SINGAPORE - Joint Meeting of the ICANN Board and the ccNSO
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CHRIS DISSPAIN: Ladies and gentlemen, if you start taking your seats, we can get started. Thank you very much.

BYRON HOLLAND: Good morning, everybody, and welcome to the ccNSO/Board meeting. We have several items on the agenda, including an update from the framework of interpretation working group, hopefully an exchange of views on the work of the CWG and CCWG, and also some findings from our ccNSO working group, the SOP, the strategic and operational planning working group, which I know the board is relatively familiar with.

And we have a relatively new chair, Giovanni, who is going to be providing the update there.

So with that, I thought we would lead off with Keith for an update on the framework of interpretation working group.

STEVE CROCKER: Let me -- let me just --

BYRON HOLLAND: And just before Keith gets going, Steve?

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STEVE CROCKER: Yeah. Thanks.

Thank you, Byron.

So on behalf of the board, welcome, and I won't say a lot more. We're eager to jump in, but I just want to say we're here and geared up and ready to go.

KEITH DAVIDSON: Thank you, Steve and Byron.

The -- the framework of interpretation --

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Could I just ask it now, please? Can we take an attendance of the board members? I see only three on the rostrum and the backs of a few, but I would like to know who's actually present.

STEVE CROCKER: Well, a lot. Erika, Kuo --

[Laughter]

BYRON HOLLAND: Thank you for having raised your hands.

STEVE CROCKER: -- Ray, Rinalia, Wolfgang, Asha, Cherine --

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MIKE SILBER: Can I suggest this is not helpful?

STEVE CROCKER: Yeah.

                        -- Gonzalo, Jonne.

                        I'm not sure why you're asking but a lot of us are here.   The two
                        members appointed by the ccNSO are up here with me.

BYRON HOLLAND: Thank you, Steve.

                        Keith?

KEITH DAVIDSON: Thank you. The framework of interpretation was completed, and I think
                        we reported to the board last time that we were taking it forward to the
                        GAC, as per the original plan to seek, the GAC -- the GAC's approval
                        alongside the ccNSO's approval and then delivering the final framework
                        to the board.

                        It does appear that there's been a little bit of dissent from some of the -
                        - some aspects of the framework within the GAC, and just the
                        unfortunate timing of this meeting with the board first and then going
                        to the GAC immediately afterwards doesn't put me in a good position to
                        have a positive report on what those issues actually are and whether
                        they are resolvable or not.

Notwithstanding the GAC's position, my hope is that we will have a final framework of interpretation report from the ccNSO during the Singapore meeting and that a recommendation from the working group to the ccNSO council will be to forward the recommendations of the framework to both the CWG IANA and the CCWG accountability for incorporation in the service level agreements for the IANA transition agreement, where appropriate.

And that's really it from us. Thank you.

STEVE CROCKER: The framework of interpretation is a very important effort, and we've been watching this develop over a period of time, and the interaction with the GAC is going to be one of the important milestones and test points for how well this works.

So I recognize the awkwardness you're talking about that you don't have the result from that here, but I'll take if as a good thing that that's happening and that's the next step.

So there's a good thing.

We're -- we'll continue to pay close attention.

We all recognize that the work of Postel in -- many, many years ago in developing RFC-1591 was a landmark piece of work at the time, and now quite a lot of time has passed and the world has evolved quite a bit, so getting a modern solution to the myriad of problems that need to be dealt with is very much of interest. And just speaking for myself and

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I think for the board, we're keen to see this happen and wish you fair winds and smooth waters.

BYRON HOLLAND: Keith?

KEITH DAVIDSON: Thank you, Steve. And, you know, I think even if we can't get full assent from the GAC, if they raise no objection, that in itself would be proof of the concept that the ccNSO and the GAC can work collaboratively towards common goals.

And given when we started this exercise five or six years ago you could say the trust between the constituencies wasn't high, I think this and other issues like IDNs have helped build a level of trust and collaboration between the schools.

