
ICANN72 | Virtual Annual General Meeting - Joint AFRALO-AfrICANN Meeting
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MICHELLE DESMYTER

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With this, I will hand the floor over to Seun Ojedeji.

SEUN OJEDEJI:

Thank you very much, Michelle, and hello everyone. Welcome again to AFRALO-AfrICANN session. For those who are joining us for the first time, this is the session we normally hold during every ICANN meeting, and we also do invite guests to join us to speak with us. And we also do have a statement that we normally finalize at a session like this. I look forward to a very good deliberation on this session.

I'd like to use this opportunity to welcome all invited guests, all our members, ALSes and also individual members. I'd like to also welcome all our participants, those who are joining us who are neither members or invited guests. You're welcome. Our session is always open to everyone. And of course, as this session is not just for AFRALO alone, it's also for all members which is AfrICANN, which is all members who are part of ICANN community who are from the Africa region. You're all welcome. Special welcome to our GSE team from Africa as well.

Thank you very much, and of course, the agenda is in front of us. We have a relatively packed agenda. I look forward to good deliberation. Any modification for the agenda? Seeing no hands up and hearing no voice, we consider the agenda adopted as presented and we'll move on to the

next agenda item, which is opening remarks from ALAC chair, Maureen Hilyard. Welcome, Maureen. You have the floor.

MAUREEN HILYARD:

Thank you so much, Seun. I really appreciate the invitation, and I'd like to welcome everybody that's here today. It's always a pleasure to be here and be able to thank you as a community for the work that you've been engaged in during the past year. I really have appreciated the participation of AFRALO members in the work of At-Large and the ALAC.

I wanted to mention some of the people who are coming and some who are going. This year, we will lose the services of Abdulkarim who's been an active participant both in the region and on the ALAC. And I know that his contributions and participation in the EPDP on IDNs which he's involved in at the moment has been really appreciated, and I wish him well in his future endeavors.

I'd also like to thank my other ALAC members, Dave Kisoondoyal for example, for the contributions he's made as an ALAC leadership team colleague. And I'm looking forward to his continued support and leadership over the next year on the ALAC leadership team. And of course, not forgetting Sarah who has been an amazing young lady on our ALAC team, and we really have enjoyed having her participation as well.

Really looking forward to welcome Raymond Mamattah on the ALAC team. He's been engaged in At-Large for a while now and I look forward to his productive involvement in our work on the ALAC and within At-Large continuing with that.

But of course, I can't forget Daniel Nanghaka and Hadia Elminiawi who've worked so hard in our outreach and engagement and capacity building programs, and they've done a great job of moving their areas of responsibility ahead for us in At-Large. It's been great.

But just to keep it short because I know that you've got a full agenda, I'd like to finally thank you, Seun, and the AFRALO community for your consistent contribution to the developing awareness and understanding through your regular policy statements and that they're readied for each ICANN meeting. That's always been very impressive. And I think it's a real credit to your community that you prepare these, and raising that awareness within your community is a real bonus.

I thank you again for the opportunity to acknowledge the work that you are doing and that your community is doing on behalf of ICANN and through At-Large. It really gives us some kudos. Thank you, Seun, and thank you, everyone.

SEUN OJEDEJI:

Thank you very much, Maureen. And of course, I'd also like to thank you for your leadership as chair of ALAC, and of course, wish you all the best as you also continue your term. I wish you all the best in the coming year. And of course, congratulations to your new ALT, At-Large leadership team, and wish everyone all the best. Congratulations to our own Dave who is now a member of the ALT team, and of course, to Raymond who is also going to be joining ALAC. Of course, we're still going to be recognizing some of our members who are finishing their term as well later on on the call.

The next agenda item is to hear from our speakers. And of course, as usual, we'd like to thank Göran for always making it [inaudible] to be on our call. I was on the call when Göran joined this particular call, and one of the remarks that was made was, Göran, you came in early. So I was quite happy to see him come early to this meeting, and of course, Göran, we always appreciate your support to AFRALO and of course, the entire region. Göran, welcome, you have the floor.

GÖRAN MARBY:

Thank you. I'm ordered to get into meetings early, especially when Maureen is involved. I do what Maureen says all the time, and my staff. But it's a real pleasure to be here, and yes, I've been on many of those calls. Someone told me this is the 27th time or something that you do this session. I think that's quite impressive.

You know that I often talk about your region in different areas, when we talk about the next round, the importance of expanding the next round in such a way that we break the boundaries of the Latin script and just English. I often use the examples of—as a good challenge to all of us to think about how we can have a higher degree of potential identifiers on the Internet for the African region.

