
LONDON – GAC/Board Meeting
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ICANN – London, England

CHAIR DRYDEN: Hello, everyone. If you could take your seats, please, we need to get started.

Welcome, everyone, to another exchange between the GAC and the Board. And thanks to the Board for coming to meet with us today. As usual, we have a number of issues to raise. Not all of them will require an extensive exchange; but, rather, in flagging them to you in this discussion, this allows the GAC to signal some kind of importance to you about that issue and as well to help us identify some next steps. So, in some cases, it's really wanting to understand the process going forward and to be clear about the GAC's interest in moving forward and contributing on a particular issue.

Some other issues are a bit more substantive. And many of the questions that we have or the issues we have to raise are really around seeking clarification to things. I will do my utmost to make it clear when we have a sense in the GAC about a concern or we're moving towards a particular view in the GAC. And this way we'll be clear then when you're hearing views expressed by individual members who also see this as a useful opportunity as a member in the GAC to raise their particular concerns to the board even where we may not or may not yet have a view in the GAC. So I will try to keep that clear for you as we move through.

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I can give you a sense of the issues.

STEVE CROCKER: Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN: So I can do that now.

The issue of WHOIS is on our list. And all the current work underway in relation to that.

In terms of new gTLDs -- IGO and Red Cross/Red Crescent protections as well as safeguards implementation and the responses we have received from the NGPC in relation to questions that we had outlined in Singapore.

And we have a question about the Affirmation of Commitments review of the gTLD program and generally what is the status of that review and timing in relation to it.

As well there are still some sensitive strings that some GAC members continue to have concerns or may wish to seek clarification with regard to. So there will be an opportunity there to raise those with you.

And then we have some lingering issues with, I guess, a sense of frustration in the GAC about some of the issues that we have not been able to address fully in the current round. And so it may be of some interest here to point those out in the discussion. In addition, the issue of child protection and some correspondence coming from an organization to you on that topic.

And the issue of .TEL and E.164. Apparently, there have been some exchanges with the International Telecommunication Union with regard to that. So we will be seeking clarification about the status of that.

And then in the bigger picture we can provide an update from the GAC side with regard to the IANA stewardship process and the questions that currently are preoccupying us with regard to that.

And also we would like to seek clarification about the next steps on enhancing ICANN's accountability with the board.

And then lastly, but not leastly, regarding the NETmundial alliance that we heard something about yesterday in the high-level meeting, we have some questions about what is the nature of that activity, what is its purpose. And so that is really for the purposes of clarification.

So at this point, Steve, would you like to say a few words?

STEVE CROCKER:

Yep. So thank you, Heather. And, on behalf of the Board thank you all for allowing us to come and meet with you all.

The agenda or the list of topics that you've listed is just, from a pragmatic point of view, far more than we're going to be able to cover in the time that we have. So let me be just very business-like for a second. We have from now until 6:00 p.m. in this room. And then we have a second session scheduled to do the real business that has alcohol involved upstairs. And so we should divide the agenda into two parts here and get the factual stuff done here. And then we can repair to where the serious discussions will take place. So I'm being slightly

facetious, but we do need to pick and choose and be pretty business-like.

I was keeping track for a while, and then the list got longer and longer. But what I'd like to do is take the ones that are the crispest -- most crisp and well-defined and try to dispose of them as quickly as possible. And then we can work our way through the more open-ended ones. And somewhere I had a message that had some of these topics, I think, listed.

CHAIR DRYDEN: The way in which I presented the list was to facilitate precisely what you described.

STEVE CROCKER: Then let's go from the top down, yes.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Okay. All right. Can I just say there's been a bit of a pattern to these exchanges where we start the session, and I come up with a huge list of items. And you say that's too many, and we managed to cover them all each time and on time. So let's try again to conclude.

STEVE CROCKER: I like to set the expectations low and then overdeliver.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Okay. Very good. All right. So, first of all, regarding IGO and Red Cross/Red Crescent protections, the GAC had an opportunity at the beginning of our meetings to have some discussions about this. And the GAC wishes to reaffirm early advice that we have given on this matter. And, of course, we've heard from our colleagues from the IGO coalition that this continues to be a matter of concern to them and particularly because it has wider reaching implications for the organization.

So there is a matter that I understand the IGOs would like to clarify regarding next steps that were outlined in a resolution from the Board that is separate and apart, apparently, from the letter that was communicated to the GNSO, which the GAC had a chance to look at and discuss.

We also did have an exchange with the GNSO where we raised this with them and expressed our willingness and interest to be working with them as they consider their options to look at the areas of difference or apparent differences described in the letter coming from you to the GNSO regarding differences between the GAC's advice and the GNSO recommendations and the approach of the NGPC and the GNSO recommendations.

So with that, this is still a front-of-mind for us here in the GAC and for the IGOs.

So in saying this, this is to highlight it as a matter of importance for us. And as well, there was an issue to clarify regarding next steps.

Can I look to the OECD to reiterate, there was something in the resolution regarding putting this to some sort of group for consultation that you had.

OECD:

Thank you. Thank you, Chair, and I'll be very quick. I know you have a long agenda.

But the IGOs have -- would like a little bit of clarity as to the current situation and the next steps.

We, as everybody knows, we've been discussing with the GAC and NGPC a document which, for a while, quite a while and in Singapore, we had discussions as well. And we were expecting a knew document to come out of that.

And then the Board passed resolutions on the 30th of April accepting advice from -- which was -- the GNSO advice which was compatible with GAC advice. And on the rest, requesting that or saying that there would be a dialogue between -- we assume between the GAC and the GNSO. I know ALAC was mentioned also in some of that text.

And then nothing happened. As far as we know, this dialogue did not happen, so we would like to know what the Board's intention is.

We understand after the discussions in Singapore where the GNSO had made some points about being involved, and as far as the IGOs, we can understand the Board's position of having divergent advice from the GAC and the GNSO and wanting to put us together at the table.

We don't have an objection, per se, to that. I think GAC probably does not, although I do not want to speak on behalf of the GAC.

On the other hand, IGOs would be really hard-pressed to follow yet another PDP or to follow the working group being re-opened. We've gone through that process. We're a minority there, and our views were not taken into account. GAC advice was not taken into account.

So sitting together and discussing with the GNSO -- the GAC and IGOs on one side and GNSO on the other side, we would probably be open to that. And we think that's what the Board resolution calls for, and we would like to have some clarity on how that process would happen and when, because -- and by whom, who would facilitate, because as the Chair mentioned, this issue continues to be important and it has been a very long time that we've been discussing about it.

Thank you very much.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you, OECD.

