
ICANN76 | CF – GAC LAC Capacity Development Workshop (3 of 4)
Saturday, March 11, 2023 – 15:00 to 16:00 CUN

MANAL ISMAIL: Hello again, everyone. Welcome to the second topic of the three important topics that was decided by you, our lead colleague colleagues in the GAC. So we're on the subsequent rounds of new generic top level domains. And we have with us our presenters, Karen and Chris, and also the topic leads from GAC our colleagues. I will let them introduce themselves. I'll hand over to Karen, to start us off. Thank you, Karen.

KAREN LENTZ: Hello. Can you hear me okay? Yes. Okay. Thank you. Good afternoon, and thank you for the invitation to speak with the GAC this afternoon. So, I understand this is a capacity building focused session for us to share some information on the background relating to this topic and some of the current events that will be happening, some of the discussions that the GAC has been involved in, in recent months, and what some of the discussions are that are happening at this meeting.

So that is our agenda for the day, and I think then, there's some additional materials here from other GAC members. So, my name is Karen Lentz, I am Vice President for Policy Research and Stakeholder Programs at ICANN. And I'll start off when we talk about new gTLDs, talking about some of the history. So since ICANN was created, there

Note: The following is the output resulting from transcribing an audio file into a word/text document. Although the transcription is largely accurate, in some cases may be incomplete or inaccurate due to inaudible passages and grammatical corrections. It is posted as an aid to the original audio file, but should not be treated as an authoritative record.

was interest in understanding how to continue to build and expand on the domain name system for the internet. If you refer to the ICANN bylaws that describe the mission and purpose of ICANN as it was formed, section 1.1 talks about coordinating the allocation and assignment of names in the root zone of the DNS.

And so this is really when we talk about new gTLDs, this is what we are talking about is how to expand the DNS in a way that is safe and secure, and that serves all of the users of the world. So we'll start off with the next slide if we can go. So, in 2000, the ICANN undertook what we call a proof-of-concept application round, and there was the goal of trying and testing out different types of generic top level domains. And so, at that time, the Board accepted a number of proposals, and ended up selecting seven of those. And they tried to select different types to see how those would work in experience and operation.

So they included, you see the list of the seven on the screen, but they included like .info, for example, which is a fairly broad term, and then there was .aero, which was a sponsored type of model, where the aviation community was involved in helping to establish the policies for how .aero TLD would be run. And so these new top level domains were launched as a result of this.

In 2003, there was interest in having some additional gTLDs in the sponsored model, meaning that there was a defined community that the top-level domain was designed to serve, and that the sponsor had some authority delegated for policymaking and mechanisms to involve their community in that policymaking.

So those rounds were both fairly small in terms of the number of new top-level domains that were added. Then there was interest in going beyond those small rounds, and being able to expand the domain name system in a much more significant way. You notice that all of the gTLDs that are listed there for those two rounds on the top are all in the Latin script.

And so one of the themes in the discussion starting in the GNSO in 2005 had to do with because the technical work had advanced to allow for top level domains in multiple scripts, that there needed to be a process to allow those top level domains to be launched, and also to figure out what the long term processes should be for how new gTLDs could become part of the Internet.

And as part of that 2005 policy development process, the GAC provided a document called the GAC principles on new gTLDs. And that was taken on board by the PDP Working Group both in the development of their recommendations and in ICANN Org in terms of our implementation and how we ultimately built out that application process.

So, following the completion of that PDP resulting in final recommendations, the Board approved those, we went through a few years of working on the implementation so that we could build the recommended processes to evaluate whether applicants could support their registry in a stable and secure way, whether they would have the resources and the policies in place to do that.

And so, in 2011, the Board approved the applicant guidebook, which was the rules for how new gTLDs could be applied for and evaluated,

and we began what you'll hear talked about as the 2000 application, or sorry, 2012, the 2012 application round, which is when the application period opened in January of 2012. Can we go to the next slide, please?

So, the implementation of those policies on introducing new gTLDs is what we call the new gTLD program in practice. That's what we call it. When the community worked on recommendations around this, they had a foundational question to answer, which is, do we need more top-level domains? Is there a benefit to going through this process to enable additions to the root zone?

And they concluded that yes, there should be a process for having new gTLDs. Some of the reasons that they noted for that decision are some of the things that you see on the slide here, interest in promoting more competition, offering users more choices in the DNS, allowing for innovation uses by businesses, governments, and also, importantly, as I mentioned, the ability to introduce top level domains in a variety of languages and scripts.

