
ICANN73 | Virtual Community Forum - Q&A with ICANN Org Executive Team
Monday, March 7, 2022 - 10:30 to 12:00 AST

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Please start the recording.

Recording in progress.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thank you so much. Good morning, good afternoon, and good evening, wherever you are.

I'm so pleased to welcome you all to the ICANN73 executive Q&A with our ICANN Org Executive team.

My name is Sally Newell Cohen, and I'm the Senior Vice President of Global Communications.

I know that I speak for the entire Executive team when I tell you that we always look forward to this session, and we love the opportunity to meet with you and have a dialogue about the projects and the initiatives that we've been working on at ICANN Org. We look forward to answering your questions, and we appreciate and welcome the dialogue.

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We would like to make this a truly interactive session, and we invite you to ask questions. There are going to be two ways you can ask questions or make comments during the session. You can submit a written question or a comment into the Zoom Q&A pod. Your answers may be in the form of a typed response or our session facilitator, ALEXANDRA DANS will be reading your question out loud so they can be answered live.

Alternately, you can raise your hand to join the queue, and to do that click on the "Raise Hand" icon at the bottom of the screen. Selecting it will automatically add you to the queue. Your microphone will remain muted until it's your turn to speak. We will then unmute you on your end, which will trigger a note to be sent to you on your screen telling you to unmute as well. This will let you know it's your turn to speak. And when your name is called that's your cue to speak. Again, you're going to want to make sure your mic is unmuted.

Please don't put questions in the chat if you're looking for the Executive team to answer them because we're not monitoring the chat. Make sure that you put them in the Q&A pod only, and that's the "Q&A" icon at the bottom of your screen.

Real-time interpretation is also going to be available in Spanish, French, Chinese, Russian, and Arabic. This is provided in the

Zoom app, so you simply will click on the icon that says "Interpretation" and select your language.

We also recommend that you select it even if English is your chosen language, because then you'll quickly hear interpretation if a question is asked, or a comment is made in a different language.

Please remember that all participants must adhere to the Standards of Behavior which you can read at the link on the screen. And also please be aware of the anti-harassment policy, and you can find that link available in the chat soon as well.

Before I hand it over to Göran Marby for his opening comments, I'd like to introduce you to the rest of the Executive team, so welcome to Xavier Calvez. He's a Senior Vice President of Planning and the Chief Financial Officer; Mandy Carver, Senior Vice President of Government and IGO Engagement; Sally Costerton, Senior Vice President to -- Senior Advisor to the President, excuse me, and Senior Vice President Global Stakeholder Engagement; John Crain, Chief Technology Officer; Jamie Hedlund, Senior Vice President, Contractual Compliance and U.S. Government Engagement; John Jeffrey, General Counsel, Secretary, and co-deputy to the CEO; David Olive, Senior Vice President, Development -- Policy Development Support;

Ashwin Rangan, Senior Vice President, Engineering and Chief Information Officer; Theresa Swinehart, Senior Vice President, Global Domains and Strategy and co-deputy to the CEO; and Gina Villavicencio, Senior Vice President, Global Human Resources.

So, Göran, over to you, please.

GÖRAN MARBY:

Thank you. Thank you very much. And welcome to you all. This is our now ninth executive Q&A after we started it at ICANN58 in Copenhagen.

I know me and my team really welcome to have this opportunity for a dialogue with you or a conversation, whatever you want to call it. We're happy to answer any questions you might have, and I hope you will ask many questions.

We usually get a lot of attendance at this meeting, so I take that as a sign that this is something you really enjoy doing as well.

We will try -- we're always trying different formats for this one. We have done everything from talking most of the of the time and very little time for questions until like we're going to do now, after this, we just open the floor for questions and hope you will ask us

things. We really want to make sure that we have the time to answer questions.

I mean, this is a part of our sort of transparency and accountability. We started this because we think it's important for us as an Executive team to be able to be scrutinized by you guys as well.

One thing to take into account on this, in a way the ICANN Org structure reflects how you do work within the ICANN community but also in a way how the Internet works. We are a fairly diverse global system of people that works together very closely. We today have people in I think 34, 35 countries, and we speak about 55 languages. And we are, organizational-wise divided in such a way to provide and you the ICANN community, the Board and then actually the rest of the world with services we're supposed to do.

ICANN is a little bit different from many other organizations. We work very much cross-functional -- from a cross-functional perspective. I mean, it is hard for one function in ICANN to have all the answers to a particular question, so when you talk to us, you might not be surprised about who actually answers the question, but it's because we often work very closely together.

And I think that is necessary. And this is something that we actually changed the organization to be better off.

But this is, of course, not the only way we can -- we know we interact with you as a community, reporting back as I usually do. One of the things that I always promote is for you to read the information on the CEO Corner on ICANN Org where you can find anything from my FY22 goals here, my reporting, et cetera, et cetera. And I happen to believe it's worthwhile to spend some time reading and looking at them.

No question, by the way, is a bad question. We -- you know, there might be things that could be uncomfortable, there might be things that you think we do not like. Please ask them, and we will work with them.

We have about 80 minutes for this conversation, and please use the Q&A pod for asking questions.

Sally will be the moderator of this discussion, and we will -- and she will be very firm on who is actually going to answer those things. So look at her.

Anyway, you have introduced -- we have introduced the Executive team to us, and I'm looking forward to take your questions now.

So, Sally, over to you.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: All right! Thank you!

I see hands already in the queue, which is wonderful. So what we'll do is I'm going to call your names in order that I saw your hands come up, and then of course if we see questions in the Q&A pod, we'll go back and forth.

But Jonathan Zuck, you were the first hand in the queue. So if we can unmute Jonathan, please.

Jonathan, we can't hear you if you are speaking.

JONATHAN ZUCK: Sorry. This is Jonathan Zuck for the record, and what a good way to begin. I feel as if I'd accidentally raised my hand, so I didn't have a question just yet. I apologize.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: No worries.

Okay. Let's go next, then, to Adnane Ettayebi.

You should be able to speak now. Adnane, we can't hear you if you're speaking.

Okay. I'm going to move quickly to Rick Lane.

Rick, I believe you're unmuted.

RICK LANE:

There we go. Thank you. And if you can see me, I'm wearing my "It Wasn't ICANN's Fault" T-shirt. But Göran, you recently stated that, quote, "The consequences of the GDPR on the whole system, DNS and WHOIS, is not something ICANN can fix." Has any employee of ICANN or ICANN's outside consultants connected in any way with members of the U.S. Congress and their staffs to discuss the WHOIS GDPR problem and any legislation connected to, quote, "fix" the dark WHOIS GDPR problem? If yes, what are ICANN's talking points? Please provide any ICANN leave-behind or any other information that was provided to the U.S. Congress.

Thank you.

GÖRAN MARBY:

Sally, is it okay if I start and then give over to Jamie?

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Please, yes.

