LOS ANGELES – GAC Working Group on Government/ IGO Engagement
Saturday, October 11, 2014 – 16:30 to 17:30
ICANN – Los Angeles, USA

CHAIR DRYDEN: Good afternoon again, everyone. Let's restart our afternoon session.

If you could please be seated.

So this next session is to focus on a particular set of recommendations coming from the accountability and transparency review related to coordinating and working with the stakeholder engagement team at ICANN. And as a result of working on these recommendations, we set up a working group in the GAC that is led by Lebanon. And so there have been efforts under way in the working group, and I will let Imad tell you more about those, but this work has been under way in order to prepare for this session today and begin to identify what the issues are and how we can have that coordination between the GAC and staff and work together in the future to meet some common objectives.

So I will hand over to you, Imad, to run this session. And if you could introduce our colleagues from ICANN as well who are also here, and I thank them for coming to meet with us as well.

So, Imad, if I could hand over to you and if you could introduce our colleagues from ICANN.

Thank you.

IMAD HOBALLAH: We could say good evening, everyone. My name is Imad Hoballah, for those who do not yet know me, from Lebanon.

I have been asked to get together an activity of a working group to improve the efforts that are being done for outreach, if I may say so, especially outreach towards governments.

And the working group that we put together, it's a joint GAC working group, and ICANN GSE/GE, staff on cooperation and global engagement.

And the objective of our discussion today is to talk to everybody; first of all, as to where we are, what we have done, what the team has accomplished so far. Go through some questions and answers from the floor. And decide, or at least update you on the way forward.

Also for the GSE/GE team or the global stakeholder engagement/government engagement team to listen to all of you. If you have any questions, any concerns, and see how they could be answered or could be addressed.

If you allow me and with your consent, I'm going to establish a small rule as we move forward. I know some people may not like it. I would like the questions and the interventions, if it's okay with you again with your consent, to be limited to a minute. Let's not have a long time. We have 70 countries, if not more, represented here. We'll ask the same thing of the people here from this side also to have short answers as much as possible so we're able to get through and not run over time.

Before we go through what we have done so far, I'd like to introduce for those of you who don't know, the -- first of all, Dr. Kamel, who is head of

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the GSE/GE, and Anne-Rachel Inne. I hope I represented it okay. Sorry. Pronounced it okay.

Works with Dr. Kamel. And she's located, I believe, in Geneva, if I'm not mistaken. Before we go any further, I would like to thank every member of the working group that has worked with us. We have Olga here. We have Suzanne. Few other members. Alice, I believe. And a few other members have joined us. Hassan. And, if I missed the rest of you, I apologize, please raise your hands. Dr. Kamel, it's yours.

TAREK KAMEL:
Thank you very much, and good afternoon. And, first of all, I'd like to thank Heather Dryden, chair of the GAC, as well as my colleague Imad Hoballah for inviting us to join this distinguished gathering. Indeed, it is a great opportunity to have an open dialogue with the distinguished GAC membership as well as to listen to questions, concerns, and feedback but also to report about the joint work that we have been starting together with the ICANN 50 meeting back in June 2014. As it has been mentioned by Madam GAC chair, the purpose actually of this committee came for the implementation of the ATRT2 recommendation, specifically 6.8 and 6.9 recommendations, very specifically, that talk about the enhancement of -- and coordination between the Global Stakeholder Engagement/Government Engagement team and the GAC. And we are looking at each of the recommendations in detail as a working group and making sure that we really work together in order to report back that we are implementing it and achieve also on the ground improvement of the coordination between the government engagement team and the GSE team from one side as

well as the GAC from one side. We look forward to help the GAC in its mission. We look forward to provide the necessity support as well as much as we can in the region as well as improvement participation in the GAC from a government perspective point of view.

It is a great opportunity to make you aware as well of what we are doing from our side and to get feedback and listen to you.

With that, I thank again, Madam GAC chair for inviting us as chair of the workgroup. And we give the floor to Anne-Rachel Inne, the vice president for government engagement who will play for us on our behalf the role of the ongoing coordination with the GAC concerning engagement and concerning the implementation of the ATRT together with Mandy Carver from our team. So Madam Inne.

ANNE-RACHEL INNE: Thank you very much, Tarek. Good afternoon, everybody. Thanks, Heather, Imad, for having us here and the whole working group for government engagement.

