



ICANN70 | Virtual Community Forum – At-Large Policy Session 1: The Future of ICANN’s Mandate and the Development of the DNS: Voices of the Next Generation!  
Monday, March 22, 2021 – 12:30 to 14:00 EST

MICHELLE DESMYTER: Hello and welcome to the At-Large policy session one, the future of ICANN’s mandate and the development of the DNS, voices of the next generation. My name is Michelle DeSmyter and I am the remote participation manager for this session. Please note that this session is being recorded and follows the ICANN expected standards of behavior.

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the Development of the DNS: Voices of the Next Generation!

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With this, I will hand the floor over to Matthias Hudobnik. Please begin.

MATTHIAS HUDOBNIK:

Thank you, Michelle. Hello everybody. It’s my pleasure to welcome you to the first At-Large policy session with the title the future of ICANN’s mandate and development of the DNS, voices of the next generation. Before opening the roundtable, I want to thank all persons who supported me in organizing this session. It is the first time having such a next generation roundtable at an ICANN meeting and it shows that the At-Large community is very open to new initiatives of young leaders and allows motivated community members to discuss future challenges within ICANN.

And moreover, with this session, we want to show that ICANN’s sometimes highly criticized community programs are not a waste of money and that there are young folks who are actively engaging within ICANN’s various constituencies if they get a chance to do so. And the At-Large community is a place who supports and initiates young folks, and I’m very much looking forward to give the panelists the stage to get their voices heard and also their messages.

Just some housekeeping rules before we start. I kindly ask you to type your questions either in the chat or raise them after their presentations of the eight panelists when we have the Q&A session. I will moderate it

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and keep track of all the relevant questions. Will try to do my best to address as many as possible, but we will see. It might be the case that I need to aggregate some of them. It depends on how much question we have. Also to my dear presenters, please try to stick to the time around eight minutes, otherwise we would not have more time for Q&A sessions.

Now to the content. As I told you, the session will include former NextGen, fellowship and ATLAS III participants who are currently actively involved in various constituencies across ICANN, and we try to focus on three questions. The first would be, should ICANN’s mandate be adapted? You can see here the three questions related to the future development in cyberspace, also the influence of digital platforms. Then the second one would be, might the DNS be changed to tackle future cybersecurity concerns and also digital and DNS abuses? And the third one should be more related to transparency, openness of policy development processes within ICANN that we ensure that all interested stakeholders are involved.

Now, very briefly to the introduction, please, the next slide. Okay. You can see here the beginning. It’s a great pleasure to have León Sanchez, the vice chair of the ICANN Board here with us. He will open the panel and will tell a bit about his story from a fellow to an ICANN Board member, and he was always very supportive related to the session. We’re very thankful to him.

The next one would be then Sarah Kiden. She's an ALAC member and was also a former fellow. The next one would be then Abdulkarim. He's

also an ALAC member and was an ATLAS III participant. And then we will have Mark Datysgeld. He's a GNSO councilor. He was a fellow, a NextGen ambassador and NextGen before. Then we have Laurin Weissinger. He's a vice chair and implementation shepherd of the SSR2, and he was also a fellow and NextGen and ambassador. And Olga Kyryliuk, she's NCUC-EC European representative. She was also a fellow, a NextGen ambassador and NextGen before. And last but not least, we will have Clément Genty, he's a EURALO member and he's currently a fellow and was an ATLAS III participant and a NextGen ambassador and NextGen as well.

So, thank you so far, and León, the stage is yours.

LEÓN SANCHEZ:

Thank you very much, Matthias, for inviting me. I will speak in Spanish if you don't mind. First of all, thank you so much, Matthias, for your invitation. I'm very happy to be here. What makes me most happy is the fact that you're still considering me a young voice. Thank you for that. And, well, I think that all of us who are participating in this discussion today are examples of, as Matthias said, the fact that engagement programs, the programs aiming at introducing new voices and talents within ICANN work. They do work, and they work very well.

In terms of numbers, well, maybe we would like to have many more successful examples. However, not all success cases are translated into leadership positions. There are different ways of showing success of a program, and in this respect, there are many colleagues like myself who

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have been fellows, NextGen, who are today holding a leadership position.

However, it’s not only about leadership positions within ICANN. Those of us who have had the chance to do this, to benefit, to profit from NextGen programs for example know that these are opportunities to provide a service to our community and we provide this service through the several opportunities provided to us by ICANN where we can participate in policy development discussions and other types of discussions.

I started as a fellow in 2012 at the Prague meeting, my first face-to-face meeting was Mexico in 2009 and as all newcomers, I came to a meeting in Mexico City and I didn't understand a thing. However, I did know that there was something in ICANN I liked very much and I wanted to participate. This is how I started to apply for the fellowship program. As many other people, it’s a very competitive program, so the first time I applied, I was not successful, but this was not discouraging to me. I kept on applying for the program and in 2012, I was lucky to be selected to participate in the Prague meeting. That’s where I started participating in the ICANN community, as a fellow in Prague.

Eventually, I was selected to participate in the Beijing meeting, and the last time I was elected as a fellow was for the Buenos Aires meeting. At the Buenos Aires meeting, I’d been selected by the NomCom as an ALAC member for Latin America and the Caribbean as well. I remember that as a fellow, one of the recommendations we get is that we should try to

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find our place within ICANN, that we should be open to the different opportunities and communities that may need volunteers.

As an IP lawyer and as a user right activist and advocate, my first idea was to join the Intellectual Property Constituency, but I thought that at the time, the end user community was closer to my interest. This is why I got in touch with ALAC, and I remember that at a certain time, I attended a NomCom public session. And if I'm not wrong, Cheryl Langdon-Orr was chairing the NomCom. I'm not sure whether she was the chair or the chair elect.

And I asked her, is there any disadvantage in applying for the NomCom being a new person in the community? And she said quite the contrary, the NomCom wants to see new faces, new people, new participants and being a new person in the community, the fact that I didn't have a link with any community at all might have been considered an advantage for the NomCom. And this is what encouraged me to apply for a position in ALAC for Latin America and Caribbean through the NomCom, and this is how I was eventually selected.