GÖRAN MARBY: Thank you, Rick, for that question. The first thing I want to point out that the reason I said that is because GDPR was not something ICANN decided upon. It was a legislation that have an impact on the ability to reach information in the WHOIS system. And because that's a legislation, ICANN cannot change legislation. You might think the legislation is good. You might think the legislation was bad. But it's something that ICANN -- if you want to address that, then actually that has to be through legislative effort and that is the context of the conversation.

There is no way we can build a system that circumvents the law. There is no way we as a not-for-profit in California could force anyone to break the laws, et cetera, et cetera. And I think you're welcome aware of that.

I often hear this -- and to be a little bit open about it, I often hear "ICANN should fix the WHOIS problem." The only one who can fix, if there is a problem, is the legislature. And the current legislation is in the E.U. So I hope you ask the same question to the European Commission.

Thank you. Jamie.

JAMIE HEDLUND:

Thanks, Göran. Rick, thank you very much for the question.

As you know, we engage with offices of the U.S. Congress as we do with governments on a global basis. And we try to provide information and awareness about issues -- issues before the ICANN multistakeholder community. Those issues obviously is WHOIS and the temporary specification. As you know, Congress and the administration have had a long interest in these topics. And we've tried to keep staff who are interested up to date on what's going on within the community on the temporary specification and other efforts in addressing the GDPR.

I'm not -- when you mention legislation, I'm not aware of any legislation that's pending before Congress on WHOIS or GDPR.

One of the things that we do stress is the multistakeholder (indiscernible) development and how that leads to development of global policies that facilitate a single interoperable Internet. And that is better for -- often better for users around the world than a fragmented Internet governed by individual legislations, pieces of legislation.

As you also know, we do submit filings with the Congress on our efforts on the Hill. We comply with the lobbying disclosures. And for a long time, have included these topics on our disclosure.

Thanks.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Okay. Thank you. I see questions coming up in the Q&A pod. So, Alexandra Dans I'm going to ask you to read the first one, please, from Nabeel Yasin.

ALEXANDRA DANS: Thank you, Sally.

So from Nabeel Yasin: Is the DNS4EU initiative aligned with ICANN's objectives of open and free Internet, or will it lead to Internet fragmentation?

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Göran, I don't know if you would like that or John Crain.

GÖRAN MARBY: I can start from an overarching and then lead it over to J.C. for his more technical comment.

We always think it's a good idea to set up more resolvers. But we are a little bit surprised about the reason behind the resolver because the data we have is very different from the one that DG CNECT within the European Commission has said was the reason for it.

But it's -- it is an interesting question, and I think that we as an ICANN community also need to be better to explain to legislatures and other ones how the Internet actually works. Before I ask J.C. to describe a little bit more, it seems there's a little bit of a misunderstanding about the technology behind the DNS, the root servers, and the role of the resolvers.

Thank you.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: John, anyone you would like to add?

JOHN CRAIN: I think Göran's covered most of it.

Until the E.U. actually put out a request for proposals, it wasn't clear what they were asking. In principle, another open resolver, not a bad thing. If you go into some of the details of their proposal and what they're asking for, they are talking about filtering. It's

interesting that they're talking about filtering on URIs, or on the sort of full string that goes in your browser rather than just the domain name. That's not what the DNS does. The DNS does the domain name part.

So I think Göran's right. I think we need to talk to them and educate a little bit about actually how you use the DNS.

The concept of having a resolver itself will not cause fragmentation. It's what they do with it that poses that risk. And until we know more about what they're actually intending to do, however if that's even technically feasible, we won't really know. But there is definitely a risk there.

GÖRAN MARBY:

Let me add something. On a more general perspective, we are afraid of politicizing the DNS and politicizing the identifiers by using it for purposes it was never intended. And that's discussion I think we need to continue to have.

As you have seen in recent events, we believe the integrity of the identifier system and the role of ICANN is very, very important. Thank you.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thank you very much. Okay. Next we're going to go to a live question. And I will ask is Nojus Saad to go ahead and unmute.

NOJUS SAAD: Thank you, Sally. Hello, executive team. Nojus Saad here from the Youth for Women Foundation and ICANN73 Fellowship Program.

So with consideration to the swift changing nature of the Internet, if there was any next Supporting Organization or Advisory Committee being needed in the ICANN community, what do you as your executive team think would it be about? And what DNS issue that you believe is so important to create the next SO or AC for would it serve? Thank you.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thank you for that question.

Göran, I'm going to start with you in case you would like to begin the answer.

GÖRAN MARBY: I was thinking about handling it over to David Olive and then Sally.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Okay.

DAVID OLIVE: Thank you very much. In the past, there has been discussions of the evolution of our current structures of the three Supporting Organizations and for Advisory Committees. And to that extent, that is also an effort of the community to see what is needed.

We see, for example, in the Root Server System Advisory Committee, there is a look at the evolution of that group, what that might be, how that might change. And other groups do look at the role and their mission and try to refresh that.

So it's not clear what the next one would be in that sense. It really is something that remains something for the community to look at. But, indeed, the system is flexible that would, indeed, envision changes as a community desires.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thanks very much, David.

Sally, anything to add?

SALLY COSTERTON: No. I think David said it all. Well put.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Okay. Good. Hear, hear. The next question will be for you.

Alex, if you can read the next question in the queue, please.

ALEXANDRA DANS: Yes. This is from Success Bridge. Apart from the newcomer program, how do you absorb the unaffiliated? Is there a program in place for this?

SALLY COSTERTON: Thank you. Great question. We've done a lot of work on newcomers in the last few years, and we are currently working on designing a beginner's program which will be virtual and all year-round. And part of the initiative is to do exactly that, is to help share information about ICANN with anybody interested and ensure those who are currently unaffiliated have the tools and the information that they need while they make a decision on whether or not they want to join any of the existing community groups.

This is currently in the works, and we expect to launch it in the 2023 financial year. So that 2023 year for everybody starts in this summer -- I think, Xavier, that's correct -- and runs to the following year. So this is in the next, I would say, 18 months at the latest. More on this as we develop it. But thanks for the great question.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thank you, Sally.

The next person I see with the hand up, we'll turn on the mic for Sebastien Bachollet.

SEBASTIEN BACHOLLET: Thank you very much. I will speak in French.

First of all, I would like to mention that it's unfortunate that we can see your cameras but not that of the speakers in the community.

I also wanted to mention that the current situation in Europe, but not just in Europe really, is quite uncomfortable and complex.

Well, I should have introduced myself. I am Sebastien Bachollet, and I am the chair of EURALO. And I am and an Internet end user in Europe.

The situation in Ukraine is quite desperate. I understand that ICANN, the Board, and Org are doing what they can. But I must say that starting an online meeting in this situation is quite challenging.

Since I have the floor, I would like to mention two things. First of all, you answered a question related to the DNS for Europe, and I think we need to mention that something changed the situation completely, which is the arrival of the DNS over https, DoH, and that is something that should be taken into account.

I'd like to perhaps be a little bit pushy and say, well, we should stop saying, you know, your political leads, we need to explain to you how it works. Well, they know how the Internet works, but really it is more important and more complicated than that.