STEVE CROCKER: Yeah. Let me just pick up on the point that you've just made in a couple of ways.

Trust is obviously absolutely vital here. Lack of dissent from the GAC may not be quite good enough. It may get you by, but over time that may --

So I would say, you know, whatever you can't achieve in complete engagement and support at the time, and even if you get a sort of "okay, we'll live with this," I would say that there's a continuing obligation or continuing challenge there to keep that loop closed and to

improve the education and understanding across the GAC, lest the problems that are inherent in the GAC versus ccNSO communities come back and bite from time to time.

BYRON HOLLAND: Are there any other questions or comments on the work of the FOI?

Nigel? Do we have a roving mic? No. You have your own mic.

NIGEL ROBERTS: We don't need one.

As you know -- and I've been a member of this -- the ccNSO has been a multiyear effort in this framework. We've examined in great depth preexisting policy -- you've mentioned RFC-1591 -- regarding creating and modifying country code top-level domains.

We've had several legal commentators. We've had joint working with the GAC. And we've had the -- and I would say "privilege" of having at least one board member among our number.

It doesn't create any new policy whatsoever, and I'm really concerned that the IANA and the ICANN board are not, at this stage, taking into account the interpretations that are contained in the framework.

So I'd really like to ask the board if they'd be prepared to undertake a review of the framework, and perhaps with your own legal advice, but to write to us and say what you disagree with, where you think our interpretations are wrong, because I think it is wholly wrong for the

IANA to continue to use different policies than existing -- preexisting policy, and if our interpretations are wrong, then please tell us.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Nigel, thanks.

I -- I mean, we -- I've been on the same group as you have forever, and we've been working together.

I think that's a bit -- I think that's a -- a bit of an "ask" and I think it is based on a false premise.

I don't think there are -- I don't think you can really point to behavior of IANA or -- in the IANA operation that you can say goes against 1591 specifically.

The whole purpose of this -- the whole purpose of this work was that we were -- that we needed to add the color and depth precisely because 1591 is capable of being interpreted in so many ways.

So I think the question really is -- for the board is not, "Do you think this is wrong" but, "Will you accept that this is the ccTLD world's interpretation of how 1591 should be operated, should be interpreted, and would IANA operate that way."

That's the question.

And I think that's a perfectly legitimate question.

And whether that comes from the ccNSO on its own or whether that comes from the ccNSO and the GAC doesn't change the validity of the question.

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So I think we just need to wait for the CCs and the GAC to sort out what, if anything, is going to happen, and then the CCs, on their own or with the GAC, can deliver the work formally to the board and ask the board to, you know, accept it as the way that 1591 should be interpreted.

NIGEL ROBERTS: Just to follow up -- and this gets to be a feeling of a bit of an internal discussion here. I was hoping to get input from the other board members because Chris and I worked quite well together on this.

I'm mildly happy with his restatement of the question, but it still leaves my question.

This is preexisting policy, and if you can point to the -- any incidences where this is not being followed, then by my definition, IANA isn't following preexisting policy.

So I'm really concerned that this doesn't get punted off into the long grass. This is the culmination of nearly six years of work, during which the IANA has been, by its own admission, I guess, somewhat bereft of further guidance since 1994, when RFC-1591 was actually written.

I'm just concerned that when you produce an interpretation, the interpretation stands on its own merits. You either agree with it or you don't.

MIKE SILBER: Sorry. If I can just comment there.

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Given the state of where the work is at the moment, to suggest that people are ignoring an interpretation which is not yet final and is going through process and hasn't been presented as final, and suggesting that action should be taken is, I think, a little disingenuous.

I -- if I can restate your comment to say that the ccNSO would like to finalize the framework of interpretation and hand it over to ICANN or the board, together with the IANA team, for implementation, that's a totally different issue.

But by saying that we're breaching existing policy which required a six-year piece of work to interpret what that policy actually is is, I think, respectfully wrong.