Gradually, I started working in ALAC. I remember my first meeting as a member of ALAC. Well, we discussed different policies and topics, and that really made me get involved into the community. I started working with my own RALO, with the regional organization. That also helped e gain their trust. It's been a hardworking path, but that's the key. The key is working hard, contributing to the community, participating in everyday exercises, participating in discussions, educating yourself, trying to build things collaboratively.

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Then I was appointed co-chair of the group in charge of transparency in the IANA transition, and eventually, conditions were met for me to apply to hold seat number 15 appointed by the At-Large community and fortunately, I got the support of the community to accept that leadership position.

Once in that leadership position, my policy has always been to be close to the community. That is, not only holding a leadership position and forget about my community. I try to be a member of the Board who is continuously close to the community respecting the limits set by ICANN’s bylaws since I have to serve the best interest of the organizations and not necessarily representing those who appointed me to hold this position. But I always insist in this: I want to be close, I want to participate in the meetings of every RALO, of every policy group as far as possible.

And, well, later, I was lucky to gain the trust of my Board colleagues and I applied to be the vice chair of the Board. And they supported me. And last year, they supported me again. It’s been a very good experience, a very satisfactory experience. There are no limits and barriers but those set by yourself. The ICANN community is an extremely generous community. It’s a community that does not spare effort to help us learn something new every day. It’s a community that welcomes us warmly and it’s very wise, very smart and very open. We understand that disagreement makes dialogue richer. Very frequently, heated discussions strengthen our links and promote bonds, reaching consensus, agreements.

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As to questions asked by Matthias, well, I think it’s important to understand that ICANN is not a static organization. ICANN has evolved over the years, and I think these issues about the mandate which I think is ICANN’s mission, should it be changed or not looking forward? Well, this is something that should be defined by the community proper. The community is the soul of ICANN. The community decides what happens in ICANN. The community gives life to this organization.

So I think that as events happen in the community, we have to discuss this. We have to be careful, because we should remember that ICANN has a basically technical mission and within that small Internet space, well, we have to do our best.

However, we also have to be skeptical or careful so as not to get into a field that’s not part of ICANN’s objectives. I think it’s good to think about this, to discuss whether ICANN’s mission matches current times. But however, I would be very careful not to expand ICANN’s mission.

Can we please go back to the previous slide so that I can see the other questions? Thank you very much. Well, apparently, that’s not possible. Well, I’ll focus on that first question then. And I insist, I think it is worthwhile discussing the topic, whether it’s necessary to adapt ICANN’s mission. But I insist in that we have very careful and not expand ICANN’s mission and get into the field that may not be the right ones.

Having said that, I’d like to thank Matthias again, I’d like to thank the At-Large community, and everyone who’s participating in the session, and I will obviously be open to answer any questions or get any



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comment you may have. Matthias, the floor is yours. I turn it over to you again.

MATTHIAS HUDOBNIK:

Thank you very much, León, for a very inspiring opening. It was great and we are very glad that you supported our session, and I hope you can stay until the end, until the Q&A. Now I'm very much looking forward to our first speaker. It is Sarah Kiden. She's ALAC member of the AFRALO. The floor is yours, Sarah.

SARAH KIDEN:

Thank you. Hi everyone. Thank you, Matthias, for inviting me to this session and organizing this panel. So I want to start by saying that I'm a beneficiary of both NextGen and ICANN fellowship programs, and these programs have really impacted my participation and contribution in the ICANN community.

Like León, after my first ICANN meeting in Durban, South Africa, I almost did not understand anything going on. And I remember taking time off to try to read and understand what was really going on. And then I came back one year later as a booth lead, and from then on, I stated following discussions in the background, mostly not saying anything but trying as much as possible to attend the calls. And here we are now.

I try to give back to the programs by helping new fellows to fit in and find their place, and I've done this both formally as an At-Large fellowship mentor and informally with fellows I know personally. It's

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nice to see the programs grow the way they have right now. When I attended my first meeting, we didn't even have mentors, we just came in and got lost in that sea of people, then went back. But now you have mentors, it's more structured, you assigned people from the different constituencies, so it makes it easier to follow. And it's nice to see people who came in and fellows contributing in various ways in the community from leadership positions to community members.

It's also nice to see fellows I worked with when I was a mentor for ICANN 66 and 67. I see you on the call, so hello. Thank you, Siranush, Deborah and everyone else working on these programs for all the good work that you are doing.

So now moving on to the topics of discussion for this session, I would like to acknowledge that I fully understand ICANN's mandate is narrow and specific to domain names and numbers or IP addresses, but that said, I believe there's still a big opportunity for ICANN to be flexible in contributing to the wider Internet ecosystem.

And I want to use the analogy of someone living in a neighborhood that's somewhat unsafe and their response for this is to install a state of the art security system, cameras, good locks and a fence and feeling safe because their house is secure. But even if your house is safe, just because you live in that neighborhood, you still should care about what happens in the neighborhood by participating in other community-wide safety initiatives, like if there's a neighborhood watch, it would be nice that as a member of the community, you continue to contribute.

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so likewise, I believe that ICANN should continue contributing to wider Internet discussions and when it’s relevant, even allowing some of these discussions to contribute and maybe influence internal discussions within ICANN.

Regarding content and the role of ICANN, in this case, I don’t think ICANN should have rules or policies about what content can be held under what particular domain name, but ICANN should be ready for the reality that because content is held under a particular name, the DNS infrastructure can be attacked or diverted as a way to get control of particular content. So it’s important to note at this point that some measures, like DNSSEC, are still not widely adopted, and some alternatives are not very clear as it is right now.

So this morning, I checked our website, dns-africa.org, it’s maintained by Alain Aina who is a member of our community, and it shows that on the African continent, 36 country code top-level domains are unsigned versus the 20 which are signed in the root zone. So you can see 36 versus 20, the difference is very big.

On the other hand, there are other measures, like maybe DNS over TCP for example which are done by content delivery networks, not the webhosts, and this means that they can be diverted if the content delivery network becomes a target. And all these somehow affect the infrastructure. So I think ICANN should care because of that. So I feel that there is no real way to be both domain names and content, because eventually, one will affect the other.

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Finally, in terms of transparency and openness, I want to share a short story I followed on Twitter recently. And I'm fully aware that Twitter is not an authority on rules and regulations and discussions about the domain name system and just other things generally.