Second, I would like to say I'm quite surprised about the question regarding the organization did not refer to the recommendations of the accountability and transparency review, the third one. And in particular, the proposal of a holistic review of the organization which is on the table. And I think it partly answers the question

that was asked. I would like to thank you for this session, and I would like to thank you for listening to me in French. I wish you all an excellent meeting.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thank you, Sebastien.

I don't know if -- Göran, anything you want to respond to? I didn't hear a question.

GÖRAN MARBY: Sebastien, hi. I did miss, maybe because of my bad French, the question about holistic, but I will let Mr. Crain answer the questions about https.

(Indiscernible.)

JOHN CRAIN: So, yeah, they're different topics -- right? -- compared to the DNS for EU topic, although I will say that they've asked that whoever implementation does use DNS over https or DoH as we often call for it.

As new protocols come out and new deployments of protocols, that's up to the operators how they use them. DoH and also other

versions of TLS and encryption are becoming much more common these days as people worry about their privacy. ICANN's role there is really, indeed, to help people understand what's happening there. We're not developers of the protocols ourselves.

I'm happy to have any discussions offline if people are interested.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thanks very much, John.

Alex, if we could go to the next question that's in the Q&A pod, please.

ALEXANDRA DANS: Yes. So the next question is: What factors do you have in place to have a geographical balance when recruiting for the Executive team? Can you give us the geographical distribution of the current Executive team?

This question is from Raymond Mamattah.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thank you, Alex. And Göran, that's for you.

GÖRAN MARBY: Yeah, I was thinking that.

So diversity is a multi-complex sort of question, and the answer is very -- I mean, the straightforward answer is that most of the Executive team are located in Los Angeles with some exceptions. We have one in Washington, one in Europe. And the reason for that is often very practical. The Executive team works very well together, and it's very hard to combine those for time zones.

If you take the geographical locations of where we come from, that is different. Most of us actually doesn't come from L.A. or even the U. -- some of us doesn't even come from L.A. And then as you have seen over the years is we also have a diversity in gender where if you take me out, we have a 50% -- 50/50 when it comes to men and women on it.

So it's more than just where we are. But for practical reasons, we have -- some of us has been forced to move to L.A. to be able to do the job, which me includes. I hope that answers your question.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Good. Thank you.

I think the next question is going to be for you as well. Alex, if you could read the next question in the queue, please.

ALEXANDRA DANS:

Yes. So this next question is from Javier Rua: I agree with the response ICANN Org gave in regards the Ukraine request regarding Russian domains, but I wonder if ICANN has thought of any general or specific actions to denounce evident wars of aggression and/or support illegally attacked countries. I wonder if ICANN's global public interest and/or human rights obligations might somehow inform this?

Thank you.

GÖRAN MARBY:

Thank you. I say what I say now also in the -- under the self-evident rule that we are a technical organization with a technical machine that is related. When it comes to our mission, it has to do with the identifiers, especially the DNS. And it's important that ICANN continues to be a nonpolitical organization so that we can serve the users of the world, which I think that the most -- ICANN as sort of an organization, institution is made to make Internet possible, and it's a very delegated system, as you saw probably maybe in my answer to Ukraine.

But I also want to add on to that, yesterday the Board made a statement also that the Board has decided to an initial one million dollars to help, and especially in Ukraine. And I think you will find some of those writings actually in that statement.

Maybe someone can help me to pop that into the chat, going forward.

Also, if you're interested, we announced today we're going to do relief for registrants in Ukraine with the help of the registrars which we also announced. And there are also more actions that we're trying to do when it comes to helping the actual situation.

Personally, I am -- you know, as many of us in many settings, we are very much touched about all of this. And I think that we both as an organization and as human beings are reacting to this as well. And I thank you very much for bringing the question to us, because it shows a compassion that I think is important.

Thank you.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thank you, Göran.

I'll go next to the queue and ask Michael Palage, please, to turn on his mic. Go ahead.

MICHAEL PALAGE:

Thank you.

I guess this question will be directed to Göran. I noticed on Friday that ICANN published an RFP in connection with the -- with TLD operating model study, which appears to be directed to the next round of new gTLDs. I think this is a good thing. I think I'm a big believer in ICANN making fact-based decisions.

But here's my multi-part question. First, was the -- what was the issue -- the source of this? Was this something that the community or the ICANN SubPro group asked for or was this a unilateral decision by ICANN Org?

The second part of my question is what is the projected range of funds that will be allocated for this study? And what is the source of these funds? I notice on page 5 of the RFP, there's a reference to ICANN strategic plan. Were these funds allocated from ICANN's regular budget or are these leftover fees from the 2012 round?

The third and final part of my question, in the interest of openness and transparency, I currently have a reconsideration request

pending before ICANN Org regarding two large I.T. contracts that were awarded, which appear in each case to be in excess of a half a million dollars each. Could ICANN commit to making the fees identity of the vendor that may get this particular study publicly available? I think that would be important.

So that's my three-part question.

Thank you.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Okay. Okay. Those are a lot of questions. I think I'm going to hand to Göran to start, and then I think we'll be passing it to Teresa, probably, next.

Göran, please go ahead.

GÖRAN MARBY: On the first part, I don't know where the "unilaterally" comes from, but that was funny.

Sorry. The GAC has asked us to do a cost/benefit analysis of this, and of course we are trying to figure out a way to do that, and that's why we're doing this. I hope that answers that part of the question.

Theresa, I don't know if you want to add to anything of that.

THERESA SWINEHART: Sure. I'd be happy to.

So this is to your point, Göran, also feedback that we'd gotten from the GAC and from some of the other goals that are really looking at IDN and other areas around the SubPro-related work. So that's the purpose of the RFP, to have a better understanding of some of those different areas around that.

So I hope that helps.

GÖRAN MARBY: So can I make a general remark? We have, for instance, a location right now where we'd like to do a study, and we've been working with some of the biggest vendors to be able to do a study about the -- how we can measure how to do WHOIS -- how much interest there is in WHOIS. All the -- all the big companies we're working with has all said that we can't -- the results of this, we can't display their names. So we have refused to do those kind of -- we have refused to do that study for transparency.

There is a balance between how -- what ICANN Org can and cannot do in regard to this, and we are as transparent as we

possibly can be, I think. But there are also limitations to how far we can go in the business relationships we have, which you, of course, know.

Thank you.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thank you, Göran.

Xavier, you wanted to add as well?

XAVIER CALVEZ: Yes, thank you. I just wanted to use the benefit of Michael's question and point about the Request for Proposal that he mentioned and the ability to share information that we have a practice, which I think Michael knows about, of not disclosing at the time of an RFP the range of dollars that we potentially expect to spend on the work that is the subject of an RFP so that we don't let the potential applicants be able to use that information during the negotiation that will follow the RFP once we have selected a vendor. That's a completely standard practice in all companies so that the vendors and the party that carries out the RFP -- us, in this case -- maintains the ability to leverage that private information during the negotiations with vendors. It's completely standard. It's completely logical. You don't share with another

party how much you are intending to spend with them before, of course, the contract has been signed.

