ICANN76 | CF – GAC Communique Drafting (4 of 6)
Wednesday, March 15, 2023 - 15:00 to 16:00 CUN

JULIA CHARVOLEN: Thank you, everyone. If you could take your seats, we will be resuming.

MANAL ISMAIL: Thank you. Thank you very much, Julia, and thank you, everyone. So just checking on the new text that we are expecting. Please, US please go ahead.

SUSAN CHALMERS: Thank you Manal. We're waiting to hear some feedback from those who we have been collaborating with. So we'll advise as to when we receive that response and add the text as soon as possible on DNS abuse.

MANAL ISMAIL: Okay thank you, noted. So still pending the DNS abuse text, and I have UK, please go ahead.

UK: Thank you chair. Just to flag that the UK has put forward proposed text under the follow-up on previous advice section regarding domain name registration, directory service and data protection regarding the upcoming quarterly registration directory service recommendations review. Thanks very much.

MANAL ISMAIL:	Thank you very much UK. So maybe we can go through the communiqué and start reading the new text we received and try to resolve the old text that we had parked until we receive everything. So if we can scroll down to the first new text. Okay, let's go to substance. So scrolling down we have first the proposal by Brazil for the emergency assistance program and the text reads acknowledging the importance of the emergency assistance program for continued internet access initiative developed by ICANN. GAC encourages ICANN board to consider partnering with a wide range of organizations including specialized IGOs such as ITU in order to facilitate implementation and amplify the impact of the proposed program without prejudice to the development of a more comprehensive framework as per GAC's ICANN75 communiqué.
	And I'm pausing here to see if there are any comments. Okay, seeing none, then if we can scroll down, please. And this is text on WHOIS Disclosure System. The GAC welcomes the board's February 27, 2023 resolution approving the launch of a proof of concept approach for WHOIS Disclosure System intended to gather demand and usage data to inform community discussions and board consideration of the phase two recommendations of the expedited policy development process. In the GAC, Kuala Lumpur communiqué under issues of importance, the GAC stressed the importance of including a mechanism to allow for confidential law enforcement requests and recommended that ICANN org engage with the GAC PSWG to further discuss the issue of how confidentiality of law enforcement requests will be ensured and how

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the metadata of all the requests of law enforcement agencies will be handled.

To date, this engagement has not taken place. Nevertheless, during the GAC meeting with the ICANN board, ICANN org indicated that the proposed system design would not provide functionality for maintaining confidentiality for law enforcement requests. This lack of functionality will negatively impact usage of the proposed system and reduce the amount of data collected. And before going to the therefore, I'm pausing here to see if there are any comments. Yes, Nico, please go ahead.

NICO CAVALLERO: Thank you, Chair. Instead of having metadata and meta in parentheses, why don't we just use the word all together, metadata, to specifically refer to what it is. Metadata.

MANAL ISMAIL: Thank you, Paraguay. Any objections to deleting the parentheses and having it as one word, having it without the brackets, metadata? Yes, please, UK, go ahead.

CHRIS LEWIS-EVANS: Yes, thank you. I think the reason for the parentheses is it's not just the metadata of the request, it's the request itself. So the request itself wouldn't be considered metadata. So the domain name that's been requested, for example. Thank you.

MANAL ISMAIL: Thank you very much, Chris. And I see Nico nodding, so thank you very much, Paraguay and UK. Now moving on. Therefore, the GAC advises the Board. I think we're missing -- Okay. The GAC advises the Board, directs ICANN org to promptly engage with the PSWG to identify and advance solutions for confidentiality of law enforcement requests, so as not to preclude participation by law enforcement requesters when measuring usage of the WHOIS Disclosure System. I'm pausing here before reading the rationale. Any comments? Okay, seeing none. Then I'm reading the rationale. Law enforcement agencies' investigations may be compromised if requests for domain registration data are not kept confidential.

A lack of functionality in the proposed WHOIS Disclosure System to provide for such functionality will almost certainly deter usage of the system by law enforcement agencies, which will in turn decrease the amount of data that the pilot program will be able to collect. The GAC highlights that we have doubled that. The GAC highlights that further engagement between ICANN org and the PSWG is necessary to resolve this issue. A satisfactory approach to this concern is also consistent with the Board's resolution, "to encourage comprehensive system usage by data requesters." Any comments?