So someone posted about how they had applied to ICANN to be an accredited registrar and their application had been denied. So the person was saying that the application had taken too long and that ICANN was a monopoly and we cannot continue operating in a monopoly.

This did not worry me. That post, I was like, okay. I'm on the inside, I know what happens. But what worried me was actually the number of people who were responding and saying that ICANN is indeed a monopoly and we need an alternative “body” in charge of an alternative domain name system. And they complained about how ICANN is not transparent or open at all. And it was like hundreds of comments of people saying the same thing.

Now, for me who is on the inside, I feel that ICANN is transparent and open, at least from the way I perceive it, but that means that there's a big number of people out there who do not believe that ICANN is open and transparent and we need to do better to reach out externally and show this transparency and openness.

And I'd like to refer to a talk by Dr. Steve Crocker, the former ICANN Board chair. He gave this talk at the Africa Internet Summit last year. He used sketches to demonstrate how what is now known as the Internet

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started and grew. And he mentioned that behind this growth is open architecture and innovation and that policies, requests for comments and Internet drafts can be authored by any member of the community, mailing lists and working groups are public, open and free for everyone to participate in.

So I know that and people within the community know that, but not many people outside know that it’s open for everyone to contribute. And I’ve actually—during my fellowship, mentorship experience, I remember when we’d be drafting the joint AFRALO-AFRICANN statement, I would reach out to particularly the fellows from the African region and ask them to contribute. And for many of them, they were a bit, “I don’t know, this is policy, I don’t know if I can contribute.” And then after that, you would see a lot of the text is actually contribution by them. So it’s just something we have to continue reaching out to.

And I think our outreach efforts should also be targeted, so not just casting our net out there and saying, okay, whoever comes comes, but maybe we should try to target like the people who can enrich the discussion we’re having at the particular time.

So we have other challenges on the African continent that are hindering participation, but I would let one of my colleagues chime in and I’ll stop here for now. Thank you very much, everyone.

MATTHIAS HUDOBNIK:

Thank you very much, Sarah. Very interesting insights. I will give the floor to Abdulkarim Oloyede. The floor is yours, Abdul.

ABDULKARIM OLOYEDE: Thank you very much, my good friend, Matthias. Let me start by thanking you for inviting me to this. I think it’s a wonderful session, especially when we’re talking about the things that have to do with the future.

Let me start by saying just one or two words about my own journey within the ICANN community. I think my journey is similar to that of León and also Sarah. I started about four years ago and it was just about hearing one or two things about [how ICANN had a conference.]

That was surprising to me at that point in time, because I went through the technical schools, I had a degree in electrical engineering, a master’s and a PhD, and I never heard of ICANN Org through my studies, and I was thinking, what is ICANN, what is ICANN all about? And I didn't really understand the function of ICANN until I went a bit closer.

And I would say that for me, that was how it all started and that is how I've been able to move from being an ordinary person listening from the background, just like Sarah mentioned, and when I felt the time is right, I decided to apply through NomCom to become an ALAC member.

And luckily, I've been able to make friends in the community. If not for any other thing, it is an environment whereby you will be able to not only contribute to the community but you also learn from the community. And I think that’s just a brief summary of my own journey.

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But one key thing I want us to take home from my journey is you have to be dedicated. It’s all about dedication. And that’s just all it requires.

So [inaudible] the questions for today, I want to say that in some regions of the world, we still have about 50% of the population that is not connected to the Internet. This is despite a large number of people in these communities being connected recently according to most statistics.

In recent years, the African region has the highest number when it comes to new connection to the Internet. Despite this good development, a significant number, majority of whom had a younger generation, are still left behind and remain unconnected.

As more people, especially from this region, are getting connected day by day, we need to adapt and we need to adapt the mandate of organizations like ICANN to suit these group of people. This is important, because the mandate was originally put together by the early adopters of the Internet, and those who came late to the table should not be deprived of the need and should be considered when we are developing policies that have to do with everybody.

This is also the same for the younger generation that were not born when some of these policies were put together. So we need to make sure that we take into consideration both the new people that are just coming onto the Internet and also the younger generation, because it is quite important to have a diverse opinion and also take some of these things that are unique into consideration.

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This is important because future development in the cyber world would have an impact not only on those who are veterans but when it comes to access to the Internet and its infrastructure like the DNS and the domain name industry which is the core mandate of ICANN, but it would also have an impact on those who are just new to the Internet. It is important because every region or community has its own peculiarity, and this peculiarity must be fully taken into consideration when dealing with mandates of core Internet organizations like the ICANN.

Let me give you an example. I usually give this example because it’s an example that demonstrates our diversity. It has to do with CCTV cameras in primary schools. A majority of the time when I discuss this issue with my western friends, they would always say it’s an invasion of privacy and something that should not be encouraged.

But when I speak to parents from the African region, they see it as a good idea, a way to protect the child because the teachers will be more careful dealing with these students when they know that the parents will be able to check the cameras at any time.

You'll see that this seems to be like a contrast, but that shows that different community has different need. And this is one of the many differences between our communities.

Therefore, we need to ensure that we put in place mechanisms that would help us ensure that ICANN’s mandate is adapted to suit different future developments in the cyberspace.



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Like my colleague, Sarah, mentioned earlier, transparency and openness is very important in order for the younger generation to be fully engaged in policy development for the Internet. This is because the openness of the Internet is one of the major factors that has made it become a critical enabler and it also contributed to the rapid growth of the Internet or the Internet’s system around the world.

Therefore, the Internet or its core infrastructure within the mandate of ICANN should not be seen from only the technical infrastructure point of view, it should be seen as a powerful tool that can significantly influence the social, political issues and can also serve as a tool for national development and integration.

The uniqueness and the global nature of the Internet should bring about a model for governance that is innovative, collaborative, transparent and open to ideas, not just about ideas but it should foster collaboration among different layers so as to address the common challenge facing the global Internet.

For me, it is very important for ICANN to continue to be open and transparent. We need to make sure that the younger generation and newcomers are given the opportunity to contribute and engage in an open and transparent manner. Just like what my colleague earlier mentioned, Sarah, that a lot of people from the outside see ICANN as a monopoly. Some of us from the inside see some of these things and some people from the inside do not also see these things because [inaudible] what León mentioned, ICANN is all about the community, it

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seems about community taking decisions. But it is important that we continue to be open and transparent.