That doesn't prevent, of course, that the information about the types of services and the scope of services, subject of the RFP aren't detailed, of course, in the RFP so that the applicants can be able to provide a valid bid.

Regarding the name of the incumbents, what we try to do -- and I know there's a little bit of a timing challenge which Michael pointed out in his question, is that when the Board, who provides approval for expenses that are higher than \$500,000 publishes its decision, we -- of approving a contract with a specific vendor, we remove the name of the vendor so that then the contract negotiation can occur with that vendor without that vendor necessarily always knowing that it has been selected and approved by the Board. Again, so that we can keep adequate leverage in contracting negotiations. But after the contract has been signed, then we go back to the RFP page to be able to indicate who the recipient of that contract has been.

So I hope that's helpful to explain generally our approach and practices which, again, are generally very consistent with most common practices.

Thank you.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thanks very much, Xavier.

Theresa, is there anything else that you want to add to that?

THERESA SWINEHART: No. I think it covered it. I think, you know, one aspect, the SubPro work is going to be very important, and it is very important. And so this is one aspect of it that can also help inform that work for all of our purposes. And so I just want to highlight that this is just complementing all of that work we have undertaken for the SubPro, which is, as the community knows, is a very wide track of work that we're doing together with them in preparing for the ODA.

Thanks.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thank you. Thanks very much.

I would ask when you're asking your question, if it's a compound question or multi-part, it might be simpler to put it in the Q&A pod

for us to dissect. But speaking of that, we're going to go to the Q&A pod for the next question. Alex, if you could read that.

ALEXANDRA DANS:

Yes. So the next question is from Arnaud Wittersheim: The third annual ICANN meeting is usually in late October. Why was ICANN75 moved up to mid-September? September is a busy month in terms of economic activities as it is a recovery month for many companies after summertime. Moreover, it implies that there are six months without an ICANN meeting since the next summit will take place in mid-March 2023. Isn't this too unbalanced for the continuity of the topics discussed?

Thank you.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN:

Thank you, Alex.

Sally Costerton, I think this is a question for you, perhaps.

SALLY COSTERTON:

Thank you, yes. I'm actually going to ask Nick Tomasso to answer this because I want to be very precise on the answer to your question.

Could we have Nick switched on, please?

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Okay. We just need a second. Nick, you should be able to speak.

NICK TOMASSO: Good day, everyone. I believe I'm unmuted now.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: You are.

NICK TOMASSO: Thank you.

Identifying potential dates for ICANN meetings, we go through a very rigorous process. The first thing we do is we work to avoid major national and religious holidays. We also then need to be thinking about other industry conferences, such as IETF, ITU, IGF, RIPE. And then not only do we avoid those weeks, we also work to avoid the weeks prior to and following. And the reason we do that is to make sure that community members do not have to attend back-to-back conferences, perhaps having to choose one over the other.

After we have made our selections, we put them out for public comment to make sure we have not missed any major holidays or industry meetings, and that our schedule will have as little negative impact as possible on the ICANN community.

For this particular one, we actually had an extended public comment period. We went out with an initial one and did not get closure. Went out again. And in the end, it was the community that ultimately set the final dates to avoid holidays in October and the IETF at the beginning of November.

I hope that helps to explain why it is where it is and a little bit about our process.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thanks very much, Nick. Appreciate that.

We're going to go back to the queue. And if we could unmute Nigel Hickson, please.

Nigel, go ahead.

Nigel, we can't hear you if you're speaking.

NIGEL HICKSON: Good afternoon. Perhaps you can hear me now.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Yes, yes.

NIGEL HICKSON: I'm so sorry, yes. The muting is -- Yeah. Yes, thank you very much. Nigel Hickson from the -- from the UK government, GAC representative.

Really, I don't have a question, but I have a brief remark to make, and that is to really endorse the announcement that ICANN made yesterday with respect to emergency funding for Internet -- to support Internet services during emergencies. On behalf of the UK government, we'd like to thank ICANN for this. It is extremely positive. And for those of us that took part in the GAC plenary session earlier today where we were able to express support for our Ukrainian colleagues in these horrific times, I think it was really appropriate that we were able to refer to this ICANN announcement. And also to -- for the further clarification that Göran Marby gave earlier concerning relief for the Ukrainian registrars and registries.

I think this really is a credit to ICANN and the ICANN Board. Thank you.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thank you, Nigel.

GÖRAN MARBY: Thank you, Nigel. Good to see you again, my friend.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Okay. Thank you, Nigel.

We're going to go back to the Q&A -- the questions in the Q&A pod.

So, Alex, if you can read the next question, please.

ALEXANDRA DANS: This question is from Samik Kharel. Does GAC function like a multilateral entity within the multistakeholder model of ICANN? Do we see traces of multilateralism within the multistakeholderism within ICANN?

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thank you, Alex. David Olive.

DAVID OLIVE: Thank you for that question. The GAC of 100 plus members, of course, operates really in a different model from the multilateralism. They operate by consensus. And to that extent, that is somewhat of a change. Though, as governments, they are very used to operating in multilateral meetings and sessions. And so in the corridors, or maybe in the chats, they might have some of that.

But it comes to the focus of the GAC's work and commenting on public policy on ICANN matters, it's really a consensus-driven approach. And that is the difference between the two.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thanks very much.

Okay. If we could ask, we will go to another question in the Q&A pod, please.

ALEXANDRA DANS: The next question is from Griffin Barnett. What has ICANN done or what does it plan to do in response to the E.U. DNS abuse study? And has ICANN had, or does it plan to have any discussion with the European Commission regarding the study? Thank you.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thank you, Alex. Göran, I think you may want to start with this response.

GÖRAN MARBY: We don't plan to do anything. I think it's an interesting input in a community discussion where the European Commission DG CNECT has made its opinions fairly clear from the onset of this discussion. And I think the policy-making process within ICANN belongs to the multistakeholder model.

With that said, we looked at it before, we read it through; but this is something for the community to act upon, not us.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Okay. Thank you for that.

Okay. Alex, we have --

GÖRAN MARBY: Could I --

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Yeah.

GÖRAN MARBY: Just an additional...

I mean, ICANN Org has to be neutral in those conversations. Our job is to provide facts in all those conversations. And as you know, when it comes to the DNS abuse, there seems to be a lot of different sets of facts. And I think the best one who judged upon those should be within the community.

I would recommend as always to look at the DNS ticker, to look at DAAR to get data to see how the DNS abuse actually -- the DNS abuse evolves and what's happening, and what is also within ICANN's mission and technical capabilities.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thank you. Does anyone else have anything to add to that? Okay.

Okay.

Alex, next question in the pod, please.

ALEXANDRA DANS: The next question is from Jonathan Zuck. There appears to be broad consensus that the DNS itself should not be used as a tool to influence international disputes. There is also broad support

to find ways to help Ukraine. The recent aid program is a welcome announcement. Separate from that, has ICANN looked hard at its business relationships in the context of the situation in Ukraine?

GÖRAN MARBY:

Maybe I can start. I have to say maybe you can help me if we can get Jonathan to speak as well because I'm a little bit confused by the question.

