ICANN72 | Virtual Annual General Meeting - Plenary Session: Designing Hybrid ICANN Public Meetings to Equalize In-Person & Remote Participation
Wednesday, October 27, 2021 - 00:00 to 00:00 PDT

ANDREA GLANDON: Welcome, everyone, to our ICANN72 plenary session. We'll be getting started in approximately one minute. Thank you for holding.

Okay, Chris. We do have the scheduled start time. Are you ready to get started?

CHRIS DISSPAIN: I am.

ANDREA GLANDON: Okay. Great. Please start the recording.

[Recording in progress]

ANDREA GLANDON: Hello and welcome to the ICANN72 Plenary Session: Designing ICANN Public Hybrid Meetings to Equalize In-Person and Remote Participation. My name is Andrea Glandon, and I am the remote participation manager.

Please note that this session is being recorded and follows the ICANN Expected Standards of Behavior.

Interpretation for this session includes Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian, and Spanish. Click the "Interpretation" button in the Zoom toolbar to select your preferred language output.

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Please ensure that you have selected your preferred language input. Please speak clearly and at a reasonable pace to allow for accurate interpretation.

Once the session moderator calls on your name, kindly unmute your microphone, then state your name for the record.

During the community discussion, to have a comment read aloud by the remote participation manager, please add your comment in the chat pod starting with "comment" and ending with "comment." To have a question read aloud by the remote

participation manager, please add your question in the chat pod starting with "question" and ending with "question."

Additionally, suggestions will be added to a Jamboard will be shared during the conclusion. When submitting a suggestion, please start with "suggestion" and end with "suggestion." Text outside these quotes will be considered part of the chat record and will not be added to the Jamboard.

Please now welcome session moderator Chris Disspain. You may begin.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Thank you very much, Andrea. And good morning, afternoon, evening, to everybody. Welcome.

My name is Chris Disspain, and I get to be the moderator for this session, designing hybrid ICANN meetings so we can equalize participation and the meeting experience between those present in person and those who are remote.

This session is not about what steps will make it easier for you to attend the face-to-face meeting. It's not about masks and vaccinations and ventilation and the number of people in the room. It's about building on the remote participation improvements that ICANN Org have managed in the last 18

months and melding those with physical meetings to create a truly hybrid ICANN meeting.

We've got -- we've got 90 minutes, and we want this to be as interactive as possible, and so we're not using a webinar room. Yay!

A couple of logistics. Open Zoom is obviously much better for interaction, but it has a high level of responsibility for all of you to remember to do things like mute your microphone if you've spoken or you've unmuted it.

Hands up for questions or comments, obviously when we get to that section, and as has already been explained in the chat, "comments" or "questions" or "suggestions" in quotes so we know where we are.

We're going to hear from three panelists for about five minutes each on their efforts to build hybrid meetings. We're going to hear from Barbara Povse who is the chair of CENTR and she's going to talk about CENTR's efforts. Going to hear from Chengetai Masango from the IGF, and he's going to talk about the upcoming IGF in Poland and what they're doing to make -- create a good hybrid experience. And we're going to hear from Sandra Hoferichter, who is, of course, the Secretary General of EuroDIG, who is going to talk about what they did and have done for their

hybrid meeting. Then we're going to hear briefly from Ashwin, ICANN's Chief Information Officer. Ash is going to tell us about some of the practical and logistical issues of ICANN holding a hybrid meeting. Then we're going to hear from Anna Goulden, from the UK government, GAC rep, who is going to give us a brief GAC perspective. From Maarten Botterman, Chair of the Board, who is going to give a very brief overview of the Board's perspective. And then we're going to have an open microphone with questions, comments, and suggestions from hopefully all of you.

I'm hopeful that we'll get through the information at the beginning of this session relatively speedily. I'm looking forward to hearing from our panelists. And I'm going to go first to Barbara, if I may, and ask her to start off the panel session.

Barbara, over to you.

BARBARA POVSE: Thank you, Chris. My name is Barbara Povse, and I am currently general manager of .SI registry where .SI stands for a cute little country, Slovenia. But as Chris already mentioned, I'm talking today as chair of Board of Directors of CENTR. For those who don't know, CENTR is a council of European country code top-level domain registries.

And, so yeah, so we are trying to get -- to find a solution to make hybrid meetings work in a way that would enable equal participation of online participants and, at the same time, not taking away the benefits and joy of people sitting together in the room.

It's mainly because we have been sitting behind our screens for the last year and a half, and even though we have maybe realized that not all the meetings in the past were worth to travel and that some are actually better online, we have to admit online meetings cannot replace physical ones. Meeting people, hugging and touching, at the coffee table, that can't be replaced with any sophisticated online platform. So we are slowly getting, I think, desperate to meet.

And CENTR is organizing our first face-to-face meeting on November 15. That means that, unfortunately, I can't share with you the highlights and the failures because we are still in the planning phase, but I can share with you how we plan to do it.

And I know that speakers who will be -- who will follow me, they actually have much more difficult task, because organizing a global event, it's much, much more complex and difficult as organizing original one.

Firstly, we don't have to deal with unsolvable problem of different time zones. As maybe you know, most, the vast majority of CENTR members are living in the same time zone, plus minus two, as I as mathematician need to say.

Secondly, if we talk about scale, well, obviously, CENTR's meetings are much, much smaller in the numbers of participants as ICANN or IGF. And even so, for this first face-to-face meeting, we decided to make it even smaller. Usually we don't have any limitation on the numbers of participants who can attend CENTR meetings, but this time we decided to go with one participant per member. That means that the maximum number of participants sitting in the room will be 35. This is really small. And all the rest can, of course, participate online.

But judging on the fastest-ever registration in the history of CENTR, we think, with registration started coming in the minute after the meeting was published, I would say that this pandemic meeting (indiscernible) will have absolutely no effect on the future face to face meetings of CENTR.

So how we will try to org it? We are working on assuring equality of online and face-to-face participants for the formal part of the meeting. And still, as I said before, not taking away the joy of those sitting in the room.

There will be a screen in front of the meeting room where online participants will be in front of us or with us when asking questions, contributing to the discussions, and/or given presentations. And we will have a full-time support for online participation so that nothing could go wrong.

Financially, that means that approximately 33% of the budget for meeting will go for online, is allocated for online participation.

In addition, we also decided to make this meeting a little shorter than our usual physical meetings. Our experience is that online participants won't be able to equally participate for the whole day because sitting in front of the screen is exhausting.

And finally, we didn't plan any additional social events for online participants. It turned out that these social events, while we are -- we are really fed up with Zoom and nothing can really replace a dinner with friends and chatting with colleagues that you haven't seen for a year and a half.

And with this, I'm done, Chris. And I give you the floor back.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Thank you, Barbara. And hopefully you'll -- you'll be around still to answer some questions from the floor when we get there.

BARBARA POVSE: Of course, absolutely.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Let's go to Chengetai, who's obviously going to be some fun with the hybridness of the IGF in Poland in December. Chengetai, please, your turn.