So if we're talking about historical, I'm not even going to entertain the conversation. If we're talking about ways to take this forward, now that the work has come to a conclusion, albeit not exactly the conclusion that was expected, I think that's a positive conversation that's worthwhile having.

BYRON HOLLAND: Mike, if I could make just a point of clarification.

The ccNSO council has conditionally approved the report of the FOI at this point, and the idea behind that was then to give the GAC the time and opportunity to do likewise before we made a final approval.

But from the ccNSO council's perspective at this point, we do have a conditional approval out there right now.

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Seeing no other hands on this topic, I think given the time, we should move on to the next subject, which is an exchange of views on some of the proposals that are out there right now regarding CWG oversight transition or stewardship and CCWG accountability.

Given that both of these topics are, to put it mildly, fluid at this point, we thought from the council and the ccNSO's point of view it would be very helpful to get a sense of the board's perspective on these topics right now and to have an exchange of views, where possible.

So this is meant to be as a conversation and to help the ccNSO understand perspectives of the board at this time, and I'm wondering if we could open up the floor to board members to get their sense of where the CWG is at right now, the draft proposal that is out there, and also any sense or perspectives on some of the other potential models that we know are percolating within the CWG at this point.

Anybody want to take that one on from the board?

STEVE CROCKER: I can't believe we're not all fighting for the microphone at the same time here.

[Laughter]

STEVE CROCKER: Well, there are several things to say.

The first is, we are paying close attention. We're watching rather more issues being lumped into the process than we would have guessed at

the outset and sort of waiting to see whether the set continues to expand or whether it will focus in. We're a bit concerned about convergence.

Ira Magaziner's formulation yesterday morning I thought was very insightful that getting it right and doing it in a timely fashion are not contrary or adverse operations; that, in fact, if you spend too much time on something, you not only spend a lot of time but you also blow the quality issue. And so that's a piece of what's on our mind.

The broad concepts of accountability and transparency and making sure the process goes correctly going forward, I think we're in strong agreement.

The specific charter and focus of the whole ICG and each of its pieces, including particularly the CWG, are focused on the IANA process, and much of what -- at least speaking for myself -- that I see are other kinds of issues being put in there because there's an opportunity to go and prosecute other agendas.

This is understandable but diversionary, in a way.

There is, of course, the accountability track and the entire CCWG that provides a very good venue and platform for dealing with those, and that's -- that's good.

The board was admonished, actually, in a very forceful way, to stay quiet, stay out of the way, not interfere, not be -- that anything we said would be viewed as self-serving and untrusted. I thought that was quite unfortunate. And we've been -- we were quiet quite a bit at the outset of the process and we've been more engaged because it became

evident that various people asked us to and also it became evident that there were factual information that needed to be supplied.

All that said, it does appear that there is a convergence underway, which is helpful, and that a focus on getting the sort of right balance of what does it take to actually do this transition in a way that is constructive. And so I'm holding my breath -- I'm not so well holding my breath but I'm expecting things will go in a forward way. That may stimulate some other comments.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Yeah. Me and Kuo. That's the order so far.

STEVE CROCKER: Yeah. Chris and Kuo and -- thank you.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: So I'm going to -- I'm going to -- I'll be with you CC guys this afternoon in the session on this, and I'll be speaking there as a ccTLD manager, so let me say a few words here as a board member.

I -- I was extraordinarily impressed with the work of the CCWG. I spent two days in Frankfurt with them and just thought it was an amazing two days of collegial work, creativity, and huge respect to the people who are managing that process. It's very complicated and they're doing a great job.

As a board member, I think we find -- the board finds itself in quite a difficult position.

What I heard was "We need to control the board," "We need to have mechanisms that we can use to spill the board," et cetera, et cetera.

And that's fine.

And then people say, "But of course the board's never going to accept that."

And when we say, "Actually, that's not right," then we hear, "But you would say that, wouldn't you."