So, as both said here, we have done some work. And part of the work has included an exchange of question and answers to basically point at what it is that the government -- the Global Stakeholder Engagement team is doing on the ground, you know, for the whole community, including the GAC, to make sure that each side knows how we can help each other. Can we go to the next slide, please.

This is a bit of background on how it started. As Tarek said, ATRT recommendation 6.2, 6.9, and making sure that we collaborate and make the GAC even -- how do you say? -- even better in terms of

membership but also really effective participation by making sure that we, as the Global Stakeholder Engagement and Government Engagement team are on the ground also to help anybody who is interested in terms of governments to participate to the GAC, that we give the required information and that we also collaborate with the GAC, the Secretariat, but also a lot of times people from -- the GAC representatives from the regions that can help us actually in making sure that, you know, any hopefuls know what it happening at the GAC and how they can get involved.

So they -- we had discussions in Singapore ICANN 49 and then, as Tarek said, again, at ICANN 50. This is the third meeting where we're telling you a little bit what has happened. So next slide, please.

Yeah. So these are some of the -- I'm going to go very quickly. These are some of the questions that have been asked by the working group to our team. And, basically, some of our responses. And -- sorry.

IMAD HOBALLAH: I'm going to interrupt you for a minute. You're going to see a list of questions and answers that have been discussed between the members of the GAC and the members of the GSE/GE. These questions have come up because members of the GAC have felt like they have not been involved. Things are been going on. They have not been kept up to date. So there are questions that have been asked. And you're going to see the questions and some of the answers that were received. At least it gave us the information necessary to decide on the next steps and the way forward. Please.

ANNE-RACHEL INNE: Thank you, Imad.

So, as he said, so the presentation has been posted. And one of the things I'm going to do is that I'm going to ask the regional vice presidents who are in the room to please stand up. Can you all stand up so the community can see you? There you go. All right. So this is -- there. We have Nigel Hickson, who is also in the Geneva office and who is helping the team in terms of work with the IGOs, intergovernmental organizations.

We have Veni Markovski who takes care of engagement with the missions in New York.   Pierre Dandjinou back there who is vice president for Africa.

Mandy Carver who basically serves as our coordinator given that we're completely distributed in regions. She's our vice president sitting in Los Angeles basically to coordinate with the team in L.A. what we're doing.

Baher Esmat, who is our vice president for the Middle East.

We have Andrea who is manager for the European region and who is working with Jean-Jacques Sahel who is vice president for Europe who is right now in another meeting, but you can see him.

Save Vocea who takes care of our Oceania operations.

Michael Yakushev for Russia.

Rodrigo de la Parra and the other Rodrigos -- the two Rodrigos who are taking care of Latin-America and the Caribbean.

So, in responding to those questions -- and that's true. Kelvin. Kelvin Wong for our Asia office.

So, in responding to these questions, basically, we all came together. And, you know, we gave input into what the working group wanted to know, as Imad said. And I'm hopeful that, given that they're here, if there's anything that does not appear here in terms of the questions or any questions that you have, now you have faces to names from the regions. And, you know, you can go talk to them without any issues.

So one of the first questions that we got, for example, was is there a written mission statement outlining the objectives and scope of the GSE team? And, you know, we are here to raise awareness about ICANN. The SOs, the ACs, the work of ICANN, the essence of ICANN. The work that is happening at all levels, from anybody who's a hopeful at-large all the way to the GAC. In between we have people from business. We have also people from country code top-level domains. We give information about anywhere from training to all the others. So we're going to go through this -- the slides very quickly.

Who does them? There you go. And, basically, you can read all of this. And, if need be, we can go back and you can go back and discuss them with anybody who's from your region. I'm going to go forward all the way to let's say the way forward. Yes, go ahead. There you go.

So sorry.