CHENGETAI MASANGO: Thank you very much, Chris. I will not -- I've got slides, but I won't show them. We can just speak. I think that's much better. And as Barbara was saying, I mean, we're going back to the hybrid -- to the face-to-face and hybrid and we're trying to enhance the hybrid format as well with the online. We have -- we at the IGF have done online since, I think, almost the beginning, but let's say we did it properly since maybe 2008, 2009 with getting better as the years have gone by. But for this year we are really making our efforts for a hybrid meeting which is blended participation in the IGF so that participants in all sessions, whether you're on-site or online, can contribute equally and have comparable experiences in terms of making interventions, et cetera, and socializing online.

So what we have done for the -- the first part is, as Barbara was saying, I mean, we do have basically the same stuff as -- if you're going to the workshop room, even if you're fully online or fully offline or in the mix, you will still have a workshop room. So if you

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have a session at the IGF, you could go into the workshop room. You could find nobody on stage. You could find the stage full. Or you could find only half the panelists there. But that -- that will be there. And we will have a screen as well which will show the Zoom room and will show all the participants there on the screen.

As far as moderation is concerned, as far as requesting the floor is concerned, we have one way which you can request the floor. There's no putting your hands up, there's no queuing. We do have an IGF app. So if you want to request the floor for a particular session, you put your name into the queue, whether you're on-site or whether you're off-site, and then the moderator can call your name according to the order to which you appear in their screen, whether it be on the laptop or computer or phone. So we will have that order, and we hope that will equalize the participation.

And also we have an interactive schedule which we've had. We've enhanced it this time around as well. So it's tied into your schedule, and you know where you want to be, and even if you're at Katowice, sometimes you can't make it to the room. You can do it in your hotel room as well. So that would be fine.

The other thing we're going to be doing as well is that we are creating the venue virtually online. So we are using a -- this CollectiVibe, which will construct the venue in cyberspace, so to

speak. So when we have our IGF Village, that is where -- basically it's our exhibition center where organizations can showcase their Internet governance efforts. It will also be available online. So some of them will be there on-site, but yet they don't have to be on-site. They can also be online. All of them will be online. And you can go in there, you can watch the videos. You can chat with people at -- at their booths as well, and you can download documents, PDF files, or whatever it may be.

We are encouraging remote hubs and we are also asking these remote hubs in advance which sessions that they are interested in. So if it is a main session, if it is a workshop session, and we want to connect these people together with the session organizers so that they have a space within the -- within that session to make an intervention and to also ask. So this, of course, requires a lot of coordination, but we are definitely doing it for our main sessions and our high-level sessions. And we are also offering it for the -- all the other regular sessions, but I don't know how well we're going to do it with the regular sessions. But for those sessions we control, we're definitely going to be doing that.

Also, since time zone is an issue, the meeting is in Katowice, in Poland, and what we're doing is that we're just increasing the time only by an hour. So we're starting an hour earlier and ending an hour later. That's all we can do, because otherwise, we'll have

to pay for a whole new shift, and that will basically double the labor costs. But what we -- we can do is that all the sessions are going to be posted on YouTube and people can watch them later and can also make comments to these sessions. And those comments are going to be collected by the session organizers and incorporated into their session reports. So, I mean, that's one way we can do it so that we have comments from people who could not watch it because they're in an inconvenient time zone.

We've made breakout rooms possible online and also on-site. What we've learned is that it's very difficult to mix breakout rooms on-site and for those who are on-site and for those who are online. So what -- what we are recommending people do is that those people who are on-site have their own breakout rooms or even a couple of breakout rooms and those who are you off-site also have their own breakout rooms but not to really mix them. We found that has worked out properly. We did have a test run with this during our third open consultations that we had at the end of last month which we tried our hybrid format, and yes, we did trip up a little bit now and then. But now we know where these points are, and we're making our efforts just to smooth them out as well.

Bilateral rooms, same thing. Bilateral rooms, they are fully organized so that you can integrate online and off-site for meeting participants.

We have the music nights and social receptions as well. Music is very difficult to do online because of the latency effects. So I don't think that's going to work that well, but we're going to give it a shot. But the receptions we are going to have, especially through our virtual platform that we're going to have, try and get that.

I think that is all, and I think I've talked a lot. So I have distributed the slides so you can download them and look at them, and if you have any questions, please just let me know. Thanks.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Thanks, Chengetai. Some interesting points there, especially about the watching the sessions afterwards on YouTube and being able to comment. I think that's a really valuable thought.

Just before I go to Sandra, just a reminder to everybody, questions, suggestions, comments in the chat. Please, we are going to have hands up for people to talk at the end, at the end before -- way before the end, so do save some energy for actually putting your hands up and chatting. That would be fantastic. That's what makes it interactive. But for now, let's go to Sandra for the EuroDIG perspective. Sandra, over to you.

SANDRA HOFERICHTER: Thank you, Chris. Can you hear me?

CHRIS DISSPAIN: I can hear you. If you lose connection, we'll let you know. At the moment you're okay. Nice curtains, by the way.

SANDRA HOFERICHTER: I switch off my video anyway because in the testing we realize my connection is not the best today. I'm in a hotel on vacation, so I apologize for this, but I'm following closely.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak here, and first of all, I would like to congratulate this community, ICANN, IGF, and everything that is around it, for being able to switch so easily from the in-person model to the online model. I think this is really an extraordinary skill that this community has because I could see in other communities, they had much more problems in working online and getting used to remote participation.

And then I would like to speak about, first of all, the experience that we had with two virtual EuroDIGs, the sort of innovation that we integrated in our online meetings, and I would like to give an outlook and a short and very personal resume. On the experience.

Finally, for me, we were able to transfer a program to -- from the offline to the online space as it was in place with physical meeting. So we didn't change the program structure at all, and this was one

of the most surprising innovations -- not an innovation but actually the most surprising point for me, that works off -- online -- sorry, on-site, can also work in the virtual space. But we could see the people's behavior was quite different. For instance, people sign up for a session on a very, very short notice. Basically just before the start of the session. So a session's organizer have to be prepared for that in terms of sending the credentials and all those kinds of things.

Also, we realize people are getting much more picky, because as Barbara said, we all are tired of Zoom meetings, so you really pick and choose what kind of session you would like to attend.

On the other hand, it was much easier to get participants from outside the community that, in a normal environment, you would never get when you have a meeting with face to face or at a present meeting.

This was really the most significant experience that we had with two virtual meetings now.

On the innovation side, you know, EuroDIG is a regional forum. We don't have the issues of time zone issues. And what we did is we set up three studios across the continent, let's call them mini hubs, and we wanted to create a sort of community feeling across the continent.

From the feedback of participants that we got, we found this was a great success because this moderation in between the studios really gave a sort of we are sitting all in the same boat, we are looking all in the screen, yes, but we are somehow virtually connected.

We also used, in our second virtual meeting, a tool named Gather.town where we built a virtual conference center. I must say half of the participants were really very much amused by this tool and really liked it, but the other half of participants found this an additional hurdle they didn't want to take. So you basically have to be very careful if you make such a tool as the only point of entrance because you won't lose any participants that are not ready to use those kinds of tools.