So I mean, really we are not entirely sure what it is that we need to do in order to get it clear that in respect to the accountability mechanisms, within reasonable parameters -- by which I mean legal parameters that are kind of, you know, acceptable -- we're fine with what's happening.

We understand. We get it. And I'm starting to get a little bit tired of the amount of unnecessary rhetoric that is flying around about the way the board members see things, that the board has some kind of hive-minded mentality that gets us all in a room and we suddenly start behaving like aliens.

I think for those of you who have any issues about the way that the board operates, I suggest that you go to one of our newest board members, Markus, who arrived on the board at the last ICANN meeting, and he will tell you how he felt after his first time with the board and how the board operates.

In respect to the CWG, my personal position is probably quite well-known. But from a board point of view, again, we think that -- I think we think that stability and -- the least amount of disruption is the most

important thing and that it really ought to be possible to deal with the transition of the IANA function relatively simply provided that people are comfortable with the accountability mechanisms that exist and the ones that are going to be put in place by the CCWG. Thanks.

BYRON HOLLAND: To Cherine and then Kuo.

KUO-WEI WU: I would like to share my observations since I was ICG liaison from the board. As you know, the ICG already received two proposals, one from the IETF, also one is from the numbers community.

And my observation actually is different communities, actually they have their own culture and differences, how to governance, how to develop the policy, this kind of stuff.

And so I think there might be also a problem in the CWG. As you know, in the CWG, you have the CC and also the G. There is a cultural and also the governance and developing the differences in the governance stuff.

So I think we might should be looking around the -- the principle is okay. But in the detail of the -- regarding the IANA transition, maybe we can approach in a different way based on the different communities' needs. We should not try to apply a single rule on all the different communities.

This is just my personal observation what I saw from the ICG and also from the CWG. And maybe this is just a comment. I know you have

four ICG members from the ccTLD. And I think maybe they can share more of this kind of -- to verify my observation. Thank you.

BYRON HOLLAND: Thank you. We have Cherine and then Mathieu and then Eberhard.

Cherine.

CHERINE CHALABY: From my part, I'm speaking in my own capacity but not on behalf of the board, I was really impressed about the work of the CCWG, particularly in stream one. I think the proposal, the ideas they are coming up with are eminently sensible. Frankly there is nothing to fear. What they are asking for, what they are looking for is putting checks and balances, particularly on policy, on changes to the bylaws, on recalling the board, which are healthy things to have anyway. So to me, I was very happily surprised with what they've done.

I also like their comments that these checks and balances would be used in exceptional cases. This is not about day-to-day control of the board. This is really checks and balances. I like that.

The CWG work, as Chris said, I think ought to be smoother because I think -- the only concern I have is they won't come up with another accountability mechanism just for IANA stewardship. I think to have many accountability mechanisms we need just one overarching accountability mechanism for the community to govern the board and ICANN rather than for individual items different accountability mechanisms.

I also like what Ira Magaziner said about speed and quality go together. I had a concern that this could go on forever and ever.

Obviously, it is very important that this is bottom-up. It is very important everybody is involved. But the reassurance from Ira that speed and quality can go together from his own experience in this own environment was a good point to make. Thanks.

BYRON HOLLAND: Thank you, Cherine.

I will just take a moment of chair's prerogative here for a second since there is nobody speaking on behalf of the CWG, which I am not a member of but I'm fairly close to, I think we also need to keep in perspective because there's an underlying current of messages here.

I think it's important that we recognize that the CWG came into existence before the CCWG when the messaging around accountability wasn't clear what was going to happen and that the CWG in effect began its work in a vacuum and as a result, perhaps, included a wider range of issues than might have been the case had there been clarity at the time on where the accountability track was going to go and when it was going to happen. And that has perhaps muddied the waters a little bit.

And on the issue of time and quality, I would say there's also been conflicting messaging happening on the timing issue. Because we if look back over time on what the messaging has been around when we need to get to conclusion, the messaging has been unclear and varied over

time about, no, we have lots of time, let's do the right thing versus now coming into sharper focus about time and quality can work together.