I also want to thank some of you—without naming them—for reaching out to us during the discussions about the African RIR. Very much supportive of the discussion and of the way your RIR handles all the challenges it had over the last six months and the last year. And as you can see, we now have the former CEO on our Board, which I think is testament to the hard work he's done there.

Interesting enough, you have chosen to talk about Internet security. It just shows your ability to think about things in a strategic way, because that happens to be one of the things that I know [León] would come back to that is high on the Board's radar. And if it's high on the Board's radar, it's also high on the Org's radar.

The data security is something that—for none of us is it a surprise, and I like the fact that you also talk about it from a [methodology matter] and the fact that it's also the end users that have to do things, it's not only the systematic approaches from providers or platforms or ICANN as in the identifiers. It's also something puts the end user that has a responsibility for it.

So the fact that you chose this was important, and I want to mention some of the things that we do in turn that we support that. It's a little bit [inaudible] we have for instance what we call the health indicator, which still contains the best user interface that I've seen on any application because it reminds me of when I went to school back in the '80s. So I like that.

But we also have the DAAR system, which I know that more and more country code operators are also choosing to be part of because it gives us the ability to give reports back to the top-level domain operator how well they are fighting DNS abuse, and that is helpful especially for the smaller TLDs, but it also is used by a benchmark for the bigger ones to see how well they're doing against others.

We also together with [Lars Hoffmann] and the community created what we call the DNS ticker. We have really funny names on anything—and if you remember, the DNS ticker was intended to work with the COVID-19

threats where we actually through the zone file went in and looked at any one registered name that related to COVID-19, and we did that in many different languages.

And I think in the beginning, we saw that 80,000 registrations. In the end, we ended up with maybe 3-400 that we saw were fraudulent, which tells me that most of them were for speculation. That's another example.

We had the KINDNS project, but I also want to give a little bit—if you haven't seen that—and maybe I can ask the staff to post that in the chat, is the latest thing we do. I asked a group of very smart people to come together and do what we call the Technical Study Group to see how we can enhance the cooperation between top-level domain operators for some of the biggest security threats that exist.

We often talk about DNS abuse as one thing, and that's very important. But ICANN is the place where every time you go online, you hit about something that technically originates from ICANN and IANA. And in that, we have a role together with other partners, and it's really equal partners, how we can see in this distributed system how we can enhance the security against many of those threats that we see. We have for instance seen top-level domain operators being completely taken over.

So your timing in this interest is highly appreciated, because I think we would continue to have those discussions. I want to end with an update that we are right now preparing internal material to take to the Board about a promise I made to you a while ago, and that is that we'll go and invest in at least two datacenters in Africa where we're going to build—and the datacenters are for our own [inaudible] server. So that is now going through the process to see how we can enhance the technical

capabilities for African users as well. It's a major investment for ICANN and something we need to work with governments.

We do this because we know that the amount of users of Internet expands a lot right now in Africa, and that creates more opportunities for people which means one of the things we try to do is both provide DNSSEC but also given the opportunity—so the time for requests technically gets shorter because when there are more Internet users, the resolution of the requests technically needs to be happening closer and closer, and therefore while the Board and the Org is now looking to make those investments.

So I'm going to keep it short there so smarter people than me can speak, but again, thank you very much, and thank you for making sure that this region has a voice within ICANN. And it's so important, because in this, we are in it together. Thank you.

SEUN OJEDEJI:

Thank you very much, Göran, and of course, thanks for your support and all you do in providing leadership at ICANN. Thanks for the support that you're providing also to improve participation from this region. We truly appreciate it. We hope that this support will continue to increase. And of course, the news about that datacenter is also one that we truly appreciate, and we hope that this will one way or the other contribute to the domain industry growth within the region even as ICANN is still looking into starting a new round sometime in the future. Thanks again, Göran.

I would now like to call on Eddy, the CEO of AFRINIC. It's always a pleasure to have him. And of course, Eddie, welcome, good to have you on the call. And of course, happy to be the one introducing you this time around [inaudible] network issue the last time. Eddy, you have the floor.

EDDY KAYIHURA:

Thank you so much, Seun and the entire community. It's a pleasure to be here and to have a short word and appreciate your support, appreciate the power of community, because as you know, we've been going through some challenges in different angles, and we've been going through a lot of situations, if I can say, from the time I joined the organization.

But in the past month, it has been one of the most difficult situations where we operated an organization with bank accounts that are frozen, and it was a challenge that became easier because of your support and encouragement. And I can say that I can see a lot of people on this call that I want to call family, because you've been there and sending messages. Some of you even rallied to find ways for us to be able to pay our bills. And I'd like to say that we didn't have any delay in the payment. Just a little bit, but we managed to have all the critical payment done, and even some of the providers were very keen to provide some grace period.