So prior to the new gTLD program, there was no process for adding a top level domain, a gTLD in anything other than the Latin script. So this application round began in 2012, continued processing the almost 2000 applications that we received, and my colleague, Chris Bear is going to talk a little bit about that round. Thanks.

CHRIS BEAR:

Thank you, Karen. My name is Christopher bear. I am a director under Global Domains and Strategy under the Strategic Initiatives Team. The 2012 round, and sometimes you'll hear us call it the last round

since it's the last one we worked on, started in January of 2012, that's when we launched the application window. This was the third round of gTLDs.

Karen mentioned the 2000 and the 2003 before that. There were 1930 applications for that round. It was a significantly higher number than we expected, but that was the number we received. The applications themselves, the strings that were received were announced in June of that year. And in July of that year, 2012, we signed our first contracts, the first registry agreements with four IDNs.

In November of that year 2012, the GAC issued their early warnings on 242 of those applications, and they were notifying or noting potentially sensitive or problematic issues by one or more of the [00:10:54 - inaudible]. In December, that's when we had our prioritization draw. This is where we select the order of processing for the applications, and it was done as a drawing in Los Angeles.

Oh, sorry, we should be on the next slide. Apologies. So I just mentioned that in December, we had the prioritization draw. And that was, like I said, in Los Angeles, we had a drawing to choose the order, and the IDNs were given priority in that list. So the first, I don't remember the exact number, 100 and some odd applications that were processed were all from the IDN pool. In March of 2013, that's when the first of the initial evaluations were done. So all of the applications, they went through an evaluation process that had several different panels reviewing different aspects of them. And that first round of evaluations was called initial evaluation.

So the first of the initial evaluations came out in March of 2013, and those were published on the ICANN website. In October of that year, 2013, that's when the first actual new Gs from this round were delegated. Now, as of 31st of January 2023, earlier this year, 1241 of those applications gTLDs were delegated. Out of that, 84 of those are self-identified community applications, 56 of those are community based, 53 of them are geographic TLDs, and 97 of them are IDNs. So there were different types of classifications within the applications themselves. One thing to note, we still have, I believe it's 26 or 27, live applications from the 2012 round.

So the round, while it's over 10 years old, still has the occasional activity on it as well. Next slide, please. So in 2015, there was a policy development process that was kicked off by the GNSO council to initiate working on subsequent procedures. The name itself came out as a result of that as well, so on December 17th 2015. They work for quite a while on that, and in July of 2018, there was an initial report that came out that had a lot of the work that the group had been working on listed there, and it was open for public comment so that that comment could be taken back and incorporated. On the 8th of October in 2018, the GAC submitted their comments to that report, that initial report.

In 2021, in January 20 of that year, the final report was published. And that's the report that the GNSO-- whenever we refer to the final report and all of the recommendations that came out of it, this is the one we're referring to. On February 18th in 2021, the GNSO approved the policy recommendations and set those to the board as was required by the bylaws. On 12th of September of 2021, the board directed the

Org to work on the ODP, the Operational Design Phase, and that was the work that began in January of 2022 and culminated this last December 12 in 2022 with the delivery of the Operational Design Assessment, the ODA to the Board.

As of now, if you read their recent blog from Tripti, the Board chair, you will note that it's saying that there are several decisions that are being discussed right now. There's an intention to vote on those GNSO recommendations during the ICANN76 meeting, and there will be likely be a subset of those recommendations that will be deferred for future consideration and conversation. Next slide.

KAREN LENTZ:

Thank you, Chris. So the next part that I'll go over is some of the key milestones that relate to the GAC and the GAC's involvement in this process. So I mentioned first of all the GAC principles on new gTLDs, those are from 2007, a key document. And then in the subsequent procedures, PDP that Chris talked about, the GAC was, I think, actively involved in following the discussions in providing inputs and updates back to the GAC numbers.

A couple of other things to flag here. So the GAC, for the process, has the ability to provide advice to the ICANN Board, this is part of the GAC's role for the for the ICANN bylaws is to provide public policy advice to the Board. And so as some of those applications that we received in 2012, or in process, the GAC issued a communiqué in 2013, that included advice on specific applications and also on categories of applications.

So there was quite extensive advice from the GAC at that time that we spent some time working on how to implement. The GAC, as I mentioned, was involved or continues to be involved in the SubPro work providing a couple of comments and inputs at various phases, this is part of the PDP works, and most recently provided a comment to the Board in relation to a public comment period that the Board held on the final report. This is along with the public comments and the various pieces of advice and inputs received throughout the stakeholder community. The Board has been taking into account all of those inputs in regard to its decision on the final report, as Chris talked about.