So I appreciate your comment because I've always been a believer that time and quality can work together. But it has perhaps led the CWG down dead ends.

With that, Mathieu.

MATHIEU WEILL: Thank you very much, Byron. My name is Mathieu Weill. I'm CEO of AfNIC, .FR.   And I'm the -- one of the ccNSO co-chair for the accountability cross-community working group.

I think we heard a lot of comments regarding how the various groups are moving forward. Very kind comments on the CCWG progress are much appreciated and certainly well-noted.

I think we are all in a process that we want this transition to happen. We have this shared goal. And as a board, you've been tasked to facilitate this process and everyone on board is sharing this goal. And if we want this to happen, we need your leadership as a board.

And Chris was asking what can we do basically to support that. And I think you all need to be aware you are board members first in everyone's eyes. And as a board, you are the ones that the community is looking for in terms of leadership. And leadership in this case to my mind is, first of all, supporting the volunteers, especially the co-chairs, including when things go in the wrong direction into your opinion. So if you have anything negative to say to them, I suggest very strongly that

you do that in private because, otherwise, you might be undermining the very process you set up.

Secondly, there were flows in the process. We all know that. The CCWG started way too late. You as a board should be accountable to that. It shouldn't be put up to the community that this was an issue. Who else than the board could be accountable for the fact that we forgot this aspect of the discussion in the beginning? And so we started late. So it shouldn't be put on the shoulders of the volunteers that this was the way it happened. And we'll deal with this, and we'll find a way.

And, thirdly, please provide guidance and criteria about how you will treat the proposals. You mentioned stability. You mentioned the fact that to you it's extremely important that we take as little risk as possible to disrupt stability. Put it in writing and stick to those criteria and do not invent any more after that.

Its leadership. Leadership needs clear vision, needs support and commitment. And, of course, that's a personal review. But I think sticking to this level of leadership is what is required now. And if you go too much into details, you are undermining the whole -- you might undermine the whole process.

So that would be my response to the call from Chris that was sort of asking how you can have this. And we really need to be all, in our respective positions, supporting the process towards the successful transition. Thank you.

BYRON HOLLAND: Thank you, Mathieu.

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DR. EBERHARD LISSE: First I want to say, I don't need comments whether my interventions are helpful or not. I don't come here to please anyone. I come here for other reasons.

I support Chris totally. My opinion -- and I'm a member of the CCWG accountability -- is that we are going about this the wrong way, creating additional layer of bureaucracies with a view that if we're not happy with the board, we remove the board or board members. That will create only another opportunity to become upset with the next layer, and then we remove those people and we create another layer.

If we are unhappy with the board -- and I'm certainly not happy with every board member -- we must fix the board. And I believe strongly that we should work within the structures of ICANN. So far it has worked out not the best but reasonably well, and we should work within the structures to fix the structures than to create new layers of bureaucracy.

And then I have some comment about Mr. Chehade's intervention. Being impressed is appreciated but does not help at all. The board was impressed with the FOI working group and see where it got us.

BYRON HOLLAND: Thank you, Eberhard.

Jordan and then Lise.

JORDAN CARTER: Thank you, Byron. Jordan Carter from Internet NZ. I wanted to make one point about the relationship between the accountability CCWG and the transition CWG. Just to ask a question of directors about what happens if we have a legal advice face-off? There may not be an answer to my question.

On the relationship, I think one of the reasons people are confused about accountability, where it should sit, is because the charter for the CWG, designing the names part of the IANA stewardship transition, says that it has to create proposals that deal with the accountability for the operation of the IANA functions.

So accountability is firmly on the table for that CWG. It cannot ignore it. It has to deal with it.

The CCWG accountability that I'm part of is dealing with broad ICANN accountability. The problem we have in terms of timing and liaison is that the CWG can't finish its work on IANA accountability until it knows what the big framework is for ICANN accountability because, otherwise, they will just making it up in a vacuum.