ICANN Org, the only business relationship we would have, is when we have suppliers. That's the business.

So I'm a little bit -- I might not understand the question and, therefore, further explanation at least for me is needed. We are a not-for-profit operation. We are not a business in that sense.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN:

Jonathan, you are unmuted.

JONATHAN ZUCK:

Yeah, thanks. This is Jonathan Zuck for the record. And I don't claim to have an awful lot of clarity about this either, so I apologize if my question isn't clear.

It's just been the reaction of a number of businesses to look at law firms and other types of suppliers, as you suggest, as their ties to oligarchs, et cetera. That's what I mean by business relationships, not that ICANN is a business. But looking at its supplier of services, separating out the contracted parties that manage the DNS, to see if there are any there that requires a closer look because of their role in this conflict.

That seems to be something that's widespread. There's a lot of conversation about what ICANN can do. And I think ICANN in large measure has responded appropriately both with a resistance to let the DNS be hurt and also with the aid package. I think it's all welcomed.

It's just another thing that has come up that I thought I would see if you have had a chance to look at, the ICANN suppliers in this context as well. Thanks.

GÖRAN MARBY:

Since the -- I mean, we have a long list of things that we are looking into when it comes to our ability to serve the identifier system, which are meant to do.

We need to do this on all fronts. We have to comply with all the laws and how we should be able to do things.

I actually don't know how far we have gone in that. To my knowledge, we don't have -- and are you actually asking about Russia or Ukraine? Because most of the relationship we have there is through, as you know, registrars and registries.

Can I come back -- J.J., maybe you want to point out on to that question as well. Sorry for not having the full answer.

J.J.? Or Xavier.

JOHN JEFFREY: I don't have anything to add. Xavier.

XAVIER CALVEZ: Sure. Thank you, Jonathan.

We have not -- and I'm sure Göran can complement what I'm going to say. We have not initiated a process to decide to sanction any vendors from any region of the world by not doing business with them.

We have for the purpose of understanding the potential impacts on our business in our services currently being carried out if we had vendors in the region of Ukraine and Russia to be able to see

if we would be able to pay them for services already rendered. So that's a check that we do.

But we haven't made a purposeful decision to not interact with vendors in any region of the world otherwise.

John or Göran, please feel free to add. Thank you.

JOHN JEFFREY:

Yeah. I would just add, I think we don't want to misuse the word "sanctions." So we don't have any intention to sanction vendors. We will, of course, look at any OFAC sanctions or other sanctions that would apply and how we would apply those and whether we would need licenses or whether we would need to change vendors in some circumstances, if there is a country-by country sanction level. But I don't have anything to add beyond that.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN:

Okay. Thank you very much.

We've had the question in several different ways about the announcement the Board made of the financial assistance. So I'm going to ask Alex to go ahead and read that question from Dugie next.

ALEXANDRA DANS: Yes, this question is from Dugie Eyton-Hughes. The Board just allocated \$1 million to help safeguard Ukraine's Internet infrastructure. What kinds of things could it be used for? Have there been any requests from Ukraine since the resolution was adopted? And if so, what kinds of help has it asked for? Thank you.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Göran, would you like --

GÖRAN MARBY: I can start and then Sally. Sally Costerton heads up the team who is responsible for answering that question in detail.

The Board took the decision yesterday. Firstly, we have got to work with other organizations to help us with this one primarily because there are existing channels for companies -- sorry, for organizations who can do this so we can do it -- we don't have to go from a (indiscernible) internally.

To my understanding -- and it's now 7:20 in the morning -- I have not -- we have not received from the Ukrainian government requests for certain types of equipment or anything else. Now I'm getting notified that maybe satellite terminals could be

something they ask for. But we are very early in this process, and we have got a team working on it because we want to move as soon as possible. Sorry for not being more specific.

This is less than, I think, 18 hours since the Board actually made the decision, and we are setting up the process -- we started setting up the process immediately.

We will, of course, be transparent about what we do and how we do it. That's what we always do. So thank you very much for your question.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thank you.

Sally, is there anything would you like to add to that?

SALLY COSTERTON: I think that's very comprehensive. It's all very recent, very new. Göran has empowered the Org to move fast to identify the optimal choices, recognizing there's a lot here that's unknown. And we obviously will focus on what we can do that makes the maximum impact as close to our mission as we possibly can. And we will make sure that all across the Board and the community are briefed. But the primary goal at the moment is to move

quickly while clearly this is an urgent issue which we want to respond to as fast as we can.

Thank you.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thank you, Sally. Keep your mic open because I think the next question is going to be for you as well.

So, Alex, if you can read the next question in the queue, please.

ALEXANDRA DANS: Yes. The next question is from Mouloud Khelif. Recently you announced that two ICANN managed root server clusters will be installed in Africa. One in Kenya. Not sure where the second one will be. Can you explain what is your strategy for Africa to help with Internet growth in the continent? Thank you.

SALLY COSTERTON: Thank you.

GÖRAN MARBY: Can I start?

SALLY COSTERTON: Yes, I was just going to give it to you.

GÖRAN MARBY: Thank you, Mouloud, for recognizing this important thing.

The Internet users in Africa has increased a lot over the last couple years. I think it's now 30, 35%. There's a lot of things to do.

No organization has the single answer of how to come to produce a connectivity based on the Internet parameters that works for the African citizens. And the answer then becomes we have to work together, and we can do our part.

By announcing -- and, yes, as you rightly said, we have announced the first place. There will be an announcement very shortly which other country we are putting the clusters in. It's one of the things we are doing in Africa to make sure that we can contribute to a better way in the future about the Internet situation in Africa, to preserve the ability to have a sort of diverse Internet going forward as well.

You also hear we are speaking about the next round where I believe that the IDNs and universal acceptance part of it is very, very important to create the opportunity for people to use the

Internet based on their own sort of narrative, their own keyboard, and their own perception of how -- what the content of the Internet should be.

Content is not part of ICANN. But we are working together with partners -- and a good example of that partnership is that we did this together with the ITUD, with (saying name) from the ITUD, which is a part of the bigger program for connectivity, and also together with the Kenyan ministry.

But we are also working very closely, of course, with our partners in IETF, the RIR -- sorry, ISOC and other partners in Africa because this is something we have -- it's a challenge we have to do by ourselves.

ICANN speaks so much at length about this thing because it's so important, not only from me but also from my executive team and the Board and the Org in general and also from you in the community.

But I'm going to stop there. So thank you for bringing it up and thank you for the question.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thank you. Okay.

Let's go back to the queue. And I believe we have a fellow who's hand is raised, Ahmad Aghar. Ahmad, you should be able to speak now.

AHMAD AGHAR:

Thank you. This is Ahmad for the record. My question is related to Mouloud's question but in a more general sense. I would like to ask what does ICANN do to help underprivileged or under connected communities to connect to the Internet in terms of it's becoming more of a life necessity rather than just a nice-to-have thing, especially when it comes to communities that are facing efforts to deter that connection, whether for commercial purposes or for political purposes? Or there is a lack of effort to actually help them from their governments to connect to the Internet.