Chris Disspain, please.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Thank you. Good afternoon, everybody.

Okay. So I think what you said is basically correct, but there needs to be a process for it to happen. So let me level-set and we'll go from there.

It's correct that we took action to adopt the policy recommendations that were not inconsistent, and it's correct that we resolved to facilitate

the dialogue between the affected parties. But before we did that, we had to complete the process with the GNSO dealing with the policy development recommendations. So we either -- So we have to finish that first, which is why we have written to the GNSO and asked them if they will consider using a particular part of their policy development process to reconsider those parts of their recommendations which are not at idem with those from the discussions that we've had with the GAC and the IGO.

If they are prepared to do that, then, in fact, from the specific point of the notification of registration, there would be no need for convening dialogue because we would all effectively be on the same page.

But I want to make it clear. We're not talking to you. We're just going through our process first in order to be able to, when we do sit down, to be able to have this discussion with you knowing where everything is. And right now, we haven't exhausted the processes that the GNSO has.

But let me just make one other overarching point. Acknowledging -- I acknowledge the time. I acknowledge the time that it's taken. I acknowledge the difficulties, but I think it is also fair to acknowledge that during this time, the IGO listed acronyms have been protected and reserved. So it is not as if any harm has been done in respect to those acronyms. They have been temporarily reserved during this progress.

And so as I said, I acknowledge the time that it's taken, but I don't think there's actually been any harm.

So just to reiterate, yes, we will dialogue, but first we have to go through the formal processes which is what our letter to the GNSO at this stage is all about.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you for that, Chris.

Okay. So let's keep moving through the topics.

So the next issue to cover is regarding safeguards implementation.

Was it on the -- Oh, Red Cross/Red Crescent. That was part of --

CHRIS DISSPAIN: That's part of the -- You're talking about the Red Cross and Red Crescent acronyms. I believe we sent a -- we set a -- set a resolution on those as part of -- that they would be dealt with in the same way as the IGO acronyms, I believe.

CHAIR DRYDEN: U.K.?

UNITED KINGDOM: Thank you, Chair. I'm sorry. I just want to make a specific intervention here, and express a position to the Board and to the community with regard to protection of Red Cross/Red Crescent names.

I just want to remind everybody that here we're talking about names that are protected under international law and implemented in national legislation.

So, for example, if you go down Pride Street around the corner, you won't find Red Cross Burgers. You won't find Patisserie Croix Rouge in Paris anywhere, or in London, indeed, because it's against the law to use those names.

So the response that we've had from the Board is equating these names to trademarks by referring to the GNSO response, saying that this is a matter for incorporation of policy development that would use the trademark clearinghouse.

So I just wanted to make the point here that this is completely unacceptable to us. We're in a position as governments and administrations in implementing national law. So our advice continues to be that these names need to be protected and not subject to some policy development process that equates these names to trademarks and brands.

So I'm sorry to be reinforcing something that we thought we'd made clear on previous occasions.

CHRIS DISSPAIN:

I'm sorry, Mark, I'm completely confused. The Red Cross names are protected. They've been protected since -- for the last I don't know how long. They were the things -- The protection of Red Cross/Red Crescent, et cetera, is what led to the discussion about the IGOs.

So I'm at a loss, because I don't understand what you mean.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

U.K?

UNITED KINGDOM: I'm talking about our advice with regard to protection of national entities at the second level. So, for example, British Red Cross dot whatever.

That protection does not exist, and is not agreed as we understand it.

Thank you.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Thank you, Mark, for the clarification.

Heather, may I respond?

Thank you.

So Mark, thank you. Off the top of my head, I cannot remember the status of that particular issue in the NGPC. I don't know if there's anyone in the room who can....

But I take the point, and I will -- we will make sure we get back to you on that.

Thank you. Thanks for clarifying what you were referring to.

Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you.

So if there isn't a difference in view, then there's certainly some sort of disconnect or misunderstanding happening, so we can address that.

Thank you.

Okay. So next up we have safeguards implementation, and noting the responses we just received from the NGPC shortly before this meeting where the GAC had asked a series of questions covering everything from PICDRP to WHOIS accuracy reporting and the issue of transparency and what is accomplished in terms of nondiscrimination and so forth.

So I will look to the floor to help us flesh out this issue in further detail. I'm looking at the United States.

Yes, please, go ahead.

UNITED STATES:

Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you to our Board colleagues for joining us again today.

Actually, I know our list is very, very long, and the list of issues we, inside the GAC, have discussed about the NGPC's June 6 response to us was fairly long, too. So I'll just try to do a flyover.

But I guess my first question to you would be perhaps procedural. So we've gone back and forth, and I think it's been useful that you have recorded your responses in the scorecard form and it's been extremely helpful.

There are certain outstanding issues that we feel we need to repeat because the response that we have had from the Board has been to actually basically declined to accept our advice without explicitly saying so. And so we don't understand the rationale, because that hasn't been included. And let me give you just a flavor of that.

So for category 2 safeguards, we were -- we thought we had been quite clear in Singapore in our exchange with you that you had interpreted our Beijing advice as requiring transparency.

In Singapore, we drew your attention to the key point we were trying to get at in the Beijing advice was nondiscrimination and no undue preferential treatment.

You had come back again in June -- your June 6 document saying, "We believe transparency is supportive of the spirit and the intent of the Beijing advice." And so we're unclear as to apparently we missed the mark in Singapore in asking you to please revisit the advice and insert the requirement of nondiscrimination and no undue preferential treatment into the safeguard language.

And so it would be helpful to know -- because the scorecard actually doesn't explain why, yet again, you have declined to accept that particular concept.

There is one other one I would like to flag, and then I'll get to my procedural point. And the other issue is -- Yes, you need to pause. Thank you, Chris.

The other issue is the validation and verification of appropriate credentials for registration policies for strings that represent highly regulated sectors, at a minimum.

We know there are industry associations, global industry associations, that could help provide documentation. We know that there are responsible registries who are quite prepared to undertake the validation and verification of credentials.

We also know that in many of our jurisdictions, if not most, we require credentials to be a regulated sector. So a pharmacy must really be a pharmacy. A bank must really be a bank. And the response we have had from the Board, quite frankly, has baffled us.

So now I'll close with my procedural question. What is the best way for us to move forward? Would you like to have our comments, again, in writing? I think we could probably explain ourselves in an attachment should my colleagues agree when we get to the GAC communicate drafting. But we would appreciate having some insight from you as to how best to close this out. I think we are as hopeful as you are, and I'm sure the community is as well, when we can all feel like, yes, we've made best efforts. We've come to an understanding, and we have completed our work, if I may say, on safeguards for new gTLDs.

Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Chris.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Thank you, Heather. Thank you. Fanfare. Excellent.

So, Suzanne, I'm happy to -- you -- I started off being confused. Because I think you were talking about category two. And we haven't actually done anything on category two in respect to yet following your advice. Because we've been working through the process of figuring out who is within category two.

But maybe that's just an example of misunderstanding or miscommunication. I think you're saying -- if I can maybe go to your procedural point, I think what you're really saying is you don't think that the answers to your -- to the questions that we provided as an appendix to the scorecard in the last iteration of the scorecard actually answer your questions.

And, assuming that that's a rough summary of the overarching point, then I suggest that the easiest way of dealing with that is that we have a stab at answering them again.

And I don't know whether, procedurally, it would be better if you send them to us again or asked us to answer them again or whatever.

But, practically speaking, leaving aside what procedures you need to go through, we can have a stab at answering them again.

Have a go at answering them again. I shouldn't use colloquialisms for non-English speakers. That's my suggestion. And we'd be happy to attempt to do that.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you, Chris.

So I have a request from Germany and the European Commission to speak. And I hope this will help us perhaps highlight some of the key issues. And then let's look at how to move forward and identify whether it's a matter of getting a more full response to the answers. And then we can get to whether, in fact, there is -- there are any further issues there.

Okay. So we're looking for comment on that as a way forward. Okay. Germany, you were next, please.

GERMANY:

Yes, thank you, Madam Chair. I just wanted to second our colleague from the U.S. and the respect of the first part of the question. And that was a question on how and to what extent credentials or licenses could be required from registrants and in the registry policy.

And we see in many of the applications that applicants are going to fulfill or prepare to fulfill these requirements. And, in particular, in cases where you have more than one application, it would be a bit awkward if, through an auction, there would be the result that exactly the one who doesn't fulfill the requirements of the GAC advice would be the winner of an auction. And this is a situation where I think the board really needs to think over.

And, to be a bit more concrete, we had a discussion on corporate identifiers which belonged to the highly regulated sector. And in Germany we have a legal form that's GMBH. And we would really expect that the gTLD for .GMBH is only delegated to a company, to a registry that is fulfilling this minimum requirement that every registrant under .GMBH is required to have a legal form of GMBH. Because GMBH is legally protected in German-speaking countries in Switzerland, Austria. And as the Swiss government, Austrian government, German government gave early warning to this -- for all applicants, this is clear. I do not want to get in detail. And, frankly, I do not know every detail from all applications in this respect.

But I want to make sure -- and this is a question for ICANN -- that this is fulfilled. And I know there are more than this -- there are more strings in this direction where it is important and of utmost importance where we, as a GAC, would expect that our advice is appropriately integrated. And we have applications where there is no problem in implementing the requirements. Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you, Germany. European Commission, please.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION: Thank you, Madam Chair. And thank you, distinguished members of the board for another useful exchange of views with the GAC.

The European Commission would like to share with you some remarks regarding ICANN's accountability and ongoing process of reform we are engaging in. We certainly welcome the current process initiated by ICANN to reform its internal mechanisms to become more efficient. And we particularly commend the personal efforts of its CEO Fadi Chehade in bringing forward this complex exercise in a moment that some have called a constitutional period for the Internet.

Because this exercise is by all means necessary, as ICANN is so far it self-organized, self-regulated, and self-supervised entity.

Against this background, we are of the view that the main goal of every globalization effort must be the protection of the global public interest and not the strengthening of any self-serving processes.

GAC members -- sorry. GAC members have their own national experiences with the use of accountability. We can assist you in improving the overall effectiveness of ICANN --

CHAIR DRYDEN: European Commission.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION: Yes.

CHAIR DRYDEN: If I can just interrupt you, we're currently talking about safeguards for the new gTLD program. It seems like this is touching upon enhancing ICANN's accountability. Is that correct?

EUROPEAN COMMISSION: Yes.

CHAIR DRYDEN: So we will make sure that we have time to talk about that later in the agenda.

So, if we can just quickly conclude on safeguards, we can keep moving through our list.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION: Yes. Thank you, Madam Chair. I thought you had given me the word to talk about accountability because that's the point that we requested to touch upon during the preparatory session. Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Absolutely. That is understood. Okay. All right. So, Netherlands, did you want to speak on safeguards? Thank you.

NETHERLANDS: Thank you, Heather.

Just a question. We had this explanation from 6th of June with the scorecards. There was also a meeting on the 21st Saturday from the NGPC. We don't have any information on that. And we would very much like to -- if this is really something which we should know, could know. And also, in reference to our Wednesday tomorrow, before our communique drafting, that should be very useful. I don't want to go into the same process we had in the last meeting, which was very unfortunate, especially because we have now I think in the agenda I was talking about the category two safeguards. Excess, IGO protection. So kinds of things which triggers us, of course. Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Okay. Thank you. So that's a point about communications following the NGPC meeting on the 21st.

So, Australia, did you have a point about safeguards implementation? Okay. All right. If you can be brief. And then I think we need to keep moving through the agenda.

AUSTRALIA: Thank you, Chair. And thanks to the responses from the board to these questions so far.

So just to -- without starting a new issue, I'll build off the other one. So, hopefully, add some clarity to the GAC's concerns in this space.

I think the -- in response to your answer, Chris, about coming back with some additional or more -- some fuller responses to our questions, I guess from the GAC's point of view, we're very keen, along with the rest of the community to close this down. The more new gTLDs that go live, the more difficult it is for us as a GAC to try to address any concerns that we see with the safeguards. We're very mindful that we don't want to be coming in very late saying we're actually really troubled. So, if we can get to a point where we understand or can be comfortable as quickly as possible, that would be useful.

So, to be clear on the example that the U.S. raised in terms of undue preference, so this is one part of the category two safeguards which were in the Beijing advice.

There were two parts -- restricted access and exclusive access.

So this is to do with the restricted access. And this is where the GAC said, as an exception to the general rule that strings will be open, there may need to be some restriction as in the case of category one. So what the GAC was looking at in the case of a string like, for example, .BANK, which we've discussed, it would be entirely appropriate to have some limitation to access, for example, to limit it to banks. But, in doing that, we would not like to see any undue discrimination. So, if Australian

banks were excluded from registering in there without any clear reason for doing so, this is our concern.

And what we've -- the response we've received from the board is that the registry would be required to publish its policies. It would be a transparency response.

And on our reading it appears that, so long as the registry published its policy that said Australian banks can't register, that would be fine from a PIC point of view. But it clearly in our point of view does not meet what the intent of the GAC advice.

