LOS ANGELES – Working Group on GAC Working Methods
Thursday, October 16, 2014 – 09:00 to 09:30 PDT
ICANN – Los Angeles, USA

THOMAS SCHNEIDER: Okay. I think it's time to start so good morning to everybody.

I hope you had a nice rest last night after the intense work that we did together, and I must say, I'm very happy to see that we found a solution that a team is now truly representative, also geographically to the extent possible, as it says nicely in the operating principles, and we are just starting to get to know each other a little bit more closely because we haven't been on holiday together yet, so we need some time also to find out how we work together, but we will.

And, yeah, let's move forward. Let's look forward and look at the agenda.

We have three big points on our agenda, and we'll start right away with the first one, which is the Working Group on GAC Working Methods where we have a lead who has been working hard in the past months and years already to try and move these things forward. So I will hand over to the colleague from Spain, to Gema, and you take the lead.

Thank you.

SPAIN: Hi, everyone. Good morning. As you remember in London, the GAC agreed on an implementation plan for the noncontroversial issues that the working group has been working on. And ACIG, our GAC secretariat, was asked to prepare some briefing papers on some of the issues that were included in this implementation plan.

So I could ask them to explain to us the work they have been doing in the advancing the implementation plan. And I go quickly to the next point, which is the remaining issues.

I have a list here that was also prepared by ACIG for the London meeting, and that include the issue of open and closed sessions, which is related to one of the ATRT2 recommendations. And then the leadership role of the GAC share and vice chairs, it links with another recommendation from the ATRT2.

Then we had the issue of the role and the number of vice chairs, which has featured very highly in this meeting.

Then we have the issue of decision-making processes within the GAC.

There is another pending issue, which is the reply or the position the GAC could take in relation to some of the ATRT2 recommendations that are closely linked to GAC working methods.

So I should say that these are the remaining issues on which the GAC should make progress. In my view, some of these could make their way through the GAC operating principles, should trigger an amendment in the GAC operating principles.

And I'm going to leave it at this point so that Tom Dale or Michelle can explain in detail the briefing papers they have prepared on the issues that were agreed on London.

For instance, there's one on the GAC Web site, which is quite good I think, and another one on the work plan of the GAC.

So I turn over to Michelle or Tom to help us.

Thank you.

MICHELLE SCOTT-TUCKER: Thank you. Good morning. I'll be as brief as I can be.

The secretariat's been working hard since London, and in fact this gap between London and this meeting is the first time we've been able to work continuously for you without a break in our contract. So that's been a relief to us, certainly, and very helpful in being able to provide a continuous service between meetings. Let's hope it continues between now and Marrakech.

We've created a lot of fact sheets, mainly for new members but hopefully for use for some of our more experienced members to perhaps use within their own administrations to provide

information about what it is that the GAC's all about. They're on the Web site in seven languages. They're not really as prominent as I'd like them to be, so I'm hoping, over time, that those fact sheets become a little easier to find and a little more prominently used and perhaps we'll have some in hard copy in the meeting room as well.

The changes to the GAC operating principles have been discussed once or twice during today's -- this week's meeting, and we'll move those forward to the Marrakech meeting to discuss those in detail. And between now and Marrakech, I'll try and prepare an issues paper looking at some of those, the issues surrounding the change of the operating principles.

The Web site review is under way, as you know, and I'll talk more to that issue on a different agenda item in a few moments.

The GAC annual work plan as well, that's something that's another agenda item that Tom will talk to briefly.

I think the agenda-setting process for this meeting worked pretty well. We had two intersessional agenda setting teleconferences to which all members could join. They were fairly well attended, weren't they, Tom? From memory.

We had one about six weeks after London and then one about six weeks out from this, and then the agenda was -- a draft of the

agenda was circulating on the GAC list and we had plenty of input onto that.

So I think that process is improving. It's not perfect. It's a long way from perfect, but we're making progress in getting more input into the agenda of what's on each meeting and getting those briefing papers out to you a little earlier and getting some time for comment on that.