Thank you.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN:

Thank you for that.

GÖRAN MARBY:

Should I start?

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Yes, please.

GÖRAN MARBY: We all know that access to Internet actually starts with physical connectivity. We have a really good identifier system, a really good DNS, but without connectivity, it doesn't work.

But in Africa and in many other places, it's such a complex problem that nobody has a solution. A teleoperator could provide the equipment. You have manufacturers of mobile phones. You have service providers, applications on to the Internet itself. You have the affordability of those systems for the end users.

Last week I was in -- I was at the World Mobile Congress and one of my speaking points was -- we always talk about 5G, all these new fantastic opportunities you can do on 5G. I ask myself where are the cheap and inexpensive devices that can be used by people who can't afford to pay for all those services and how do we set that up.

As we said before, the answer is really, we have to come together. We have to work together throughout this ecosystem, throughout -- together with the governments who, for instance, control

spectrum, the access to power grids, et cetera, et cetera. And I think that we had to reverse the discussion a little bit.

I understand the political and I understand the commercial interest of doing this. But from ICANN's perspective, we are there to try to help to do this. But we don't have the single answer to it.

And, again, this is something that is -- this is something we can speak at length. The important, necessary thing is that ICANN as an institution, as an organization, as the Board are trying to do our bit to do it as good -- provide the knowledge and the investments we can do.

Thank you. And thank you, again, for bringing this up.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Okay. Thank you. Okay.

Let's see. Alex, if we can go to another question in the chat -- in the Q&A pod, please.

ALEXANDRA DANS: Yes. We have a question from Finn Petersen. Could we have in writing ICANN's concern with DNS4EU?

GÖRAN MARBY: So may I start? We have issued a paper -- I think we posted it as well -- about how the resolver, how the resolver market actually works in Europe, which is a little bit different from the input we received from the European Commission.

I would say we would really like to participate in the conversation in the GAC about this, because there are so many things -- We don't understand some of the -- maybe because we are not politicians -- some of the underlying reasons for this.

We always think it's good to have more resolvers on the market. But some of the uses for it we don't fully understand. So maybe an invitation to a GAC call.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Okay. Thank you.

Alex let's go back to the Q&A pod, please.

ALEXANDRA DANS: So the next question is from Jeffrey Neuman. ICANN currently has 37 positions open on its website, which seems like a lot of positions. Can you please explain what is behind the large

expansion of staff, especially in light of the current economic environment? Thank you.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Okay. Thank you for that. Göran, would you like to start with that, or I can hand to Xavier or Gina.

GÖRAN MARBY: Thank you for the question. A little bit of surprised in the sense that you have said that ICANN needs more resources, if I understand it correctly, because we have so many things to do. Of course, to be able to do all the things that the community and other one produces, we reached a point where we actually had to add more people into it. We had some -- the next round is one of those things that we need to have extra resources for.

The other thing I want to mention is that the political situation also means that we need to have more people. And also one of the things that I want to point out is that last year we supported more than 4,500 community calls in the policy area. So it seems there is a need for this resource.

I will also note in the last five years, we have not increased staff at all. We have rebuilt a lot of the way we do things in the Org. And that's despite the fact we have actually implemented a large part

of the decision with new accountability measures for the community.

So thank you very much. I take the question as you think it's a positive thing that ICANN adds more resources and, of course, for everybody on this call, have a look at it and see if there's something that will fit your future. ICANN Org is a really fun place to be.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Yes, indeed. Agreed.

Okay. Let's see. I think we -- I see a hand in the queue. Michael Palage, we'll go back to you if you have another question.

MICHAEL PALAGE: I do, thank you very much. Although I did answer this in the pod.

So, Göran, about ICANN Org and new staff, one of the new hires ICANN recently hired was Roberto Pena, who I believe is the first in-house economist that ICANN has hired. When will Roberto be introduced to the community? And will he be participating in the TLD operating model study that I had referenced earlier?

GÖRAN MARBY: I'm sure he looks forward to having interactions with you, Michael, especially.

I mean, we decided, I decided, and actually the Board thought about it, it's just taken a bit of time because of COVID, that it's good to have more competence about it and also of the economics into the ICANN staff. And I'm really pleased and really happy that this person has joined us. I hope not that only ICANN Org but the whole community could benefit to have someone we can have more of this information. Because as you know, Michael, sometimes there are anecdotal evidence about how the market looks like or who is doing what in the market. And as you know, and I know you respect this, the neutrality of ICANN Org means that we can sometimes provide information that is more neutral than some of the opinions that are raised, which I know that you like.

Thank you.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thank you so much for that.

Theresa, is there something you want to add?

THERESA SWINEHART: Yeah, just to add.

The work relating to different areas and of course all of this is coordinated cross-functionally, so absolutely he'll be part of those conversations as well, and we look forward to having him on board to do that.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Okay. Thank you. Thank you for that.

There is another question, I'm just going to read it. There is a question, I think John Jeffrey or Xavier you may want to answer this. But if ICANN is accepting payments from Russian-contracted parties, is that a violation of U.S. sanctions?

And the same sanction questions about other ICANN contracted parties receiving payments from Russian contracted parties.

I'm not sure. John, would you like to start?

JOHN JEFFREY: Xavier, do you want to start or I'm happy to?

XAVIER CALVEZ: John, please start, and then I'll follow.

JOHN JEFFREY: Yeah. So obviously we look very closely at all of the new sanctions that are issued by OFAC, by other jurisdictions where we're present, and we take those very seriously. We're currently evaluating the new sanctions to determine how that will affect our relationships with any parties in the countries that are being sanctioned, and we can provide a more fulsome answer when we have additional information.

XAVIER CALVEZ: Thank you. And just a quick addition to that. There's already issued sanctions relative to certain specific banks, for example, in Russia. So we have looked at that, and we are looking at the potential impacts on the payments that ICANN either issues or collects from those specific areas and because of those specific individual banks, but there's no -- pending the conclusion of the evaluation that John referenced, we are not, at this stage, seeing sanctions specifically that would prevent contracted parties with ICANN or that would be in the scope of the sanctions for contracted parties. There's no such thing as, at the moment, of sanctions that would prevent contracted parties to be able to be in contract with ICANN.

So at this stage, that's not what we have seen. And as John said, we continue our evaluation and monitoring of any sanctions relative to Ukraine or Russia. Thank you.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thank you, Xavier.

Göran, any final comment on this topic?

GÖRAN MARBY: Not on this one.

I'm getting sideboard questions about the DNS for U resolver and because they claim I haven't answered the question properly.

So one of -- So here is one of our concerns. This -- this is part of a bigger strategy from DG CONNECT when it comes to the cybersecurity initiatives they do where they have talked about, my understanding is, the alternatives to the actual roots. And if you see that in the line of this, that could actually lead to we believe Internet fragmentations. But we don't have the answer to the questions, so it's hard for us to have an opinion. But we are getting more and more questions by ourselves, so we don't lead up to a sort of fragmented Internet because of this.

Thank you very much.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thank you.

John Crain, anything you wanted to add there?