IMAD HOBALLAH: Okay. We're trying to cut through the view graphs as much as possible to go through the way forward. The main piece of information I believe

we should all be interested in is we are building a partnership between the GAC and the GSE/GE team. And the partnership has the objective of improving the outreach activities, improving the engagement of the GAC members in the activities of the GSE/GE as we move -- as we go to the regions and we go to the different countries to make sure that, for one, we increase the membership of this community; two, we perform better together; three, we work better towards the multistakeholder model and be successful instead of having bits and pieces of information that goes here and there without pulling it together for the eyes and the ears and the engagement of the people who should know about it. One of the questions -- one of the issues that we had before is people in the region -- sometimes you go to visit the country. The person or the GAC rep in this country is not aware of the meeting, does not know what's going on. So we have to deal with this issue. When does the rep know? How is she or he is engaged? and what type of information exchanged and how do we follow up? Now we go to the way forward. Just give you a flavor of what's going on. Please.

ANNE-RACHEL INNE: Thank you, Imad. So in terms of -- as Imad said, it's really to make sure that we work better together and address concerns about who is involved, when, at what moment. Some of the ways that, for example, some of our regional vice presidents have been working is through webinars. Others have -- some regions have, for example, regional strategies in which we see various levels of interaction with GAC representatives. So it would be interesting that, for example, given that some regions have implemented the webinars, Latin America in particularly, and we've seen that they're starting to be really great. Olga

and Rodrigo might be able to tell us more about some of the ways they have interacted. But the webinars have gone -- have included members of the GAC, actual members of the GAC who will talk about what it is -- what it means to be of the GAC to countries that are not in the GAC at the moment so that they can become members. So they will tell them about what is happening and all of that. And follow-up is then done by the colleagues in the region to make sure that, if they need any other information, supplementary information on the activities inside ICANN that they heard of at the GAC, that we can provide that.

So we're thinking that it would be a good offer, for example, to have regular conference calls in between the regional teams and also the regional GAC representatives. Either conf calls, conference calls or webinars so that we can talk about, let's say the policy, for example, issues that are happening at ICANN. The policy group already does that. But, if it has to be specific to the GAC members because they can't be there, this can be one way of making sure that we really involve people. So we're offering to do that. And the frequency is, basically, to be discussed between we're saying every two months. But the frequency can be discussed also in between the regional team and the GAC representatives from that region. And then, you know, they can also decide what the webinar is going to be about. If it is going to be a full set of policy, is it about compliance? Is it about what is happening, for example, at geopolitical levels sometimes in Geneva or whatever? Or in New York? You know, the content can be planned. And, you know, updates can be given as possible.

And we're also thinking that, you know, there is a report already that goes to the GAC. And the GAC has said that it should include a little bit

more information. So we're happy to provide, you know, that type of information keeping in mind, of course, that we do not want to be redundant if, you know, the teams are already working with the GAC representatives and regions. And also keeping in mind that the reshuffling of the ICANN Web site will allow us to have pages that will have -- right now there's already a page where you can go see region by region what the teams are doing. But those pages will also be supplemented with more information to be included probably in a -- that -- where we can draw from and include it in a big report that can come to the GAC. So these are some of the things that we're offering. And the improvement of the pages probably -- I'm not so sure yet. But this is one of the things that the two groups can discuss once the GAC website itself has been reshuffled. If there are ways that we can pull information directly so that GAC representatives don't have to go to different places to find information and so on and so forth. These are really logistical. So these are some of the things that we're thinking of. Next slide, please.

There you go. So it's -- as Imad said, one of the things that we have discussed together is also the fact that GAC representatives should be informed when things are happening in their region. So the webinars can help for that.

The regional teams will also be more conscious -- and we have talked about that among ourselves in terms of making sure that they, you know, go back to basically making sure that they know who are the GAC representatives of their region, when they're going into one specific country, that they also advise the GAC representative of what, you know, they're doing with the country. And, if possible, if possible,

depending on whom they're meeting and all of that and if the GAC representative can be involved in all these meetings, you know, that is something that can happen, of course.

So we also have offered that a representative of our group will always be sitting in the GAC meetings, except, of course, for your closed sessions. So -- and, if need be, then we can report back any issues or concerns that are directed to the regional teams, basically.

So I think this is what we had. Imad.

IMAD HOBALLAH: It's 5:28. I'll talk for one minute. And then we have half an hour remaining for questions and answers. Improvements to the current situation start from acting as partners. Second, getting -- staying up to date with what's going on in the area and the regions in the different regions and for the different GAC representatives.

