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LONDON – GAC Working Methods  
Tuesday, June 24, 2014 – 10:30 to 11:00  
ICANN – London, England

CHAIR DRYDEN: So then let's move to our next agenda item which is on the GAC working methods.

Thank you to Portugal for briefing us on the strategy working group.

So we have a lead, Spain. Could you come to the front for this item, please.

SPAIN: Thank you, Heather. Good morning, everyone.

I'm here to update you on the work that has been carried out by the working group on GAC working methods.

Maybe you recall, I already gave a presentation to you in Buenos Aires, and this time I will try to be shorter because we already know, more or less, what has been dealing with.

And the main objective of the working group is to actually improve the GAC in the way we function, to make us more efficient and understood by the community. When we make decisions, then we provide advice to the Board.

So -- Yeah.

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I've prepared a share presentation. As I was saying, we just wanted to show you what the advantages of the implementation of the measures that we are proposing here could be to try to boost the way we actually work and try to really implement all the necessary measures to achieve all these goals.

So I will -- yeah, thank you for that, to Julia, and I will go through the slides.

What we want to convey to you is that we can be better organized when we work. We have to, of course, rely on the secretariat, which has done incredibly good work, to try to make us more efficient. We have to empower the vice chairs so that the workload can be shared and there's more regional approach to different countries so that we can make the GAC more inclusive.

We can make improvements in agenda setting. We can have an annual work plan so that we all know what we're talking about when we try to amend schedule of the meetings we've got ahead. You know that we've been under very, very high pressure. We have a workload which is suppressing us.

So intersessional meetings can as well be improved. We could seek for more information from different things that are happening when we are not here in the plenaries.

We can enhance the minutes and the meeting handling and the communicate drafting.

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These are several things that have been carried out in last months already, but it would be nice to have all this implemented through the work plan that I will present afterwards.

As I was saying, we need more participation in GAC's discussions, so we need to be more involved with ICANN staff. We could connect service, and as I was saying, the preparation ahead of the meetings in terms of circulating of documents and all the stuff that we need to understand what we're talking about and what we are discussing, because sometimes we've got such an incredible amount of things to work through that it's difficult to -- for me, at least, to follow everything in a timely manner.

It's very important that we have all the preparatory documents. I wanted to emphasize that the use of the six U.N. official languages and Portuguese is of extreme importance. So to have all the documents, as well, in the seven languages is crucial.

We have to have better interaction with the community. We cannot be seen anymore as a community that just meets for a week and produces a communique and there's nothing else there. We really believe that we have to engage with the rest of the ICANN environment.

So one of the things that were proposed and that has been dealt with in other consultation group, that Manal Ismail was telling you the other day, is that the reverse GAC liaisons and the GAC engagement.

So, yeah, we have to improve the way that we communicate our decisions or our debates or discussions to the rest of the ecosystem. So we have to explain the rationale that's behind our decisions so when we

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provide advice to the Board, why did we get the conclusion. So we have to be better understood by the rest of the community.

One of the means to improve our transparency is to handle our sessions open by default, which is something which has reached for consensus, so that's something that we -- afterwards, I will talk about this again, but this is something that could be important to increase our transparency.

The (indiscernible) implementation of GAC advice, as well, is something that really has to be improved. So if we agree that the main outcome of our meetings is to -- the advice we provide to the Board, it's important we, as well, monitor the implementation of this.

So as regards the decision-making process, this has been taken out of the scope of the implementation plan, and it's beyond the scope of the working group, so don't take into account the three first lines, please, and I will end the presentation with a request from you, from colleagues of the GAC, because all these high-level objectives, so to say, have been reflected in an implementation plan that has been circulated to you via email and has as well been circulated in paper copy on Saturday, if I'm not wrong, and it has the layout of the scorecard in which we have reflected all the measures that we have identified to achieve these goals.

So this scorecard contains a well the correspondence with the applicable ATRT2 recommendations applicable to the GAC. So you can see there that we have been, as well, taking into account that.

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And so now my main primary goal today is to -- well, just go briefly through this implementation plan, so please bear with me for just a couple of minutes more.