JOHN CRAIN: Not really. You know, I think we said before that, you know, adding another resolver, and there are already thousands of resolvers in the European Union, but adding another open one, in and of itself is good in concept. There are many elements around the proposal that we just do not understand, including some technical elements.

You know, we do, for example, talk to the folks in NIS and the technical folks and talk around these things. So we have good conversations with them, and we'd love to understand more, but, you know, it's -- it's interesting in the fact that it's a proposal to do certain things in the DNS that you don't normally do. I replied to Finn in writing for a very specific example is the filtering at the URI level. That's not something a resolver does. So is DNS really just a resolver or is it more than a resolver? The documents, et cetera, don't really state those things.

So there's a lot of questions around that, you know, we're happy to discuss.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thank you, John.

Okay. Alex, I'm going to come back to you, please, for a question in the Q&A pod.

ALEXANDRA DANS: Thank you, Sally.

So this question is from Jacky: How many IDN-related staff are there in ICANN? I think that universal acceptance including Internationalized Domain Name and email address internationalization are very important. ICANN need more UA/IDN-related staff to promote UA work around the world. Thanks.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Okay. Theresa Swinehart, would you like to start to answer that question?

GÖRAN MARBY: Then me, please.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Then you? Okay.

You're on --

GÖRAN MARBY: Maybe I can start while Theresa is looking for unmute button.

So we have people that's directly involved in the universal acceptance and IDN work, who work sort of in the project and our knowledge base. But only in ICANN Org there are people -- This is a part of what we do, which means that there are many people who are actually there who doesn't have it as a full time, but they are part of the project when it comes to the IDN universal acceptance. That includes me. Every time I meet governments, I speak to -- and other stakeholders in this, I have speaking lines about importance of universal acceptance and IDNs. For instance, proposing that governments should in the procurement make sure that the systems they're buying should be fulfilling the obligations in universal acceptance, especially in countries that are not Latin based or have additional letters, such as my language, Swedish.

So then of course you have the importance of the ICANN community where we have very -- we have a very good

cooperation with many parts of the ICANN community about universal acceptance. They are actually the -- that's a lot of the outreach we are doing. Sally Costerton and her team is doing a lot of outreach as well. But the ICANN community is very important in this one.

And finally, when it comes to the practical implications of IDNs, we, for instance, work with work -- with language panels and experts on this in local areas around the world.

So it's -- I understand your question, and I totally agree with the underlying question as well, but it's a little bit -- it's simplifying just to look at how many people who has this as a title internally.

I don't know, Theresa, if you want to add.

THERESA SWINEHART:

Yeah, just a few extra points. I think this is an example of really the breadth and scope of the partnership not only across the organization and the community but also sort of more broadly around that.

So we have a team that is led by Sarmad, as many of you know, working very closely with a very large volunteer community, the Universal Acceptance Steering Group as well, and then an internal

steering group that's working in partnership across the different touch points that relate to IDNs and universal acceptance.

And I'm glad the question came because this is such an important area of ICANN's work and the ability of the use of diverse languages online using the unique identifier system.

And as you know, there's also some policy development-related work going on in this space. I'll ask David Olive if he wants to touch on that. But it's an example of really the breadth and scope of the partnerships together with the volunteer community and the different trainings that we've undertaken.

So thanks for the question.

And, David, I don't know if you want to add on to that.

DAVID OLIVE:

Just to point out that both the country code -- ccNSO and the Generic Names Supporting Organizations have PDPs in process now working on the IDNs. So the community is obviously focusing on that.

And internally, of course, we have the team that Theresa mentioned, coordinated by Sarmad, to look at both IDNs and also

UA. To that extent, that's a helpful backup to the efforts of the community in those two working groups.

In addition, other advisory committees have an interest in this. I know ALAC and others look at this. And so the community is activated, and we also are prepared to support and facilitate those conversations.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thank you, David.

Xavier, is there anything you'd like to contribute?

XAVIER CALVEZ: Sorry, on another point, yes. On the headcount topic that Jeff's question was raising up, and just to complement what Göran was saying. A couple of things that I think are important and Jeff pointed them out in his question, notably on the economic conditions that we -- we, as per Jeff's question, we should take into account when we commit to resources to any type of spend, including on headcount. And those of you who participate to the overall planning process know that we are very careful in looking ahead at the resources that we're expecting to collect and also budgeting for our expenses in a manner that is also conservative. So we try to always spend a bit less than what we budget for just

to be conservative. And in the recent five to six years, we have shown that we have collected a bit more funding than we were planning for, because we were conservative in planning for our collected funded -- funding, and we have also spent a bit less than what we have budgeted for so that we are always on the safe side of that balance between funding and expenses. And we're very careful about that on an ongoing basis so that we don't risk to find ourselves in a position where we have more expenses than we have funding's. To Jeff's point, that's really important.

Relative to headcount, I just want to remind everyone, as we do on an ongoing basis, but it's not always seen or understood, that as Göran said, our headcount has been very stable over the past six years. Around 390 headcount, even though we've budgeted about 400, 410 headcount, we're always a little bit under that number. And that's been stable for six years. I know there are community members who think the ICANN headcount just keeps growing, it is not. I just want to be very clear. It is not growing. But as Göran has said, as Jeff has pointed out, and as you can see in our FY23 draft budget that's been published for public comment, we intend to grow our resources so that we are able to address all the ongoing work that is currently pending, that requires resources; notably, the next round of the new gTLDs but also other aspects.

And just in complement to Jeff's point in the Q&A pod, some of the positions that are on our website are also for replacements of vacant positions that already exist. So I just wanted to point out that all the positions that he mentioned in his question are not increasing the headcount of ICANN but simply replacing the current positions.

Thank you.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thank you very much, Xavier. I think it's an important distinction.

Theresa, there are some positions that we do have open that I think you wanted to talk about?

THERESA SWINEHART: Yes. And now my mute button and I are having a more friendly relationship.

Yeah, just for the benefit of everybody, we do have two positions that have been posted around this, and I see that just it's also been put into the chat, but I also wanted to verbally acknowledge that for those who are not following the chat. It's for an IDN program coordinator and an IDN technical manager.

So we'll look forward to adding those to the team and to the volunteer work. Thanks.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Beautiful. Thank you.

John Jeffrey, anything you'd like to add here?

JOHN JEFFREY: Real quickly, there was a question in the Q&A pod about whether we think we're above the law in reference to some U.S. legislation. I just want to be very clear; we don't ever think we're above the law. We act consistently and always to understand what the laws are, to act in compliance with them. And I think you can see that by the way we approached GDPR and by the way we have approached many other issues like

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thank you. Thank you very much. Okay. I know we are getting close to a time check here. I do want to go back. We missed a question from Recep Serit. So, Alex, could you read that, please.

ALEXANDRA DANS: Yes. And I have another one from Recep Serit, too. The first one: If you answered, I may have missed it. Will there be sanctions on DNS or domain extensions directly for Russia? Thank you for this informative event.

And the last one is: Does ICANN have work for other domains like ccTLDs that don't support DNSSEC?