Getting the GAC representatives up to speed as to what's going on and try to get them involved in the meeting, if possible. Because in some cases the official in the government may not want to do that for different reasons. So -- but at least have that agreed to. The GAC representative should understand that the special meeting he or she was asked not to be in -- and I'm sorry. This is going to be upsetting for some people probably. But that's politics. And, for example, they go and meet in Lebanon with the minister of information versus the minister of economy. I don't know. So the GAC representative, in my view, should be aware. And we'll take it from there.

There will be improvements as far as the sites are concerned between GAC site and the ICANN site for the GSE/GE. And, finally, reports are going to be issued that are more than the content of the where we're going and who we went with probably with the objectives and what was achieved and how we're moving forward. And then close with the leadership as we're concerned. I'm done. I'll open it for questions and answers. First question will go to Heather, from Heather.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you. That was going to be my question, whether we could have questions from the floor about this work. But I will say that it's really clear to me just how much work has gone in to bringing us to this point. And so, really, I'm very appreciative of the willingness and the effort undertaken to really start to surface these issues to the GAC. We haven't had an opportunity really to focus much on this aspect of things. And, clearly, it's better for us all if we are aligned in our efforts to engage. And, certainly, it has an impact on our work in the GAC if we can't sort out what are the linkages and what are our objectives in all this. So Trinidad and Tobago, you have a comment or question.

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO: Yes. Thank you for the team for an excellent initiative. Very supportive of what's happening. I have one question and one recommendation. The question is: How do we -- how does the team know what topics that region is interested in for these discussions or for that webinar? How will they know what would be on the agenda? And the recommendation: Given that we have a GAC Secretariat, it might be very possible and prudent for the team to engage with the Secretariat

prior to any of these meetings so that they could get a great sense of what's going on, what might should be on the agenda and what may not be able to be on an agenda and those kinds of things. So that's just my input at this point. Thank you.

IMAD HOBALLAH: Thank you. I'll give it to Dr. Kamel.

TAREK KAMEL: These webinars are something that we will develop together between the regional vice presidents and between the GAC membership. It's not an agenda that we're setting depending on what issues you'd like within the region to do. It has been successful. Rodrigo, maybe you can talk about your example. And then the Secretariat. But it goes case by case depending on the regional requirements. It's a partnership, as Imad has mentioned. It's not from our side that we are imposing something. But it has to come bottom-up really in a partnership. Maybe, Rodrigo, you can --

RODRIGO DE LA PARRA: Thank you very much. If I may comment. In the case of Latin-America and Caribbean webinars, the agenda comes from the GAC members themselves. So we asked them what topics and who wants to talk about them. And there are only two topics that we like to include by default, which are the welcoming of new members, which is, basically, the -- one of the objectives of these webinars, and then to disclose the agenda of the forthcoming meeting. But it's really up to them to include the topics that they want to include. Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you very much for that response, Rodrigo. I see a few more requests to speak, if we can continue moving through that. And I think we've hit on a really important aspect of the coordination between the two teams. Particularly, if there are regional efforts in each region, there may be a particular interest in doing one thing or another. And, when convening a meeting of representatives in the GAC, they will, of course, want to be driving the agenda and setting things that are a priority for them to discuss. And, if ICANN is able to facilitate that happening, I think that would be really welcomed on the side of the GAC.

Okay. So I have U.K., then Singapore. Please.

UNITED KINGDOM: Thank you, Chair. I have three quick yes/no questions. First question is: Do you have an analysis of why governments are not participating in the GAC as members? Those countries that are not in the GAC? Do you have an analysis of why that is? Secondly, do you have an analysis of why members of the GAC who are listed but are not participating in any GAC or ICANN activity, do you have an analysis of why they are not doing that, participating actively? Thirdly, are you engaging the regional organizations that are members of the GAC, thinking in particular of the African Union Commission or are observers of the GAC, such as the League of Arab States, in order to develop your outreach initiatives to those -- to the relevant region? Thank you.

TAREK KAMEL: As I see, you have asked two parts of the question.   Why are governments not engaging through the GAC?   That's part of the work we're trying to outreach through awareness through really motivating them to participate in the GAC and showing them the benefits if they participate in the GAC, what type of role they will play to be part of the policy development within the ICANN process.