Sorry, I'm just going down my list.

One of the things is a review of the GAC Register of Advice. I'll wait until I finish the GAC Web site review until I start looking at the GAC Register of Advice because the two are interlinked, but I see that as a likely project to begin in early 2015. My first thoughts on that is that it seems a perfect candidate to apply the ISO 9000 standards to the GAC Register of Advice. So we'll do that as a separate project. And again, like the Web site review, I'll scope it out first, send that document out for comment, and encourage your inclusion in that project as it goes forward.

What else have we got?

We've been providing briefings to the Chair as required. I'm trying to skip over things here.

I think there's been improvements in the preparation of the minutes and the drafting of the communique. Certainly I've had some feedback that people are pretty happy with how that's been

progressing, but we always welcome your feedback at secretariat. If you have any information or advice or things that you'd like done differently, we'd love to hear from you.

Is there anything else I've forgotten?

The document I'm referring to it on the GAC Web site. It's one of your agenda papers. I think it's -- it's did you knowingly listed as agenda item 23, because I think that's what we're up to. 23, Working Group on GAC Working Methods. It's got an attachment at the back with a table that lists all the things that the working group wanted and a status update on those, and that's available on the GAC web site.

Thanks.

THOMAS SCHNEIDER: Thank you.

I see there are some hands up. So comments? Questions? Remarks?

Who was there first? Was it Sweden and then the U.K?

Okay. Sweden first.

SWEDEN: Thanks.

Yeah, I'd like to have a couple of minutes to speak about the open forum session and going towards Marrakech, if that's all right by you.

I would like to suggest that in Marrakech we don't actually hold open forum but we have a GAC session to discuss the open forum. And since this will be open to the public, this will sort of be an open forum anyway.

We never really discussed the open forum. We had a session slotted for it in Singapore, I believe, but it was canceled due to other pressing matters, or something like that. And what I'm going to suggest is we make -- we plan for this discussion with proper time, not 8:00 in the morning, and prepare a paper before this where I outline why we're doing this, the connection to ATRT2, how we have implemented it in London IGF and Los Angeles, and some lessons learned from that. And then suggest a way forward.

And I don't want the discussion about this now, but just to let you know I'm going to suggest something like having the very basics on a video together with the eminent fiches (phonetic) prepared by the secretariat so that it's always available online -- and then when we have the open forum sessions, we don't need to have this long starting stretch but can dive into discussions in another way.

I would also like to suggest that we institutionalize a prime-time slot for this so people can find it. 8:00 in the morning is not prime time. I'm sorry. If it's going to be outreach, we need to consider this.

So for now, I'm seeking your okay on not holding an open forum session in Marrakech, and I'll return with a paper in couple of weeks.

Thanks.

THOMAS SCHNEIDER: Thank you.

U.K. and then Indonesia.

UNITED KINGDOM: Yes, thank you, Thomas, and thank you, Gema and Michelle, for starting today's discussion.

Just to follow on regarding the open forum, I most missed most of it because of another commitment but I came in at the tail end, and I got the impression that stakeholders were using it to ask questions about GAC positions on issues.

And I always thought, actually, that's properly a useful purpose in terms of an opportunity to explain to stakeholders, perhaps in a

more informal way or more sort of interactive way, I should say, the rationale for GAC positions, and so on.

So if we don't have an open forum in Marrakech, there may be a lost opportunity there. I just sort of flag that as a sort of question.

My main reason for wanting to speak was with regard to the minutes. I think I need reminding of what the process is for formally approving the minutes. That may have been regularized and I may have missed that particular thing.

Is there a comment that Michelle might make on that? Because I think that is an important step to make sure that -- well, two reasons. To make sure that the full committee is content with the more detailed record of the meeting, and, secondly, that step of approving the minutes focuses the attention of members on the issues, and so on. So it's a device useful for that, I think, anyway.

Thanks.