So we're trying to get to a point where we understand why the board has gone down a particular implementation path and whether it really does address our advice so that we can quickly come to a view where we're comfortable or not.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you, Australia. So I think that lays out clearly the motivations and what are the key issues in there that we're particularly focused on. And it's fair to say that some GAC members have in mind particular strings like bank or health or related to gambling where they're trying to understand how that actually would look in the operation of those particular strings.

Okay. Cherine, can you respond to the point raised by the Netherlands about communicating following the June 21st meeting?

CHERINE CHALABY: Yes. We met on June 21st. And there were really no decisions taken on that day. We had various topics on the agenda. We did talk a little bit about the category two safeguards, exclusive access. We talked about IGO protections. We talked about consideration of sensitive gTLDs. We talked about name collisions. And most of the discussion -- most of the topics there were just for discussion and no decision at that point in time.

So we didn't publish any resolution, per se. But the minutes are being written by staff and should be published in the normal course. But there is no major decision that would impact the GAC or any member of the GAC from that perspective. Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you, Cherine, for clarifying that.

Okay. So the next issue is regarding the Affirmation of Commitments review of the gTLD program and regarding what is the status of that work and the timeline for it to carry out its work. So it's a straightforward request, I think, for further information about that. Italy, you can add some depth to that?

ITALY: Thank you, Chair.

I know that there is a benchmark being prepared in this -- in the field for new gTLDs. But our opinion is that the activation of the review panel promoting competition, consumer trust, and consumer choice, that has not yet been activated could provide a view of how the implementation

of the new gTLDs program is going ahead and also giving answers to what are the expectations of the GAC and not only of the GAC, of the community. The benchmark in general is something that is more business oriented, let's say. While -- what we would like to see is how, for example, the older recommendations are regarding the safeguards are then implemented and appreciated and respected or not possibly.

So, in our opinion, the two activities should not be waiting one each other. I mean, the benchmark and the review panel.

And, in any case, the review panel normally works for 12 months. And then the board has six months after receiving the recommendations in order to respond. And we think that not waiting more to activate this review panel should be helpful also for the work of the GAC working in to a multistakeholder panel that will be able to evaluate and make it a confrontation of the expectations of the users, expectation of the private sector, and then also result of the recommendation provided by the GAC. Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you, Italy. Akram.

AKRAM ATALLAH:

Thank you, Madam Chair. The community has started, actually, a little bit of some initiatives around this issue. The first initiative was to put together a working group that -- to address how do you measure consumer choice and competition. And the working group decided that there is a need for a benchmark as soon as possible so that a year later we can do the same test again and measure the success of the new

gTLD program. They came up with a set of questions to be answered. And the decision was made that we need to do a survey for awareness of the new gTLD program to benchmark the awareness now as soon as possible. And then do it a year later and then to do an economic study to get competitiveness and then do a -- the same thing a year later.

I agree that these efforts do not have to go serially with AoC. So we can actually start putting some work for -- or a session, a community session for next meeting in L.A. maybe. So we will work with the NGPC and the board on this, and we will decide on what next steps we can take to move forward. Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you, Akram. So let's keep moving.

So next up we have sensitive specific strings. And this is an opportunity for any GAC members that want to raise a concern or seek a clarification in relation to a specific string to raise that. So Belgium, please.

BELGIUM:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Of course, .SPA is a very important issue for Belgium. And it is a matter of principle for most of the states represented in the GAC.

Nobody knows that Spa is a city in Belgium. Everybody knows about this city, thanks to you. And I would like to highlight that since Beijing, we have been discussing systematically the .SPA as part of the list of the most sensitive strings such as .AMAZON and .PATAGONIA. In Durban,

the GAC had recommended the ICANN board. And I'm going to read --- outreach.

And this recommendation that I have just read in English has been accepted. And there was an agreement established with one of the applicants. Today we received comments from the NGPC that determine that the NGPC accepted the GAC's recommendation. And, as a result, the applications will proceed as with a normal process.

So my question is the following: What do we mean by the normal process? We asked this question to ICANN staff on Saturday in the afternoon meeting, and they told us that this was an auction process. So I would like to know whether you share this same view.

If that is the case, I would like to know what is the point of reaching an agreement with a local authority if this is going to be taken to auction? And this has a lot of implications for us, because we are under the impression that ICANN no longer supports the GAC recommendations. So we would like to know why that recommendation made by GAC was not complied with.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you, Belgium. Okay. Cherine, will you respond?

CHERINE CHALABY:

Yes. Let me put some clarification on how we accepted the various GAC advice on .SPA and also say where we are today.

So in Beijing we received for the first time the GAC advice asking the board not to proceed beyond initial evaluation of the .SPA applications. And there's more than one. So the NGPC accepted this advice.

Then in Durban, for the second time, the GAC advised the board not to proceed beyond initial evaluation of the .SPA application until agreements between the relevant parties were reached. The NGPC accepted this advice.

In Buenos Aires the GAC, for the third time, reiterated the same advice. We accepted this advice. But we noted a concern about concluding discussions with .SPA applications.

And we sent a letter to the GAC chair asking for clarification on two aspects. The first one we asked that the GAC identifies the relevant parties' reference in the GAC advice.

The second we asked an understanding of the anticipated timeline for the GAC to issue a final advice on the .SPA applications. The NGPC also noted that the applications for .SPA were posted more than 18 months ago and received no early warnings, no objection. And there was no provision in the applicant guidebook for indefinite hold of the applications.

Then in Singapore the GAC communique stated that it has finalized its consideration of the .SPA applications and welcomed the report that an agreement has been reached between the City of Spa and one of the applicants.

So on May 14 the NGPC met and acknowledged the statements made in Singapore and noted that there was no GAC advice pursuant to module

3.1 of the applicant guidebook. And, as a result, the .SPA application would proceed through the normal process.

So where are we now? According to this resolution and consistent with the new applicant guidebook, the NGPC resolution cited above, ICANN has continued with the processing of the .SPA applications. However, there is more than one application for the .SPA. And, therefore, the applicants will need to resolve the contention set before ICANN enter into a registry agreement with the prevailing applicant. So this is where we are today. Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you. So among those options, then, is the possibility of auctions. That's one way to resolve the contention. So to answer directly the next steps.

AKRAM ATALLAH:

So there is a scheduled set of auctions. And there is a date for .SPA now for when they have to do the auction based on their priority. It's already in the public domain. If the applicants do not agree among themselves and resolve the contention, then they will go into auction. Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you. Okay.

So, continuing with our discussion of specific strings, Iran, did you have a specific string?