I also want to emphasize it is important for any community to know where it is coming from and where it is going to. This is important especially for the next generation so that we do not lose anything in-between generations.

In learning about where we come from, we need the older generation, but the future lies with the younger generation. Therefore, it is important to have a fair mix while archiving [inaudible] for transparency and openness. We need an environment where no group is going to be dominant, and that is what I think is very important for us, and that’s where I’m going to stop. Thank you.

MATTHIAS HUDOBNIK:

Thank you very much, Abdul. Very great ideas, and we will later also discuss some of the issues you raised. Thanks a lot. I will give the floor now to Mark Datysgeld. As I told already before, he's a GNSO councilor, and we are looking forward to your speech. Thank you.

MARK DATYSGELD:

Thank you, everyone. I began as a NextGen at ICANN 55, had been engaged in the community ever since, and currently, I'm serving on the GNSO council for the Business Constituency. It’s been a pleasure to be in this function together with some of the people who are in this call. So hello to all my fellow council members.

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Today, I would really like to discuss something that is dear to my heart, has been a project pretty much [inaudible] past four, five years of my life very intensely, which is universal acceptance. I'm sure most of you have heard of it, because it has been cited in many different sessions. But one thing that I would really like to highlight is despite the fact that awareness of universal acceptance has increased dramatically—I think that possibly most of the community knows what it is by now—at the same time, we are having a hard time actually pushing the needle towards a better direction, because of many factors. And I would briefly like to discuss them since the goals of the session are about inclusion and cybersecurity, and all those elements come together in universal acceptance.

So if you look at this chart that is up on the screen right now, what we can see is that we have progressed in the acceptance of certain aspects of this equation. The first few ones, if we're looking at what we call new gTLDs in a very broad manner, so if you want your .accountant to work, that's getting better. But the moment we start to talk about Unicode and the inclusion of characters from other scripts, whatever script it is, the Han script or the Cyrillic script, then it falls dramatically. And if we look at RTL, which is right to left, so we're talking about Arabic here and other languages, then it just plummets to the very bottom of acceptance.

And this is tricky, because ICANN is allowing the sale of these domains. It does seem that ICANN care. I believe they do. And it does seem that there is interest. But nevertheless, as a community, we are in a way just

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saying that, okay, this is kind of a problem but maybe it’s not a priority to solve it because we are selling domains that have 10% acceptance. And this is a reality.

So as a community, I believe we should be focusing on tackling that a little bit more than we are. I understand that questions such as the WHOIS database are very important for several reasons, but this is also very important. We are talking here about how to make sure that people can communicate in their own languages, can have an experience that’s native to them, because we keep talking about the next billion, but a lot of those people are not very knowledgeable of the ASCII set of characters. Right now, we have the privilege of having a lot of people who can handle that, but that’s not a given. And we want them to be provided the services that are being enabled by the Internet.

So, how do we change this equation? And this is the part where I would like to make something very clear. The problem with universal acceptance is that you can just fix one link of the chain. If you fix one link, then that link is fine but the next one is broken and then nothing works. The problem is we need to work in a very holistic manner with the other technical bodies, with the rest of the policymaking community, and this requires outreach. We need the voices of the community.

So I, together with some other people, have been developing some studies. We are working hard at this and trying to identify the problems, and you will keep seeing the studies pop up over at UASG.tech, but what

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we need the most right now is for the community to become aware that this is happening and start trying to reach out within their niches.

So maybe you have a leg on the IETF, like maybe that’s your second home in Internet governance. We need you there. We need you helping us push this forward. Maybe you have spaces that you interact in that we are not able to reach. Even big companies, we are talking about big tech companies, small tech companies, we’re talking about hosting providers, we’re talking about other aspects in which we can start collaborating. We need this collaboration.

And for this, we need the community to come together. We are a very dedicated group. There's quite a few of us in this call. We try very hard, but there's only so much you can do without everybody caring. And it’s important. That’s my vision. There's many ways to generate inclusion and to ensure that people have access and that we are doing our job in representing everyone, but this is the way that I particularly personally found to do that and to help move this along. That doesn’t mean that within my job, my function as a GNSO councilor, I'm not striving to deal with all the other questions. I swear I really am.

But there's things that I think are being a little bit ignored by the community. I think there's an over focus on certain narrow aspects that are important mostly to the western portion of the world, if you want to call it that, and we are kind of blindsided in relation to the other things that we should be caring about. We are very desperately lost in this whole EPDP process and it seems like everything else is smaller. I don’t think everything else is smaller. I think that we should be finding ways

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to move everything that’s under our responsibility, everything that this community needs to do for the Internet. We should be working on all of it with priority, not just take one subject and overwork ourselves to death for two years on that. There's healthier and better ways that we can manage our time.

So that’s my message for now. I'm very glad to answer questions, and if anybody wants to join the project, feel free as well. But if you have like only passing interest, just reach out to us and we are more than happy to hear anything that you might want to contribute to this project. So, thank you very much.

MATTHIAS HUDOBNIK:

Mark, thank you very much for raising this very important topic. It’s very good. It was even not in the questions, but I think universal acceptance is very important also in terms of inclusion and that people can reach their websites in their language. It’s a very important thing also related to the openness. Thank you, and we can also discuss later it.

I will give the floor now to Laurin. Laurin is the vice chair and implementation shepherd of the SSR2, and we’re very much looking forward to your short presentation. Laurin, the floor is yours.

LAURIN WEISSINGER:

Thank you, Matthias. Hello everyone. I'm glad to be here and I'm looking forward to the discussion later as well. So like everyone else, I'll give you a quick idea of what I do and who I am. I'm a cybersecurity

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researcher, and I've been a NextGen, NextGen ambassador, I've been a fellow, and I've also selected some NextGens before as that was moved into a different structure.

And first of all, thank you to all the staff members, Deborah, Siranush, who are managing this and everyone who supported them, because this really was very useful for a lot of people, including myself. For me, it was very useful, not just in terms of getting involved in the policy side here but also in terms of helping my research. So a lot of what I saw at ICANN went into my research while I was doing my PhD. So that is very much appreciated and it also shows that there is a lot people can benefit from and a lot of things that can be relevant to people.