We have to be candid. In some cases, the awareness still needs to be developed. Specifically, if the DNS industry in a specific country is not up to specific level of expectation, then maybe they come once or twice and then they reconsider until their DNS industry develops further. So we have a separate group that is running with the GDD team in order to develop the DNS industry in underserved areas. The DNS center in Egypt is an example that we're starting with the government of Egypt is leading that effort, our regional vice president together with the GAC member Manal from Egypt as well as other colleagues to serve North Africa and the Middle Eastern region in order to close this gap.

It's a long journey. This will not happen in a year or two. It will take some time. But we are aware of that that we need also to stimulate the business awareness and the motivation for the representation of the GAC representatives when they come and participate. Sometimes -- and definitely Heather knows better than myself.

Sometimes, and definitely Heather knows better than myself in that, it's financial reasons, unfortunately. I mean, ICANN meetings take all over the world three times. You will know definitely the financial burden that might be there.

But I would like, really, to say that the more, really, we have also invite to high-level meetings, like it happened in London and before that in Toronto, both were very successful and helped us in our outreach and engagement message because the representation is there.

The second part, I will let my colleagues, maybe, from the region very quickly in a telegraphic form, if you permit me to, that they talk. Pierre, about your African engagement with the African Union and then Andrea about the engagement with the European Commission as a regional organization.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Just to let you know I do have Singapore and the United States in the speaking order, and I would like to hear from those colleagues as well, especially if we don't have time to cover all the regional strategies.

TAREK KAMEL: (Off mic.)

CHAIR DRYDEN: Okay. So we will hear -- Okay. All right.

So we have the -- Pierre, was it?

Thank you.

PIERRE DANDJINOU: Thank you very much and referring to all.

Just to complement what Tarek has just said as regard to Africa specifically --

Louder, please, Pierre.

PIERRE DANDJINOU: Yes. I would like to say that we are, of course, in touch with the African Union, for instance, and actually they are our key -- I will say kind of they really help us out (indiscernible) from Addis Ababa. So there is no point with about that one. But we do have regular meetings, you know, when we are in Addis, with the economic, you know, transition that we have in Africa.

The plan for us is to have a whole list of all of them.

I just would like to say that the reason, also, they are not really participating is we need a kind of informed participation. We need to prepare some of the members so that they could come here quite confident with why the subject, you know, we'll be going to deal with, and we do have a plan for that. We are trying to work out in a Webinar as well to see how we can tackle those issues.

So there are efforts, no (indiscernible) ground but of course there is room for improvement, and we are really ready to assist them.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you, Pierre.

UNDICERNABLE: Yes. Just very quick. Our engagement with the European Commission is solid and longstanding. We have regular meetings with them. But more than that, we also have a relationship with the European Parliaments and the other institutions in Brussels.

I think in terms of participation of European countries, we have good coverage. But we will consider again also the Webinars, because there are some members of the European Union that don't come that often to ICANN meetings, although they participate in the coordinations back in Brussels. Basically that's a solid, longstanding relationship with -- at least with the European institution is there.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you.

Okay. So next I have Singapore, then the United States.

SINGAPORE: Thank you, Chair.

A unique feature of Internet is there are a number of forums and organizations existing in each region. And in the AP region, we have a number of regional forums and organizations, and they may consist of members who are GAC rep or who may not be GAC represent.

So we would like to suggest when the GSE -- GSE/GE work with the GAC representative, perhaps we can take the opportunity to work with the GAC's representative to reach out to this regional forum and organizations so that they have better outreach to the government

reps.   This may help ICANN to reach out it various government representatives in the region.

Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you, Singapore.

United States, please.

UNITED STATES: Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you, Imad, for your efforts in preparing for this session this afternoon as well as to Tarek and his entire team.   And apologies, I can't rattle off all of your names, but we're certainly very grateful that you're all here and you're able to share your approach with us.

Very, very much we endorse Imad's characterization of what we're doing here as a partnership.   And I see you nodding, so I'm very grateful that you, too, also see it that way.   I think this is off to a very, very good start.

I would like to plant a teeny seed.   Another side of the coin, if you will, is not just a partner, but quite candidly, I think we're a client.   And that might help you sort of also reach agreement as to how we collaborate not only on the timing or the scheduling and your outreach, but the substance of what you take up.