IRAN: No, Chairman. I wanted to just clarify the situation. Quoting or saying the issue will be proceeded in accordance with normal course of action is a subjective issue. It would have been better if they referred to the applicable course of action in the guidebook rather than the normal procedures. Perhaps you can say in accordance with relevant provisions and quote what provision or what section is applied to remove all of these questions and back and forth answers. Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you, Iran.

So next I have the African Union Commission.

AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION: Thank you, Madam Chair.

First of all, I would like to thank you for this opportunity given to us. And I would like, specifically, to thank the board for the continued support they are providing to the African continent. And I wanted to say that publicly because it may somehow be understood that we are not recognizing that grateful support that specifically for the last two years came with the new board and with Fadi's leadership and all of that.

I thank you, Fadi. Thank you to the board. Thank you, everybody, for the support you have provided to Africa. We started a strategy, and it is being implemented. And we updated, you know, on a regular basis. That's very important to me to say.

Having said that now, I would like to come to the issue of .AFRICA. And, again, thank you to the board. I'm thanking you for the fact that you have accepted the GAC advice.

Unfortunately for us, things are being slowed down for a certain process that is actually happening. We wouldn't like to appear as interfering with any kind of process that it is legally very important. But let me emphasize on something very important. .AFRICA is not just a domain name as any other domain name. It's beyond that. It is a huge program built by the African continent to bring Africa into the digital economy. It is a program about capacity building for Africans. It is a program for supporting the ccTLDs. It is a tremendous -- and many other things to be done. And, therefore, it is key and very important project for us in the sense that we do not like to see ourself delayed again not to be really participating in the process of contributing to the digital economy, per se.

We are pretty confident that things will happen as per the rules and the regulations about governing the new gTLDs. The only things I would like the board and the management of ICANN to indulge with us is to make sure that the proper communication has been made and the proper way forward has been carried out so then we don't -- Africa wants from the (indiscernible) of not having this digital identity in Africa.

But, again, thank you very much for the whole supports. And we are here at your disposal for anything you would require from us. Clarifications, support, consensus of the GAC. I'm sure the GAC will be providing many support that we needed and will make sure that everything will proceed as it should be. Thank you very much.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you.

Okay.

So let's keep moving, and at the beginning I skipped over WHOIS, and the interest of the GAC here is strong in coming to grips with all the work under way in relation to WHOIS.

We did receive a briefing to cover the streams of work all under way simultaneously at the organization, and as well, we had an update from the Expert Working Group who apparently have a very lengthy report now out and available to us for public comment.

So there are a range of issues here in relation to existing gTLDs and the future of WHOIS by the efforts triggered by the Expert Working Group. We did have some questions around the timeline for that Expert Working Group report and what the Board might do with it and, at a minimum, wanting to flag that this is something where the GAC is very much interested and wanting to ensure that there is that opportunity to be able to contract to that as well as some of the streams of work under way at ICANN presently.

So, Cherine, you're wanting to comment? And then there may be other colleagues in the GAC that want to identify particular issues just to give you a sense of what we're thinking.

Cherine.

CHERINE CHALABY: I don't want to talk about WHOIS. I just want to make sure that we have exhausted all the topics the GAC wants to talk about in relation to sensitive strings.

So are we done?

CHAIR DRYDEN: U.K., is this about a specific string?

UNITED KINGDOM: Well, it's not about a specific string but a type of string, child protection.

CHAIR DRYDEN: We're talking about WHOIS.

UNITED KINGDOM: I'm sorry. I misunderstood. Sorry.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Steve, did you want to comment on WHOIS before I --

STEVE CROCKER: No, no. You do it, and then I'll give a full response on the various pieces of this.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Okay. All right.

So colleagues in the GAC on WHOIS, please.

All right. I'm looking to the United States.

Ah, Australia. Go ahead.

AUSTRALIA:

Thank you, Chair. Just to add some more depth to your introduction which I think covered the field very well, I think the GAC is coming to the growing realization that there is a lot of very important work happening in this space, which is probably an understatement. And in particular with the Expert Working Group report, we understand it is with the Board for consideration. The GAC is very, very keen to engage with this process, to look at the public-policy issues associated with those recommendations.

In terms of timing, we have been considering allocating a significant block of time to this in the L.A. meeting, and we're just seeking some reassurance from the Board that we won't miss the boat if we go down that path, I guess.

So if the GAC spends a significant amount of time intersessionally, discusses the Expert Working Group report in Los Angeles, are we too late or is this okay from the Board's point of view?

Is there anything we indeed to know or take into consideration coming away from this meeting?

STEVE CROCKER:

I was tempted to tell you that by Los Angeles, we will have completely read the report, made the decisions, hired contractors, implemented it,

and we will completely replumb the entire WHOIS for the entire Internet.

No; quite seriously, that will be fine.

I want to cover a number of points in some depth, probably even a bit more than you might be expecting.

Just to do a quick review, we have had significant changes in the Registrar Accreditation Agreement. We are implementing the recommendations from the WHOIS Review Team from sometime ago, and then as the sort of third quite significant thrust, the activity that the Expert Working Group took on, which is part of -- which is triggered by a Board resolution in November 2012 in which we said we want to look completely fresh at this whole thing.

They've done a magnificent piece of work and I commend it to everybody to read and to share and to engage in discussion.

That is a big step forward, but it is not the whole of what needs to be done.

There really does need to be a lot of reading and discussion about it. And I want to go into a couple of areas.

Going back a few years, there was a kind of longstanding complaint from primarily law enforcement, but other parts of the community as well, that we needed to tighten up on WHOIS. And a -- at least for me, a quite memorable session in this setting, Board interacting with the GAC, it was my very first time that I was chairing the Board and sitting in this

session. It was in Senegal. And quite a vigorous attempt to take us to task for not having been more responsive.

And I took it to heart, actually. There was quite a bit of history there, and things took longer than I had wanted even from that point. But we had -- Changes were made to the RAA, and then all the other things have progressed.

There were -- There are multiple questions outstanding as to what to do next. There are issues with respect to how to implement such a thing, what the policies ought to be if one has differentiated or tiered access, whether to have a centralized or distributed aggregation of the data, what -- if not everybody has access to all the information so that you have stronger privacy controls, then what are the criteria for being admitted to the groups that do have more access. An awful lot of implementation and policy questions associated with it.

But let me bring up a couple more. There's been a renewed concern about privacy. I think that's a very important dialogue that has to continue. Some of it will be a more detailed sorting out of exactly what's meant, just a disambiguation, and some of it will be very earnest discussions about policy.

There's another element which has had very little visibility but is actually right at the core. It came up strongly today in our interaction with the registrars, but it actually goes back quite a bit.

