be an advantage? I mean, will it get less overwhelming over the years? What's your advice for us?

Leon, I see your hand. Please go ahead.

LEON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Siranush.

It is definitely an advantage to join young. I'm only 24 years old, although I look as if I was almost 50. So you'll end up looking like us in no time.

No, being serious, I think it's -- it's something that you get addicted to literally. Attending ICANN meetings, being around

this community, and contributing to the work we do is something that you really get addicted to.

So at least my experience, yes, meetings tend to become less overwhelming. You start to understand things better. You start to contribute in those areas where you actually feel that you are contributing meaningfully.

So, yes, in the long run, I think it tends to become less burdensome, although you might be dedicating more hours of our time. But, certainly, at least in my case, I enjoy it a lot and I like a lot what I do. So, yeah.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Leon.

Anyone wants to respond to that question? Or we will move to the next one.

LITO IBARRA: I can try it.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Yeah, please.

LITO IBARRA:

Veronica is asking for advice of how to handle the overwhelming of ICANN meetings and ICANN as a whole.

I would say, you take it easy the first times. I mean, you go and listen and everything. Maybe you can take notes, if that helps you. It is already somewhere, everything that is discussed is somewhere. I mean, diagrams, graphics, infographics, and documents with text. They are all there.

But if you try to understand the whole thing at once, you will get really overwhelmed. So it's better, I think, to go easy to just listen, take notes, and maybe after -- I have to say this, maybe after the second or third of your meetings, you will start to understand better what is going on in ICANN.

And at that point -- or maybe even a little bit before that, you can start to see what is -- what is it that interests you most and that you will feel comfortable helping, cooperating with those working groups at some point.

First you have to have the whole picture at your pace, and then you will have the time to decide where to look at yourself. Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Lito.

MAARTEN BOTTERMAN: Siranush, just to add, you've got a great team to help you and to point you in directions.

I think the younger you are, it doesn't matter. It's as soon as you start engaging, you will find out sooner or later that things fall in place and actually make sense.

So don't worry if it looks overwhelming. And don't -- as Lito said, as Leon said, give yourself some space to learn.

But, also, you don't have to wait for the meetings to engage with ICANN. I'm sure you will hear more about this over the week to come. But there's plenty of opportunities to engage, in particular initiatives that ask for public comments. You can read; you can form your opinion; you can see what other people think. There are so many opportunities to get a better feel also using the website, using ICANN Learn and everything.

So give yourself some time. And my guess is once you get into it, you will find it makes more and more sense, whether you're younger or older.

Sorry.

[Laughter]

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Maarten.

I would like to give the floor to Bonface Witaba. Bonface, if you can unmute yourself and ask your question.

GÖRAN MARBY: You didn't let me give a comment.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Oh, Sorry, Göran. I thought you don't want to take this question.

GÖRAN MARBY: I gave a piece of advice to my own staff when I joined. And that is that when you get entranced into ICANN, you will see there are so many fun things that you will be a part of.

Literally I have one of the best jobs in the world because I have all those people I can go and ask questions of, even if it's what we talked about when we -- how do you secure the DNS systems

going forward? How do we enhance all the acronyms like DNSSEC?

This is technically interesting, and the funny thing is no one has done it in world history before. So there's no real answer. There are geopolitical consequences. Oh, it's so much fun.

What I say to staff is pick very carefully the things you're interested in and stick with that.

But there's one thing I would like to say. We don't do this only because we're nice people. We want you to be engaged because we need your voices. I know it becomes a little bit intimidating, you go in and you start -- first of all, you don't know what an acronym is. And then what is the actual subject people are discussing, and it seems like people have been around for 200 years and they have. But your voice is important because that's why we have these programs, to get people into the system so they can have their voices.

It doesn't matter if it's right or wrong or something. We need your voice. So especially now due to digital, to engage in conversations can be harder but please do. That's why you're here. You're not here to be silent, listening to elderly people with gray beards. That's me and Maarten, for you.