This goal, this could be achieved through enhancing the role of the secretariat. I'm not going through each and every measure because I already did so in Buenos Aires and you can read it here. But then it's about enhancing the secretariat, about having this work plan and calendar, handling/implementing the agenda and the community interaction. It's about the advice to the Board, the monitoring, the description of our advice, the rationale behind our decisions, the interaction with other constituencies and the broader ICANN community, and increasing the participation in the GAC.

So as I was saying, my primary goal today is to get a green light from you in order to proceed with the rollout, implementation of this plan that has been circulated.

So I would kindly ask my colleagues to express their view on this, and if there's any opposition to the implementation of this plan, that I have to say that it's important to say that has a consense of practicality measures that have been agreed upon, so there's nothing contentious in the plan. There's nothing that can -- that I can actually raise some kind of concern. So to implement these practicalities and these measures from now on and to have them ready for the next meeting in Los Angeles, I would like to have this support.

That's what I'm asking you today.

Thank you.

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CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you very much, Spain, for giving us an overview. Okay. So we're seeking agreement to move forward on the matters that Spain has outlined. And I think you have in your documents in front of you, there should be hard copies regarding suggested actions that could be taken now as a result of the various work items. Is that correct? Yes. Okay.

All right. Okay.

So there's a document by the name of GAC working methods implementation plan to be agreed before or at the London meeting. The version dated June 21st, 2014. And so we have a series of measures proposed and then in the last column, a series of suggested actions to be taken. So we're looking for agreement to proceed on those suggested actions. Argentina please.

ARGENTINA: Thank you, Madam Chair. And thank you, Rafael, for the update and the presentation. Argentina would like to commend the work, the excellent work that Spain has done in preparing this document and leading this working group. By the way -- and if you see our comments for NETmundial, we especially specific -- we will do a specific reference to your work in this working group because we think it's a relevant issue. So Argentina is in favor of the document and to move forward with implementation. Thank you very much.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you, Argentina.

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Okay. So shall we go through each item? So Secretariat is the first item. And then there are three suggested actions in relation to that for the working group to prepare with support, a FAQ sheet to inform about respective roles regarding the Secretariat staff, both from ICANN and from ACIG, another measure to look at the Secretariat role in relation to article 11 of the GAC operating principles, and a third action to develop a briefing paper regarding the Web site. Okay.

So are there any comments or questions about that for Spain? Okay. All right.

So let's keep moving through the document. That seems to be non-controversial and allows us to proceed.

Okay. All right. Also, the suggestion to develop a workplan for the GAC. Another one that I think is quite straightforward for us, non-controversial, and, in fact, useful to our work.

So, as a suggested action, the preparation of that workplan. Okay. I see no comments there. Australia, please.

AUSTRALIA:

Thank you, Chair. And to echo the comments from our colleague from Argentina, thank you to Spain for taking the lead on this work. It's been very comprehensive and much appreciated.

In terms of the workplan, I'm obviously supportive of this. I think it's very useful.

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I'm just interested whether how this will be formalized and if -- how things will get on or off of the workplan, whether there will be flexibility for issues that arise during the year if they may not be on the workplan.

Is this something contemplated by the working group? Or will this be the next step when it comes to implementing where we draw it up and say here's how we'll do it? Or will we just remain flexible and sensible about this, and it's not something I shouldn't worry about at all?

SPAIN:

Thank you, Peter. We believe we should be flexible by default. I mean, this is intended to make our life easier. And, of course if we could do annual planning, whatever that comes in to the amplification we can just fix it on the spot and yeah, sure.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you. Ah, U.K., please.

UNITED KINGDOM:

Thank you, Chair. And thank you, Spain, for leading off and doing all this very valuable work.

Just a quick point on that workplan, it might be worthwhile incorporating some basic risk analysis, you know. We plan work ahead. What might be a risk to that work if it -- in terms of delay or if we're relying on a consultation with another supporting organization or advisory committee and they say they haven't got time do it. You know, some sort of basic risk analysis you could incorporate into that workplan document. Thank you.



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SPAIN: Thank you, U.K. That could be a possible workable solution. Let us try to go through that and kind of try to make -- work out a plan that can have as much information as possible. Yeah, thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN: United States, please.