All of the controls that are envisioned are -- don't have any rationale on their own. They're intended to satisfy a broader principle. We want to be able to identify who has control of a domain name for various

reasons, and those reasons are coupled to even bigger issues as to what harm is being done generally or what purpose is being carried out.

So in the spirit of saying so if we increase the level of effort necessary to registry a domain name, if we increase costs, does that actually improve what we're trying to improve? Does that reduce abuse? Does it make it easier to track down the people who are abusing? Does it make it easier to get control?

We do not have, we do not have any accurate information about that.

We have raised that issue with law enforcement community, and, in my view, the onus is how in their court.

We have -- As I said, we've implemented the controls that they've asked for, pretty much; I mean, essentially, all of the ones that they asked for. And at the same time we said, "Can you document how much of a difference this is going to make?" We've not had that information. I don't think they have it, frankly. I don't think that they're being resistant. I think that their world is not organized in a way that provides a direct relationship between the impact on our world and the way that they work.

So I think there's some serious thought that has to go into that and some work that has to be done, and it will be a constructive and positive process. It's not just, "You do it or we won't pay any attention."

I think this is a learning process that will raise the level of understanding about the relationships of how information is collected and what it's used for and what the impact is on behavior.

So this will take a while. And I don't intend to say we won't do anything until we know all the answers, and on the other hand, I do want to say we're not going to just proceed pellmell down some path without having at least some shape to all of this.

So there's a number of questions that have to be pursued, and we're not going to do anything as quickly as make a decision in Los Angeles, for example.

What I hope we will do -- we have not had the discussion on this because this report just came out. I think within the Board, we will try to identify some of the question, put some precision to what are the things I'm sort of rambling on about, and try to present those to the full community -- the GAC, to all of the SOs, ACs, the law enforcement community, et cetera -- and try to frame those questions, and then see how to pick a path out of all of that.

So it's still in a formative stage.

I think the work that the Expert Working Group has done is absolutely magnificent. I had the privilege of sitting in many of the sessions, and I think we've been very well served by their work. But it is a big problem. It's not a small problem, and I think we should put our arms around the entirety of it.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you, Steve.

STEVE CROCKER: And you asked what the time frame is. I don't know.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Okay. All right. I think we can leave WHOIS there.

Spain -- oh, did you have a comment, U.S., on WHOIS? Okay. Let's take that first, and then Spain, please.

UNITED STATES: Thank you, Madam Chair. Not to linger too long, but if I can put a slight twist on Peter Nettlefold of Australia's intervention, we know in advance now that we need sufficient time to be prepared to engage if discussions with yourselves, the Board and the broader community. But if I can put a little twist on this, I'd like to sort of make a suggestion for L.A. We were given a very, very substantial briefing by ICANN staff. Margie Milam in particular did an outstanding job of providing an overview of all the various WHOIS-related activities. And, frankly, it was a little alarming to the GAC to see just how much is going on at the same time that had some bearing on some aspect of WHOIS policy. And of course it's no surprise to you, you've known this for years, governments have all sorts of issues, interests, concerns, however you'd like to understand that with regard to WHOIS-related policy our feeling is that it's very hard to digest all these different initiatives and to understand them and to piece them together and to see what their timelines are and how we can address them in a coherent manner. So I'll be quite candid with you. It's very indigestible at the time moment.

So what we would like to propose and ask you to consider is if you could structure a meeting, a full day or a series of sessions in L.A. to permit everybody to end up on the same page.

I'm sensing that -- or I'm guessing, let me say, that the GAC is not the only part of the ICANN community at the moment that is struggling with overload and the need to do triage. And regrettably, we are concerned that we might be sending the wrong signal; that by not contributing to something, because we cannot imagine the timeline, we are somehow sending a signal that we're not as interested. And that couldn't be further from the truth.

So we'd like to have an opportunity, and we think it would be good for the entire community to get together to understand each other's perspectives perhaps a little bit better.

So a lot of the activity is siloed, if you will.

So we think it would be useful if we could try to tackle all of this at the same time. Because I can tell you, just to close on one thing, none of us feel as though we have the sufficient bandwidth at the moment, in view of workload and in view of the other priorities, such as IANA transition and accountability, to even provide comments on thing posted document about changes to the existing policy of WHOIS conflicts with national privacy law.

And so I think for that one, we might even feel the need to ask you to defer work on that.

So it's -- We're at a point now, I think it's almost -- it might be going a little too far but not too far to say this is a very critical moment in time for our workload, for the community's workload, for a set of very important issues. And I haven't even addressed the Expert Working

Group report, which is, of course, substantial. And we do plan to be ready for that in L.A.

So I would ask that you might consider that.

Thank you.

STEVE CROCKER:

Thank you very much. Rather than engage in an extended dialogue, I take your point, and we will try to wrestle with all of that. I think you opened up a number of possibilities. One is that we'll clearly -- and I think it already has started and more plans for outreach to explain what's going on, and then I take from what you're saying that we should also try to be clear about what timeline and perhaps some implication of the resources that we expect governments and other groups to bring to bear in order to provide a sensible response and choose a path and I think that's fair. I won't commit to saying we'll just stop everything and try to sequence things serially so nobody has to work very hard. I didn't mean it that way, but this is very important. We're not going to -- We're not going to just put a stop on this work at this point. We've got momentum and we're going to keep it up.

But I think you raise a very good point about setting expectations and giving you messages that you can carry into your organization so that you can allocate the necessary resources.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you. Okay. Spain, you are next, please.

SPAIN: Thank you, Heather. And thank you to the members of the Board for being here today.

I just wanted to come back to the previous section because I think you didn't see my raised hand before, so sorry for that.

I just want to talk in Spanish briefly. Thank you.

We sincerely think the Board's letter received last Saturday regarding the applications for .WINE and .VIN; mainly, the invitation that is extended in that letter to the GAC to provide new GAC advice to the Board. In that regard, I just want to indicate that we are committed to working within the GAC in order to build consensus and to try to provide new advice to the Board on this issue.

Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you, Spain.

Okay. So I think we can leave this particular agenda item now on specific strings. Okay; great.

So next up we have child protection. U.K., please.

UNITED KINGDOM: Yes. Thank you, Chair. Online child protection is a major public policy concern for governments. And I'm sure the entire ICANN communities is fully cognizant of that.

And the GAC has raised this issue previously. And new domains are being created which are very likely to attract children in large numbers, for example, .TOYS, .PLAY, .GAMES. And, while they have great potential for enhancing the welfare of children, we also must acknowledge that they raise public policy concerns about protecting and promoting children's rights and ensuring that the risk that pedophiles might be attracted to these domains and exploit them for their evil purposes. There is that risk.