Seeing no requests for the floor. And I do suggest that the long introduction, can we maybe push it in the rationale or just to be consistent in the way we write our GAC advice? And I see nodding and I see a hand up from Egypt. Please go ahead.

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UNKNOWN SPEAKER:	There's just a comment in the chat.

| MANAL ISMAIL: | Oh, thank you. I'm sorry. Okay, and thank you, Loreen, suggesting to direct instead of directs. And I see agreement moving the text in the background, the preamble text in the rationale. So thank you very much for your flexibility. |

And then let's move on. Any other new text? I see text under follow-up on previous GAC advice on domain name registration directory service and data protection.

And the text reads, the GAC notes that the upcoming quarterly registration directory service recommendations review includes item R10.1, which provides for the ICANN Board to monitor the implementation of the privacy proxy services accreditation, PPSAI policy recommendations, and thus implicates the previous GAC advice in the Kobe communique and the GAC follow-up within the Montreal communique on resuming implementation of PPSAI recommendations.

The GAC therefore asks for a better understanding of the assessment planned for the PPSAI recommendations and requests, one, an update within two weeks of the status of activities related to this issue, and two, that its priority is more appropriately aligned with the GAC's advice to support implementation work to start. So frankly, I think this is too much text for follow-up on previous GAC advice. We normally just reference the GAC advice. And if we have new requests here, they don't fit under follow-up on previous GAC advice, but I stand to be corrected.

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And lastly, I don't think we have ever given a very rigid time frame for the Board to respond to the GAC. Two weeks is really a very aggressive time frame. Everyone already takes two weeks after an ICANN meeting. Two weeks off. But anyway, I see Paraguay. Please, go ahead.

NICO CAVALLERO: Thank you, Chair. So maybe number one, a more diplomatic tone would be an update as soon as possible, or something along those lines, as soon as possible, of the status of activities related to this issue. Something like that. Would that be acceptable?

MANAL ISMAIL: I think it's more diplomatic. But again, I see this as a new request under follow-up on previous GAC advice, but let's work on the language, and I see Iran's hand up.

KAVOUSS ARASTEH: Thank you, Manal. Yes, sometimes diplomatic language is good, sometimes diplomatic language is not good. For me, as soon as possible is nothing, unless we say as soon as possible, but not later than, and put some time, some reasonable time. So I have been facing with this as soon as possible, sometimes with two years, three years, as soon as possible, because they say that it was not possible. So, but you accompany that with not later, but not later than, not two weeks, a little bit more time, I have no difficulty. But I see no difficulty to add something here, even being a little bit beyond the normal follow-up action, if it helps. So my suggestion is that taking Paraguay suggestions,

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adding that, but not later than, and put some time. If two weeks is too short, maybe within 30 days, or something similar to that. Thank you.

MANAL ISMAIL: So again, I'm just cautioning that we have never given a time frame, and I stand to be corrected, we have never given a time frame for the board to reply, but we can check other presidents, and -- Thank you for checking. Please, go ahead.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Thank you, Manal. [Inaudible - 00:16:47] for the records. I would prefer to remove the timeline if possible, to remove it, or say like, to report before the next ICANN meeting. Instead of saying two weeks, or as soon as possible, I think it would be better to put the timeline. Thank you.

MANAL ISMAIL: Thank you very much, and I fully agree that it would be better if we remove the time frame, if there is no objection. But again, most importantly, I think this is a loaded text under follow-up on previous GAC advice. So is this a new GAC advice? I mean, are we advising the board to provide us with updates? Yes, Egypt, please. I'm sorry.

CHRISTINE ARIDA: Christine for the record. I also am seeking clarification of the people, of the colleagues who proposed the text, whether those point one and two fall within the understanding that is required that was previously in the previous advice, or is this something new that we're adding?