Next slide, please. So the next section that we'll talk about is focusing on what we anticipate is happening in the next phases after the Board makes the decision on the final report. So we'll talk a little bit about the work ahead of us.

CHRIS BEAR:

Thank you. Yes, so the next steps we're working on, the expectation is that the Board will be making decisions all along the way till we actually launch the next round. And one of the first bullet point here talks about the fact that we expect during this meeting at ICANN76, that the Board will vote on the majority of the GNSO recommendations, although there is an expectation that a small subset of those recommendations will be deferred for future consideration or future conversation. It is also expected that it's part of this resolution that the Board will ask the Org to actually start the

implementation work. So that is where the Org is sitting right now in that expectation and planning around that.

These deferred recommendations are pending, sorry, pending recommendations that are not resolved during this meeting, and will continue to be a priority for the Board to work through and to work with the community as needed to move that forward. You'll see here that we have the Board already starting a dialogue with the GNSO Council on a number of these, there was a call, I believe it was last week, where these were presented as well as potential ways to move forward on those. We want to make sure that the clarifications or the resolution of the any questions or issues outstanding within those recommendations doesn't slow down the actual implementation work that's to come.

All right. Next slide. So the implementation phase, and this refers to some of the work that was done by the Org in the ODA, the Operational Design Assessment, so once the Board tells the Org to begin progress on implementation, that's when we'll actually start the implementation phase. And if you're familiar with the ODA, on page 69, we talk about what that means, the implementation phase. And it's basically made up of four different streams of activity, four different streams of work. There's the policy implementation, there's the program design, the infrastructure development, and the operationalization. So I'll go through those in a little more detail.

The policy implementation would be-- the result of that would be an updated Applicant Guidebook, and AGB. And in order to get through that, there's obviously the work with spinning up the IRT and working

with them to clarify or to resolve on any questions that may exist from the policy recommendations, and to get all of the work done, and the authoring of the AGB, the Applicant Guidebook.

The program design, in simple terms, would be the processes that we have to build. It's a simple word to say processes, but there's obviously a lot to make that happen when you think about figuring out what the scope of the process is, and which teams would deliver that, this is all more internal work now I'm talking about, which teams would deliver it, what the expected amount of capability needs to be to make that happen, that's in the program design there.

And the policy implementation and the program design will work in parallel in order to be able to get the information that will go into the AGB. The infrastructure development in simple terms would be the systems that we develop, but there's more to it than that.

It's not just the portals that we'll use to accept applications and the other type of processing tools we have, but there's the expectation that there may be tools outside of that we'll need to develop as well. And then, the operationalization is to take all of those pieces, create the procedures, and then get the staff hired and trained to actually operate when we launch. All four of these needs to happen pretty much in order, but they do overlap and have a lot of parallel activity along the way. The one thing we'll note on here, we say they're interdependent, and that means that it really to complete the following stream, the prior one needs to be completed.

Now, it's not all linear, like I said, there will be overlap, but we want to make it clear that we can't finish something at the end until something

before that has been done, that's the interdependent aspect here. And the guidelines we're using for the implementation here are the consensus policy implementation framework, the CPIF, the IRT principles and guidelines, and the policy development process manual. Next slide, please.

KAREN LENTZ:

Thank you. So the last part I'll talk a little bit about in terms of what implementation looks like, how we do policy implementation at ICANN within this multi stakeholder model that we have.

So these next couple of slides talk about the different roles and responsibilities when it comes to implementing policy recommendations and the different responsibilities that different parts of the community have when it comes to building out the work towards the next round that Chris described.

So in terms of the policy process, the GNSO Council manages the work within the generic names supporting organization that makes policy relating to gTLDs. So they are responsible for managing that process for the development of consensus recommendations, and for providing those to the ICANN Board for decision.

When it comes to the process of implementation, often, the council may provide input as to some aspect of the policy or implementation of work. The next group here that's on this slide is what we call the IRT. That stands for Implementation Review Team. So when the board accepts consensus policy recommendations that have come from the GNSO, they typically direct ICANN Organization. That's those

of us who work for the organization to do the implementation work. We have this IRT that consists of volunteers that performs a reviewing role.

So as we develop the applicant guidebook, for example, based on the policy recommendations, that group reviews to make sure that they're consistent with the intentions of the policy, with the policies, language of the recommendations, and then they also advise on some of the implementation details that come up in the process of building out high level recommendations. There is within the IRT process, a mechanism to escalate, for example, if there's not agreement on what policy recommendation means, or how it should be implemented, there is a process for the IRT to bring that back to the GNSO Council.