So it's -- As a country who is from a relatively small region, if I may, in terms of the numbers of us who are actually considered North America,

I do want to put a marker down that even those of us in our situation are just as interested in what our colleagues are interested in in every other region, because we meet with our colleagues from around the world three times a year in this room, in the GAC. Well, hopefully not in this room again, but you know what I mean. Figuratively.

So from our perspective, we would urge you to also consider an issue based or topic based approach, not just a regional approach. I fully appreciate that's how you are structured. I'm not trying to suggest you restructure in any way. It's just that the material, whatever it is you do in one region, may be of great interest to members in another region. And it would be interesting to us to know, because we deal with other joint projects. For example, several of us are engaged in a GAC/GNSO consultation working group whose intention is to facilitate the early engagement of the GAC in GNSO policy development processes. We haven't come to that discussion on the GAC agenda just yet, and I hope Manal does not disagree with me vehemently, but one of the issues we are struggling with at this moment in time is that GAC members are actually not entirely sure that the information we receive from the policy shop, how it can be amended to make it more useful.

So the question is not do we get information. In fact, I would call it perhaps close to information overload. It's that we don't know how to digest all of that. We don't understand the timelines very well.

So even if you do continue to focus as a region, when the regions all come together here and we are trying to develop consensus GAC advice, it's on issues of substance, as well as the other issues.

So we fully support whatever capacity building that you are engaged in because that's a huge priority for all of us as GAC members, that that be done effectively and be well coordinated.

But I would ask you to contemplate perhaps working with us to identify some of the substantive policy issues that we are grappling with because it's a very similar exercise we're engaging with the GNSO policy staff, and we need to go back to our own members to ask them what kinds of changes in this material would they consider most helpful.

So one of your regional outreach meetings could, in fact, focus on current policy matters so that we can help use your outreach to help achieve some other objectives.

Thank you very much.

TAREK KAMEL: Yeah, thank you very much for your comment, Heather. And if I may say, and I mean I'm pretty sure Suzanne knows the distinction between our role and the team of David Olive. The team of David Olive are providing the necessary support for the various constituencies for the policy development on a topic base.

We are working on education, capacity building, outreach, transfer of know-how to regions, to governments, stimulating governments' interest to participate within the GAC and within the topics that are related to ICANN. We are working with ICANN globalization and the IGOs.

So if there is a topic of global interest around these issues, including with the IGOs, including Internet governance, including issues like that, we are happy to provide and share the necessary information on a global basis as well as on a regional basis. But I just wanted to make the distinction that the direct support of policy development comes from David Olive's -- David Olive's team, so that the roles are clear. I'm pretty sure they are clear for you.

Anne-Rachel, you want to add something?

ANNE-RACHEL INNE: I would just like to add that notwithstanding what Tarek said, I think Heather, Suzanne is right that there are moments when, if we know, we can also reach out to the GDD team to have somebody, for example, on the Webinar who's going to address those things. And we can -- in fact, if the question is posed, we can work with them and talk about aspects that are specific to regions that may come up, you know, in other regions, as you said, that people can be interested in.

So that's not an issue at all. It's a question of just a coordination, and we're happy to do that. Yeah.

TAREK KAMEL: And by the way, I want to -- no, I want to make a comment so that no misunderstanding happen. The whole regional team is not necessarily under my direct supervision. They are under the supervision of my colleague, Sally Costerton. And I asked her that they join us today. It's only the government engagement team that is on my direct supervision. But we work very closely within the GSE team, almost as one team. But

I just wanted to make this comment so that's clear from a structural point of view.

From -- The question of our colleague from Singapore about the outreach to regional organization, we also -- I mean, we have definitely our regional presence in Asia, and it has been quite empowered, I think, within the last 12 months by our vice president there, Kuek who is not here with us but represented by our colleague Calvin. We're just from -- or 15 months, maybe, from one man. How many people are there now, Calvin? 20?

UNDICERNABLE: 20 in the region.

TAREK KAMEL: 15?

UNDICERNABLE: 15 in the office, 20 in the region.

TAREK KAMEL: Yeah, 15 in the office and 20 in the region.

So just to give you an impression about the leapfrog that happened in our Asia communication and our Asia outreach strategy with Sally and Kuek.

So the team has been very empowered and is ready definitely to provide the necessary support.

In other regions, there has been empowerment in the Middle East as well as in Eastern Europe and Russia, with Michael as well as with Rodrigo in Latin America.