So yeah, after being a fellow, I was assigned to be part of SSR2. I was selected through ALAC and became vice chair. That's a pretty long review process that also wasn't particularly easy at times. It's a big, complicated topic. And now I'm one of the four implementation shepherds for SSR2 and I'm hoping that the four of us can kind of support what is coming in regards to questions and so on for the report we were writing.

To comment on the three big questions, I know we're maybe running a bit slow so I'll try to be quick here. Let's see how well that works. I'll switch around question one and two. Apologies to everyone, but it seems to make more sense in the context of what I'm about to say.

So obviously, having been a member of SSR2, DNS abuse, cybercrime and so on is obviously a key thing that I care about, that I have dealt

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with in-depth in recent years, and I think one of the things we have to see in terms of changes to the DNS is that while there are some technical tools—DNSSEC has been mentioned already where it is kind of time to roll these out and get it done.

A lot of what we need to focus on is more in the area of management, so how do the people who can—usually that’s the contracted parties—respond to incidents, what controls and measures can we put in place that deal with DNS abuse, be this before or after the fact.

And there are things that can be done, and I think we have to move in the direction of figuring that out, defining rules around this, defining KPIs so essentially performance indicators around that, so we can say, yes, this is essentially what is expected of actors in the space, and I think there's a lot of work that the ICANN community will have to put in. Keep that point in mind because I'll be coming back to that in like a minute.

So, should ICANN’s mandate be adapted? To me, obviously, again, cybersecurity is a key problem, and one of the key questions to me is really what is the public interest when it comes to DNS abuse. And maybe a lot of what is happening really needs to see a little bit of exchange in how ICANN, the community, is currently approaching the issue of abuse. And we should keep in mind that maybe making some hard decisions in that space and enforcing more strongly would actually be for the good of the community and the multi-stakeholder policy model, and the reason is that if something as problematic as the abuse of the DNS is kind of seen to be let slide, other actors will kind of



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come in and we don’t know if they will be as open to kind of community discourse and to trying to include different stakeholders.

At the same time, changing the mandate, expanding the mandate I feel is something that is risky. And the reason for that is if you are responsible for everything, you become a catch all and you lose kind of sight of what you want to do or what you have to do. So I think this has to be done in a very careful manner. We have seen and heard before that others have also called for reevaluating things in this area, and I think it has to happen, but at the same time, I feel we have to be careful about what we’re doing.

In terms of the transparency and openness in ICANN and trying to include all the stakeholders, I think just on a theoretical level here, we have a key problem, and that is that ICANN as a community includes players that have strong economic interest to shape policies because these policies define their kind of operational environment as an industry.

Other people—talking from the perspective of ALAC—are volunteers. We have other jobs. So when I did SSR2, as did most of the team, SSR2 was something we did on the side in addition to full-time work. And as you know, a lot of work full time does not mean 40 hours, it means more than 40 hours. So there is a problem here.

And this is why some of this, in terms of inclusivity, is hard to fix. We haven’t even touched on travel and all that other stuff, because on the one hand, for people who have economic interests, it is absolutely

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rational and completely understandable that they have multiple full-time staff to deal with ICANN policy problems. If I were in their position, I would do the same, as would any other kind of company that’s supposed to make money.

And empowerment of the kind of ... I don’t want to say as fortunate, but the other groups that are not involved, like the actors I just described is easier said than done, because you can't take people’s jobs away and make them do volunteering at ICANN full time. You can pay for their flights, but it doesn’t mean that—they still have to invest the time.

At the same time though, I think one of the things we have to get better at as a community is to deal with some of the veil of secrecy that still exists around here, particularly as it relates to questions pertaining to security that I'm obviously sitting close to.

We also can be more transparent at least about some of the interests people have and some of the [cross-affiliations] that are available, which doesn’t mean that we should discount these voices but that they should be seen in context.

However, and to finish here, we still are in a kind of space where there is more availability of voices, where there are more actors involved than we find more or less anywhere else. So this is not to say everything is terrible, but I think there are ways to get better at what we’re doing, and a lot will have to do with kind of really trying to amp up even more the inclusivity and think about how can we address this obvious slant in how different communities are able to engage.

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I hope that helped as well, and obviously, looking forward to discussion. Back to you, Matthias.

MATTHIAS HUDOBNIK:

Thank you very much, Laurin, for your very valuable contribution. I think there were a lot of interesting points, and this is exactly the reason why we are making this session, to get fresh ideas, open ideas, and also stimulate the community a bit and try to maybe do things the other way around.

Nevertheless, I want to give the floor to the next speaker, to Olga Kyryliuk. She's NCUC EC European representative and we are also very much looking forward to your ideas, Olga. The floor is yours.

OLGA KYRYLIUK:

Thank you very much, Matthias. Hi everyone. Greetings from Kiev, Ukraine. I'm very much pleased to be here today and join this amazing panel of speakers, with some of whom we together started our ICANN journey at ICANN 58 in Copenhagen. And since then, as Matthias mentioned, I stayed engaged in the community and did come back as NextGen ambassador, then also as a fellow, and then started to contribute as part of NCSG. At NCSG during the last year, I was serving as a member of the policy committee of NCSG and starting from October meeting last year, I'm representing Europe region at the Executive Committee of NCSG.

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So to come back to the questions which have been raised on today’s agenda and to save time, I want to directly go to the point, and my short answer to this first question about ICANN’s mandate would be no, and here basically, I could conclude responding to this question, but any answer has some rationale behind so I would elaborate a little bit more why I’m so decided to say no, that ICANN mandate should not be adapted to the developments which are happening currently in cyberspace.

And this is so because my strong perception is that ICANN is a technical organization with very well and clearly defined mandate. And this mandate, as you all know, and just to reiterate, this is to ensure coordination of Internet’s unique identifiers and to make sure this system’s functioning is secure and stable.

So everything that goes beyond this mandate falls under someone else’s responsibility, but not ICANN’s. And I believe when we are talking about online content regulation and about the role of digital platforms, then we should first of all refer to nation states and to intergovernmental organizations, but not to such technical organizations as ICANN. Whatever is the global nature of the Internet and whatever was the initial sentiment about a multi-stakeholder governance, it is still the nation states who are the only actors who are able to adopt binding rules and to actually have the enforcement authority to make those rules applied by those, by citizens and companies who are located within their respective jurisdictions.