The European NGO alliance for child safety online, known as eNACSO. For the transcribers, that's E-N-A-C-S-O -- wrote to the CEO and president about this issue to determine what the extent to which ICANN has recognized that there are risk and concerns and what action ICANN was proposing to take to address those concerns.

They have told us that they didn't receive a reply to that.

So I want to take this opportunity to request that the CEO reviews that outstanding correspondence. And, secondly, to draw the attention of the NGPC to proposals that eNACSO has drawn to our attention for guidelines and a code of practice. If the NGPC could look at those proposals, I think it's very well worth doing. And look forward to hearing a response in due course following these actions. Thank you very much.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you, U.K. So next we have the issue of .TEL and E.164 numbering plan. And I will ask Iran, please, to raise this.

IRAN: Thank you, Chairman. The issue of .TEL was raised in the ITU council. And a letter was sent to the ICANN to Mr. Fadi Chehade in 2013. Answer has been received. Another letter sent in February 2014 apparently has been replied. But in the council we are not in a position to see whether the reply is received or not, whether it's satisfactory.

But several important issues have been raised in a letter of Malcolm Johnson with the TSB with respect to various issues which are in that letter.

In view of the little time that we are available, I would like you just briefly to refer to that. And we need clear-cut answers and a necessary course of action in order to respect and protect the numbering in the ITU. In particular one of the items refers that whether there is any validations of the registration of the eight digital strings when they are similar to and give to three areas. And then talking about the treatment of the unallocated and unused numbers that may be used by this .TEL or any dot any other entity. I don't want to go to any other names.

This is an important issue that I would like to draw attention that we need a reply and course of action to that very probably that issue will be again raised in the ITU plenipotentiary conference. Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you for that, Iran.

FADI CHEHADE: You want to answer.

TAREK KAMEL:

Thank you, Iran, for this comment. And I just want to answer both letters have been replied to. The letter to Fadi and the Secretary General Hamadoun Toure that was raised to Fadi in a meeting last fall. And then Malcolm Johnson also has addressed us with another letter, and we have replied to it. We have made a common meeting together with Malcolm Johnson and the team in order to clarify that the position is not only related to .TEL but related to other top-level domains for licensed operators like .ORANGE or, for example, or whatever. And they are in charge of using their numbering as long as they have license from the regulator and local member state.

Recently Nigel Hickson has made a presentation to the study group, too, at the ITU about this issue that it is not only restricted to .TEL. But it is a general problem to issues related to top-level domains that are licensed. And the committee has been convinced that the first report that they have submitted needs revision. And they have asked us for some time in order to revise their report according to our explanation that the problem is bigger than that because, if numbers are allocated to the operator, license operator, nobody in the ITU or anybody can do anything. And we want to seek innovation and support innovation in that aspect. So we are waiting now for the report of the study group to the new report of study group to address the exact issue in light of our response, including the unallocated numbers, as you have mentioned. So we're working on it. We take it seriously. The management takes it seriously. And things are progressing. Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you for that. Okay. So the last topics we have relate to the IANA stewardship transition process and enhancing ICANN's accountability. And then some questions about the alliance that was pointed to at the end of the high-level meeting yesterday and what is involved or what is intended with that.

So, if we start first with the IANA stewardship transition process and an update from the GAC, we are currently looking at how to participate in the coordination group. We've taken note of the proposal to have two from the GAC appointed there. And we hope to come to some decision about -- or clarity about what the coordination group will be doing and, therefore, be able to determine what is the best way for the GAC to participate and organize itself internally as well as being clear about expectations for anyone that is appointed to that coordination group.

And I think it's essentially the same sort of thing that we're looking at with regard to the enhancing accountability process, even though there are certain differences between those two tracks of activity.

So here I'm aware that the European Commission has comments to make. And I see other requests to speak as well. So European Commission, if you would, please.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION:

Thank you, Madam Chair. For the sake of completeness of the transcripts, I will start my contribution again.

The European Commission would like to share with you some remarks regarding ICANN's accountability and the ongoing process of reforming, which we are engaging in. We certainly welcome the current process

initiated by ICANN to reform its internal mechanisms and to become more efficient. And we particularly commend the personal efforts of its CEO Fadi Chehade in bringing forward this complex exercise in the moment that some have called a constitutional period for the Internet.

This exercise is by all means necessary as ICANN is so far a self-organized, self-regulated, and self-supervised entity. Against this background, we are of the view that the main goal of the regulation effort must be the protection of the global public interest and not the protection of the strengthening of any self-serving process.

GAC members have their own national experiences with the issue of accountability. And, in this regard, we can assist you in improving the overall effectiveness of ICANN, including the strengthening your independence, transparency, and accountability mechanisms to ensure that decisions are made in compliance with public policy objectives. ICANN, regardless of its office not-for-profit corporation status is, in fact, a private corporation. And this requires compliance with applicable competition norms and the promptly undertake of ICANN's consumer, competition, and trust review as mandated by the Affirmation of Commitments.

Another essential prerequisite worth noting in light of the recent developments is that to achieve real accountability, ICANN needs to protect, respect, and promote the principles agreed in NETmundial.

Moreover, in the current ICANN structures, it is undoubted that we need effective and predictable policy development and decision-making processes for all stakeholders.

And bearing in mind that governments have primarily legal and political accountability for the protection of human rights and the rule of law.

Members of the board, there is no such thing as internal accountability. Checks in ICANN must be conducted by independent external entities. An essential element of good governance is to break up with the fusion of powers which characterizes your structures. ICANN cannot regulate, adjudicate, and enforce at the same time. As our commissioner and vice president Neelie Kroes said yesterday during the high-level meeting, this change has been a long time coming and, in some quarters, patience will run thin if the process is not going to be successful. This was already noted by a member of GAC delegates last Saturday rather strongly.

ICANN needs accountability -- a type of accountability that is implementable, measurable, and trustable and that pays due regards to the rule of law. This does not mean at all that you will have always to abide by the same law. But you should at least ensure a fair degree of jurisdictional interoperability among us to operate globally and in full compliance with our local and regional laws.

You can still count on our support. But this time there is no room for failure. We have reached a point in which ICANN has to demonstrate its true nature, in which ICANN needs to prove that it's actually come of age and can live up to the expectations of the Internet community as a whole. Thank you very much.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you, European Commission.

Okay. I have Iran next, please.

IRAN:

Thank you, Chairman. With respect to the two groups currently under the operations or to be operated soon, one is called nation group and the other is working group, the first one is on transition and the second is on accountability. These two groups, terms of reference, conditions, and scope of work are very, very important and crucial for the government and for the GAC members.