So we definitely have access to the regional organization. We look forward to empower and build bridges with them, but if you can help us as well by providing us there with contacts, being there on the ground, this is definitely helpful because it will not be possible that we provide an engagement touch point in every country.

The number of GAC members, you are 140? Yes? At the time -- at the time being. So it is clearly, from a staff point of view, even if you wish, very difficult to have a touch point and a staff member that is dedicated for every country.

So we count on your proposals as well, and then the regional engagement team will be helped.

Thank you.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you very much. I'm really glad that we've introduced this idea about how -- how we can deal with topics and help to guide and inform new or potential GAC members from are coming and contributing to the discussion.

It seems to me that there's a second dimension to that, and that is guiding representatives specifically to come here to express a view. And so if, in fact, you can assist with providing Webinars and raising topics that are of particular interest to region or even in bilateral, that you're

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holding, at the end of the day, those views are really -- if we're discussing it in the GAC, if it's on our agenda, then we would want colleagues from governments to come here and participate in the process, in the consensus process here, you know, to develop advice and comments and so on that we communicate to the Board. So that seems to me to be the two pieces that we can focus on to get that to work more smoothly.

The risk, if we don't have clarity about that, is that because some colleagues may not be familiar with how this model works, they may, in fact, ask staff to provide them with a result or make a decision or influence a decision. And I think we can agree that that would be problematic.

And really what I would like to see is reinforcing this process here and making it work. And it is really positive, I think, to acknowledge that these are the ways in which we can link up our work and we can help to inform our colleagues in governments and encourage them to participate to come here to express their views.

So I'm very happy with your responses to those particular questions.

TAREK KAMEL: (Off mic.)

Thank you, Heather. I may ensure you also that within the key performance indicator that have been put within the five-year strategic plan that the Board asked us to develop and has been provided to the Board as well as the operational plan, one of our main key performance

indicator is helping to increase participation, active participation, in the GAC in terms of numbers as well as in terms of the level.

So this has become clearly a priority within our five-year strategic and operational plan.

IMAD HOBALLAH: I just want to let everybody know, we have only seven more minutes. I know Alice is asking for the floor. Alice? That's it?

Jamaica.

JAMAICA: Thank you. Dr. Kamel, a quick question. Well, in absence of a rep from every single country, which is understandable, can you give me a clear idea of the strategy that you have that will ensure that all the needs and concerns of all the various reasons will be met?

Thank you.

TAREK KAMEL: As I mentioned, part of the mission that the GSE team under Sally and the GE team under myself are doing and working together in order to empower, really, the regional engagement. Whenever we have seen that there are areas that needs further support, like it happened in the African strategy, in the Middle East strategy and the regional American strategy, we don't spare effort. And Fadi really provides us to the maximum resources as much as he can within the budget limits,

definitely, that exist in order to increase the outreach and include the GAC membership within this regional development activities.

And let me be candid with you. In some countries, we don't have other point of references or other point of contacts except the GAC member, and maybe the ccTLD representatives, which sometimes come from the same organization, because of the underserved area don't have a well developed industry, don't have registrars and registries yet. This is the situation in some countries, if not in many countries.

So the GAC representative is a valuable asset for us for our outreach activities to work with and to make it -- to expand the stakeholders in this country and to help us develop the stakeholder engagement within the country to include civil society and businesses as well, which make the overall ICANN process more healthy.

IMAD HOBALLAH: Turkey. Ihsan, please.

TURKEY: Thank you, Imad, for giving me the floor.

Thank you for coming here, Dr. Kamel, and his team for sharing us their activities regarding outreach to governments.

Let me just make a few comments on this issue from my personal experience.

First of all, I appreciate so much. I think it's one of the most difficult areas of the work that you guys are carrying out, reaching out to

governments with all different understanding and barriers and even politics that -- regional or local politics that you have to deal with. It's not easy, I know. There are a lot of barriers that we need to overcome.

And I would like to just point out to one thing; that I think we need to realize that when we talk about the governments, we're not talking about just single element within the government. And let's not forget officers, ministers, and all the critical decision-makers within the government also change. And you would assume that the knowledge and the capacity that are already built in from the previous administration would be transferred to the new -- newcomers, and it doesn't happen so. Among millions of things, those are overlooked. I mean, those are undermined, I think, a little bit.