And so until, I think -- if you play that out logically, till there's some confidence about what the CCWG's recommendations are on ICANN accountability, until it is clear what the board is going to accept and not accept, it's going to be difficult for the CWG to finalize the IANA transition proposal for the names.

And as I've been raising this week, I don't see in the schedule that joins CWG, CCWG, and the IANA stewardship transition coordination group, I

don't see enough time or effort on that particular process. So I just think that's why people keep noting it. It's wrong to describe the CWG as getting out of scope for dealing with accountability. Its charter obliges it to.

And, actually, I'm not going to ask the question about the legal advice-off.

MIKE SILBER: Can I quickly respond to Jordan because I think the comments were well-made and well-noted. I think it's a very useful reminder that the items don't need to work in lockstep. But at the same time, there are dependencies over there.

The one thing I wanted to just mention was what you are describing as a legal face-off. And maybe it's just because I'm a lawyer myself that I'm possibly a little more tolerant of lawyers than I should be, but I think people are getting hung up on the legal face-off which may not actually occur. And I think the critical thing is getting good advice for the CCWG and dealing with the consequences.

And I don't want to create an endless loop of lawyers advising on conflicting opinions. We just have this escalation where every time there is a conflict, you go to another lawyer. Sooner or later, rational people will need to look at this and decide that in some cases, there are two or more opinions that can't be resolved and we've got actually do what's acceptable to the majority or a rough consensus needs to be derived.

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But at the same time, we can't be in a situation where a grouping is not comfortable with the advice it's getting for itself. As a board, we're fully supportive of providing the CCWG with the right resources to move its work forward.

BYRON HOLLAND: Thank you, Mike.

Lise and then Steve.

LISE FUHR: Sorry. Yes, I'm Lise Fuhr. I'm one of the co-chairs of the CWG. And I think I would like to support Jordan and Mathieu's views on what are the difficulties for the CWG. Furthermore, I think it's very important to underline that the dialogue that's ongoing, if it's constructive, if it's said in a -- well, in a way that doesn't put pressure on the groups, well, it makes our work much easier.

We have had a lot of sayings on the timing, whether or not we're overlapping with the accountability group, and we're not looking at SLAs.

Those remarks are not very helpful for us if we're not -- if they're not made in a more constructive way.

So I think -- while those groups are actually trying to work together, we're participating in each other's meetings. And having a constructive dialogue is very important, and we really welcome any dialogue with the board, too, because the board is an important stakeholder, too.

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So my underlying message is that I think it's a constructive dialogue. Please get back to us in a good way because whenever you send out messages to the community, we get all -- we get all wound up in the different groups. So help us in this by being constructive, please.

BYRON HOLLAND: Thank you, Lise.

Steve?

STEVE CROCKER: Thank you, Byron. Jordan makes a point that there are different focuses for accountability between what the scope of the CCWG is and the CWG. Fair enough. But I think it's helpful to understand with some precision what the scope for the CWG is. That's focused on the IANA function. And the accountability issues are whether that function is being performed reliably, accurately, timely. And that is a publication function. It is not a decision function. It is not where the interesting decisions are made about what the content of the root zone ought to be, for example.

So the mechanisms for assuring accountability should focus on those performance in very narrowly scoped aspects.

The more interesting ones that will draw the attention of a much broader set of people are the more contentious decisions that belong, for example, back in the framework of interpretation or elsewhere. And those are specifically outside of the scope of IANA, and then I would suggest, therefore, are specifically outside of the scope of the

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accountability concerns that are being dealt with within the CWG. Thank you.

BYRON HOLLAND: Thank you, Steve.

Seeing no further intervention -- Fadi, we'll give you the last word.

FADI CHEHADE: Yeah, I just want to clarify. Jordan said, We don't know which things the CCWG will propose to the board they will accept or not accept, you said. That's not a correct statement because the board will not be in the business of accepting or not accepting what the community decides. So just to be clear, that the CCWG track will produce a proposal that the board has to live with.