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MANAL ISMAIL:	Thank you, Egypt, and my understanding, this is new, but if we can double check, so, or colleagues who proposed the text, if they can confirm if these are new requests to the board, or we are reiterating. Kavouss, is this a new hand?
KAVOUSS ASASTEH:	It's a new hand.
MANAL ISMAIL:	I have Iran and then UK. Thank you. Go ahead.
KAVOUSS ASASTEH:	Thank you, Manal. I think the way now it appears, we could add something at the beginning before one, saying that to this effect, that would be new thing, and still we retain or maintain as soon as possible, but we put it not later than, and we have some time. The longest period in our view is that not later than or before ICANN77. Put a time frame as soon as possible before ICANN77. And add at the beginning to this effect, that means something adding to the previous situation. It's not advice, but it has come to this effect or in this connection. The GAC request, and then we put these to these, not contradicting with the previous text. Thank you.
MANAL ISMAIL:	Thank you very much, Kavouss. And this is exactly my point, and I think the point that Egypt flagged as well. If this is new text, new request, it

cannot be placed under the follow-up on previous GAC advice. But I have the UK waiting patiently, so please go ahead first.

CHRIS LEWIS-EVANS: Thank you, Manal and Chris Lewis-Evans for the record. So in our previous advice, we had asked for a status update on this, and we'd obviously reflected on how important it is to the GAC, but we hadn't asked for it to be a priority. So I'm unsure on whether that would constitute new advice or follow-up. Thank you.

MANAL ISMAIL: Okay, so maybe we can check the previous GAC advice if it already requests a status update. We can make a reference here. So, Kavouss, Iran, please go ahead.

KAVOUSS ARASTEH: Thank you, Manal. I think if we put one and two, it's not considered strictly as a new advice. If we proceed that either in this connection or to this effect or in view of the above GAC request or invites and put that one. I don't think it is considered as a new advice. It is just a strengthening or further clarifying the previous advice, and I don't see any difficulty to add that one under the issues important, not important, issues relating to follow-up action. But if you proceed that with any of these three texts, either in this connection or to this effect or in view of the above, to add that one and put it in a more general way as soon as possible before ICANN77, which gives them time maybe just

two weeks or three weeks or five weeks or just before the 77. Thank you.

MANAL ISMAIL: So, I'm sorry to be pushing back a little bit here. So, let's think of it that way. The board takes the GAC communique, the part under GAC advice and the part under follow-up to previous GAC advice, they parse it carefully and they log it into the tracking system. So, for new advice, it's put, it's flagged, and it doesn't close until the thing is done. If it is a follow-up to previous GAC advice, it's going to be missed. I mean if it is merely a follow-up on previous GAC advice, they would only refer to the previous GAC advice and anything new would be overlooked if we put it in this section. I hope I'm able to make myself clear, but anyway, let's check the previous GAC advice and see how much of this is grasped under this part, and we can take it from there. But I see a hand up from Egypt. Please, go ahead.

CHRISTINE ARIDA: Okay. Christine Arida for the record. It looks to me, as a distinguished colleague from UK mentioned, that the priority is the new thing here, that we're trying to place that issue as a priority. And I would suggest if this is the most important part, that we do move it to a new advice and put the reporting together within the new advice part, or if that's not the most important and we'd like to see just an update, that we keep it here without number two. So I think there are two options that we can consider. Thank you.

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MANAL ISMAIL:	Thank you, and I tend to agree with the first part. If it is new GAC advice, we put it under the GAC advice part. If not, I would say it could go into the issues of importance to the GAC and we can still request an update. But anyway, I see a hand up from UK, so please UK first.
CHRIS LEWIS-EVANS:	Thank you, and Chris Lewis-Evans again for the record. Thank you very much for the input from Egypt there. I totally agree that the number two there is the most important part and that probably is the most thing that is like new advice. So our preference at the moment would be to move this to GAC advice. Thank you.
MANAL ISMAIL:	Thank you, UK. So it's going to be the GAC advice as the board that its priority is more appropriate. We need to clarify the language is more appropriately aligned with the GAC's advice to support implementation work to start. Please UK, and then Iran.
CHRIS LEWIS-EVANS:	Thank you, Manal, Chris Lewis-Evans again for the record. With the movement, maybe if I can take this language off and propose new text, that would be helpful.
MANAL ISMAIL:	Perfect, thank you. That would be very helpful. Iran, please go ahead.

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KAVOUSS ARASTEH: If I understand correctly, this text will be taken from here and you put them in new GAC advice?