But the story is not yet finished, we still have different battle in court. But we're just going on and we believe that the court will continue its course normally.

One of the things that was also very important as this thing was happening is to keep the eyes on the ball. By that, I mean to continue

staying true to the mission that we have and ensuring that the digital growth of our continent continues, the Internet continues to go ahead, that our members continue to be served.

I would not say that we didn't face any delay or sometimes it was kind of heavy, but we made sure at least that we didn't have any major deviation from our key performance indicators. We'll have a meeting in November where we'll give a report to our community and tell you different things according to the strategic plan. And yeah, life continues, and I really want to appreciate your support, your encouragement, your availability. It was so encouraging and making it worth it, the challenge and the journey. Thank you so much, and I'll give the floor back to my Board member.

SEUN OJEDEJI:

Again, thanks, Eddy, and of course, we're happy to hear from you and of course, good to know about the progress that AFRINIC is making. On that note, I would just pause and see if there's any question or reaction to [the speakers who are around] and Eddy, because I'm sure they may want to run to another meeting. Any question or comment to them? Göran, please.

GÖRAN MARBY:

I really want to reach out to Eddy and thank him for the cooperation. We are all really respectful of the situation you're in, and I wrote that in the chat as well.

I think one of the good things with all of this have shown that we are sometimes having disagreement about details, but when it really counts, we're part of the same ecosystem, so I want to thank Eddy for the

conversations we had. It strengthens my belief in the importance of this ecosystem. I also thank personally—I'm a big admirer of Eddy.

SEUN OJEDEJI:

Thanks, Göran. Seeing no hands up and hearing no voice, we'll move on to the next item, where we'll welcome León Sanchez. León has been always attending our AFRALO meetings, always been a great source of support to us, and of course, to At-Large as a whole. León, welcome, you have the floor.

LEÓN SANCHEZ:

Thank you very much, Seun. Thank you for having me here. As usual, as I've said many times, this is one of my favorite meetings when we come to ICANN public meetings, and it is always a pleasure to be hear with you.

I just want to echo what has been said by Göran and by Maureen. I continue to be impressed by the level of work that the AFRALO region performs. As I've said many times, you set the standard to other regions in many ways, and I'm very proud to be part of this community.

As usual, I have read your statement, and it is a very high quality statement as usual. I would like to touch upon a couple of items that you recommend ICANN and the community to undergo.

The first one being to encourage the deployment of DNSSEC and other good security practices to ensure the security and integrity of DNS data. I couldn't agree more with you. DNSSEC is something that has been in implementation for years, and it's I believe an effort that we must undertake as a community in collaboration with the ecosystem.

So to this end, I think AFRALO and other RALOs of course are key to trying to push for DNSSEC implementation in our different regions, and our ALSes are of course the basis for this effort. So I would definitely encourage or support this encouragement made by AFRALO in asking both ICANN and our community to encourage this adoption and implementation of DNSSEC and best practices as well.

Of course, data security is something that I believe is top of everyone's mind nowadays. Data is considered one of the most valuable assets in different areas. So of course, its security should be paramount to the different actions that we undertake here at ICANN and we should definitely factor in the implications of our actions in regard to the impact that this may cause to data security when making decisions or building policies.

So again, I just want to congratulate you, commend you for the excellent job that you are doing with crafting these statements, by distributing and educating members of our community at different levels with these statements and offer you my support as vice chair of the Board in helping you in any way possible.

Of course, I would also like to convey a message from Maarten Botterman, our chairman of the Board, and send his regards to the AFRALO region to the African community, and remind you that I'm always just a click away from anyone. If you ping me, I will be more than happy to be in touch with you to answer any questions or to again assist you in any way possible. So thank you very much, merci, [inaudible], thank you very much.

SEUN OJEDEJI: Thank you very much, León, for your usual participation and intervention. It's always appreciated. We also have members of the Board from our region, and of course, we are always happy to get to hear from them, and I'll be starting with Mandla. Welcome, you have the floor.

MANDLA MSIMANG: Thanks, Seun. I'm always grateful for the invitation to address you, and it's always a pleasure and an honor to receive it. I'll just start by saying I'm pleased to note that we have another African member joining the Board, Alan, and that he's with us today. So I'm really looking forward to his contributions to the community, to this particular community given his vast experience in this area, especially in Africa.

Thanks also for sharing the draft joint statement. I think as León has said, it's always of good quality and always happy to receive topical issues. I like the way that the community is always on top of what's important, and data security being one of those key issues. I think it demonstrates that we engage on the issues that are of extreme importance to ICANN in general and to stakeholders in our region in specific.