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Okay. Thank you for that.

Göran, I don't know if you want to start. I know we'll definitely turn to John Crain. But would you like to start here? No?

GÖRAN MARBY: Sorry. I want to shadow my inside John Jeffrey here and say the word "sanction" is very specific in the context of what we do.

But I think I can reference the letter I sent back to the Ukrainian government last week about the role of ICANN when it comes to contribute to the ability for people to connect to the interoperable Internet, which is our role. And I hope that answers your question.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thank you.

John Jeffrey, anything to add to the second part of that? I mean, John Crain. I'm sorry. Starting to get my Johns confused.

JOHN CRAIN: Come on, J.J. You can answer it.

ICANN works all the time with ccTLDs. You will see our staff participating in the Tech Days here at ICANN meetings.

When it comes specifically to DNSSEC, what we tend to do is educational outreach. We have training programs on how to sign. We also help them if they have questions about technology. So we're very supportive of any ccTLDs that want to do DNSSEC. And we will put resources there upon request.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thank you. Okay. There is another question regarding sanctions. It was from Reg Levy. If we could -- I feel like we've answered that. Alex, if you want to read it and see if anyone has additional comments to add.

ALEXANDRA DANS: Yes. Giving the sanctions against Russia, making payment transactions difficult, will ICANN consider suspending RRA 3.7.5.1 for Russian registrants? The question is from Reg Levy.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Theresa, would you like to talk about the blog that we recently published today? Apologies. You are muted.

THERESA SWINEHART: Yeah, sure. We had posted a blog earlier today with regards to relief to registrants. We can repost that in there, if that's helpful.

JOHN JEFFREY: If I could just add.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Please.

JOHN JEFFREY: I think we're clear in that the events in Ukraine and the surrounding region are now considered by ICANN to be an extending circumstance under the Registrar Accreditation Agreement, under 3.7.5.1. So I think that might go directly to her question.

THERESA SWINEHART: Perfect. Thank you, John.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Agreed. Thank you.

Okay. And then we have question from Jothan Frakes. Alex, if you can read this one.

ALEXANDRA DANS: Yes. This question is: Please pardon should I have missed a public announcement if it has been made on this. Has there been any formal announcement or final determination that ICANN74 will not be virtual-only?

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thank you for that. Sally Costerton.

SALLY COSTERTON: Thank you, Sally. We have explained that our plan is for ICANN74 to be offered as a hybrid meeting. And what that means is partly face-to-face and partly remote. And we are proceeding with those plans, which we've been communicating about in various different ways over the past few weeks. So keep an eye on this.

We live, as we all know, and has been mentioned multiple times already on this call, in uncertain times. But we are committed to doing everything we can, providing we can do that meeting safely, to have a hybrid meeting in The Hague and all the staff resources are pointing in that direction.

And immediately after the aftermath of this meeting, we will meet again, as we do regularly three times a year, with the community meeting planning group to work through exactly what that is going to look like and what we would factor in, in terms of some new protocols and new arrangements that we will have for that meeting.

Yes, Jeff, I see your comment in the text, in the chat. I think you're referring to the meeting itself. We need lots of notice.

David, do you just want to just explain the likely expected calendar dates for when we will do further communication on opening up the calendar, the sort of normal time frame for the meeting? David Olive, that is.

DAVID OLIVE:

Thank you very much. I know we have planned, I think, on March the 23rd to have the community planning group start the

discussion on that. And to that extent, that will be an important start to the planning for ICANN74 and the hybrid meeting.

We'll also, of course, toward the end of March start the process of constituency travel applications. And that will help in planning for that as people begin to look to their schedules for the June meeting, which is the Policy Forum.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thank you. Excellent. Appreciate that. There is Sebastien Bachollet, I see your hand raised, if you would like to speak. Sebastien?

SEBASTIEN BACHOLLET: I just now got the authorization to speak. Thank you for the answers regarding ICANN74 in The Hague, in the Netherlands. It is very important for us because it should be the General Assembly for EURALO. And so I truly hope we can have a face-to-face meeting for the benefit of all our members. I do understand it will be difficult for people coming from outside of Europe. But precisely for these questions in order to find a solution, I think the quicker that we can find a solution, the better -- or the quicker we can have a decision, the better.

We are in a global context, and we need to work on travel plans and so forth. So thank you in advance for your decision.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thank you, Sebastien. I know we are keenly aware of the timing and all of the planning and work that the community needs to do as well as we move towards this next meeting.

I don't know, Sally or David, any comment you would like to make related to that?

SALLY COSTERTON: Yes. Just one summary comment. Just for clarification, so we have made a decision. The decision is that we are aiming to put on a hybrid meeting. So in that sense, the decision -- the binary decision, yes/no, is made.

What we are doing next, as David says, is getting to the next point where we start to go through the gates where we specifically open up for funded travelers. That's a typical point that you are all familiar with.

But as things stand at the moment, that is the plan. The equipment is on its way from the West Coast of the U.S. to Europe. This is a decision that Göran talked about a couple of weeks ago.

So we're in -- I was going to say in trade, not literally. But we're in motion to put the meeting on. We've done site visits. Everybody -- everything is a go.

The only -- the only reason I expressed any doubt is, as I said, we live in uncertain times. And this is the first time we've tried to do this. But we are all leaning in, and we are hopeful, and we are all planning to be there. That is the goal. But we can't guarantee anything on the ground these days.

I don't think we can be in a way -- we are as decided as we possibly can be at this point, if that's helpful.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thank you, Sally. I think that's an important clarification, that we are planning forward and we are planning to have the hybrid event.

We are almost at the end of time. Thank you, all, for these challenging questions and the interaction.

Göran, I'm going to hand it over to you for any final comments you'd like to make.

GÖRAN MARBY: First of all, thank you very much for the interaction. It's been -- it's actually quite fun to do this. I know I speak for the rest of the executive team as well. Many good questions. Many good conversations. And I'm looking forward to the rest of the ICANN meeting.

Just one more thing, the situation in Ukraine is evolving and ICANN Org and the Board and everybody else is looking into things that we can do to help. And you have seen some examples of it over the weekend from the Board.

Maybe if you are interested in DNS abuse, we are also looking into how to evolve the uses of the DNS ticker where it successfully worked when it comes to potential abuse using the word "COVID," et cetera. That's something we are now working on to immediately start helping that as well.

I don't know, J.C., if you want to add something to that.

JOHN CRAIN: Not really. For those who are familiar with DNS ticker, it's really looking at the use of names for phish and malware dropping. And we're looking at how we can use terminology related to the

current conflicts to help protect the end users who are being duped by these kinds of things.

There's a lot of stuff in the press and some technical papers out there that show clearly that the bad guys, as always, have, once again, pivoted to whatever is happening in the world. So if we can do a little bit to help, we will.

GÖRAN MARBY: Just another way how ICANN fights DNS abuse. Thank you very much for this. I wish you a very good ICANN meeting.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN: Thank you, everyone. Have a good day. Bye-bye.

Recording stopped.

[END OF TRANSCRIPT]