We also made some experiment with social events, but we found the effort that you put in such social events and the feedback that you get is basically that only a very small group is interested in the social event. They are quite costly. They need a lot of preparation and these kinds of things. And personally, I would not suggest to invest too much into social events. Rather, invest every effort into a good connection.

On the outlook, I think we have to expect changes on both sides, on participants that participate in the meeting physically, and we will also see changes in the online participants.

My guess is that people are getting very much picky in terms of choosing where do I travel and where -- what kind of event I just take from the screen. And I think everything which is related to knowledge transfer, pure knowledge transfer, and leave networking aside, will work perfectly in a hybrid and online form. Everything that needs to have a hug, a coffee, a glass of beer at the bar and an individual discussion, that needs to be done in a physical meeting mode. And when people are taking the effort -- and I think that will also change in the future. When people are taking the effort of doing a travel, they are expecting to have good networking environment and experiences.

For me, the conclusion here is we don't need in the future overload agendas, because it's tiring for participants on the screen, on the Zoom or whatever platform, and it's also tiring -- or it's not what people expect when they travel across the globe.

So my guess would be we need much more networking breaks for the people that traveled to a certain meeting place, because they want to meet. They want to discuss. They don't want to just listen to what another person or panel speaker or whatever is saying. And we need to have shorter session also in order to make it much easier for the --

(Indiscernible)

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SANDRA HOFERICHTER: Because shorter session would also make it much easier for remote participants to follow a session.

And as I said, I think the overloaded agendas with short break, this is nothing for the future. This is not a concept that would work for the future.

I would also like to encourage you to think about, and think about it in a positive way, we do not have to provide equal participation for online and offline participants because it is not equal. People will pick and choose where to travel and where to stay in an online mode. And if I choose to stay at home, I do not expect to be fully equal. Of course I do expect to be able to join easily, to connect easily. I expect to contribute easily. But I do not expect to have all the same opportunities as a participant who choose to travel to a place. And this doesn't mean that there's a disadvantage between one or the other. It's just a different type of participation for both, for online and for on-site participants.

And I still think there is a lot of space for funny things. Like, for instance, recently a sort of mind war that we could also use the Global Villages or the booth areas as little remote hub. So for people that want to have a short individual discussion after a session, an ICANN booth, an ISOC booth or an IGF booth can be used as a little hub where maybe people can just stand together,

maybe can have a coffee. One participant one or two or three are on the screen; the others are standing around. A microphone that serves the purpose. I think this is not rocket science. There is still a lot of improvement that can be done, but in general, I would say we have to think on changes on both sides; on the people what they expect when they travel across the world and on the on-site participants -- sorry, on the online participant side.

And I stop here and give back to Chris.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Sandra, thank you. And, yes, it is -- striving for it to be an equal experience is an impossibility, I think. Driving towards -- driving towards making it as equalized as possible is a worthy goal.

Thank you.

Now we're going to go to Ash who is going to talk to us a bit about logistics, and so on, from ICANN Org's perspective.

Ash, over to you.

ASHWIN RANGAN: Thank you, Chris. Thank you, everybody, for giving us the opportunity to present what we're thinking about.

I'm going to lean back a little bit so that we have context about how we have been going about doing things, and then lean into our thinking about the hybrid meetings.

If you think back, even before COVID-19 we used to offer remote participation for people who were unable to participate in person for whatever reasons. They could submit questions; they could submit their comments using chat and Q&A features.

But when the pandemic was coming at us in force by February of last year, our Board took the decision to convert the first of these meetings into a virtual meeting in March of 2020. And it presented us with a wonderful opportunity to figure out whether technologies could supplant or at least serve in the place of having to physically meet. And looking back, this now is the sixth -- ICANN72 is the sixth such meeting that we have, and we've learned a great deal over the last five iterations leading up to the sixth one.

The backbone for us has been Zoom, and Zoom has been mentioned multiple times. We have had a wonderful relationship with the Zoom senior management team to the point that their CEO and I are on literally speed dial, so when we have issues or requests, we're able to get that level of connection. And several improvements that are now benefiting this community are directly as a result of our engineering teams working together

hand in hand and delivering these on relatively short time frames. And of course we have made sure that these are available back to Zoom, too, so that everybody can benefit from some of these innovations that we've been co-authoring or collaborating with Zoom to bring to the forefront here.

I think one of the things that we learned through all of this is that having technology proved to be a leveling branch, so to speak, because it became so that everybody had an equivalent platform, and there was a feeling of inclusivity, equitability, and globality. And for our multistakeholder participation, this proved to be something that worked directly in line with what we have always been aspiring to. I don't think we went into it thinking this is what the outcome would be, but certainly that has been one of the outcomes that we have seen.

As a result of that, as we look at hybrid, in the org we want to continue to meet participants at their comfort level by continuing to provide them with flexibility to either attend the meeting in person. As Sandra was saying, there may be different levels of comfort depending on who wants to attend, from where they want to attend, whether the pathway to get to the intended location is available, and safety. Those are considerations that are speculative, at best, at this point in time.

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From a technology perspective, as we look at the future of ICANN meetings, a fully in-person public meeting as they used to be, we don't know when that will be. So we are taking the approach that we must offer a platform that is available for anybody who wishes to participate from anywhere, anytime, particularly if they're using technology on any device. So that's a kind of mindset with which we're going in. And to help us, we're also leaning back on a definition, finally, of what is a hybrid meeting. You know, the connotation of the word "hybrid" varies from one person to the next. So we looked at a source of meeting professionals international, and there was a formal definition of hybrid meeting that says hybrid meetings include any meeting or event with at least one group of face-to-face participants that digitally connect with participants in another or multiple other locations.

So we're looking at our hybrid strategy in that context. And there are several considerations that we're taking into our sort of thinking processes here.

The first is engagement. When choosing virtual event software, there are many innovative options that is are available out there. We today, for instance, have embraced discussion boards with accessibility features. You know, audio streaming an option. Real-time transcription in English is an option. That button that you see at the bottom of Zoom was something that was co-created in the last six or eight months. Simultaneous

interpretation is an option. We now offer one-to-one private meeting rooms in Zoom with a capacity limit of up to 50 people. We have virtual survey tools, polling tools, Q&A as a pod that's available, YouTube live-streaming is available. I mean, the -- all of these are channels for engagement, and we wish to carry them forward, whether they're Zoom meeting rooms or webinars. I know that webinars has a history here. Session recordings and transcripts which are available post the session. These are all things that continue to be valuable engagement tools.

At the same time as continuing to look at these, we are also evaluating several potential options to enhance the experience. We're trying out Zoom white boarding. Jamboard is another option that we're using in the background. Fact, we'll be using Jamboard today for this session. Social networking platforms. We're looking at how to integrate what we do with them, if the need be. Perhaps pre-recorded on-demand content that is available to the community. Increasing availability of sessions streamed on YouTube. These are all tools that we're continuing to look at.

From an environment perspective, our thrust is to make sure that we provide an equal, quote, unquote, equal experience. And to do that, it takes a new behavior for all of us to have to embrace. For instance, if the number of people who are physically in a location is relatively small compared to the number participating

from a distance, then everybody will need to be on Zoom for every session. Everybody will need to use some kind of a device with a headset and a microphone to participate. The way we're thinking about this is to have a single integrated queue where questions are posed, and interventions are made.