UNITED STATES: Thank you, Madam Chairman. And thank you, Rafael. Thank you for Spain's initiative. You've done an enormous amount of work. And I do appreciate that you have converted the very lengthy e-mails with multiple attachments into a very handy chart. I really appreciate that.

I will say on the workplan, if I could make a suggestion, I'm guessing then our ACIG Secretariat would be too modest to suggest that they might not be able to take on all of these assignments. So, when it comes to workplan, I would also recommend that we explicitly acknowledge that this would have to be done in collaboration with ICANN staff. And I continue to believe that actually the policy staff is, I believe, willing and able to provide more support. And they probably need to in light of our GAC-GNSO work to facilitate earlier engagement of the GAC in GNSO policy development processes.

So we need some substantive input and updates in terms of deadlines and those kinds of things. And that would be very helpful, I think, to have integrated into the workplan.

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And I, just in closing, would concur with Australia's comment about let's be sensible and flexible so this doesn't read like -- you know, once this is decided, that's it. You're fixed. So I think we always have to have a little bit of flexibility. Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you, United States. Tom would like to respond from the ACIG Secretariat.

TOM DALE: Thank you, Heather. While I appreciate Suzanne's concerns for the general well-being of Michelle and myself in tackling our workload, I appreciate the point that is being made. However, the totality of the services provided to the GAC in recent times and now that we're close to formalizing our longer term arrangement is not just about ACIG resources. It's all about, as well, ICANN support staff. And it's about contribution and cooperation with a range of staff in ICANN as well so that we now have time and resources to develop linkages, which we have already started doing, with a range of ICANN staff to ensure that their input to assist and inform the GAC is focused in the way that's most relevant to your concerns. And so what you're seeing from us is not just, you know, 24/7 work from ACIG staff but a range of contributions from ICANN staff and ourselves and other stakeholders that we're trying to synthesize for you to make sure that information flows.

I guess I'm just reassuring the U.S. and others that the capacity to deliver what these working group recommendations are proposing that

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capacity is certainly there. But it is spread across a number of players all of whom have a lot of goodwill towards supporting the GAC into the future. I just wanted to make that clear. Thank you, Heather.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you. Iran, please.

IRAN: Thank you, Chairman. Thank you, Spain, for the hard work that you have done. Just a question, because I have not followed the working group. Is the workplan based on a particular time frame? Is it annual? Is it biannual or some others? Number one.

Number two: Is there any order of priority which will be included or foreseen with respect to the workplan?

Third: As far as I understood -- and I'm working for many other organizations -- workplan is a live document. At each meeting we should spend about half an hour to update that based on the progress that we have made or based on the priority that we associate to particular things moving up and down based on the circumstances. So it should not be something rigid even within a year. So that is something some other international organizations are doing, and that has helped very much. So we have to really consider that. And then, if the objective as it is in the workplan is not met, we should have a good reason for that. What I'm experiencing that, unfortunately, there are items on our agenda for sessions and sessions and sessions without having any definitive objectives that when we have to finish this item. Coming from one meeting to the other meeting we spend an hour and

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so on that. Leave it. Next meeting again. So on and so forth. So let us say undetermined or indefinite conclusion on that.

So we should have some sort of at least objectives in concluding things. If the issue is going on, we accumulate the agenda items. And we will be criticizing ourselves that we are not making progress. We're just coming here, taking our agenda and doing it.

I have seen items on the agenda at least since let us say 46th meeting of the GAC, and still the issue is continued. Sometimes, yes, it is required to be continued. Sometimes, no, we have to put an end on that. But not leaving that.

If there are some other elements beyond our control in the GAC and other entities are involved, we have to find a solution and push for those entities not to put us in a sort of depending situation. So that is something that we have to really take into account, which has also some relations, distinguished author, with the agenda setting this workplan. So we have to have also that one.

And something which may not be quite important at this stage. But also we should think about the respecting the time of the meetings. Sometimes we have to use Swiss watch. 20 minutes is 20 minutes. That's all. We should not relax that for half an hour or 40 minutes or 50 minutes and so on and so forth.