MAARTEN BOTTERMAN: And Lito.

GÖRAN MARBY: He's only 24.

So don't feel that you don't have anything to say, and you have to wait for the right moment. Speak from the beginning. Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Göran. I wish someone gave me that advice when I came to ICANN first time.

Bonface --

MAARTEN BOTTERMAN: You don't have a white beard. You will never have a white beard, Siranush.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Bonface, please, unmute yourself and ask your question.

BONFACE WITABA: Thank you, Siranush.

Hi, everyone. My name is Bonface Witaba. I'm an ICANN71 Fellow from Kenya.

So a couple of questions. One is related to Leon and then I would like to ask the Board chair and the President.

First to Leon, there was a time you had a plan to have ICANN training material translated to Swahili for outreach purposes. I don't know if this was your personal initiative or the initiative of the Board. So how far have you gone with that plan?

And then the other two questions are -- one is regarding the ICANN remote hubs that was (indiscernible).

So I would like to know: Is there any plan by ICANN to have these hubs come back? Because personally, I've been doing outreach - I was doing outreach. And some of the universities that I went to had been using that remote hub to bring their staff or their students to ICANN events.

So is there any plan to have that come back? Especially in this pandemic, at least with a minimum number of people meeting onsite.

And then the other question is: Besides the ICANN Fellowship Program and the ICANN Next Gen Program, does ICANN have any plans, either now or in the future, to at least incorporate the aspect of internships at its regional engagement offices? Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Bonface. Really good questions.

Leon, if you would like to take the first question.

LEON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Siranush.

Thank you, Bonface.

I have to say that I am still looking for volunteers to help me translate into Swahili a couple of materials from ICANN and the knowledge base of ICANN. So I remember that you were in touch with me on that. So let's by all means pick up that conversation and continue to work together on this.

And that is not a Board initiative. That is a personal initiative. So if we can both work together on that, maybe we can convince Göran to support us in that task.

BONFACE WITABA: Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Göran, what will be your response? Any of you can take the question about the hubs and internships.

GÖRAN MARBY: Sorry. Leon knows -- I will tell him to go and do it. He's on the Board. He's the Vice Chair of the Board. I'm just the simple President and CEO.

I mean, seriously, I think the question about adding the languages, it's a big -- there are 6,000 or something languages around the world that we are constantly trying to improve. What we focus on now is to make it better for the languages we do actually do support. And we have spent a lot of investments and time and energy, for instance, to create better translation services, better transcript, but also rebuilding our own website into what we call the ITI. It's now possible for search in different languages and scripts. And I think that for now, we will focus on going forward on that.

I'm sorry, Siranush. What was the second question?

MAARTEN BOTTERMAN: Around remote hubs.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Remote hubs and internship opportunities in regional offices.

GÖRAN MARBY: We used the word "hubs" before and we stopped using it. We actually had regional offices around the world. And our intention is to continue to develop them in such a way that people in an area feels closer to it.

But, also, ICANN -- despite what people think, ICANN physically, it's a small organization, with only 400 people around the world. And still we are widespread. We have people today, I think, in 35 countries. So many work from their own homes.

So what we're really trying to do when it comes to this kind of outreach is to continue working with the community and support the community where they are, so we can make sure that you feel that you are connected to ICANN also on a local basis.

But it's a very good question. It's a multidimensional question because we see, both me from the Org and board, that is there is an increased regionalization of the Internet.

And one of the things we are facing is the Internet is global. As I said in the beginning, we often treat it as global but, at the same time, it's also very local. Your language is one Internet in itself. And your ability to move around what was talked about before, the ability of what we call IDNs and universal acceptance. It's about making the Internet more local. And ICANN as an organization needs to follow that as well.

Internships? We try it sometimes and we have not tried it. We have not -- especially now during the ICANN -- now during COVID, we don't do very much internships. But it's something we always think about because we want to find a way for people coming into ICANN as well.

I hope that answers your question.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Göran.

I see Albert has raised his hand. Albert.