We'll need to learn new habits when we do this as we enter into this model, because even though we may be in the room, we will need to be mindful about switching on and switching off our microphone when we speak and when we are done with speaking; otherwise, there could be ambient noise and feedback loops that can be very annoying.

Room setup itself may be different depending on whatever physical distance is required at that point in time in that location. So these are environmental considerations that we're thinking through.

In much of this, we're taking connectivity for granted, but we indeed to be sensitive to the fact that not everybody has high bandwidth for connectivity, which is one of the reasons why we're looking at ways in which to accommodate the people who may have bandwidth issues. Live streaming, in fact, is something that may consume more bandwidth than we see. We offer lower bandwidth options as a result. Only-audio streaming is an option that we're looking at. We're looking at YouTube as a means to

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convey the content while something is going on because we have seen in our experimentation that it consumes slightly less bandwidth than a native Zoom session that is being streamed out.

Another aspect that we're thinking through is the production environment itself. So if you think of these as a staged kind of production, in staging these, the room setup may need to vary depending, again, on the ambient nature of conditions that are imposed by the facility or by the local government, wherever it is we host the event. How many people can we anticipate is a question that we continue to wrestle with. And depending on how many people are there, how many are in the facility participating as opposed to being present in the location, so to speak.

We may need fewer sessions that allow for more space for overflow rooms depending on the level of attendance. So we're thinking that through.

From a camera's viewpoint, when we think about how to present the speaker, we're thinking about how do we have clear line of sight for physical room cameras, providing more than one viewing angle to enrich the online experience, rather than just be focused on the one camera which is native to the tool that may be used by the speaker at that point in time.

From a facilitation perspective, we are focused on providing stronger facilitation which is more mindful of the fact that remote participants are being treated as equally as the people in the room themselves. Previously, if you think about it, remote participants would wait for a certain point in time before their queued-up questions or comments were batched, whereas here we're trying to create a singular queue. So we need to have a new behavior in the remote participation manager to be sure that they're respecting how these interventions and questions are coming through.

And finally, from a pure logistics viewpoint, what does it take for ICANN Org to hold an ICANN meeting? You know, it takes months of preparation and planning. Each one of our physical meetings, five, six months is fairly typical for us. So even as this meeting is going on, if we were in physical mode, literally at the end of this meeting we would be having a pre-meeting visit to the next location to ensure the facilities are up to par. In many a case we have gone in looking at a facility only to return from the first trip saying, "Oh, my God, we need to redo that entire network." And we've had to work for three, four months with their I.T. provider to create a network so the network is ready when we get there. That's just an example.

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we have had to work for three, four months with their I.T. provider to create a network so that the network is ready when we get there. That's just an example.

In a couple of cases, we've left behind our network so that that facility could benefit from what we put in place because it was leaps and bounds ahead of what they previously had.

Now, regardless of how many people attend in person, we have other logistics. We have container loads of equipment that need to get to the physical location, microphones, video equipment, signage, screens, projectors, laptops, wi-fi equipment, the stuff that makes wi-fi -- our network wi-fi available to you in every locale, for instance. All of that is set up by our teams. So these are a couple of container loads that need to get there. And whether 200 people show up or 2,000 people show up to our meetings, we need to have the same kind of equipment available. The quantity may be less, but the logistics are the same for us.

And much of this, if it is in bulk, has to be sent in cargo ships, so there is the supply chain issues that are prevalent around the world today that we're contending with. So there's quite a bit of work that goes into thinking, planning, figuring up road logistics or ocean logistics, unless we're able to take a smaller quantity and just air transport it at a significantly higher cost.

And then there's the interpretation. I'm sure that you've seen, when you attend in person, that there are interpretation booths along one of the sides of the rooms in many different rooms where we offer more than a single language. During the pandemic, we have been successful in handling interpretation remotely, and we're looking as we look at the future and hybrid meetings on how we can capture some of these new capabilities and render them without necessarily having to replicate the physicality that we used to previously have. So this is just a long list of considerations that are going into what we are thinking of as we consider the hybrid meeting.

So with that, I'm going to hand the microphone back over to you, Chris.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Thank you. Thank you, Ash. Very interesting, and helpful. There's been a lot of stuff going on in the chat. Some of that stuff -- a lot of that stuff is being captured, and we're going to get to it in the not-too-distant future. But before that, let's go to Anna to give us a government or a GAC or a community generally perspective. Anna, over to you.

ANNA GOULDEN: Thanks so much, Chris, and hello to everyone. Like Chengetai, I also prepared some slides, but I think for the sake of interactivity I'll speak without them and then post them in the chat instead for those interested.

So as Chris mentioned, I'm here to offer a GAC perspective on the issue. I will be sharing some of the reflections that we've had within the GAC on the topic so far. Of course, it's worth saying that the GAC is just one group within the ICANN community and even does sort of a great range of sectors among GAC members. So my goal today is really just to give you a general sense of some of the thoughts, ideas, and experiences GAC members have shared.

So the first question I'm going to speak about is the benefits and risks of returning to hybrid meetings from the GAC perspective. So first of all, it's worth saying that there's a clear appetite in the GAC for returning to sort of the option to attend in person. So in a poll of GAC members, of the 20 or so countries who responded, nearly 43% said they were highly likely to attend ICANN73 in person. And in discussions, many have pointed out that in-person interactions allow for corridor conversations and networking opportunities which are very important to GAC members. But at the same time, there was also a strong appreciation that not everyone will have the option to attend our meetings in person, so due to factors such as vaccine availability and travel

restrictions, and so we must be careful to ensure that the transition to hybrid meetings is fair for all attendees, regardless of region.

So for those who responded to the poll saying that they were unlikely to attend in person, the most common reason was COVID-19 travel restrictions, followed by the cost and the time associated with traveling.

So in terms of the risks of hybrid meeting, it was clear that the group was emphasizing the need to ensure as far as possible that online participants are treated on par and with those in-person and to avoid disadvantaging particular groups or regions. But we also identified some risks such as the environmental impacts to increased travel, obviously there's been a lot of savings from not traveling under the virtual setting, and health risks of attending in person which may worry some members as well as costs and resource demands on the ICANN organization of all of this extra planning.

So in terms of how we can actually, you know, work to ensure that ICANN meetings in the hybrid format are fair for all attendees, and there are a few ideas within the group. So in the GAC poll, participants are asked which of the following items would you most like to see at the first ICANN hybrid meeting. So we had 71.4% selecting opportunities for virtual networking and informal

discussion. So, for instance, some excellent ideas that we mentioned already, but things like breakout rooms and small group meetings help replicate those informal corridor conversations and the opportunity to have coffee breaks and other social opportunities for both in-person and online participants. 47.6 selected sort of having a real-life screen to bring virtual participants into the room. 51.7% pointed out an effective fair online system for moderating and managing requests of the floor. So one idea that's already been mentioned is sort of having an integrated system for both online and in-person participants. And we also had suggestions around new interactive virtual tools such as kind of Wonder.me that could help facilitate social interactions and also the need for real time interpretation for all participants as well as sort of having user-friendly and accessible tools that everyone can access and an online moderator who perhaps is sort of partnering together with the in-person moderator.