THOMAS SCHNEIDER: Indonesia, will you make -- let's take your point and then we answer everything together. So maybe that's the way to --

INDONESIA: Thank you.

First of all, I would like to say that I fully agree with what Anders -- what Sweden said. You can say both. Because in the GAC, we normally say it with the country's name list. Okay. I say Sweden. Yes, I fully agree with what Anders said.

You see, in ICANN, I see personally that the activities of ICANN is increasing so fast and that all the countries sees the more and more important the Internet situations. And that's the reason why GAC, all our government, are paying more and more attention to the development of Internet. That is for sure. Otherwise, we'll not have full GAC members' participation like this.

Six to seven years ago when I started my first meeting in the GAC, it's only 20 or so. Only two or three times in a week, and only two hours, and half of them are sleeping. No. I'm not sleeping. Not paying full attention; okay? I'm sorry with my bad words. I'm not so good in English. But that's what I saw seven years ago.

Today it's completely different. We have government officer who are fully paying attention, and in Singapore I was very shocked that some of the member of the GAC has to wait the approval from Brussels before they say something.

And Heather has to buy us some of dinner, because we have to stop the meeting at 6:30 and the meeting stop at 10:00, 10:00 p.m. That's how the government looks, how important it is.

I remember that my colleagues from Europe, some of them has to stay until a little bit after midnight because they have to wait until their friends in Brussels wake up. So that's the kind of thing to show how important is the GAC.

Now, having said that, I understand that in Indonesia we set up even small back office to support the GAC activities.

And I'm sure all, of you as government officer, you also have your back office at home, because that's what I and my friend did in Indonesia. You also represent the government in ITU, in UN ESCAP and IGF and so on. I saw some of you in IGF in Bali and Turkey, and UNODC in UN ESCAP and so on. I saw more or less similar people. And some of you has been talking how -- who will be selected as our next Secretary-General of ITU at Busan. So it's (indiscernible).

So what I'm saying is, because of that, I think we need a more and stronger secretariat to support all of us, because the activities of ICANN is so diverse. It's different with ITU, for example. Sorry, if I mix (indiscernible). In ITU we have the ITU Council and we have the secretariat of ITU, and it is very narrow activities, you know.

But in ICANN it's so broad. You have ccNSO, multistakeholder, CSO, whatever.

Because of this I'm afraid that our back office back home will not -- will need a fully support from GAC Secretariat to make sure that

back home our government, my boss, for example, can make a decision, okay, that is what you should say or decide in your GAC meeting.

Bearing in mind that I'm here. I'm not representing myself. I'm representing 250 million people there and representing a big government. And I cannot say whatever I want to say. I have to report back home. The rest of you also do the same thing.

You mentioned yesterday, Tom, that you get the fully backup from your minister and your former president, because otherwise you will not -- sorry. But that's all of us.

You know? A standard government office. So that's what one -- that one stronger and stronger Secretariat that can coordinate with our back office back home. Thank you.

THOMAS SCHNEIDER: Thank you very much. I will quickly give some answers with the help of secretariat and others. First, with regard to the open forum, thank you, Anders, for bringing this up. I think this has been an experiment that we did at the IGF. We did it here. There is a difference between doing it here and doing it at the IGF, because the public is not 100% the same. So we need -- I think it's worth to spend some time discussing what we want to achieve with this. And then, if you think we can achieve something, how is the best way to achieve this?

And I just heard from my colleague Wanawit that the board has apparently had the idea that we could do, instead of an open forum, public forum, whatever you call it.

But here it's maybe less necessary to explain what we're doing but to actually engage in a free interactive debate on anything people want to ask us questions about. We use it as a communications tool for us and as a learning tool for us what people are concerned with and so on.

So I think we'll note this down on our list of things that we have to discuss. And I'm talking about noting down things of -- lists of things that we have to discuss, I think what I -- I'm trying to find ways to be more efficient in allocating a time in our agenda. I think we will just start creating a list of issues like of things that we have to deal with somehow.

[Session transcript continues in transcript titled "GAC Work Plan"]