Chair and vice chairs should be in their position five minutes before the start of the meeting, all of them. They should start the meeting even though half the room is empty. Then it brings the people pushing that come at the meeting on time. So we see that we are very relaxing

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positions with respect to the following of the time. It is not to the working method directly but indirectly. So I just now request you, distinguished Rafael, to possibly comment on the three items apart from this respecting the time. That is another issue. Thank you.

SPAIN:

Thank you, very much, Iran. The plan is meant to be annual, as for your first question. And we have, of course, as speakers have already mentioned, the plan will be, of course, flexible. And I repeat that this is meant to make us more efficient and to make our lives easier. So, of course, to be more efficient we can be -- we have to be able to be flexible. And, as regards time in meetings, this is something that's going to be discussed right now. So you were ahead. Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you. So let's keep moving through the document. So we have some suggested actions in relation to the preparation of meeting agendas. Again, we've had some experience with putting this in place already. And I expect this is not controversial.

So I see no request to speak there.

Regarding GAC community interaction -- ah, Lebanon, please.

LEBANON:

Thank you. Thanks, Rafael and the team. This is great work.

As far as the meeting agenda is concerned, I believe, based on the previous discussions about having a flexible yet known plan with dates

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and known exactly what we need to achieve throughout the period, I believe the preliminary agenda should be set at the meeting today for the next one and then go from there. Otherwise, we will be shooting in the dark. Thanks.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you, Lebanon. So I hope you will be there Thursday morning when we have that discussion exactly to plan the agendas. We will also be setting a call for approximately four weeks after today's meeting so that we can have a discussion about the agenda and how things look one month after we conclude here in London. And we will also be setting the call to happen approximately six weeks or so before Los Angeles, which, again, will be to further finalize our agenda for our next meeting.

So let me offer that assurance that we are putting in place quite a robust process with opportunities to shape that agenda and identify what our priorities are in the intersessional periods between our meetings.

So thank you for that.

All right. So we have some suggested actions proposed in relation to GAC community interaction. Some suggested actions in relation to GAC advice to the board. And, in addition, interaction with other constituencies. Some suggested actions there. Okay. I see no requests. Iran, please.

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IRAN:

Chairman, I may not be at the right moment. But what -- where we can include interaction between the chair of the GAC and the GAC itself. Chair would attend the board and need to communicate the views or decisions to GAC and reflect the views of the GAC. So we would like to establish a sort of better communications that we are all informed of what has happened and we are all informed why something that we have asked has not been happened. What is the reason for that. And having some further reflections. So we need to just make these communications better and transparent and understood by everybody. So sorry that it may increase the role of the future GAC chair. But that is something very interesting. In fact, the chair, apart from all its duties, also is a communicator or a messenger between the GAC and the outside of the GAC.

And this communication path needs to be followed, needs to be respected, and needs to be properly and timely responded. Where that has happened in this schedule? Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you, Iran.

So that is on the last page. It's the last item proposed regarding reporting to GAC. And there are some suggested actions proposed there in relation to that item.

So, in addition to that, we have some suggested actions in relation to increasing active participation in the GAC and the handling of meetings where we have several actions proposed.

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So are there any comments on these? Questions? Or can we take it as agreed then that we can proceed with these actions? United States, please.

UNITED STATES:

Thank you, Madam Chairman. And apologies for struggling a little bit to know exactly where we are.

But I did want to concur with the sentiment that I thought I heard you express, which is to engage more and more GAC members in -- not only to help the Secretariat create the agendas and plan and organize our sessions but to actually, perhaps, create working groups to help monitor and manage issues so that we're actually able -- better able, perhaps, to develop potential GAC positions on an intersessional basis that could then be brought forward instead of finding ourselves -- since, again, I think the workload -- we all agree that the workload has grown enormously. And it poses quite a challenge.

So, in addition to sort of urging ICANN to perhaps hit the pause button on a few issues and to maybe consult the community in a priority ranking of work, we, too, could do the same thing. So it was just to concur with the idea that we are open to creating as many discrete working groups as possible to help develop potential GAC positions on substantive matters. Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Thank you for pointing out the issue of working groups and creating those. It's been clear, I think, that we have needed working groups to



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deal with issues. And I think it's expected that this would be necessary in the future as well.