Next slide, please. So ICANN Org as I said, is responsible for leading the implementation of the recommendations that have come through the multi stakeholder process. We do work with an IRT, we do within the function that Chris and I are part of which is global demands and strategy, we do a lot of this implementation work, but we don't do it alone, with many of our colleagues throughout the organization in finance or technology or other areas of expertise, work with us as well.

We also at times may consult with other experts if there's some area where we need some additional input. There is in the IRT, a GNSO Council liaison, and that provides a direct link for this process. So in the event that there is something to be escalated or a question to go back and forth, the liaison helps to facilitate that. When you look at the GAC in terms of the possibilities for working on the implementation, noting that we've had GAC members previously be

part of an IRT to perform that role, as well as the standard processes that the GAC follows for its procedures.

So next slide. So the last slide we have on here is some of the key links, you can find the final report that the board is now considering and getting ready to act upon. The second link is the Operational Design Assessment, that was our information that we provided to the Board on what would be involved in implementation of those recommendations, for example, the costs, the timing, the risks, and then there are some recordings of the last link of the webinar, a few webinars that we gave going through the Operational Design Assessment and answering some questions on that. So that concludes our part of this session, I think. We'll be happy to take any questions and then turn it back to you all,. Thanks.

KAREL DOUGLAS:

Hello, hi. Okay, so thank you, Karen and Chris. All right, so we do have a couple of questions. And after questions, we go to Ross and Jason. So I do see Kavouss. Go ahead.

KAVOUSS ARASTEH:

Yes, thank you very much for the presentation. Yes, GAC members have been involved to some extent on the preparation of this activity as it took me about six years, about, as I mentioned this morning, and [00:29:09 - inaudible] due to the time zones and so on, so forth.

Sometimes it was, for instance, 3 o'clock in the morning, sometimes there was a different time. My question is not this, my question is that

there has been a lot of unclear situations in this report. I don't know whether the Board has decided on one big round or four annual rounds. Whether between the two options, the issue of cost has been only taken into account or the issue of cost and benefit has been taken into account. And it is a benefit of whom, benefit of some particular constituency or benefit of GAC.

The other point is not clear in here; for instance, geographical name is not clear, and many other issues. So, I think maybe we are not so close to the implementation, and I think something which has been at least from 2013 up to now, 10 years, it may not be appropriate to rush into any conclusions unless whatever decision is made, this is my expertise personal view would be subject to come back to the option which yield or provide a better result.

That means the decision is not definitive, the decision is for some period of time to see as a source of, I would say, a trial effort but not [00:31:33 - inaudible]. This is something very important, and we also would like to see many other problems raised in this report or voluminous report recommendations and rationale for these recommendations.

I think, maybe some of the GAC members, maybe not all, it would be difficult to make a careful analysis of all of these very voluminous reports, which sometimes there is no agreement. There are some relative, I would say ICANN type consensus. Still, there are some minorities statements from different group, and I don't know how this minority statement will be taken into account in the final decisions. This is very, very important, and we should see whether there is a top

priority to rush into any of these conclusion or yes, we need to have a careful consideration of the matter.

And I think before your session, there was another session, which is DNS abuse, it is top important issue for the governments and so on. And this is which activity we should concentrate our efforts. Most of the GAC members, I'm talking about our own country, have unlimited resources to put on these, and they cannot have on the multiple resources and to multiple activities and so on so forth.

So we need to look into the prioritizations of the activities and put our effort on something that has more priority. I give a simple example, that you have a house, it may be good to maintain that house in a better position, rather than leaving the matter as it is and go to have a new house, then you will face more difficulty. So this is the important moment for the ICANN Board to decide what we can do with respect to this SubPro. Thank you.

KAREL DOUGLAS: Thank you so much, Kavouss.

KAVOUSS ARASTEH: Thank you.

KAREL DOUGLAS: Karen, you want to -- I must remind everybody that we do have a time limit. So after this question, after your answer, we have to go to Jorge

Cancio, who is actually online, so I meant to mention him. And then we go to Ross and then Jason. So, Karen.

KAREN LENTZ:

Okay, thank you very much, and I'll just quickly comment that you referred to the amount of information in the ODA that included a couple of options, one being one big round and another looking for annual rounds. There are a number of ways that these recommendations for new rounds could be implemented. And so, the reason we included those options in the in the ODA was to help be able to examine what the impact is of changing some of the aspects of the implementation. For example, you mentioned costs and benefits, and that benefits can be two different stakeholders.