ALBERT DANIELS: Thank you very much, Siranush.

I rather suspect the question related to remote hubs was more focused on those hubs that we used to do for events rather than actual engagement offices, as Göran has explained.

GÖRAN MARBY: Sorry, then I misunderstood. Thank you. Thank you, Albert.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Okay. We'll move to the next question from Oreoluwa Lesi, who is an ICANN71 Fellow. What is the best way to contribute to a policy development process when you are still learning about the issue? If anyone would like to take this question. So what is the best way to contribute?

MAARTEN BOTTERMAN: I think that that's partly what I said already. It's happening as we speak and all the time.

One thing is, of course, to get engaged, learn to become familiar with the bigger framework which you're doing by participating in this ICANN meeting.

But the policy issues themselves are all on the website. You see how to develop. You see the timeline, which steps are taken. You see invitations to contribute, to think.

And if you want to make it even more exciting and more interactive, you can engage either with the communities that exist in ICANN and you can even in your own country bring people together and work on it.

So there's plenty of opportunities to really get your hands dirty in a way. And then step by step, you learn where you want to contribute most, what interests you most, and how you can engage with others to make a more meaningful difference over time.

Yeah, use the meetings but also look at the website.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Maarten.

Leon, please.

LEON SANCHEZ: It's just to repeat part of what Maarten has said and some others have said. I mean, it's just paying attention, asking questions, reading a lot, getting involved, and understanding that most of the work that doesn't happen in ICANN meetings but around ICANN meetings or in between ICANN meetings. So I think if you

follow those guidelines, you'll be able to contribute to PDPs in no time.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you.

There is a question from Riccardo Nanni. Does one ever get familiar with the whole of ICANN's work or do people generally become familiar with a specific subset of it? For example, one advisory committee or supporting organization or even specific working groups.

Who wants to take? Yes, Göran.

GÖRAN MARBY: Can I start?

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Please.

GÖRAN MARBY: The simple answer is you actually just described half of what ICANN does. I sometimes describe ICANN as two -- it's like a tree with two branches. One tree is the policy-making process that you're referring to; the other part is actually our technical arm

where we do run IANA, which is the place where all identifiers come from, where we run things like DNS -- DNSSEC where we do technical work.

Remember that all root servers around the world, which we have one of them, by the way, are from us through VeriSign updated from us.

So is it possible to get to know all of it? Surprisingly, many people in ICANN do. Because the way Internet technically -- we are a technical organization. We're not a political organization. Everything we do has to be based on technology, can we actually do it, which means that over time, you get a very good understanding also of the technology part of it.

We have realized that over the last couple of years, it's also in the Board -- sorry, in the ICANN strategic plan to talk more about the technical part of what we do because when it comes to cybersecurity, when it comes to the ability for people to connect, that is so important.

So, yes, many people know because the technical part is a basis of what ICANN does.

If you don't -- it sounds like a joke somewhere. We talked about translations before. ICANN produces enormous amount of documents every year. And we also have ability for trainings for community members to be able to do that. And through discussions like these, it's a learning process as well. But the answer is actually quite yes, a lot of people do.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you.

Lito, please.

LITO IBARRA: Thank you. I would like to add that it is possible to get to know what ICANN does as a whole. But I would like to recommend or to say that we -- in general, we may focus on certain topics, specific topics, more than SOs or ACs, advisory committees or supporting organizations, because in order to do that, may it is better that you are part of that advisory committee or supporting organization. So that will require that maybe you are part of a ccTLD or gTLD registry or part of an advisory committee, technical advisory committees such as Security and Stability Advisory Committee and so on.

But what is, I think, easier to get to know is a specific topic. Göran mentioned the sub pro, subsequent procedures, about new gTLDs, for instance. That's a whole world of aspects that we all need to consider before launching the next round.

And that by itself is a complex and large issue that if you are interested, you can get into it. Or I mentioned IDN and UA, also they are specific topics that combine many technical, sociological, political stuff that you can get into.