So that suggestion, I think, is useful to us to keep in mind as we move forward with implementation. Iran, please.

IRAN:

Yes, chairman. Sorry to come again. Two issues came to our mind. And I think one of them we have discussed. One issue is that we would like to examine and consider is the sort of the briefing of the new GAC members at the beginning of each meeting. There should be a session maybe even before the start of the GAC meeting or at the lunch break conducted by vice chairs to brief the newcomers to know what is the GAC. Some people they say at the beginning they are -- maybe not totally but they maybe are lost. So it is critical that a briefing or orientation be organized. And together with that, we also would like to know what action is being taken or should be taken in order to attract more members from the -- I don't know, 195 or 200 potential from the 140 that we have. Is there any action being taken to attract more GAC in particular in developing or least developed countries to know why they don't come to the GAC? Lack of interest? Lack of money? Lack of what? That is there because we need to engage more peoples in order to have -- to bring enrichment to the GAC. That is important issue. So I would like to share with you and ask my distinguished Rafael if they have been also thinking of these two issues. Thank you.

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SPAIN: Yeah. Thank you, Iran. We have been thinking about this last issue that you mention. Whether we have this discussion concluded with the green light, we could discuss this. But the role of the vice chairs could be as well be enhanced or reinforced to kind of reach out to different regions of the world so that we can attract more GAC members, as you mentioned. So that would be one of the things.

And, just regards the first thing you mention, I find it's a very good idea to -- as we are growing numbers here in the GAC, to have some kind of welcome debriefing or something like that so that they can understand and we can engage in a timely manner. Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you, Spain. United States.

UNITED STATES: Thank you, Madam Chairman. And thank you, Spain, again. I hope you don't mind. I'm sorry to take the microphone again.

I'd like to make a suggestion. In terms of the -- I think Iran is quite correct in sort of noting that, as we attract new members, it is of course very challenging, when you come into a GAC meeting for your first, second, or even third time, to sort of understand where things are. Where do we think we're going? I do think that we have a GAC GSE working group. And that's, again, where I think we can utilize under Lebanon's leadership of that working group, we can utilize ICANN's resources to do that kind of outreach. I'm personally very hesitant for us to impose enormous burdens on our chair and vice chair beyond what they already do. I think we have to be very mindful that all of us

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have regular jobs in capitol. So I do think we need to leverage the resources that ICANN has. And certainly the global stakeholder regional group is, in fact, doing this kind of regional outreach. So I think we could piggyback there.

And then, if I could add a note, we need to add a social aspect, if I could suggest, to our GAC agendas. And I have found it very difficult with our new seating plan -- I know we have new members, and I have to apologize because I'm not entirely sure I know who they are by face. And it would be -- I would be very grateful if I would have the opportunity to actually meet new colleagues. So perhaps we could, again, think about maybe an opening day GAC lunch, an opening GAC cocktail that is just for us to meet each other and to kind of say hello, greet new members, and have more time. Our schedules become so busy that we miss these opportunities. And yet it is the face-to-face interaction that helps us advance the work and facilitates good relations.

So I'd like to put in a bid for some social activities somehow. And I hope colleagues would agree with me that this is not actually a frivolous suggestion. I think it would have some payoffs.

Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN:

Okay. There are more requests to speak. Okay. Good suggestions. Thank you, United States and others, for their suggestions to do outreach and to provide support to our new members.

So I have Switzerland and the Netherlands.

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Switzerland, please.

SWITZERLAND:

Thank you, Madam Chair.

We would also like to thank our colleagues from Spain who have done an excellent job regarding the working methods that should be improved.

With respect to the topic we are discussing right now, we think it's important to ensure the GAC visibility, the visibility of the GAC's work not only for the member states participating at the GAC or those that may potentially participate but also to others outside the GAC.

We think that the chair and vice chairs of the GAC have a significant role to play. Perhaps we are imposing more burden on them. But if that burden, that roles and responsibility are properly balanced among the chair and the vice chairs, our work may be strengthened and we may enhance communications.