For example, you could build a very low-cost application system, but that would make it hard for applicants put more work on their end. So those are the kinds of things that the Board is weighing. And I want to be conscious to that there's more discussion to be had. So I believe the GAC is also having a discussion, SubPro continuing tomorrow. So hopefully, some of that can continue. Thank you.

KAREL DOUGLAS:

Thank you, Karen. And given the time frame, can we move straight to Jorge Cancio who's online? So Jorge, are you there?

JORGE CANCIO:

Hello, Karel. Hello, everyone. I hope you hear me okay.

KAREL DOUGLAS: Yes, Jorge, continue. Thanks.

JORGE CANCIO: Thank you so much. So next slide, please. So first of all, why I'm speaking to you in this capacity building session, I'm Jorge Cancio, representative for Switzerland, and for the last few years, together with other colleagues, I've been one of the so called topic leads for this issue of new gTLDs or subsequent procedures.

So that's the reason for having me here in this session. This first slide tries to summarize why this is so important to governments, why do we care about the new gTLDs. So, a lot of things have been said by Karen and by colleagues, but maybe one thing to raise, which is to underline is that, of course, ICANN is setting the rules for generic top-level domains. Before the 2012 round, we had around 35 generic top-level domains, gTLDs, and now we have more than 1200. And if what we are doing with subsequent procedures is really developing the rules for new expansions of this space.

And top-level domains are very silent identifiers on the internet. They are unique, you can only have one.com, or one dot base or dot whatever, and they carry meaning. So they mean something to us humans, and at the same time, they are infrastructure of the internet, and therefore, they have public policy implications. And here, in this slide, I have just highlighted some of them. One is, of course, that a top-level domain can have an economic or a development aspect for a

country or a region or for a branch of economic activity for the community. So this is something to consider.

As names, top level domains, are also closely linked with intellectual property at large as trademarks, and that's why they are also always connected discussions about the rights protection mechanisms attached to the new gTLDs. At the moment, the rights protection mechanisms are being reviewed in a different PDP. So that's also important for us as governments in the protection of intellectual property TLDs and the registries and how they perform their obligations as an impact on public safety implications on DNS abuse. And we had a session today, registries are very important role in this matter.

And, of course, top level domains can also have substantial geographic connections. So for instance, as they carry meaning, some top level domains can be the name of a capital city, of a city, of a region, of a geographic feature, a golf, a sea, whatever. And this is also something that, of course, for us governments is very important.

And, finally, the participation, the active participation of governments in the application process, whenever these rules are implemented, is very important in order also to preserve and protect important public policy interests. And for that, we have different instruments in the rules concerning subsequent procedures, which we call GAC early warning and GAC consensus advice, amongst others.

So we can go to the next slide. After having a look at the general considerations, and yes, as I mentioned, the current discussions,

everything, what we call SubPro, is about determining the application rules for the next round of new gTLDs.

As we have seen, the outcome of the operational design assessment is being very important, and it has brought many issues, as also Kavouss noted, to the attention of the Board. In the GAC, we have some interested members who participate in an emailing list where very relevant information about subsequent procedures is exchanged.

And if anyone of you is interested, you can contact the GAC Secretariat to be added to that list. And, of course, as has been mentioned, by Karen, the GAC has both participated as a whole and also through its members and preparations of the subsequent procedures recommendations. If we go to the next slides, and then mindful of time.

Here we have a summary of the so called overarching comments that the GAC delivered to the board in 2021. So almost 18 months ago, this was in June 2021, where we raised some of the main issues that concern or that are important to the GAC, amongst other things, that DNS abuse has to be tackled holistically before any next round starts. If we go to the next slide.

Next slide, please. Yes, we see that this was underlined in the ICANN70 community, and we made emphasis on this in different communications to the Board, as we see also in the next slide, please.

And if we go one further. Another thing that we reminded or we called is that the GAC is still looking forward to receiving an analysis about the costs and benefits, drawing on the experience and the outcomes

from the 2012 round. So, these are things that are still open for discussion with the Board.

By the way, tomorrow, at 18:15 UTC, we will have the GAC plenary session, where we will be discussing really the present state of the situation and try to further developing the GAC position. If we look at to the next slide, we try to look ahead a bit at the next steps. And there are two issues that are currently being discussed in two different work streams. One is Closed Generics, where Jason will introduce the matter. And then also applicant support, and the so called GNSO guidance process on this matter where Ross from the UK will introduce the present state of work.