So I think it's also important because it shows that we, AFRALO and AfrICANN as a community, are champions are the bottom-up collaboration and cooperation that is the way that the Internet was developed and works.

I think on the matter of data security, it's key that on one side of the picture, as you've done in your statement, we should continue to focus on preventing perceived harm and attacks. But on the other side, I think I urge the team to continue to be proactive to put in place measures to

build confidence and particularly trust in the Internet and protect the opportunities that it presents us for economic and social prosperity as penetration in our region grows.

And I think highlighting the end user responsibility is a strength of the draft that you've put forward. We need to ensure that stakeholders care about deploying an open, trusted, resilient Internet and care about data security, not just when there's an incident which as you highlighted, the South African department of justice incident in the statement, we shouldn't just care about that, these data security issues when we have these kinds of massive breaches, but always.

When I look at that instance in particular, especially because it was particularly close to home for me, practically the cost of that breach has been significant in time, just because court cases for example were delayed in administration, online systems were affected for a few weeks, financially, and I think most importantly in trust. And the trust deficit is really very real and it's very difficult to quantify, but it impacts the very functioning of the Internet.

So I think with that example you've just kind of highlighted the importance of the statement, the work that we do and the contributions that you make as a specific community to these issues. So I think with that said, I think the statement is good. I think I'd like to hear more about the how and the when, because I think there's a certain level of urgency to some of the recommendations that have been made, and we just need to make sure that that comes across and that we make sure that our recommendations are specific to our African context while they can still be globally appealing.

So I think the work that's been done is very good and I look forward to the discussions today. Thanks.

SEUN OJEDEJI:

Thanks a lot, Mandla. Thanks also for your contribution. And of course, thanks also for all your support and of course, for the interest in AFRALO. I'll be asking Ihab as well who is also one of the Board members from our region, and after Ihab's intervention, I would also ask Alan to make his intervention. We especially also welcome Alan and congratulate him for his being on the ICANN Board. Alan is a very familiar face to us all in this region, and of course, we look forward to his continued contribution to the Internet community through the ICANN Board. Ihab, you're welcome and of course, we look forward to your continued contribution as well. You have the floor, Ihab.

IHAB OSMAN:

Thank you, Seun. Thank you, everyone, for the kind invite. It's always a pleasure to be with AFRALO and AfrICANN group and community. This is my home region, and the issues related to the Internet in this region in particular is very close to my heart.

You've picked a hot topic, data security. Your statement is very well crafted and well presented, and I think you hit the right notes in the statement.

From my days, I spent most of my career in telecom in Africa, and when it comes to security, I don't think data security for a number of years in the past was very high or as high as it should be in the agenda of a lot of service providers on the continent. They were busy rolling out basic

infrastructure and providing connectivity to this vast continent under a lot of challenging conditions, availability of energy and basic backbone connectivity and so on. So it was always that came first, and security kind of became a distant priority.

However, as the continent is digitizing more and more and specially with the various fintech applications and platforms, the minute you start having real live transactions and financial transactions, when security becomes uncompromisable and it is something that has to—as Mandla said, just maintaining that level of trust in the network.

I thank you for highlighting this critical issue for the whole world, but especially in the African region, and I also like that you had points also for the end users, so it's not just on the service providers' side but also there is a lot that we should all be doing. And given some of the challenges of basic Internet connectivity we have in some parts of the continent today, I think to build a truly resilient Internet that is available and secure is critical for the young population of the continent and development of the continent and digitization of the continent.

Seun and the whole drafting team, thank you for this well-crafted statement. I look forward to working with all my colleagues in the Board and Org to support a lot of the points that you raised in the statement. Thank you. And thank you again for the kind invitation.

SEUN OJEDEJI:

Thanks a lot, Ihab, and thanks as well for your intervention. I would now like to call on Alan.

ALAN BARRETT:

Thank you, Seun. This is Alan Barrett. Most of you have seen me before at various meetings in Africa and at ICANN. I was recently appointed by the ASO to the ICANN Board, and I'll formally take that seat at the end of the AGM a couple of days from now. It's great to see you all here virtually and I really look forward to meeting you again at an ICANN meeting or an AFNOG or an AFRINIC or any of those meetings where we often see each other.

I'd like to say that I support Eddy in what he's doing at AFRINIC. It's been very tough for him. But I think he's handled it very well. So I thank you, Eddy. Congratulations for how you're handling a very tough situation. Okay, that's all from me. Thank you.

SEUN OJEDEJI:

Thank you, Alan. And of course, we look forward to collaborating with you from this portfolio as member of ICANN Board when you finally assume the seat, and of course, we do congratulate you once again for the achievement.