MANAL ISMAIL: Yes, number two is going to be moved in new GAC advice, but we need to work on the wording.

KAVOUSS ARASTEH: The new GAC advice, I mean, it is not only one line alone. You need to have a little bit more text, you need to have rationale, or I don't know how you want to put it. Or you need to connect it that in relation to the follow-up action, the GAC wish to invite the board or request the board to advise the board. So we have to do something. This one line is not a GAC advice as such. It is too alone. It should have something, some introductory part, then you have some rationale. So if it should be taken seriously, we need to put it in a better formulation. Thank you.

MANAL ISMAIL: Thank you, Kavouss. UK is going to work on the wording, and indeed we need a rationale here, and not necessarily loading the advice with more text, but at least it has to be self-explanatory. And I see a thumb up from UK, so great. So any other new text that we haven't read before?

So there is no brand new text at the moment, so we're going back to the text that we have parked for later discussion, and starting by the second paragraph under subsequent rounds of new gTLDs, and the text that reads -- just trying to find where to start. While the GAC continues to be

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committed to the facilitated dialogue, no policy option, including the prohibition of closed generics, should be excluded if no satisfactory solution is found. And Kavouss, you raised a concern regarding satisfactory, and I'm giving you the floor. Please Iran.

KAVOUSS ARASTEH: Yes, I think is that should be excluded if the result is not agreed by consensus. Thank you.

MANAL ISMAIL: So I tend to be corrected by colleagues who participate to the dialogue. Are we working -- I mean the work modalities, have we mentioned consensus within the group? I'm just wondering if we're asking here something that I need to check our rules and regulations for participation. I cannot remember the exact terms and conditions. I don't even recall the title, but I'm not sure. So you can leave it between brackets. Please Ian, help me here. Australia.

IAN SHELDON: Thank you Manal, Ian Sheldon, GAC Australia for the record. Can I just clarify, Iran, are we discussing consensus within the closed generics group or are we talking about GAC consensus?

MANAL ISMAIL: Iran, there is a question from Australia asking whether the consensus you are referring here to, whether it's consensus among the group of the GAC GNSO dialogue or the consensus within the GAC?

KAVOUSS ARATEH: A consensus within the GAC because that group will report to us. We need to have consensus but they don't have any authority, any delegations to agree something on our behalf. What they said, they come back to us and we have to agree on that by full consensus, otherwise it will not go through. So, it is GAC consensus. Thank you.

MANAL ISMAIL: Thank you, Australia, for the question because this was not my understanding and thank you, Kavouss, for the clarification. So, the output from the GAC GNSO facilitated dialogue is going to be put out for -- is going to feed into the normal PDP process again. So, it's going to go through a PDP which is subject to public comments but the output doesn't come directly from the group to the GAC seeking consensus. Please, go ahead, Kavouss, and then I have you, UK, I'm sorry.

KAVOUSS ARATEH: Thank you, Manal. Perhaps we forget what we have been faced. We have been faced during the last six years of difficulty that we always remained in minority in any PDP. So, whatever is agreed finally should come to us and if we don't agree in GAC, then it doesn't go through because you cannot have a single case showing that all views have been accepted by the community. Always remain in minority, always, and then we have to have a minority statement.

So, I don't understand that why there is a push for this closed generic without having consensus. But maybe you put consensus in both ways.

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Consensus within the group, 6 and 6-12, the 12 should have consensus and then comes to us and we see what we can do. So, maybe you put it back, consensus within the group. So, on the solution there should be a consensus within the group, full consensus within the group. When it comes to us, we will see what will happen to that.

MANAL ISMAIL: Thank you.

KAVOUSS ARATEH: This is very critical and I suggest that the member of the group do not push for more than they are expected and not defend what they decided or what they are going to decide. The result should be agreed by full consensus, at least in that group. If now people don't have any view on the GAC, at least at this group should have full consensus. Thank you.

MANAL ISMAIL: Thank you, Iran. I have UK waiting patiently and then Canada. UK, please go ahead.