Beyond that, if we go to the next slide, there are a number of what we call GAC priority topics, which were included in the submission to the Board that I mentioned before, from June 1st 2021. And without not surprisingly, really, all these issues that are listed on this slide are issues that have been identified by the ODA as open or unresolved issues to different extents where the Board still has to take a position or a decision about the GNSO recommendations.

And on all of these issues that GAC had filed comments and had taken a position in the comment I mentioned before, of 2021. So if we look to the next slide, we highlight here, two of those issues, applicant support and Closed Generics, but mindful of the time, I think I'll be going directly to Jason and Ross to introduce these issues that are currently being discussed, as I said in different work streams of ICANN. Thank you.

KAREL DOUGLAS: Thank you, Jorge. Ross, over to you.

ELSPETH ROSS: Great, thank you so much, and thank you so much, Jorge, for your helpful overview and explanation there. So I'll be updating on the GGP Working Group on applicant support. And GGP is GNSO Guidance Process, just to make that jargon clear to everyone.

So first, I'll just provide a little bit of background. The applicant support program or ASP was developed for the 2012 round with a goal of providing financial and non-financial assistance to gTLD applicants requiring support that intended to use a gTLD to provide a public interest benefit. ICANN Org notes in the operational design assessment that the ASP is an important program, and the Org has added planning details to the ODA with the aim of improving the program.

So now, I'll move to background about our specific working group, and then talk you through some of the things we've been discussing to help improve the program. So in August 2022, the GNSO council approved the GGP initiation request to provide additional guidance to support the eventual implementation efforts relating to the applicant support program. The working group was formed and began its work in November 2022 following its work plan and timeline. And the GAC members appointed to the GGP on applicant support effort include Argentina as the primary representatives, the United Kingdom as an alternate, and the Universal Postal Union as an observer.

So, the group has a number of different tasks that we've been working on reviewing historical information about applicant support. The group has completed these tasks. It required reading over relevant documents and reports related to the previous program with a critical eye to looking at how it could be improved and made more inclusive.

We've also completed our task on identifying subject matter experts, and we did so by reaching out to relevant committees supporting organizations to solicit recommendations on subject matter experts that could be appointed to the group. The GAC put forward, Olga Cavalli, which was excellent. Then we moved into some more substantive, substantive work on developing data metrics and measures of success for what the applicant support program would look like for the next round.

One thing which Jorge alluded to, as well, that the GAC previously commented on, and that we've been very much discussing in the group is the importance of geographic and regional diversity, ensuring that that is included as a measure of success and looking at ways that we can adequately measure that. We've also been looking at metrics that specifically aim to identify what raising awareness in an effective way would look like. So looking at beyond number of events, although that's important as well, but also the quality of information provided.

So for example, did a potential applicant feel that they had the relevant information that they were able to take an informed decision about whether to apply, so looking at some qualitative feedback mechanisms and evaluation that way, but definitely the raising awareness so that people and organizations know about the

opportunity to apply through the ASP has been of critical importance in the working groups discussions.

Finally, we have a task related to creating methodology for allocating financial support where there is an adequate funding for all applicants that qualify. So we have not reached this task yet, but we are meeting face to face on Monday during ICANN76 to hopefully wrap up our conversations around developing measures of success for the ASP.

Now, next step, so looking a bit forward to the future now. Once the working group completes all of its tasks as referenced in the initiation request, it is expected to produce a GNSO guidance recommendations report, which will be subject to public comment. So that's a good opportunity for the GAC to feed in. Following review of public comment submissions, and if required additional deliberations, the working group will produce a final report for the consideration of the GNSO Council and subsequently for consideration by the ICANN Board.

So next slide, please. Oh, we may have already moved on to the next slide. Yes, apologies. But I just wanted to conclude by giving a quick overview of some of the comments the GAC has made in the past in relation to the ASP, just to conclude here today. So the GAC noted in its 1st June 2021 collective comment, general support for the final recommendations on applicant support, noting the importance of extending the scope of the program beyond only economies classified by the UN as least developed, and also considering the middle applicant.

So looking at geographic diversity a bit more widely. GAC members also highlighted the importance of fostering gTLD applications from a diverse array of applicants, which of course, as Jorge showed earlier in his slide, could include regional and local authorities from all regions, and that every effort be made to increase the number of applications from underrepresented regions.

The GAC reiterated its support for proposals to reduce or eliminate ongoing ICANN registry fees to expand financial support. So that's just a quick overview of some of the comments the GAC has made in the past in relation to this process. I would of course, welcome any questions, but turning over to you, Jason, in the first instance to report on Closed Generics. Thank you.