I would now pause here and then see if there's any reaction to all our speakers so far. Any comments or questions to them before we move on to the next speaker? Okay, seeing no hands up and hearing no voice, we move on to the vice president of the GSE team from Africa, Pierre Dandjinou. Pierre and his team has been great supporter of AFRALO. We do have updates from the GSE team during our AFRALO session, and of course, apart from the fact that they're supportive to AFRALO, they're supportive to the entire AfrICANN community. So Pierre, you're welcome once again. Please, you have the floor.

PIERRE DANDJINOU:

Thank you very much, Seun. I'm Pierre Dandjinou, VP stakeholder engagement in charge of Africa. Always happy for us to be at this session, and thank you for having me again this year.

I would like to quickly brief you on where we stand in terms of [inaudible] Africa strategy, which of course stems from the ICANN strategy. As you also know, this strategy has been developed by the community and again, I'd like to really thank AFRALO members for being, I will say, part of the doers, especially you hold very important position in the working group that we established that came up with the strategy. So thank you very much for this.

In fact, GSE Africa staff is about three people. You know all of them, Yaovi Atohoun, Bob Ochieng of course, but we're also happy to recognize our colleague from OCTO. We do have two staff members from OCTO that have come now to support [in our technical] engagement that we are conducting. [inaudible].

I'm not going to go through our strategy per se, but let me highlight a few projects [we are rolling.] There's something we call DNSSEC road show which kind of, I will say, was one of our flagship programs. This is being revamped now, and especially with the presence of our two staff members from OCTO, we are now having capacity building sort of workshops that are much more handholding and that [inaudible] make sure that people understand what it takes to apply DNSSEC and how to do this exactly.

We do have about ten African countries now that have signed their zone file. The plan for us is to move towards more than that, maybe 20 of them by the end of FY22.

That's quite important. And also relating to your statement, which of course is quite valid because some of the things I've read there, you are right on it. Part of them, we are also already doing. I mentioned the DNSSEC for instance, but also, we work closely in terms of security issues [inaudible] and in that regard, some of the things we are doing is about collaborating, say for instance with governments [inaudible], but basically, we're also working with the [cert] in the different countries to make sure that people understand what it takes to have an Internet that is safe.

We're also working to make sure that they understand [inaudible] program that are aiming at securing the Internet. Göran mentioned a few of them, but basically, we are trying to make sure that the operators, the ISPs, even government entities [are at par] with these programs and actually also contribute. So it's quite important and a subject that you guys have tackled.

As far as we are concerned, we do have a workplan. We are deploying different sort of webinars that are specific. We are targeting regulators, governments, GAC colleagues. We are also targeting the business sector. So definitely—thank you all. And like I said, [inaudible] AFRALO to be, as you know, in Africa, there's so much to do, so many countries to tackle, and we've been passing the information to you. We need to find more and more avenue to work together.

And finally, I would really like to [inaudible] of course express thanks [inaudible] Eddy spoke about AFRINIC, and also celebrate some of the moves that we are having. Thanks also to Alan, former CEO of AFRINIC and now to be ICANN Board, which is quite an interesting thing.

Yeah, that's basically what I wanted to share. Of course, when it comes to your statement, as I said, well balanced, of course, and the issue is that you make sure that this really also applies to Africa. And our common challenge self-assessment well, how do we make sure that those recommendations become applied to Africa to make sure that Internet has been secured enough.

So yeah, that's what I wanted to share. Thanks again for having me here, and back to Seun.

SEUN OJEDEJI:

Thank you very much, Pierre. And of course, thanks as well to all your team members who have been also supporting AFRALO and of course the entire AfrICANN community.

Any question or remark to the speakers? Seeing no hands up and hearing no voice, but seeing a lot of remarks in the chat. Of course, please feel free to raise your hand if you'd like to have the floor. And of course, I would recognize you accordingly.

So thanks very much to all our guest speakers, we really appreciate you coming to this session. We hope some of you will be able to stay to the end. And of course, for those who are not able to stay to the end, we very much appreciate you and of course, we look forward to continue

collaboration with you within the ICANN community and of course, beyond. Thanks once again.

The next agenda item is a summary of the AFRALO webinar on data security. This webinar has been held to prepare us for statement drafting in the particular topic of interest. And of course, the other essence is also to build capacity and to do both outreach and inreach as well. Bram and Tijani are the co-chairs for the AFRALO webinar series and they're going to give us a brief remark, updates with regards to data security, which was the last webinar they did. Bram, you have the floor.