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To the contrary, ICANN was never granted the authority to regulate online content, and in my strong belief, it should never be the case, neither now nor in the future.

In my opinion, any attempt to try to connect online content regulation with ICANN mandate reminds me the attempts to try to ask the producers of kitchen equipment to fix the bad taste of poorly cooked dinner. Just because they have produced this equipment and just because they have provided these technical means does not mean that they're responsible for every single usage, and in many cases for illegal usage of those technical means. And this can't be the case, because if we start making every single actor, as Laurin said before me, if every single actor in Internet ecosystem will be responsible for everything at the same time, then we basically lose the understanding who is doing what and what responsibility is aligned with which actor, which I believe shouldn't be the case.

There are multiple organizations which are dealing with the whole variety of Internet-related issues, but we should understand that in order to keep the resilience and the stability and security of Internet, each of these organizations has to do its own part of the job, and when we talk about ICANN, its part of the job is purely technical. That's why when we start to talk about expanding the mandate of ICANN, I believe this is not what should be happening, but at the same time, I also think that the community should be engaged in such discussions whenever there are attempts by other organizations or legislators or governments of nation states to shift to ICANN this responsibility for regulating the

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contents, because if we are not part of the debate which is to some extent touching upon the key mandate of the organization, then we basically can't influence that debate. This is why it is so important to be aware of it and to influence those discussions and to make sure that all actors within the Internet ecosystem understand the difference between different layers of Internet and that they understand the clear distinction between the technical layer and the applications and contents which are running on top of the infrastructure.

When addressing the second question, I must say that DNS abuse is not really my field of expertise and this is why I will not stop a lot on it. We'll just mention that performing regular DNS audits and reviews is an essential preventive measure to ensure DNS resiliency, and also, I find that ICANN efforts with identification of abusive domains during the COVID-19 period have been quite efficient.

Also, I'm sure many of you already know this news, but just in case someone missed that, around a month ago, Public Internet Registry, which we all know for managing .org domain, created the DNS Abuse Institute with the aim of research and also creating the tool to identify and report DNS abuse. This is why I'm sure that in the coming months, we will hear a lot of news about what can be done to ensure the resiliency of DNS.

And now moving slowly to the third question, I must say that I believe that there is no problem with transparency and openness of joining PDPs at ICANN. There are plenty of opportunities to get engaged,

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including multiple working groups and mailing lists dedicated to specific ICANN policy issues.

However, I must say that transparency and openness are not the same as inclusivity and meaningful participation, and this is especially felt by representatives of those who stand for noncommercial interests. And this is so because we all know that ICANN is a very complex ecosystem and it requires a lot of time commitment and a lot of efforts to stay engaged, and it is the same—again, I totally agree with Laurin who said before that he was doing that on top of his regular job, and it is especially true for noncommercial stakeholders which are volunteers, and these volunteers are basically the only ones who are standing for human rights just because they strongly believe in that and who are trying to make sure that human rights and noncommercial interests are fairly reflected in all ICANN policies and bylaws.

And this has been especially challenging during the last year when there has been an increased number of online calls and meetings, and the resources have been stretched a lot, and it is true that people go through emotional burnout and it is very difficult to stay engaged and stay connected all the time. And this is also a challenge for the newcomers because first of all, except for the motivation which they have at the beginning, they also need at least some basic knowledge of the issue at stake to be able to meaningfully contribute to the discussions at working groups and various PDPs and to write the public comments. This is why even if we get new members on board, it takes

some time while these members would be able to actually meaningfully contribute and to represent the stakeholder group.

But nevertheless, we are trying our best to get new members on board, and I'm more encouraging those who still haven't decided which stakeholder group or constituency to join to become members of NCUC and NCSG and to help us support and protect the noncommercial interests at ICANN.

And to conclude, I must say that it is very important for the noncommercial voices to be heard, not just because they are the loudest in the community but actually because they are the only ones whose ultimate goal is to serve the noncommercial interests and human rights, and this should be always taken into account.

And as my final statement, I want to say again a thank you for organizing this interesting session and also to thank ICANN for giving the opportunity for next generation to get engaged through such programs as NextGen and fellowship. Thank you.

MATTHIAS HUDOBNIK:

Olga, thank you very much for your input. Also very interesting points taken. The next one in the list will be Clément. Is Clément still here?

MICHELLE DESMYTER:

Clément did leave the meeting. He had to attend another meeting, so he will not be presenting. And just if I could give a kind reminder to all



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speakers if you could please speak at a reasonable speed to allow for accurate interpretation for our interpreters today. Thank you.

MATTHIAS HUDOBNIK:

Okay. Then if Clément is not here, we will move on, last but not least, with Bruna Santos. Bruna is NCSG, is related to the NCSG, and is chairing the NCSG. We are very much looking forward to your thoughts, Bruna. The stage is yours.

BRUNA SANTOS:

Thank you very much, Matthias, and thank you, At-Large, for the invitation as well. I'm also taking the opportunity to congratulate you both on the timely subject we're discussing.

Before becoming the NCSG chair last October, I have acted also as the NCUC chair and NCUC representative for the LAC region. And as many of my colleagues in this call today, I have also been a fellow and a fellowship mentor.

Here in Brazil, I have been working with topics such as content regulation, data protection and IG for a few years now with civil society organizations.

But moving on to my remarks, it's going to be a shorter one, I promise, but I want to address maybe some points that haven't been addressed yet. And I'll start by saying that this month marks one year since the pandemic started, and I believe a lot of us had to reorganize themselves

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around work and the times we had all allocated for ICANN participation and ICANN works.

So as we see the situation develop, a lot of the already existing inequalities in the world and at this community as well were increased after so many restrictions being put in place, and obviously for the necessary reasons.

But that being said, I would like to start by addressing some of the pandemic-related shifts in global civil society. I guess that since March 2020, civic activism and civil society have [maybe seen] newer functions and identities and forms as well. Now the majority of movement in organizations have focused their activities in a more local way and gave much more prominence in the regional level, and even a renewed legitimacy with the local societies.

On top of that, I believe that it’s fair to say that the majority of our activities have been focused on crisis management or responses to the pandemic.