So it has to be an ongoing educational effort to the newcomers, new officers, new ministers, new decision-makers.

It's not easy. We can use some of the tools, like technical training or security issues or -- to reach out, to get their attention. Once they get more exposure to ICANN and multistakeholder processes, they change their mind and they try to get more positive view on this.

I think one other point I'd like to make is high-level events are very important. I mean, I've seen personally the effect of that. I mean, it gave a good chance to change many of the position that some government officers, at least from my own country, changed.

And one other question I have, the last one, Imad, is to hold these ICANN meetings in different places every year. Looks like they are repeating sometimes the meetings. Because an event like this really

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gets their attention. And at least it could become a part of this learning process.

Thank you.

IMAD HOBALLAH: Thank you.

Please.

NAURU: Thank you. I just wanted to -- Sorry. It's Criden Appi from Nauru.

I just wanted to touch on a question raised by a colleague from U.K., and that was the fact that they are members but no -- very little participation.

In our part of the world, there are 25 different countries, of which 22 are members of the GAC, yet participation is very low.

And I think the issue here is basically where we come from, government are only concerned when the Internet is not working, which means they see the GAC as not a real priority, maybe because they're not very familiar with the operations of the group.

That's what I'm saying, is that with this initiative, we hope that through regional vice president and ICANN contact, we can hope that more information is disseminated to different countries on the importance of GAC and its ongoing operations.

Thank you.

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IMAD HOBALLAH: Thank you. This is the last question, and I leave it to Dr. Kamel to end.

TAREK KAMEL: Thank you for this question. I will start by definitely remote areas and underserved countries are on our priority list. And Fadi realized that very early when he started and tried to put together a strong outreach and engagement -- engagement team.

We have, for example, sitting disclose to you our vice president for Oceania who definitely is very well experienced and can help you in this outreach and help you also to leverage other resources from ICANN, as Anne-Rachel has said, outside the engagement -- the engagement team.

At the end, it's a matter of the decision of the government itself, how far it is seeing this as a priority. But I can tell you that we see increasing interest from governments to engage with ICANN, within ICANN. We see that from the participation at the GAC as well as from the questions that we get sometimes directly from governments about ICANN and its road.

The new gTLD program has definitely raised awareness on a global level about the importance of ICANN and the role that ICANN's play on the global level. The announcement also of the U.S. government of the 14th of March on NTIA, Larry Strickling is here with us and he definitely has played a wonderful role, and that announcement has really been well received in many countries. In many of our outreaches that we do, we see that it is very well received and raised the awareness about ICANN, about this organization that really has been asked by the U.S.

government to play the role of convener with the community in the IANA stewardship transition, as such.

So we see growing interest, even on the U.N. level in Geneva and the country missions outreach that we do in Geneva and New York. More and more questions. We want this to be more translated with an active participation and more effective and meaningful participation within GAC. Yes, you are right. And we try definitely to do that as much as we can.

For our friend Ihsan from Turkey, yes, governments change. That's the nature of the world. The only -- The only true fact is change, as such. And we have to live with it.

But we hope that there is some legacy that is being left from the previous administration in order to feed in within the new administration.

We are ready to help, definitely. We don't spare effort on our level as government engagement as well as regional vice president as well as Fadi himself. And he goes and provides support.

So we help as much as we can. And I share your view that the high-level events -- I'm looking here at the GAC leadership. The more we can do high-level events in the future, this will be extremely helping us in our outreach.

Thank you very much.

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IMAD HOBALLAH:	Thanks, Dr. Kamel. Thanks, Anne-Rachel. Thanks to the whole working group.
	I would like to thank the secretariat because it's been helpful throughout the effort. Thank you to the GAC chair and the vice chairs.
	Thanks, everybody, for listening, for engaging. And we hope that this will move forward to what's better for everybody.
	Have a good day.
CHAIR DRYDEN:	Many thanks for that. And thank you, ICANN staff, for joining us.
	So a lot of work done and a lot of work to do in that area of work.
	I don't know whether you're looking to recruit additional members to the working group. Do you need -- Always.
	So, please, the work will be that much better if there are various perspectives being contributed. So there's an invitation to those of you that are interested to join that effort. So thank you.
	Great. Okay.

[END OF TRANSCRIPT]

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