Currently, as I have been informed or we have been informed, maybe both of them or one of them, there are 27 members and only 2 have been given to GAC. We have been discussing the GAC. And there is general agreement, if not unanimous, that the number of the representatives of the GAC need to be increased at least to five -- to have five representation or five regional arrangements. The member of that group we come to the agreement how would we organize and both with the (indiscernible) with the same and we'll come up with structure and how the issue is communicated to the meeting. But the only thing that you want to share with the board, and we request them to say that we take into account increase the number from 2 to 5. We don't believe that there is a difficulty between 27 and 30. If we could work with 27, could also work with 30.

But GAC needs to be better represented more geographically and more widely. And the number five is a minimum that with five regions, representation to view all colleagues of the government. And we don't believe at this stage that the participation of the GAC should be marginalized and to be limited to two. So we request the board kindly

to seriously consider the matter to increase the number from two to five. Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you very much for that, Iran.

Okay.

So for the next topic regarding the alliance, I will ask Sweden if you could perhaps raise some questions here. Thank you.

SWEDEN:

I will. Thank you very much, Chair.

We heard Fadi mention that NETmundial -- here I am -- NETmundial alliance. And he also mentioned in this context the Ilves report that this would be or could be a template for implementing NETmundial principles within the framework of this NETmundial alliance. That sounds interesting, but it's also a novelty for us. So let me just say something shortly about the Ilves report. It is very interesting. It is comprehensive. But it is also quite sophisticated. It introduces some novelties that takes quite a lot of effort to wrap our heads around. And we're working to wrap our heads around it trying to understand how these new concepts and relate to existing bodies and foras and functions.

Now, multistakeholderism is a complicated area. I know you don't like labels, but still we're seeking clarity here. And we're seeking common ground and understanding. And there is perhaps a risk that we need to

be aware of that the Ilves report in this sense adds to confusion when we need clarity.

And, when you say that you want to use this report as a template for further work, I think that is something that needs to be discussed, understood. It's important to have the troops with you, as you say, sometimes. I wouldn't want to be the one to hamper the "just do it" attitude, obviously. This is extremely important. But it's also very important not to run too far ahead in this instance. So I would like to ask you if you can say something of how you foresee that the NETmundial alliance will play out, how you envision engaging stakeholders. And also, particularly, how you see this relating to existing fora such as the IGF. We don't want to undermine the IGF for the possible renewal of the IGF mandates and have a competing body. So that's my question. Thank you.

FADI CHEHADE:

I was just told by my colleagues that I stand between you and the drinks. So they told me to be short, which is difficult for me, as you know.

First, I want to just acknowledge the statement from the European Commission and to assure them that the accountability process is going to be very important. And we have a process that has been opened. We don't know yet how it will work.

So this is a time for all of you to give us your insights and input. We take this extremely seriously. But, as I said today to other groups, it is very important that we are careful how we tie this to the transition.

There are some elements of the community that would like to delay the transition. And, therefore, when we talk about accountability, we talk about its interrelation with the transition, not necessarily its interdependency. So we need to manage this together, make sure we address all the things we need to make sure ICANN is prepared for the next 15 years, I hope. But we should be thoughtful and measured in how we attack these together. But all of us are welcome. And I know that the European Commission, specifically, has been very helpful in supporting this process.

Looking forward to work with you and everyone to make sure ICANN grows constitutionally and practically as a very, very accountable institution.

Having said that, I want to also be clear that accountability is a very complex term.

You know, who are we accountable to for what needs to be well-defined. Otherwise, you know, you never know when you get there. How accountable are we today on a scale of 1-10? Can't answer. It's impossible. Depends on the issue and the matter. So I'm asking all of us to be thoughtful and to participate in this. But I am committed to this process. Our board is committed to this process. And I hope you will be equally committed with us to this process.

On the issue of the alliance, there is not much to add than what I said yesterday. Still very early discussions to see how we can bring together some institutions, some organizations, some countries that would like to actually answer the very questions you asked. So there's not much more to it than that at the moment we're just thinking through it.

We're trying to see who would like to help us advance these concepts, understand them better, apply them better. But I can assure you of one thing: Nothing we intend to do should erase any existing institutions. Period. In the case of the IGF that you mentioned, we think the IGF should be strengthened. Currently, the IGF is strangled. It's designed to die. If it weren't for those of us who have some deeper pockets or deeper resolve, Bali would not have happened.

So I want to be clear that ICANN is one of the largest donors if not the largest donor in the world in the IGF process.

Just in this meeting, several regional IGFs came and asked us for resources and support, and we're ready to do it.

So I want to be very clear that from an ICANN standpoint, there is absolute clarity that the IGF is an incredibly important process that has been strangled and has survived purely because of the will of the people that benefit from it today. And we will continue to support it.

Finally, I just want to say something about the alliance. As I said yesterday, ICANN has been doing a bit of extracurricular activity in the space of Internet governance. Our job is to coordinate names and numbers. It is not to solve Internet governance for the world. However, we also recognize that we live in an ecosystem, and if that ecosystem continues at every turn to question multistakeholderism and how we work together and how we make decisions, that's not healthy. And, frankly, some of us had become a little bit tired of being defensive about the great model that led to this incredible thing we call the Internet.

And so a little over a year ago, we engaged in a positive, constructive effort to show that multistakeholderism actually works. We contributed to 1net, to NETmundial, to the Ilves panel.

But it is also time for ICANN to step back in line and to join a broader group. We cannot continue to be leading this alone. So we are bringing along our technical community, other good institutions and governments that believe in a model of governance that supports an open Internet, supports an Internet economy that thrives, supports all the things that many of us believe in. And so that's what it is.

So it's almost what we've done for the last year, but now through a broader group of people, and I hope all of us will participate and join so we can tell the world that what we have here is precious. It's not perfect, as we've learned for the last few days, but it's precious, and we should save it.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you very much, Fadi.

So we did go a bit later than planned, but we started a bit late, and if we deduct Steve's lengthy intervention on WHOIS from the time --

[Laughter]

--

We come in just about right on time.

So with that, many thanks to the Board for coming and having this exchange with us today. There is a cocktail now with our Board

colleagues, and for the GAC, with each other, in the back of the lounge. The raised area in the lobby area. So I hope you're familiar with it. It's called the Library Lounge.

Okay. So hope to see you there, and back in the GAC room tomorrow at 9:00, please.

Thank you.

STEVE CROCKER:

Thank you, everyone. How about a round of applause for us all.

[Applause]

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]