So in the poll we are also asking around, you know, the biggest concerns for members of the return to -- I'll say the transition to hybrid meetings. And top of the list was potentially qualities about phone participants, which is something I've mentioned already, and then also concerns around sort of any health risks and travel restrictions associated with in-person. And at the same time, there was a strong sense that, you know, we've gained many

positive innovations from virtual meetings, and it's important we sort of take these with us into the hybrid setting.

So just briefly before I wrap up, you know, the GAC, like all community groups, has had specific challenges when it comes to virtual meetings. So we've had around 80 new members since ICANN meetings went online who, of course, need to be properly integrated and onboarded into the community, and there are certain GAC processes like establishing quorum and communique drafting which also needed to adapt. So in GAC discussions there's really been a strong sense that the GAC leadership have done some excellent work introducing new systems and tools to cope with this as well as the ICANN organization, and I think some of these, you know, sort of members highlighted is really important to continue into the hybrid session. So, for instance, things like recording sessions so that there's a time zone -- different time zones can access them and making use of interactive features to foster interactive participation. And we even have some suggestions around sort of using a combination of totally virtual and hybrid meetings going forward. So there definitely was some very positive innovations and learnings to be gained from our experience in this virtual environment.

So that brings me to the end. I hope this has given you a sense of some of the views within the GAC and looking forward to discussing further throughout the session.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: It certainly has, Anna. Thank you very much indeed. So before we go now to the open microphone and listen to your comments, suggestions, let's briefly go to Maarten who's just going to give us an overview of the Board's perspective. Maarten. The floor is yours.

MAARTEN BOTTERMAN: Yes, thank you, Chris. And thank you, everybody, for your -- your useful and insightful comments. It's really about how do we get the best out of meeting together.

Now, the Board's role there is one to listen and to lean back and to facilitate as much as possible. But next to that, we also have a role to determine when it's practical or lawful or prudent enough to return to face-to-face or hybrid meetings. And for that we take a risk mitigation approach based on a mitigation approach that really takes into account the risk landscape, the health and safety requirements, and the viability of traveling safely as well on top of that.

As Barbara said, it's one thing that we organize an in-region meeting, another one is a global meeting where we're faced with many more situations that differ around the world. This has always been a problem. Well, we've seen nothing yet once we try to get back together, I think.

So with regard to the risk landscape, first and foremost, we considered the risk landscape with the location itself. And for that, we depend on credible sources, external sources, globally applicable resources to inform our risk assessment rather than think what we think is best. So, for instance, the U.S. CDC classifications ranging from 4 to 1, from very high to low is something we take into account. And if there would be a CDC classification of 4 or 3, very high or high, we would not go there. We would not have a meeting there. Or we would look at international SOS data. A 5-ranking scale to the extreme travel risk or the high travel risk are just situations where the Board would think it's not responsible to go there. Our risk appetite would prevent us to travel there.

So currently the CDC risk ratings, which are obviously fully applicable, in particular for U.S. situations but also considering for the rest of the world, Puerto Rico, The Hague (indiscernible) who at this moment are at 4. We do hope and sort of expect that this will change soon. But if the pandemic taught us anything, where it will be in due time is unpredictable at this point in time.

We've been thinking of preparing for smaller meetings as well, and one of the options was, for instance, Singapore, and even Singapore on the 1st of October has been back into a lockdown. I live in the Netherlands, and right now we're tightening the

restrictions again as well. It's just unpredictable, and we all hope and believe that things will get better towards next year. So we get to risk levels where it's practical and possible to travel.

Now, COVID will still be there, but the risk levels will be lower. And once we are at those lower level of risks, we think we should require COVID-19 recognized vaccinations, facemasks. We should continue to obtain physical distancing and knowing who's on-site for in case if there are exposures, so we can inform people. Obviously pre-travel COVID-19 testing would probably still be required by airlines and nations, but on-site we would want to do daily on-site temperature checks and daily on-site rapid COVID-19 testing. Also with the understanding that whereas we can have some assurances of health and safety on the location, we're not going to be able to control what people do in the hours that they don't spend on location but have dinners, have -- meet in bars or whatever. And we shouldn't. But this means that for the location, we shouldn't assume that everybody is safe once they came in until they leave at the end of the week.

In addition, for the site inspection that Ash already said we would take very seriously, additional element also for locations that we visited before is that we would look extra to the ventilation ability, adequate ventilation but also adherence from staff to the health and safety requirements that we would deem would be important. And I'll admit, it's all important.

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Now, next to that, the last part is international travel. Is international cross-border travel possible? As you know, this summer Europeans couldn't fly to U.S. and U.S. citizens couldn't fly to Europe. That's a difficult situation. If these -- I'm European so I'm very aware of that one, but there are similar situations with other parts of the world. If it's big parts of the world that are hampered in this way, what affect does this have for the meeting ability?

Another thing is the government processing of essential traveler fees or something. Many official offices will open again in -- per next week, the 8th of November. And they've been closed. And will be able to handle all the official restrictions that may be more than they were in the past. And then the potential financial impacts. It's just not known yet. The cost of pre-travel COVID tests, however government mandated travel requirements, and yeah, I don't know what airfares will do, and that's a longer-term issue.

So while the Board is eager to resume the public meetings, for the clear benefit of collaboration, communication, and camaraderie, we're not willing to did that at the expense of the community or staff. We will continue to evaluate the risks, viability of travel, and conditions in which it's reasonable to resume. And in the meanwhile, we do appreciate and very much support and are willing to do what we can to help the community come together

on how to organize the meeting best in terms of structure, content, and to make it happen.

So I hope this helps and look forward to hear more from you. Most of the board is here on the call too. We're listening. Chris, back to you.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Thank you. Thank you, Maarten. Okay. So it's open mic time to the floor. And to the questions, comments, and suggestions in the -- in the chat room. So while we're waiting for people to put their hands up in the -- in the chat, in the Zoom room here, let's go to a couple of questions that we got from the chat. Who's going to handle those?

ANDREA GLANDON: Great. Thank you, Chris. I will read them.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Thanks Andrea. Fantastic.

ANDREA GLANDON: You're welcome. We did have some questions that were addressed by the speakers during the remarks, so we'll go with the questions that have not been answered yet. The first question

is from Jeffrey Newman. I am not sure if I missed it, but is there a limit on the number of attendees at the IGF?

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Chengetai, I think that's probably one for you.

CHENGETAI MASANGO: Yes. We have not set a limit at the moment because the conference center can take 15,000 people and at the moment we have a registration of about 2,000. So let's say even if it goes up to 3,000, we still only reach 50% -- we will still not reach even 50% of the capacity, which is the limit that we have set for the rooms as such. Yeah.

ANDREA GLANDON: Thank you.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Thanks, Chengetai. Andrea.

ANDREA GLANDON: Our next question is from Shah Zahidur Rahman. How the questions and comments will be collected from those who see the IGF recording? How will the questions and comments be collected? Due to time zone, they are unable to participate online.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: I think -- I think that's about how are you going to weave in questions and comments that come in five hours, ten hours later, Chengetai, when someone's looked at the YouTube video?