BRAM FUDZULANI:

Thank you, Seun. And indeed, I think on behalf of my colleuage, Tijani and the entire community at AFRALO, the data security webinar series was one of the most interesting, I think, leading up to the drafting of the statement itself. It was one of the highly participated webinars, and it I think generated quite a number of comments and from our members. This was a webinar that was organized on the 7th of September. We did engage our facilitators, Yazid and Paul, who delivered a masterpiece in terms of the subject itself. And that helped us as a community, I think, in terms of engaging and obviously inputting to the drafting of the statement itself, which is today read out.

Yes, there were challenges in terms of participation, I think due to the infrastructure challenges during this period of COVID, so much that some of the members could not be with us on the webinar. And I think that is one of the ongoing challenges within the continent. But suffice to say that this was highly participated and really, the community felt that we need

more of this kind of thought-provoking subject through our webinar series.

So I think there's not much on that. In terms of the numbers, if I'm not mistaken, we had 30+ participants, and we had a few fellows from Uganda that also joined us during the webinar. And that was one of the first in our webinar series. Thank you so much, Seun.

SEUN OJEDEJI:

Thank you very much, Bram. Seeing no hands up and hearing no voice, this brings us to the next item where we would be introducing the topic, and that would be done by Daniel and Hadia. Daniel.

HADIA ELMINIAWI:

Thank you, Seun, and thank you all for being with us today. In the statement, we looked at data security as it relates to ICANN from three different aspects. First, the security and integrity of the Internet naming system, second, security of registrants' data, and third, the security of users' data as it relates to the DNS.

We mentioned mitigation of all forms of DNS abuse that make use of DNS data to victimize online users. We mentioned the impact of data on ICANN policies and we specifically mentioned the PDP on gTLD registration data and the transfer policy.

We also highlight the impact of data security on online users, and the possible loss of trust that potentially impacts contracted parties' businesses. Therefore, we try to highlight through this statement the

impact of data security on the entire ICANN ecosystem or the entire Internet ecosystem.

And then we provide some sort of recommendations to the entire ICANN community, to ICANN, and to end users. So I'll stop here and give the floor to Daniel to get more into the details. Thank you.

DANIEL NANGHAKA:

Thank you very much, Hadia, for those remarks. Thank you for highlighting those key points that are attributed to data security. Just to go slightly into the deeper details of the process that was involved in drafting the statement is that we had a call to debate on what should we be able to write to contribute to this statement for ICANN 72. So we had our members select data security as one of our key pertinent issues that affect Africa region.

When it comes to the issues of data security, starting from the discussions involved in the transfer policy working group, an interesting thing comes up on security of the domain. And DNSSEC was one of the things that came out strongly, and to make sure that there is continuity in the discussions of data security, we could not leave out key aspects that affect Africa region but also affect end users.

In reference to ICANN, data security [inaudible] security and integrity of the Internet numbering system. This security can't just simply be ignored. And that's why this recommendation is coming both to ICANN and then also the community of AFRALO.

So this statement was carefully reviewed by the AFRALO team to come up with key subjects with various [inaudible] that affect data security of

Africa region whereby examples like South Africa security breaches came up and [inaudible] others.

The underlying issues don't just simply cut across one country, but it's an issue that cuts across all throughout Africa. Furthermore, key recommendations also include how can users enhance their security, and all this is highlighted in the statement which would be read by our secretary of AFRALO, Abdeldjalil, shortly.

So with that, I'd like to thank everyone who participated in the drafting of the statement and give the floor back to our chair to proceed with the meeting. Thank you.

SEUN OJEDEJI:

Thank you, Daniel, for that. So before we open the floor, I think there is still the discussion, modification and adoption which is going to be led by the AFRALO secretary, Abdeldjalil. Abdeldjalil is going to lead this agenda item. Abdeldjalil, you have the floor.

ABDELJALIL BACHAR BONG:

Thank you very much, Seun, for giving me the floor during this joint AFRALO-AfrICANN meeting on the 26th of October. Here's the statement. Data security. We, the African ICANN Community members participating in the Virtual ICANN 72 AGM and attending the joint AFRALO/AfrICANN meeting, discussed Data Security as an important topic for AFRALO. We hereby put forward the African position in relation to Data Security as it relates to ICANN. The discussion was prompted by the majority of AFRALO members following a request on the AFRALO mailing list for

topics to be discussed at ICANN72. We subsequently organized a capacity building webinar on Data Security that was facilitated by ICANN Staff.

Data Security is a set of processes and practices designed to protect critical information technology ecosystems. Data Security and privacy are the biggest challenges of the information age. Examples of such challenges include ransomware attacks that we have seen make headlines in African newspapers. Just this past month, South Africa's department of justice faced a massive ransomware attack. The African community explicitly has the subject of Data Security as a high priority on the agenda of all stakeholders.