Now, there are going to be involvement by the board as we told you to make sure that our views are understood along the way because Larry said, "I will not accept a proposal from the ICG without the joint -- jointly having the proposal from the CCWG." He already said that. We said that as well. We will not send the ICG proposal to the U.S. government unless we pair it with the CCWG proposal. So that's already established. And we will participate, as Larry asked us, and I think is right, as individual community members in the processes. But at the end of the day, if we go to Larry and say, Here's what the community said but the board doesn't like it, he said that's no good. It's like, Go back and work. So we are committed to work with you along the way, and the community will make the final determination hopefully in a

thoughtful and constructive way of exactly how you want to keep the ICANN board and the ICANN organization accountable.

And for those of you who were not there, I think it is important you appreciate that we are very open to the proposals we've heard, even potentially of spilling the board if certain extreme conditions are not achieved, of having the board be removed by the community.

I mean, the board frankly has come out with clear, open-minded and committed posture at this meeting to work with you so that we can find the right solution forward. I can assure of you that.

Now, if this assurance has start putting the community at ease that the core accountability issues, which exist -- there are accountability gaps which we can improve, will be addressed in the CCWG. I hope then we can give the CWG the oxygen it needs to start adding to its agenda looking at the things that Steve described much better than I could, the real critical service level agreements and recourse mechanisms when IANA doesn't perform. These are the things we need to hear.

And I hope the right focus will be put on these so we can move forward successfully as a community and do the right thing together. I assure you we have the same goals.

When I hear you, Jordan, we have the same goals. It is just we're trying to get it done, and I want to assure you that as a board member and as a fellow community member, if you can accept that position for me, we are equally committed to strengthen our accountability in every possible way, including and leading up to in an extreme case spilling the whole board because it is not doing what the community has asked it do

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within a framework of certain conditions that we're looking forward to develop with you.

BYRON HOLLAND: Thank you, Fadi. We have about ten minutes left in this meeting, and one more agenda item which is a report from the strategic and operational planning committee. So at this point, I believe that was a very constructive exchange of views and I think very helpful to the respective co-chairs that are in this room in particular but all of us in general. So thank you for that.

And at this point, we'll move on to the report from our SOP working group.

Giovanni.

GIOVANNI SEPPIA: Thank you, Byron, and thanks again to the ccNSO community for the appointment as ccNSO SOP strategic and operational planning working group chairman. We have done quite a lot of work over the past decade basically and we have also contributed, we believe, significantly to the shaping of the ICANN strategy plans and operating plans.

I'd like to start with a big thanks to Steve because yesterday during his speech, the opening speech, he underlined once more the diversity and experience coming from the ccTLD community. And I think that this diversity and experience we have in our communities again helped ICANN significantly to improve and refine the strategy and operating plans.

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The latest ICANN operating plan 2016-2020 was published by ICANN with a public comment in the last quarter of 2014 with the public comment period open until early January this year. ICANN received eight comments from all the main constituencies, including the ccNSO via the ccNSO SOP working group. And the feedback of ICANN staff to the various comments received was posted on ICANN's site a few days ago.

The feedback is quite constructive, as it's the first time that the feedback addresses each of the points and each of the comments that were made by the different constituencies. So we really appreciate that, and the first point that we put forward to the attention of ICANN was that we really appreciated the fact that for the first time the operating plan is incredibly well-structured and made a lot of progress against the previous year's plan. So that's really a great improvement, which we acknowledged.

The second point we noted is the lack of KPIs. ICANN staff explained to us that there are currently 20 KPIs in the operating plan 2016-2020. In the feedback we received against our comment, we were explained that more KPIs will be introduced over the years and we do understand the internal and external challenges that ICANN staff is facing to include KPIs in the operating plan.