JASON MERRITT:

Thank you very much, Ross. Hello, everyone. My name is Jason Merritt. I am the Government of Canada's representative to the GAC, so it's my pleasure to be here today in Cancun through ICANN76 to be with you I'll hear again. And it's also my pleasure to give a bit of an update on a key issue as part of SubPro on Closed Generics. So we can move to the next slide.

So, a closed generic is essentially a gTLD that is operated by an exclusive registrant. And so when we look at Closed Generics, we look at them just a little bit differently and a little bit more carefully than when we're talking about just general TLDs. So, as part of the ODP work in SubPro, ICANN Org sort of took a bit of an innovative approach to dealing with this sort of long-standing issue that's been around. And they've created a facilitated dialogue between members of the

GAC, the GNSO, and the At-Large, to sort of come together and discuss some of the issues around Closed Generics, to try to essentially, potentially sketch out a framework for how these could be introduced into the next round, and to see if we can move the needle on this issue going forward.

So this all stems from the 2013 Beijing advice, ICANN46 I believe, where the GAC had issued advice around saying that exclusive registry access to a gTLD must serve a public interest goal. And so that's been the baseline starting point for how we are tackling this issue, trying to find ways to sketch out a framework where the public interest school is being represented in terms of how we could approach new gTLDs.

So you can see on the screen that there were six GNSO, six GAC, one ALAC, the members from the GAC are listed there below. It was the GAC chair, Switzerland, Canada, the UK, Nigeria, and Australia that are all part of this facilitated dialogue, which is ongoing. We can move to the next slide, please.

So this facilitated dialogue group has been meeting since the tail end of ICANN75, where we've held several ad hoc online sessions to sort of discuss these issues. We've met in person in DC, just fairly recently, in January, for a two-day session to really work through some of these issues.

And we've met here as well at ICANN76 As a group, face to face, which is always very helpful. The group operates under this sort of Chatham House rule sort of framework, and that's really just to have a space where people can come with fresh ideas, brainstorm, talk through some of the thorny, sticky things that are associated with Closed

Generics, and really try to start to find common ground and see where we can move on this.

How it sort of evolved over this time is that we've looked at the gTLD application process in phases. So you look at the application phase, when an applicant submits an application for gTLD. Then you move into an evaluation phase, how do you evaluate this unique application for closed gTLD?

And then some of the issues around the actual process of implementation, post delegation, trying to work through some of that as well. So the idea here is, should this facilitated dialogue group reach some type of agreement on a framework that could potentially go forward? That will be presented to the communities, the GAC, and feedback will be invited.

We really want to hear from the communities across ICANN, and especially from the GAC in terms of how they think about this issue. And so that'll be a key checkpoint, I think, for us where something will come out to the communities probably in the next, I don't know exactly the timeframes that we're working towards, but hopefully before the next ICANN meeting. But that doesn't prohibit anyone from the GAC in particular, that would like to dive into this issue a little bit more, maybe they have a perspective on it. And so we'd like to hear that feedback to the GAC because that will really help us in how we continue moving forward with the discussions, getting perspectives out there.

So really welcome that feedback essentially starting now. I think in terms of next steps, once that framework goes out to the communities

for comment, it'll probably get reworked in a way where it's trying to come up with something that makes sense, and then it gets presented to the Board. And the Board then will have to take a decision on whether or not to move forward with Closed Generics in the next round or not. And so that's really what we're trying to do here is sketch something out that gives the Board some, some guidance or some perspective on how the various communities around this had been looking at the issue.

And then obviously, from there, for example, if the board was to take a decision to move forward, it would go through the official PDP process where all of those mechanisms come into play in terms of the various roles at the communities. So I'll pause there and happy to take questions or anything like that. Thank you.

KAREL DOUGLAS:

Okay, thank you so much Jason, and Ross. And let me take the opportunity to thank Karen and Chris as well. We are almost out of time, but I do think we really should ask persons who have questions to allow them because this is so important, so everybody, every country, at least in this region, who are interested in new generic top-level domains, and seeing how those domains could affect those countries, certainly be involved or interested. Let me allow Ashwin, your question, please.

ASHWIN RANGAN:

Yes, fairly short question actually. I just want to know whether, like in previous discussion, we have researched about DNS abuse, I just want

to know if there is already a recent study about generic top-level domains used already by many companies, for example. How is the business development of those names, .bank for example, is it good, .spa, is it good, whether geographic names is giving better economic development, compared to say, names like .insurance, .bank, whatever? That's what I want to know if there is a research or study on that. Thank you.