In the context of ICANN, Data Security is multifaceted, it includes the security and integrity of the Internet naming system, the security of registrants' data and the security of users' data as it relates to the DNS. The ICANN community addresses those Data Security aspects through practices and policies, which the AfrICANN community is in full support of.

Ensuring the security and integrity of DNS data is crucial to the security and stability of the Internet. The DNS can be used as a tool to perpetuate abusive actions, risking the security of Internet users' data, victimizing many of them and reducing their trust in the Internet. As the security of DNS data has a direct impact on the security of users online it subsequently also has a direct impact on registries' and registrars' businesses.

Accordingly, prevention and mitigation of all forms of DNS abuse that alter or make use of DNS data to victimize millions should be of high priority to the entire ICANN community. Technical methods to protect

the integrity of DNS data include deploying DNSSEC, which strengthens DNS security by using digital signatures.

However, DNSSEC is not widely deployed. Resolving methods such as DNS over HTTPS (DoH) and DNS over TLS (DoT), which are both based on transport layer security and encryption, also improve privacy and security of users.

Moreover, ICANN policies are also affected by the issue of Data Security, examples include the new round of gTLDs, registration data directory services formerly known as WHOIS and Domain Name transfer policies. Moving forward with a new round of gTLDs without addressing issues pertaining to Data security, will only lead to an increase in malicious actions affecting the entire Internet community.

To address the issue of registrants' data security and following the enactment of the European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the community developed a new policy for gTLD registration data. However, despite the fact that the policy protects registrants' data, it does not effectively enable disclosure of data for the purpose of protecting the Internet community. In addition, registrants' data security remains a concern as it pertains to domain name transfer policy, particularly in relation to the authentication code sent to registrant.

In analyzing domain name security practices, we note that registry locks are currently used to prevent domain name hijacking and unauthorized changes to the DNS. Without such a lock, threats could take a website offline or redirect users to malicious content. Many domains might be unlocked currently as not every registrar offers this service. AFRALO hereby recommends that registrars should be required to offer domain

lock services as a data security measure for domain names. A registry lock policy standard could prevent domain transfers initiated by registrars.

To that end, AFRALO recommends to ICANN and the community to do the following. Encourage deployment of DNSSEC and other good security practices to ensure the integrity and security of DNS data, address issues pertaining to data security and DNS abuse before moving forward with a new gTLD round, regard prevention and mitigation of all forms of DNS abuse as a high priority to the entire ICANN community, find the right balance between registrants' data privacy and protection and protecting Internet end users' data, require registrars to offer domain lock services as a data security measure for domain names.

Furthermore, the AFRALO community urges Internet end users to take measures to protect their data through practices that include the following. Using e-mail data protection tools and data loss protection tools to detect any suspicious activities. Two, protecting stored data by making it unusable and unreadable, this would keep information safe in the event that data is stolen. Three, protecting the data when it is being distributed through password protection and encryption, as well as distribution through secure channels. Four, minimizing devices which hold data by allowing file access only on secured platforms. Use data only for tasks that require the data, and give selective access. Last point, enhancing data use monitoring through digital watermarking and checking data movement through the network.

Thank you.

SEUN OJEDEJI: Thanks for reading out the statement. I think Aziz would lead this session if there's any comment or remarks. For me, I think I [inaudible] something. There's a section of the statement that says AFRALO recommends. I think it should be AFRALO-AfrICANN recommends. So we'll take note of that and make that modification.

I'll hand the floor to Aziz to coordinate this part of the session. Over to you, Aziz.

AZIZ HILALI: Thank you, Seun, for giving me the floor. As it was said, data security is very important in Africa. All countries in Africa are concerned, they all have a problem, and it is an important issue. I want to thank the leadership of AFRALO and all stakeholders, all the members who participated on the drafting of this statement. I will now give the floor to certain participants. For those who have question, I will ask them to ask directly orally or they can also ask a question on the chat. Are there any questions? Chokri, you have the floor.

CHOKRI BEN ROMDHANE: [inaudible] security recommendation proposed by our friend from the drafting team. But I wonder if they imagine the impact on the financial aspect in order to implement such security measure. It's clear that the price of registering DNS is quite low. For example, in Tunisia, to register DNS, you have to pay \$10. If the registrant will implement security recommendation or proposal, I don't think that the price would be [the same.]

So my question, if there is any study or any finding about the financial impact in order to implement this security measure, it will be welcome. So if the draft team have seen this impact, it would be useful to add this reference to the draft. Thank you.

AZIZ HILALI: Thank you, Chokri. I would like to give the floor to Kossi. He's a fellow for the ICANN 72.