So I would say, yeah, if you want to make an impact, it may be better to focus and specialize in a certain topic that you like. Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Lito.

There is a question from Peter Oduro to all panelists, or who wants to take this.

Recently, there has been a rise in cyber-attacks on government and corporations and individuals. What role can ICANN play in the prevention of the cyber attackers and hackers on the domain names and accounts of companies and individual organizations in post-pandemic.

So what is the role of ICANN in preventing cyber-attacks?

GÖRAN MARBY:

I know I use the word -- I mean, I can speak about this for a very long time because it's such a good question. But let's try to break it down a little bit.

You're an educated audience, so I'm going to use that. I don't usually use the word "cyber." I just used it, but I usually don't do it when I try to explain.

So the Internet is nothing about cyber. Every information exists in someone else's computer. There's always a computer somewhere, so there's nothing magical about it. I sometimes describe it as when we talk about cloud services, that's probably a computer in your neighbor's garage. And "cyber" is probably just a computer in someone else's jurisdiction. It's very practical in many of those things.

So then you have the connecting lines between those computers. If you add protocols and identifiers, suddenly you have the Internet.

My recommendation to anyone when it comes to cybersecurity, make sure that all your systems are patched, most important

thing, because that means that if they are patched, you are probably as secure as you can be.

The other thing is -- so what is ICANN's role? So what we do? First of all, we create -- for our specific route, which is very -- it's got nothing to do with content. It's got nothing to do with how it's in the computers or anything else. It's only about the structure of the DNS, the domain name system, itself. That's what we do.

So, first of all, there are people who use the domain name systems for abuse, and we build systems, and we do checkings for doing that in our own remit. You will hear acronyms like DAAR or DNS sticker. Those are practical examples of that. We also in our policy sense have obligations with the contracted parties to do things to counter abuse.

But on the other hand, we also work about the security of the domain name system itself, attacks through the system. We have seen top-level domain operators around the world being completely taken over by bad actors.

And from a technical standpoint, we work with that as well because if a top-level domain operator gets taken over, nothing is ever secure doing that. So that's another part of what we do.

Educate and train is a big part of what we do. We work with law enforcement. We work with cyber intelligence, agencies are another one, to educate them how the domain name system works.

But I want to make one distinction. We are a nonpolitical organization. We do believe that every person on earth should have the ability to connect and stream on the Internet. We are respectful of the fact that there are laws. We don't always respect the laws itself; but ICANN doesn't have a mandate or the ability to go into that, which I understand is a part of your underlying question.

I hope that answers -- I can speak at length about security issues and stuff. But I always end this, the most important thing you can do when you leave this set is to clean your cache on your computer and your mobile phone. Do that regularly and actually you will be less tracked on the Internet. Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Göran.

And we will take the last question from Pavlo Burdiak and probably the question will go to Maarten.

Can the ICANN Board be characterized as the ultimate authority within the ICANN which makes all final decisions, or is there some sort of system of checks and balances within the organization that ensures the Board's accountability?

MAARTEN BOTTERMAN: Okay. Thanks for this easy question.

It's a weird situation, very unique as a model. And what you will find is that policies are made by the community. Priorities are set by the community.

As Göran explained before, the organization helps the process. The organization implements. And the Board is for a final check: Is this reasonable? Is this in line with the bylaws? And from that perspective, we do our bit.

So rather than a traditional board, it's not a top-down board that calls the shots. But for sure, we take our responsibility and carry in many ways the fiduciary duties of ICANN as a whole. So from that perspective, we react.

So in order to make the right decisions, it's crucial that we're well-informed. And transparency shows the process, shows what

input we use for our decisions, as the base of our decisions, and how we came to decide it.

All these decisions are made public, including the rationale for how we came to it. And decisions can be challenged by the community, by, in fact, anybody.

But basically, we are accountable to the community since what we refer to as the transition -- the IANA transition a couple of years ago. Explicitly our bylaws give the community the mandate to appoint us, to send us away.