This brings us to the scenario that Olga was just addressing in which the ethos kind of changes, and that means that places like the NCSG or any other spaces for civil society at ICANN might have been strongly affected by the pandemic, and we now have, at first, even less incentives for having people around, and B, less volunteers.

In this situation—and we believe in the NCSG that this is an area that we need to work together in order to improve participation and provide the means for capacitating our members more than ever. At least at NCSG,

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we are seeing and watching a really relevant decrease in engagement and participation. And I believe that on top of it all, providing the means is something that we have been focusing on for the past year, and also working on courses or webinars or anything that could help our members see this community better and also to include them in a lot of the discussions that we host.

And the reason why I'm focusing so much on participation is because I believe this will remain to be one of our greatest challenges moving forward as a community. ICANN has a narrow technical mission and we should stay within it. This is a question that pretty much every single speaker here has replied in the very same ways. And NCSG wouldn't change that. It would never advocate for any changes in the mandate or for ICANN to maybe start dealing with content. We also think that this would be a mistake, even in light of some legislative challenges, we have discussed so much in the past month such as the NIS or DSA or DMA.

And coming directly to the DNS, we also believe that it's important for us to repeat over and over again that this Org is not the only actor involved in the activities of running the DNS. ICANN's mandate has always been to respect the diversity of actors and participation and keep its mission limited to the policies related to the allocation of domain names.

And on that note, I would also say that we need to work on improving our mechanisms and creating more competition and avoid, as Laurin was mentioning as well, industry capture. So here, we do think that

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focusing on protecting the registrants and other consumers of the domain name space in a meaningful way will be a main goal, has always been one of the NCSG and NCUC and NPOC also as well and should remain to be like that.

And last but not least, I guess Olga stated that in a much better way than I could ever, but I would just like to reinforce the invitation for anyone who’s interested in NCSG to become our member. And there are no actual restrictions in being members of At-Large and NCSG. You could exist in both spaces at ICANN. So in case you're interested, please go to NCSG.is and yeah, just file a form and maybe become our member as well. So thank you very much, Matthias, and I look forward to the discussion.

MATTHIAS HUDOBNIK:

Thank you very much, Bruna as well, very interesting points. Now we are over with the presentation. It’s perfect, we have 15 minutes left. First, I want to ask, are there any burning questions of the audience? Because so far, I'm not seeing any raised hands. If not, I would just start with a question.

Okay, I think we had a very good, broad overview from various very likeminded young people, and it’s a lot of interesting topics which I can choose for some further discussions. I would like to try and focus a bit on the DNS abuse and also what Laurin was mentioning before related to end user campaigning and also the knowledge and awareness which is a very important point.

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Especially we here in At-Large are trying to face this DNS at almost every session and our point is always as end user how we can teach people related to social engineering to computer hygiene and also research on predictive analytics and also related to new mandates and to compliance. For example, the modification of the registry agreement or other contractual compliance. So the question, what I want to throw into the round—and I don't know who wants to start—is, so we have on the one side an idea that contractual compliance is for example saying we need to rigorously enforce both registry and registrar accreditation agreement. Then the industry, for example, is more on the side that they produce a DNS framework, so the Contracted Party House where they just say we need to change it a bit and we need to try to get more possibilities to tackle the problems, and then we have also the contracted revision also says that the status quo is a bit untenable.

[So no provision for systematic abuse, reaction mode,] if not enough, compliance is needed and we need more tools. And I wanted to ask—I don't know who wants to start. How do you see that, how can we tackle these abuse problems also related to the different scenarios with registrant data accuracy? There are also problems related to names registered with Facebook information for example where they used actively, I don't know, [30,000] end user, target through messages where they got the information, and then it's the question, how far should we go, and how can we tackle that? Mark, please.

MARK DATYSGELD:

So one thing that struck to me as very important is we recently had strategic outlook session with the GNSO council, SO and AC leaders, and we had different breakout groups. And in every breakout group, the thing that came out on top as a priority was DNS abuse. It was literally the number one concern from any breakout group you can imagine between different stakeholders of different constituencies and interests. So clearly, the community wants to engage in this.

Something that I hear a lot in these discussions is that we lack a definition for what DNS abuse is. But we don't. Right? Like we have from the contracted parties pretty much a very clear definition that is defined in the ICANN bylaws, in the contracts, and then there's also the fact that we do have the voluntary framework on DNS abuse. That was at least a basis for discussion of what can further be implemented.

So we have a lot of bases to work upon. What we lack is a coordinated effort by the community to do that. And I guess you could say, sure, the online era is affecting that. But if you can all remember the distant future back in ICANN Montréal, we had a very good community session on this that I think clarified a lot of the different points of view that are out there about this issue, and we've been having these smaller sessions where [little] things are discussed, but the fact of the matter is we have good definitions to work with. We just need some leadership—and in this sense, I would say we kind of need some help from the Org here, other than just promoting debates. We need some kind of push for the community to start really looking to this, because clearly, if it is such a priority, we can't just have these ad hoc discussions and things.

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The tools are there. Maybe they're not perfectly enforced, but they're there. The definitions are mostly there. It's not as insurmountable as it is sometimes made to look. And this is one of my concerns about ICANN. Why make things so insurmountable when they're not that big? It's very difficult. But we just so happen to have a ton of very intelligent people gathered in the same place who are willing to do this. So might as well be time to start really acting on this. I think Laurin's next in the queue.

MATTHIAS HUDOBNIK:

Yes, Laurin, please.

LAURIN WEISSINGER:

Thank you very much. So I feel that Mark already said a lot of what is important here. What is required is a concerted effort to deal with this. One thing I want to add is that we often hear that, oh, it's a small minority of actors and so on. And then I'm wondering, well, if that is the case, why are these few actors allowed to continue what they're doing?

I'm a cybersecurity researcher, so I look at data, and this is an accurate assessment. We could deal with a lot of the badness that is in the system. And that is not to say all, because you will always have a little bit going on, even if you try very hard, that's just what it is. But we could deal with a considerable amount of what is a problem by dealing with a small number of actors. We're talking like ten fingers kind of situation here where we go through those ten, we have achieved a lot.