CHENGETAI MASANGO: They will be integrated in the session report. So that's how it's -- it's going to be done. If the question is, how are these questions going to be set, maybe Anriette can answer that one. But for the exact mechanics of the question being set, I'm sorry. I was not part of that conversation. But it's going to happen and it's -- it should be in our frequently asked questions as well.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Let's see whether Anriette, is your hand to do with that question?

ANRIETTE ESTERHUYSEN: It is. It is.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Welcome and over to you.

ANRIETTE ESTERHUYSEN: Thanks so much. Great to be here. It's fantastic to be part of this session.

What we plan to do is that every event has a number. So in the schedule as, with the ICANN schedule, in the IGF every event will have a number. So participants who are not involved or participating in real time, we'll have like a 12- to 24-hour period where they can send comments using the hashtag for that particular workshop or that particular session.

Let's see whether, Anriette, is your hand to do with that question?

ANRIETTE ESTERHUYSEN: It is, it is.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Well, welcome, and over to you.

ANRIETTE ESTERHUYSEN: Thanks so much. Great to be here. It's fantastic to be part of the session.

What we plan to do is that every event has a number. So in the schedule, as with the ICANN schedule, in the IGF, every event will have a number. So participants who are not involved or participating in real time will have like a 12- to-24-hour period where they can send comments using the hashtag for that particular workshop or that circumstance session. And that will then be incorporated in the event report. If the questions come

be before the event takes place, they'll be handled during the event. If they come post the event, they will be incorporated in the event report by the session organizer.

So that's roughly it. Pretty primitive, but we hope it will work. At least it's asynchronous and it facilitates some kind of asynchronous participation.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Anriette, thank you for that, and thank you for going first in the sense of being prepared to go out and do that and try it before we have to. So that's very much appreciated it.

Did you want to -- Your hand has gone up again. Did you want to say something else? No, it's gone down again.

I think we have one more question from Andrea and then we might go to comments and the floor.

ANDREA GLANDON: We do have a question from Fred Baker: Is there a way to have Zoom server or servers on-site at in-person meetings? If there is, would that help with the bandwidth implications?

CHRIS DISSPAIN: I think that's for you, Ash.

ASHWIN RANGAN: Thank you, Chris. Thank you, Fred.

The answer is unfortunately not. Zoom currently offers us a cloud-based service and they do the balancing of the load in the cloud. The best we're able to do is to ask for one of the data centers, depending on the location of our meeting. And to the extent possible, they are able to route our traffic to that.

But essentially, the answer is no, we can't fork it down, and it won't be something that can assist with less bandwidth consumption.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Thanks, Ash. That's great.

So I'm still game to get people with hair hands up and asking in the room but in the meantime let's get to comments. Who is reading out the comments? Is that you, Andrea?

ANDREA GLANDON: It's me.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: You go ahead, then.

ANDREA GLANDON: Thank you.

Our first comment from Volker Greimann: We should accept the fact that by holding hybrid meetings we will be creating a two-class society of participants for those meetings. However, not holding an in-person meeting soon will result in all participants withdrawing further into their silos. Meeting face to face allows for personal and direct informal meetings of participants from all groups and usually serves as a fast track to compromise. So the question is if we can afford slow or not progress much longer -- or no progress much longer.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: That's a really interesting -- thank you, Volker. That's a really interesting comment. I think it -- it sits as something perhaps, Maarten, that you should be feeding into your risk profile. Yes, it's correct to say that of course you need to take account of all of the risks for the venue and all that stuff that you talked about.

All of that is incredibly important, and I don't want to diminish it in any way. But there is also the risk to the organization and to the work of the organization. And it may be that at some point, a decision needs to be taken as to which of those risks is the one that you need to take into account the most.

But thank you, Volker. For the comment. I think that's very useful.

I'm going to go to -- while -- I know we have other comments, but Andrey, your hand is up, so please, let's go to you.

Andrey, if you're talking, you're on mute. You need to come off mute.

ANDREY SHCHERBOVICH: Hello everyone. Good afternoon from Montreal, Canada. And I am currently the ICANN72 Fellow and also a participant of the IGF. In 2021 I will participate on-site in Katowice.

Yesterday I took the visa, and I think that, in my personal opinion, shared by these two years of pandemic, and I think that we are really -- it's really important to return to the offline mode of meetings, even -- and that's really important for the community, for the spirit of the community, I think.

And, yes, that -- And these online meetings and these kind of, there could be live, but they could be part of intersessional activities. They could be held throughout the year.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Andrey, thank you, that's --

ANDREY SHCHERBOVICH: Thank you.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: That's a helpful and useful comment.

                         Jeff, go ahead.

JEFF NEUMAN: Yes, thanks. Jeff Neuman, for the record.

                         I think -- and I put this into the chat, but I think it's important enough. We all have to -- and I heard it during a meeting yesterday, that it's expected that the chat and Q&A function, you have to use English. I think that is a problem. I think we need to figure out how people can contribute in their own language and not just, you know, listen to it or speak it, but also to be able to write in the chat.

                         And to add to that, use of the word "comment" or "question" or "suggestion" before and after every comment, question or suggestion is not very easy for those that are non-native English speakers. So perhaps something else could be used to indicate that as the source of your comment, question, or suggestion.

                         Thanks.

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CHRIS DISSPAIN: Thanks, Jeff. Good points. Don't know what the solutions are, but certainly things that will need to be considered.

Cheryl. Hello.

CHERYL LANGDON ORR: Good day.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Good day.

CHERYL LANGDON ORR: That's an in joke for an ex-Australian. Yeah. Ex-Australian there. Good to see you, Chris. Good to see you everybody, actually.

I know you're all going to think I'm probably -- Cheryl Langdon-Orr for the record, by the way -- probably going to say something about the remote participation aspect of all of this or the disability aspect of all of this. Well, I'm not.

I wanted to actually share an observation that may affect the physical location of any future hybrid meeting. And that is that the amount of time it takes to just consider, and it will need to be considered in the scheduling as well, the processing of some of the information -- vaccination status, current temperature, all of

those sorts of things -- on-site, and the fact that the foyering, the control of the people in that area will also have to be considered as well if we're going to manage distancing.

(Indiscernible) is a very small (indiscernible) first time in many, many months face to face, safe to say, fully masked, fully vaccinated, all of that. Our call was an event. And the bottleneck entering for a timed start was most disconcerting. Now, that was 25 people trying to get into somewhere. 250 people, there's going to be some existential potential issue.

I just wanted to share that and raise that as a concern. It needs to be considered and planned for. Thank you.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Thanks, CLO. Appreciate it.

While we wait to see if anyone else has a comment or suggestion in the room, let's go back to Andrea and some more comments. Andrea.