We were also reassured that there are some definitions in the operating plan that are going to be further explained in the ultimate interest of the community so the community can read the plan in a sort of easier way and making sure that everybody understands what certain definitions are, including definitions like public interest or LTE unique

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identifiers and much more. So we really appreciated the fact that again ICANN staff has committed to include the extra elements that will improve the readership of the entire plan in the future.

The last part of the plan, and I just pick up on some highlights of our comments, is relating to the financial model which was again a great progress because it was included for the first time. The financial model has assumptions, principles which will run basically the entire plan for the next five years. We did expect to find some more financial data which were not in the plan, but which will be included in the yearly fiscal year budget and operating plan that ICANN is about to publish for the fiscal year 2016. And there we will find more detailed information about the yearly planning as well as yearly financial data. That again is progress against what was done in the past.

We also recommended ICANN staff to make sure that the format of the strategy plan and the operating plan is captured in its last version, and that again we received reassurances from ICANN staff that it's going to be -- it's going to stay the same and that's really good because in the past five years we have always faced different kind of -- different kind of formats and that didn't help us in producing our comments and feedback according to the timelines that were set by ICANN.

We have also appreciated the fact that there will be new mechanisms of consultation with the different stakeholders that are going to be introduced by ICANN staff over the years, not only for refining the strategy and operating plans but also to improve the different strategy goals and objectives that are included in both plans. And this is really extremely good.

We were also impressed that last night we were invited by ICANN staff to participate in this budget working group and we found it extremely valuable because we were facing -- we face a lot of information regarding the way ICANN staff is taking into account all of the elements to have a good projection for the revenues for the following years and also a good estimate for what are going to be the expenses they are going to incur in the coming years. And that's really also very good. And again, what I'd like to point out is the extremely constructive process that we have seen in the past -- especially the past 24 months. I must say there's been a great shift and that's been really appreciated by the community.

There's some nasty comments, I must say, in what we have put forward to the attention of ICANN on the 24th of December because it was really our Christmas gift to ICANN. So we submitted the ccNSO SOP working group comments on the 24th of December intentionally and with a panettone, Fadi is saying to me now. There was no pannettone because electronically -- well, maybe one day with the 3-D printers there's going to be a panettone with a file to download with a panettone to print for ICANN staff but no there was not a panettone attached, but let's say that there are some areas of the plan where we believe there is room for improvement, further refinement. We were told, for instance, because we have noted the starting goals of the plan could be merged to improve the flow of the plan itself we were told that's not possible because the plan is linked to the strategy plan which has been approved by the ICANN board, but this exercise will be done during the review of the plan in 2019. And so we are looking forward -- 2019 is many years ahead but we are looking forward for those further

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improvements in the strategy and operating plan that again will improve the flow of the entire plan process.

That said, again, I'd like to congratulate ICANN staff for the work done so far we did last night and thanks a lot. We will continue to provide you with our input and we don't get discouraged if we have to repeat over and over the same comments as we have done in the past years for some points, some elements of the plan. But again, thanks a lot for the opportunity to contribute to the process. Thank you.

BYRON HOLLAND: Thanks, Giovanni. And I just maybe will add a point, as the original chair of the SOP a number of years ago, I think it bears mentioning that while there are still some -- there's still work to do, as you will have seen from our submission, where we are today is a significantly better place than where we started with the SOP a number of years ago. And I know the Board here has had to listen to me and to Roelof make some pretty sharp criticisms as chairs of the SOP over the years, and I think I just want to acknowledge the significant steps forward that ICANN has made to get us to a place where Giovanni can make the comments that he's made this morning.

Recognizing we only have about one minute left in our time, any comments or questions for Giovanni? Seeing none, Steve, any comments that you would like to make as we -- you don't have to make any but before we wind this up?

STEVE CROCKER: No. I think I've spoken enough probably, huh?

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BYRON HOLLAND: Okay. Well, thank you very much to the members of the Board. That was, I think, a very productive discussion that gave certainly our chairs of respective CWG CCWG groups a lot to work with. Thank you very much.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]

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