KOSSI AMESSINOU: Thank you for the statement which is quite clear. I just have a question on the phenomenon we have in Africa. There are many countries in which the VPN are forbidden. Would it be good to put something on the statement to encourage the states who forbid this type of thing? Some of them do have opinions that are not always favorable for everyone. Thank you to everyone.

AZIZ HILALI: Could you please specify? Are you talking about the role of each state? I did not quite clear.

KOSSI AMESSINOU: There are states in Africa who forbid the use of the VPN, or they do something in order to discourage them. We would like to do something to encourage them to change.

AZIZ HILALI: Hadia.

HADIA ELMINIAWI:

Thank you, Aziz, and thank you, Chokri and thank you, Kossi, for your question. I basically raised my hand in order to comment on Chokri's question in relation to the financial aspect. So we actually did not look into the financial aspect, but this needs some sort of calculations and data. However, Chokri, you were mentioning the costs of implementing security can be an impediment to taking security measures.

But actually, I don't think so, because you need to remember that having security issues and risking online users' security impacts also contracted parties' businesses. It leads to a loss of trust in the ecosystem. So definitely, investing in security measures does make sense from a business perspective, from an ICANN perspective and also from a user perspective where the user could actually get his personal information stolen or maybe beyond that, bank accounts hijacked. But actually, we need data and figures, I do agree with you. However, I don't agree with that security is too expensive to be implemented.

In relation to Kossi's comment and the VPNs being not allowed by some states in Africa, we were actually here looking at the data security from an ICANN perspective. I would say that this is out of scope of this statement. Thank you.

AZIZ HILALI:

Thank you very much, Hadia, for answering. I see in the chat that John Crain was saying that security is always a balance between the costs and the issues we have. So there is a cost for not investing in security. Thank you very much. Who wants to take the floor now? I hope we

answered your question, Kossi, regarding the role of states and VPNs. Very well. I don't see any hands raised, so we can go to the next step. I'm going to give back the floor to Seun and thank all the participants.

SEUN OJEDEJI:

Thank you very much, Aziz. And of course, thanks a lot for helping to lead this part of the session.

Seeing no comments—there were some modifications that I hope the drafting team have taken note of. So normally, after this, we would update the document and of course, the secretariat would share the updated version with the community, and after two weeks, after the end of this ICANN 72, it would now be shared with the respective stakeholders that the statement is trying to address, which would definitely include the ICANN Board, but since the statement is also as direct addressed to end users as well, it would definitely also come back to AFRALO as well, and of course, we'll try to see how we can implement the section that applies to us.

Seeing no other comment on the statement, any other reaction. We have a few minutes till the top of the hour. Seeing no hands up and hearing no voice, I'm going to just use this opportunity to thank us all for joining this session. As usual, it's been a full session with lots of discussions and of course, various deliberation on this statement. I'd like to thank this drafting team of the statement, which is led by the penholders, Daniel and Hadia, and all the people that actually contributed to the statement, you're appreciated.

This is where we also use this opportunity to recognize members of our community who are actually outgoing members whose time is ending, so to speak. The first person is Abdulkarim Oloyede whose term would be ending as member of ALAC. I would like to thank him for his contribution. The other person is Hadia, being on NomCom. Thank you for your contribution to that committee. So thanks a lot for your contribution to the community.

I would also like to recognize members who are actually incoming as well, which is Tijani who'll now be on NomCom—congratulations, Tijani—and Raymond who would be joining the ALAC team at the end of ICANN 72. Congratulations to both of you. And of course, Dave's term has ended in ALAC, but of course, we'd like to congratulate him on his reelection to ALAC and of course, his appointment to be one of the ALT members as well.

I hope I've covered all of the members whose terms are ending at the end of ICANN 72, and of course, those who are also taking new roles. I'd like to thank all our staff of ICANN, especially from AFRALO, from At-Large, for their support, and of course, thanks to technical team who have been in the background to make sure that this event runs properly and in accordance.

Special appreciation to my colleagues who are the AFRALO leadership team for all their efforts and the support they've been giving. We've been having this meeting remotely for quite a while now, but we've been trying to make sure that we continue to keep the flag running. This is the 27th session, and we look forward to the 28th and many more of this session.

Thank you very much to everyone who participated. We started with over 100 and we still have a good number staying with us to the end. So thank you, everyone, for joining. You are very much appreciated. And of course, we look forward to your continued support and participation within the ICANN community and AFRALO.

From me and on behalf of my entire AFRALO leadership, we say bye for now. Thank you.

MICHELLE DESMYTER: Thank you, Seun, and thank you so much, everyone. Meeting is adjourned. Thank you.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]