ANDREA GLANDON: Thank you. From -- a comment from Reg Levy: More recently the ICANN meeting schedule has not had a significant amount of overlapping meetings, but I imagine that this will start to creep back toward how it used to be where there were significant

numbers of overlaps. Before the switch to Zoom, it was possible to attend multiple meetings simultaneously. Zoom does not allow this feature. I would appreciate if this were considered as a feature for future remote participation providers, either encouraging Zoom to provide this feature, attendance at more than one Zoom meeting at a time, or when evaluating future tools.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Thanks, Andrea, Reg. That's a really interesting suggestion that I'll wager is a particular ICANN skill, the ability to attend more than one meeting at the same time and come away from both -- or more than two, believing you got a hundred percent out of all of them. But it is, nonetheless, an interesting thought, and it would be amazing to be able to run parallel zoom rooms if that was a feature that was available. Thank you for that.

Roelof, your hand is up. Go ahead.

Roelof, you're on mute.

ROELOF MEIJER: Sorry, Chris. Thank you.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: There you go. Hello, mate. Good to hear your voice.

ROELOF MEIJER: Hello. Yeah, likewise. Good to hear everybody's voice.

I am Roelof Meijer, for the record. I have a question for Maarten. Maarten, you mentioned some of the measures that you would foresee once we would have hybrid meeting measures for, let me call it, the physical part of the hybrid meetings. My question is.

(Indiscernible)

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Hold on a second, Roelof. We have a stray microphone.

Okay. I think you can go ahead now.

ROELOF MEIJER: So my question is do you envisage to adhere to the measures that are valid recommendations and those are obligatory at the location, or do you foresee to go beyond those measures and decide on certain additional matters and measures yourself?

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Thank you, Roelof.

MAARTEN BOTTERMAN: Yeah, thanks, Roelof.

I think most importantly we would consider what it makes, taking into account the specifics of that we do have a global community participating in one location; that it's a large participation of people that we know will also not only visit the conference but also the city location where they are. And obviously the local circumstances. So local circumstances and local guidance are important, and we are aware of the specifics. So we would consider both, I would say, in that perspective. Safety first. And in that, the best possible meeting.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Thanks, Maarten. Roelof, do you want to respond?

ROELOF MEIJER: Yeah. So you will seek advice from local authorities or something like that?

MAARTEN BOTTERMAN: Oh, yes, as well, of course. Not only local but also very much take into account the global character of our community.

ROELOF MEIJER: Okay. Thank you.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Thanks, Roelof. Thanks, Maarten.

Hopefully everyone can see the Jamboard that's up on the screen. There are a number of suggestions on there. I'm not proposing at this stage to read them out, but you'll be able to get this. You'll be able to also get -- download a copy of the chat in which there have been a number of really useful and helpful comments and opinions expressed. I'd encourage those of you who feel strongly about stuff to put your hand up and express them to us verbally now, but while we wait, let's go back to Andrea and see if there are any more comments.

ANDREA GLANDON: Yes, thank you. We do have another comment from Annebeth Lange: I think one of the reasons that the virtual meetings of ICANN during COVID have worked so well is that we know each other. In the future, we must reckon and hope that new people come to the community to engage, and then it will be much more difficult if the new ones have never met the people they are talking to and with virtually. We need some places to meet face to face as well.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Thank you, Andrea. And Annebeth, I think that is an absolutely spot on comment. It's much easier for those of us who know each

other really well to remotely participate. We can -- we can shorthand. We've probably got each other on separate Skype chats or WhatsApp chats or whatever it may be and can interface in back channels, and so on. And the point you make is incredibly important and a valuable one about the future and how we deal with new people coming along.

Jeff, I think it was you who just posted in the chat about the Jamboard being open to people to put notes on. I don't think it is, but I can assure you that if you send a suggestion through, unless it's offensive in any way, which of course it wouldn't be, it can be put up on the Jamboard.

We did discuss whether it was possible to have it open to everyone, and it just got too complicated in the end. It was enough that we managed to get the Zoom room to be functional like this as opposed to a webinar.

Andrea, do we have any other comments?

ANDREA GLANDON: Yes, we do. We have a comment from Lori Schulman: INTA is approaching the hybrid model with online plenaries and educational events and then supplementing them with one-day educational slash social programs in Berlin, Los Angeles, and New

York. We have seen very good registration numbers for the in-person as well as the online.

We agree that it may be a long time until meetings return to the format pre-COVID or they may never be the same. It is so hard to tell. We appreciate that ICANN is holding this session and asking critical questions. Happy to share the learnings from our virtual-plus format which will be held on November 15 through 19th.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Thank you. That's incredibly helpful. And it occurs to me, given that both Chengetai and Barbara will be able to provide us with significant input, if they're willing to, post the CENTR meeting and the IGF, and Lori says about the INTA one, that we should probably set up a channel by which those who are involved in the ICANN community and who are operating hybrid meetings in other environments are able to put their -- their experiences and comments in so that we can gather all that information and that this -- and this session doesn't just become closed at the end of -- in 15 minutes' time and that's an end of it. I think it would be very helpful if we could ensure that there was a way that the community could gather the information.

Roelof, I'm guessing that's an old hand? Lori, go ahead.

LORI SCHULMAN: Thank you, Chris.

I wanted to add to that comment. We had also planned a one-day social educational event in Hong Kong in the Asia Pacific region, again to try to cover as much of the globe as we reasonably could under the current health and safety and travel restrictions. And we actually canceled Hong Kong. And we canceled Hong Kong relatively recently, and that was again because of the uncertainties of travel within the Asia Pacific region itself.

So the important thing to remember in all of this planning is sometimes you can't plan. You can try to accommodate as much of the world as you can, and we did. We went literally across the globe in a horizontal line, and we still had to cancel one of the meetings.

So I think it's important that we have a bit of grace for the planning and remain nimble, and always keep health and safety in mind.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Thank you, Lori. Absolutely right. 100% agree with you.

Andrea, any other comments to put forward?

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ANDREA GLANDON: Yes, we do. Coming from --

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Go ahead.

ANDREA GLANDON: Okay. Thank you. Coming from Dawn Shackleton. There would be great value including a much younger of younger ICANN participants to hear how they interact online. They find it more natural -- far more natural to use technology to interact. Their way of communicating is different and should be accommodated in the hybrid world if ICANN wants to level the playing field and make meetings more equitable. Climate changes and legislation across territories may also be a consideration to many people, too, and contrary to your organization's business travel policies.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Thank you. And as I sit here in the UK and we approach the COP, whatever number it is, 26 meeting in Glasgow in a few days' time, I am mindful about the climate change point and the carbon cost to us flying around the world in order to attend meetings.

                    That said, there is, of course, a happy medium to be struck between no flying and flying everywhere for everything.

But nonetheless, thank you very much. And you're right about younger people and the use of technology. I -- Although I'm not entirely sure whether it would be feasible for us to hold a useful ICANN meeting on TikTok.

Andrea, next comment, please.

ANDREA GLANDON: We have a comment from Jorge Cancio: The return to hybrid actually is not a return. We should learn from the past and avoid returning to the prior three-meeting cycle we had, which is very costly in terms of time, resources, and carbon footprint.