KAREL DOUGLAS: Anybody who's done any studies on the usefulness or the economic benefits of the new gTLDs? That question, Ashwin?

ASHWIN RANGAN: Exactly, yes. I just want to know if there is --

KAREL DOUGLAS: Okay, Karen, please.

KAREN LENTZ: Sure. Thank you for the question. So I don't know of any [01:02:58 - inaudible] specific TLDs and ask that question, but there have been a number of review activities that looked at the impact of having introduced those new top level domains on competition trust, different aspects like that. So I'm happy to point you to those if they're of interest. Thanks.

KAREL DOUGLAS: Thank you. All right, Kavouss, if it's short, we'll be happy. We do have a Nigel as well in the back. So, Kavouss.

KAVOUSS ARASTEH: I think we could be short. But I wish to reiterate what I said this morning. It is not very productive if we have so many topics, and do not allow the people go to the heart of the problem saying that we don't have time. Reduce the number of the topics and allow us to discuss.

The first question is there for Jorge and the distinguish United Kingdom representative. In the second or subsequent round how the issues of inclusiveness and non-discrimination among the countries are observed. This is something very, very important, not make this process political, go technical and administrative. And I'd see there are some sorts of attention to be paid to this one to be non-discriminative and inclusiveness, totally.

With respect to all countries, no matter what type of economy they have, [01:04:30 - inaudible], but they speak to the distinguished colleagues relating to the closed generics, we have many questions, we leave it to the next time. There are a lot of problems in these reports, a lot of problems are unclear in these reports. But there is no time, I don't go to that and I leave the first question, please ensure that this non-discriminative and exclusiveness will be fully observed. Thank you.

KAREL DOUGLAS: Thank you. Yes.

ELSPETH ROSS: Yes, I can respond from the applicant support program perspective. I would say inclusiveness goes to the heart of the work we've been doing, and that's part of the reason we've been looking at metrics of success that will help to encourage geographical diversity, as I outlined. So I would absolutely say that across working group members actually, inclusiveness has been at the heart of our work, and remains that way. Jorge, I didn't know if you had comments on wider SubPro, but I thought I'd start there from an ASP perspective.

JORGE CANCIO: Thank you, Ross. And in the interest of time, I completely agree with what you said, and I hope we can make this new expansion as inclusive and as diverse as possible. And of course, if there is anything in the recommendations that goes in a different direction, it's still time to highlight it, so I invite all colleagues to have a look, and to check it.

KAREL DOUGLAS: Thank you, Jorge. I do have Nigel who is in the queue. Are you still interested, Nigel, or you different, then we could go to Tracy?

NIGEL HICKSON: 15 seconds, I just wanted to really thank the participants in this session, I think it's really, really constructive. And of course, we're going to have other opportunities during the week to drill down into

some of these subjects. But I just wanted to say on applicant support. It is just so crucial. I was a member of the ICANN staff during the 2012 round, and we were embarrassed. We were embarrassed about the lack of diversity in the applications in the gTLD round. This cannot happen again, for the credibility of ICANN, and thus the work that Ross is involved in is just so important. But I don't get emotional about these things, so I'll stop.

KAREL DOUGLAS: Thank you, Nigel. I think we're out of time, but I do Susan.

ANA NEVES: If I'm allowed, I'm Ana Neves from Portugal.

KAREL DOUGLAS: Sorry. Yes.

ANA NEVES: So I just would like to comment, a specific gTLD. Not exactly to have a response, but I think that I will have the time during the GAC meetings all over the week. But we are talking about the economic development, the geographic importance, et cetera.

Well, what really is the output of .amazon at the end of the day? So we had such a fight in the GAC, because it was so important for the company, Amazon, to have .amazon for it. So it was not good for the Latin America countries to keep .amazon. So what was really the

economic development that it brought, and what was the difference between to have .amazon or to have amazon.com? Thank you.

KAREL DOUGLAS:

Okay, that's a loaded question. I don't know if we have the time or if we are able to respond, given the fact that I've been signaled that we are really out of time. Tomorrow, I believe it is that we are going to be discussing this in greater detail.

Is that correct? So maybe, if you'd like, we could defer some of those questions to tomorrow if that's okay. So I want to thank everybody here, and again, Chris, Karen, Roslyn, Jason, thank you very much, Jorge Cancio who's online as well, and thank you as well for the questions and thank you for being here. We take a break until half past and we come back for more. So thank you so much.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]