They are the final check.

So accountability to the community, transparency is in everything we do. And, no, we're not calling the shots but, yes, we do take the fiduciary responsibility. I hope this answer helps a bit.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: And as Göran added in the chat, there are many checks and balances, also checking Board decisions. And as our ombudsman added, including also Office of Ombudsman.

Thank you for your additions.

Leon, I see your hand raised.

LEON SANCHEZ:

Thank you, Siranush.

Just to complement what Maarten has said, there are a number of mechanisms that hold the Board accountable. And we have to remember that the Board is here to serve the community and make the decisions in the best interest of the organization.

And as Maarten said, those decisions may be challenged either through an IRP, which is an independent review process; a reconsideration request; and ultimately through the empowered community.

You might not be familiar yet with what the "empowered community" is. But when we made the transition in 2016, there was a group that was the CCWG on Accountability. And there the community designed a number of mechanisms in which they thought those would be tools to hold both the ICANN Board and ICANN Org accountable for their decisions or lack thereof.

So, yes, there are a number of mechanisms including the Office of the Ombudsman, of course, that those who feel affected materially by the decisions or lack of decisions by the ICANN

Board or Org can challenge these decisions and can make their voice heard.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Leon.

And I thank all participants for great questions. And I would like to give the floor to our panelists with one call to action or one advice to our participants of this session.

If we can start with Göran, please.

GÖRAN MARBY: I think I said my most important call to action, both of them. First of all, please -- please help us when it comes to the next round. I stopped calling it the sub pro because it's such a strange name. The next round of bringing the localization of Internet going forward, making sure that people around the world can have access to identifiers according to their own narrative, their own concept, their own place on earth.

That's going to be a big challenge. We don't know how to do that because we have never done it before. And that's because no one in world history has ever tried to do that before. So we need your help to do that.

And the second thing, call to action, please speak up. Don't be shy. The way we talk on this call is how we're going to hear it during ICANN. We talk to each other. We debate sometimes a little bit more energetic than other times, yes. But don't be afraid of that. Your voice is important. You know by entering ICANN that you're representing 5 billion Internet users in the world. So thank you. Welcome.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Göran.

Maarten, please.

MAARTEN BOTTERMAN: I think Göran said it excellent.

I would start with, indeed, also speak up. Also give yourselves some time. So don't expect to have to know everything before you open your mouth. Don't expect to have to know everything within the first half year, year. But do know that what you think and what your questions are already matters today.

And don't think you will never learn, or you will never be able to contribute because it's specifically a world that needs to work for all of us. So give yourselves some time. Give some reflection and

come from that place with your questions and your suggestions.
And love to have you on board.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Maarten.

Leon, please.

LEON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Siranush.

Well, I think my only call to action is make things happen, guys. It is up to you to make things happen. So make them happen, and feel free to have our support and to call for support. Thanks.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Leon.

And Lito, please.

LITO IBARRA: Thank you.

My call to action is after ICANN71, I will ask all of you to get together with your friends, your colleagues, members of your family and neighbors or whoever and try to explain to them what

is ICANN, what does ICANN do, and how are you engaged -- or will you be engaged what we do at ICANN. So try that. It's not so easy to try to explain what is ICANN to others. But that will reflect how much have you learned and the next questions that you will have for coming meetings about that.

The question that you receive from this group, you can ask them a little bit later to one of our emails or to whoever you feel confident to and you will get a clearer picture. Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Lito.

Just as a final word from my side, I would like to thank all our participants, NextGeners, Fellows, newcomers who came to ICANN and I'm sure they will stay with ICANN because, as Göran well said, we need your voice.

I also would like to thank our great panelists for your responses to the questions. As always, open and transparent.

And, also, last, but not least, I want to thank our interpreters and tech team for making possible to listen in different languages and to ask questions in different languages.

Thank you all for participation. Looking forward to fruitful ICANN71. And with that, this meeting is adjourned.

Thank you.

[END OF TRANSCRIPT]