Instead, we could well manage things with one or two hybrid meetings and one or two pure online meetings per year.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Thank you. I'm one of those who remembers when ICANN used to have four face-to-face meetings a year, and I remember the angst and complaints about what a disaster it would be moving to three. We've managed to maintain those three for quite some considerable time, and maybe, just maybe, the time is right to consider a different -- a different methodology or a different set of meetings.

Although, personally, I would encourage us not to do that in the midst of the pandemic. It's probably a decision that should be made once we've got through this and we're settled back again, and we know where we are.

Right now I'm not sure is the best time for us to be making serious long-term decisions.

I believe there's another -- a new question, Andrea. Is that right?

ANDREA GLANDON: Yes, there is. Is ICANN trying to think in terms of an in-person meeting without any adaptation, with all the glory and splendor of pre-COVID in-person meetings? Does it require a different thinking for hybrid meetings even during COVID?

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Yes, is the answer, it does require a different thinking. And no, I don't think ICANN is trying to do that. But, Maarten, do you want to address that point?

MAARTEN BOTTERMAN: Yeah, no, the splendor of the old days. I think the future will never be as it was. But let's also be clear that good things came out as well of this period. I mean, nobody wanted it, and they all look forward to going back to face-to-face. But there is some elements

that good integration of online participation, better integration of online participation will be an asset that I think we (indiscernible). But for that, how to organize and how to find a balance, we listen mainly to the community. But let's make no mistake, good things happened, as well.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Oh, sure. Absolutely. I couldn't agree with you more. And the way that interaction has -- interaction, remote interaction, remote participation has improved, is extraordinary. And I wonder whether we would have got this far if it hadn't been for the intervention of nature. We probably would not.

Comments, Andrea? Anything else?

ANDREA GLANDON: One moment.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: While I'm waiting, we have 8 minutes left. Now is your last chance. Put your hand up into the room, if you want to say something. I am going to go to the Jamboard in a minute and just have a quick look at what it says on there. But Andrea, anything else you want to insert into the conversation?

ANDREA GLANDON: Yes. Thank you. We have a comment from Bill Jouris. Zoom has been a lifesaver during the past two years. That said, it will never replace the benefits of in-person meetings. We want to keep the option available going forward, but that is a recognition that not everyone can travel. It isn't a suggestion that it is just as good.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Thank you. Thank you very much. Siva, go ahead. Siva, if you're talking, you're on mute. And you are still on mute. So let's come back to you in a second, if you can get off mute.

Let's look at the Jamboard. I noticed a number of things on here that are -- there is a --

SIVASUBRAMANIAN MUTHUSAMY: I'm sorry. Can I speak now?

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Ah, Siva. Yes, you can. Go ahead. Well done.

SIVASUBRAMANIAN MUTHUSAMY: I'm so sorry. I had to switch to the phone to speak.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Not a problem. Go ahead.

SIVASUBRAMANIAN MUTHUSAMY: This is in continuation of the comment on hybrid meetings, and I was thinking, why is it considered difficult or inappropriate to have some of the participants in Europe who are in close proximity, between three or four European countries, to come together in a face-to-face meeting or a few states within U.S. to come together on a face-to-face meeting but some remote participants from Europe to manage who can manage to attend in person with fewer participants from other parts of the world who manage to travel and attend. It could be a 50-person meeting in a room for 5,000 people and combine the thousand participants by remote and that kind of thinking is needed. If this is going to go on for another year or two, and we have to think in terms of a few people in the room at least. A very few people in the room. Thank you.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Siva, thank you. And yes, you're right. It's certainly regional gatherings, gatherings of small groups of people in a room to meet with others remotely in other rooms should be factored into our thinking.

Alan Greenberg, hello. Your hand is up. Go ahead.

ALAN GREENBERG: It's a comment. It's not really a question. Over the last number of years --

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Alan, you're very, very faint. Alan, you're very faint. You need to be closer to the microphone.

ALAN GREENBERG: That's -- that's because my microphone was at my forehead.

[Laughter]

Over the last number of years planning for ICANN meetings has taken longer and longer. We tend to start travel arrangements the day after a meeting for the next meeting. The organizational discussions on what meetings to hold and things like that also have taken months and months. I wonder how that fits together with Maarten's comments about we have to be prepared for things to change on short notice and someone else made a comment on the need for nimbleness and being flexible. And I wondered how we were going to have any face-to-face meetings where we have the uncertainties that will be around for quite a while and yet the very long planning cycles and travel planning cycles and things that we've seemed to have become used to. Thank you.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Thanks, Alan. Yeah, you raise a good point. I'm going to sum up shortly, but Sebastien, you're up next, and then I think there's one more question from the chat. Seb, go ahead.

SEBASTIEN BACHOLLET: (non-English word or phrase). Thank you very much.

Sebastien Bachollet speaking. I heard several people talk about new participants. I would like to say that we have less and less people that work and we have to be careful. There is a Zoom fatigue. It's great that we have more than 400 people today, but how many of those participants are going to -- to work hard tomorrow morning. What I would like also to say is that it's not the best time to -- to go back to the idea of less meeting every year. We need some face-to-face meetings, but if it is to say well, we don't need them right away, let's get rid of them. I don't think it's good.

Thank you very much for this meeting today. And thank you.

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Thank you, Sebastien. Appreciate it. Let's go to the last question from the chat, and then

I'm going to sum up. Go ahead, Andrea.

ANDREA GLANDON: Thank you. Last question from Pierre Bonis. Don't you think pure online meeting creates a new burden that is the jet lag management for employees? Being in a place is not the same as being in your bedroom, annoying your wife and children at night and expected by your colleagues on the morning after. Of course, travel was also a burden, but it seems to me sometimes there is an approach that paint online meetings in too bright a color, no?

CHRIS DISSPAIN: Pierre, I'm going to take -- I'm going to use my prerogative as the chair, as the moderator and say, I agree with you. It's a comment rather than a question, but yes, I completely agree. There are challenges with being at home. There are challenges with traveling. The challenges are different for particular people but there are real challenges.

Okay. We are coming up to out of time. I want to do the following. I want to say thank you to Barbara and Sandra and Anna and Chengetai and Ash and Maarten for their contributions. It's very much appreciated. I want to ask those of you on the panel who have got meetings coming up that are going to be hybrid to please be prepared to provide us with the feedback and as much information as possible so that that can inform what we do going forwards.

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I want to ask Org if you could make sure that you capture any suggestions that haven't yet been put onto the Jamboard onto the Jamboard and that that is part of what goes up onto the site for people to download, along with the chat which contains some really, really useful and helpful comments. And I want to charge whoever is the right person to be charged with this, whether it's you, Maarten, or it's Ash or it's whoever is on the staff who's in charge, to create the ability for this conversation to continue. I don't know how, but I don't -- what I would really love to see is not this conversation continuing at the next ICANN meeting, whether that is face-to-face or hybrid or remote, but continuing from tomorrow or within a reasonable period of time from today. So some form of list, some form of ability for us to be able to continue to work to bring our ideas together and have the community, us all who are used to all of this, provide input and suggestions.

With that, I would like to say thank you all very much, indeed, for participating. It's been great to see everybody. It's been great to have an interactive discussion. And we can stop the recording and then close the meeting.

Thank you all.

[END OF TRANSCRIPT]