We have discussed several times at these meetings of the possibility of having a representation of the chair and vice chairs of the regional representations. And I think that if we think about regional representations so as to have a more proportionate representation at the GAC chair and vice chairs, it would be helpful because the vice chairs will be directly talking to their respective region and perhaps they may sell, if you allow me to use this term, what the GAC is doing at their relevant regions.

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CHAIR DRYDEN: The CTU and Denmark asking to speak, and then I am going to close -- ah, I see Russia, and then I will close the speaking order so we can move to the next item on our agenda.

So next, the Netherlands, please.

NETHERLANDS: Yes. Thank you, Heather.

Basically, Switzerland kept my -- the points I wanted to say. Very thankful, Switzerland, because I think we are basically also of the opinion that the GAC, in order for its legitimacy, its exposure to the external world, not only within ICANN but also outside, needs much more engagement within the fora in which also Internet domain names are being discussed.

So we will very much urge for a very active participation of the leadership of the GAC in also outside ICANN.

I think the point of -- that this, let's say, the chair and vice chairs have, of course, limited resources, I think Jose said this, something to take into account but it's not something which should hinder this. There are options to use other parties, also ICANN. But in essence, first we have to define the roles and the amount of what is expected from the roles, and then we have to look at resource and other things. It should not be the other way around.

Thank you.

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CHAIR DRYDEN: Next, the CTU, please.

CTU: Thank you, Chair. I certainly endorse the sentiments expressed by Switzerland and the Netherlands.

I think there is merit in regional representation at the level of vice chairs, so that is something I wholly support. But in response to a comment made by my colleague from Iran about why countries -- many countries are not represented in the GAC, it is simply a lack of awareness, a lack of understanding. And so the outreach -- emphasis has to be given on reaching out to those other countries who are not represented here. And I would like to throw my hat in the ring and say that I am prepared to work in terms of getting more representation from the Caribbean. I'm prepared to do that. And I don't want to burden the chair and the vice chairs, but I think there is a working -- the GSC that can do a lot of the work in terms of how we build that outreach and get to those countries that are not represented here at the GAC.

Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you.

Next I have Denmark, please.

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DENMARK: Thank you very much. And we would like to commend Spain on their tremendous work in this area, and we are -- I mean, we really hope that we'll be able to start implementing these recommendations here. And I would like also to echo the past colleagues we believe that outreach is of tremendous importance as well, and regional representation of the chairs as well.

Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you for that, Denmark.

Now I have Russia.

RUSSIA: Thank you. I would prefer to speak Russian. Thank you.

What I would like to say is relatively simple. Going back to the working groups, we have the working groups listed on our GAC Web site, but it's only available to members. And if we're trying to improve GAC transparency, then that limits access to these materials. But, in fact, we could open access to it. In fact, this information is publicly available. We just need to change that on our Web site.

Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you, Russia.

Next I have China, please.

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CHINA: Thank you, Madam Chair.

We concur with the proposal to increase the number of GAC vice chairs. With the intention to play a more important role in ICANN, GAC needs to strengthen its own capability construction and make a strong voice in ICANN. It requires the wide participation from all of the governments and public authorities of different regions and more vice GAC chair, and vice chair -- especially vice chair really promote the coordination function among the regional governments or Internet communities and form coordinative mechanisms is very important at this stage.

Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you, China.

And our final speaker is Lebanon.

LEBANON: Thanks, Madam Chair.

Quickly, I welcome the proposal to increase the number of vice chairs to help as we move forward. The second item, I welcome members to join the working group on -- in government and IGO engagement, and I'm happy to say that couple of people in the past couple of days have joined the group and they seem to be very active.

Thank you.



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CHAIR DRYDEN:

Excellent.

Thank you.

Okay. So we are running a little bit over time, so I think this is a good place to conclude on a very positive note. So clearly there is a lot of interest and a lot of support for the measures outlined in the document and further suggestions coming forward.

So this is clearly a matter of interest to colleagues in the GAC on an ongoing basis, to improve our working methods and provide support to new members in this committee.

So with that, many thanks to Spain for your continued efforts and your efforts to date in bringing us to this point with these proposals in front of us. So thank you.

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