GAC Meeting with ICANN Nominating Committee

Session # 13

Session Objective

Building on recent GAC discussions about the potential use of the GAC's reserved slot on the ICANN Nominating Committee (NomCom), the goal of this session is to inform GAC representatives about the role that individual members of the NomCom exercise in the nomination of future ICANN community leaders and to alert the GAC to the planned work of the NomCom for the rest of the 2024 calendar year.

Session Agenda

During this session, members of the NomCom Leadership Team will visit the GAC to explain their 2024 work plan, promote the opportunity for ICANN leadership applications and provide information about the role of NomCom members and liaisons.

Background

The ICANN Nominating Committee (NomCom) is an independent committee tasked with identifying and selecting individuals for ICANN leadership positions. The ICANN Bylaws call for the NomCom to make a specified number of appointments each year to the ICANN Board of Directors (Board), the Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) Council, the Country-Code Names Supporting Organization (ccNSO) Council, and the At-Large Advisory Committee (ALAC). For years, the GAC has had a reserved non-voting liaison position on the NomCom. However, this position has gone vacant for some years due to a lack of agreement within the committee on the proper role for this position. At one point back in 2015 a GAC Working Group was formed to help facilitate GAC consideration of NomCom participation.

There was an exchange of views on NomCom issues on the GAC e-mail list back in December 2017. Several members indicated support for the GAC taking up its position on the NomCom. Others noted concerns about the NomCom's requirement for confidentiality, which was raised as possibly creating problems of accountability and transparency for the GAC. While this issue was discussed several times in the GAC over the past years, there was never any GAC-wide consensus on the matter.

As of the GAC's ICANN62 Panama City meeting (2018) there was no consensus in the GAC on whether the GAC should resume the position available to it on the NomCom. Consequently, the GAC agreed on developing public policy-focused criteria to be submitted annually to the NomCom

as guidance it could use in selecting appointees to the ICANN Board. Since that time, every year the GAC has shared essentially similar criteria, in place of the committee naming an individual to serve on the NomCom. The committee has made sure to emphasize that the lack of a GAC participant in any given year to the NomCom should not create an assumption that no future appointments will be made.

Recent Developments

With several new changes now coming to the way the NomCom will operate in the future – including the transformation of the GAC and other community NomCom positions from non-voting to voting roles, the question has been raised whether circumstances have changed enough over the last several years to warrant a possible change in the perception of committee members on this issue.

When the ICANN Board Chair reached out earlier this year to ask the GAC and other community groups to share thoughts about potential NomCom rebalancing and other issues, it was suggested that the GAC discuss the matter collectively at ICANN78. The GAC conducted a robust discussion of the topic during ICANN78 (see session transcript at https://gac.icann.org/sessions/icann78-session-4-gac-operational-matters-nomcom-planning-working-groups-etc) during which GAC representatives shared the full range of views noted above.

This session scheduled for ICANN79 will enable NomCom leaders to directly explain to the GAC what the role of a NomCom liaison is and how an appointee from the GAC would expect to operate in that environment.

Key Reference Documents

- 2024 Nominating Committee Web page - https://www.icann.org/nomcom2024
- Example of GAC Annual Input on Selection Criteria to the NomCom - https://gac.icann.org/contentMigrated/gac-chair-letter-regarding-the-nomcom-criteria

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