And I feel this is one of the key issues where I think the ICANN community needs to reconsider. Imagine in a different industry, be this airplane manufacturing or train manufacturing, it doesn’t matter, where certain manufacturers continue to not do things in a way that is kind of safe and secure for people onboard, they would not exist anymore. And I think the community, you have to say that, yes, there is a point where punishment needs to be a part of the system.

And obviously, there is the concern that this might hit people who shouldn’t be hit. So there has to be a discussion on how to do it. But at the same time, there needs to be some way of dealing with the most egregious parties so that we don’t have kind of [Altnames] version two where essentially not paying bills is how you get out of the system and not because you have been doing things that really no one should be doing in this ecosystem for a very long time. I hope that wasn’t too negative, but I think in addition to what Mark said, it is important to also think about, okay, there needs to be a point where actions have to be taken against specific parties.

MATTHIAS HUDOBNIK:

Yeah, I think that’s a very interesting approach, and I think it’s also important because when we had this At-Large session, there were different scenarios like [this whack-a-mole] scenario, then a scenario with privacy proxy, and third one related to public interest commitments. But I think the most important thing is also that at least from my opinion, the end user perspective needs to be considered more because since we are using the Internet more than ever, also in the



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pandemic times, it’s very important that people are also aware of these abuses, that they know what they need to look after, and that we’re also trying to educate and campaign, which we already try to do also at the last ICANN meeting.

Now I will just, with only six minutes left, I want to go a little bit more to the transparency questions which I think it’s also very important. We are very well aware that there are sometimes some issues related to economical incentives where people have cross relations or sometimes also stepping out in community and there are sometimes [inaudible] then going on, but in general, I would say that ICANN is trying to me as much accountable as possible. nevertheless, there should be definitely more efforts taken to ensure that this level of transparency will be higher and that we can tackle these problems.

But I want to go more when we talk about transparency and also openness, how can we ensure like the universal acceptance, a topic which I think is very important that it’s also on the nature of the Internet, that people can use their domains and also can enter the domains via their language. And there, I would be maybe curious to hear if Mark has some other ideas, if he wants, or some other person, how can we try to push this effort more? Because I think it’s also a very important topic related to—that we are not excluding Internet users, and especially also people from other regions [who are] not aware of it. Mark, do you want to say something to this, or some other person?

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**MARK DATYSGELD:** Yeah, very briefly, I'll just get the conversation started. We would like to demystify the idea that this is an entirely technical effort. And in this sense, we need other hands. We need the civil society, the academics. And my question would be then to you guys from the noncommercials, how do you feel we can better communicate, how do we better feel that we can give you the data that you need? What would be the right channels? That's more my question. How can we help you guys help us?

**MATTHIAS HUDOBNIK:** Yeah, that's a very good point, definitely. Anyone else who wants to say something related to universal acceptance? Sarah, please, the floor is yours.

**SARAH KIDEN:** Yeah, I just wanted to reiterate something that Jonathan said on the chat about launching massive outreach campaigns. We have At-Large Structures, and I think right now, we have people in a lot of the countries, so we can start from what we have, do outreach with the communities we have, and then reach out further to other people that are not part of the community, but just start with our At-Large Structures in the different countries. Thank you.

**MATTHIAS HUDOBNIK:** Thank you, Sarah. It's a very important point. I saw that Sébastien wants to say something. Sébastien, do you want to say something

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related to the topic, or just a general comment? Please, the floor is yours.

SÉBASTIEN BACHOLLET: You don’t want me to wait until you finish with this topic? It will be better then.

MATTHIAS HUDOBNIK: Okay. I thought you want to say something related to universal acceptance.

SÉBASTIEN BACHOLLET: No, general topic. Thank you.

MATTHIAS HUDOBNIK: Then I see another hand of Yik Chan Chin. Please, the floor is yours.

YIK CHAN CHIN: Thank you. I'm from the ICANN Asia pacific region and also from ICANN China community and I'm also from IETF China. So my understanding of the universal acceptance issue is that actually, in China, they have developed a numerous number of the Chinese DNS domain name, but when look at the figures just presented by Mark, I felt a bit discouraged about how the Chinese character was accepted by the other websites.

I think the problem I observed from the Chinese ICANN community is that people are not really actively engaged in the ICANN’s even At-Large

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community. So I think I do not really know the problem, whether it is a language issue or the lack of members’ participation in the ICANN communities, because we have almost 400 members in ICANN China community, but actually not many people engaged in the international [inaudible]. So I'm not sure what's the problem, if it's a language problem or maybe lack of representative in the ICANN At-Large. That's my comment.

MATTHIAS HUDOBNIK:

Thank you very much for your comment. I think this is, again—or your comment is still showing that it's a very important issue, that there are a lot of people aware of it, but still, it's not pointed into this direction as far as it should. That's why I think we should definitely focus more on it and to get also more view and also more public consultation to this very important topic.

Since we are almost running out of time, I want to give Sébastien the floor. I cannot see any other hand. Very briefly, Sébastien, I give you the floor before I conclude because we are already one minute after 8:00. Please, the floor is yours.

SÉBASTIEN BACHOLLET:

Thank you for giving me the floor. I'm the oldest one to talk tonight, but I also feel quite young. 20 years ago, I wish when I first met with ICANN, I wish that we had such a great program as the one you talked about today, NextGen and supporting so many people. It would have been great 20 years ago to have that. But I think it is excellent that we have

this type of exchanges. And I think you're going to do a lot for this organization, just like León, you are the future of ICANN. Thank you very much.

MATTHIAS HUDOBNIK:

Thank you very much, Sébastien. Yeah, I would love to discuss more issues. I think it was a very interesting session. I want to conclude just very quickly to not take much more of your time. I think it was a very important session related to the three main questions, but also to universal acceptance, which I'm very thankful that Mark was bringing to the table.

As you can see, my dear community, there are a lot of young folks with likeminded ideas. I hope we can go on with these discussions. The next time, I will try to schedule it a little bit differently that we have more time to discuss these issues, and I hope that people will also ask even more questions.

Yeah, at the end, I can just thank you all for the participation, and even thanks more to the great ideas and presentations of our panelists, the next generation leaders. And with this, I want to close the session and wish you a good morning, good afternoon, good evening. Thank you very much.

MICHELLE DESMYTER:

Thank you, Matthias, and thank you, everyone. Meeting has been adjourned.

the Development of the DNS: Voices of the Next Generation!

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