NIGEL HICKSON: Yes, thank you very much, Madam Chair. So, it was a good question by Canada which I think clarified where the consensus rests. But I think the process is pretty clear that the small group are just set up to try and find a potential way forward between the two extremes as we discussed before. And as I think our distinguished delegate from Canada

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mentioned in the chat as well, one of the things we're doing in the -- Was it Australia? One of the things we're doing in the group as the report made clear that was issued just before this meeting is to try and look at public interest to see how we can use public interest as an obligation, how we can ensure that public interest relates to competition, to representation, to other factors that might need to be taken into consideration in terms of these applications.

Now, if we reach something which the group thinks is an acceptable framework, then this indeed would be articulated. But then, of course, the GAC would be free, as was discussed in our previous session, to say, well, thank you very much, but the framework that the small group have come up with is not acceptable. And therefore, either the existing GAC advice applies or new GAC advice or whatever.

So the GAC at all times has the ability to give advice, to give guidance, or to raise it in issues of importance or whatever the GAC thinks is the best way forward. We in the small group, the representatives, are not in any way undermining the processes of the Government Advisory Committee. We would not have gone into this small group had we not made it clear, as the terms of reference of the group make clear, that the results of this are reported back to the ALAC, to the GNSO Council, to the GAC.

And if the GAC thinks it's not sufficient, then clearly they give advice in whatever form, and the PDP would not be taken forward if the board agreed with the GAC advice. Thank you.

MANAL ISMAIL:	Thank you very much, UK. And clearly, as UK and Australia also indicated in the chat, we have all our normal means to comment and to agree or disagree. So this group, this small group, is just working to propose something for everyone's consideration, basically. Canada, please go ahead.
JASON MERRITT:	Thank you very much. I'd just like to maybe provide a little bit of clarity or some context, at least from my perspective on this. So, first of all, the notion of a PDP, as we're talking about the policy development process, is not necessarily even a guaranteed outcome of this. There is the potential that the board could take a decision to not move forward with it based on the results or the outcomes or the discussions that are happening within the small group.
	So while it is accurate and correct to say that there is nothing on the GAC that binds any of these discussions, and should this go forward, there is a decision point by the board to even take this to a PDP that I think should be highlighted there. And that leads me to another point that there is opportunity between now and when the sort of draft framework or an additional output comes out for GAC members to weigh in their views on this, which I think would be extremely helpful in the remaining discussions within the small group. So there's that.
	And the other point I would like to make regarding what the proposed text in brackets there, I would prefer to revert back to the first proposed text proposed by the distinguished delegate from Iran. And that is simply because I think it carries more weight in terms of highlighting the fact that if we should this go to a process which is not guaranteed, it is

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GAC consensus that would weigh in on this. What is written there is not reflective of what the terms and conditions or the terms of reference of the small group have agreed to. So I think that in terms of accuracy and in terms of making this a bit more robust, the original language is more accurate, frankly. So, thank you for that.

MANAL ISMAIL:
So, the proposal is to clarify that we're talking here about GAC consensus. Am I getting this right? I see nodding from Canada. I bring to your attention the comment in the chat from the GNSO Liaison on to the GAC. I have Iran and then Egypt. Iran, please, go ahead.

KAVOUSS ARASTEH:
Thank you. As Canada mentioned, please go back to my initial proposal. Let me explain to you something, Manal, that there are some insistences by the member of the group to impose their views to us. Suppose that the group agreed with something. If it comes to the GAC, it's subject to the GAC approval. It is not mentioned here. I wonder at that time the GAC chair saying that, look, this is the result of this group. They have worked very hard. They spent a lot of time. And let us take it as it is. No. This is subject to discussion by GAC. Hopefully agreed with that and may not agree with that. So if this is clear, I have no difficulty.

So I go back to my proposal saying that instead of satisfactory solution, if the result is agreed by consensus in GAC. So I don't go to the group. I leave the group whatever they want to do. They sit down with each other. They agree with each other, gentleman-wise or gentle lady-wise or whatever the way that they want. But it's subject to the GAC approval

by consensus. This is a very clear situation. Nigel, how you can prove that you go with the public interest? What is public interest? Public interest is UK or public interest in Iran or public interest in another country? What do you mean public interest? This is a vague term. It was used in the affirmation of commitment in the initial text.

It was taken, unfortunately, in Beijing GAC 46. Some people at the last moment, they put this very vague sentence. Yes, it could be used if it is used for the public interest. What is public interest? And then very good result of that, they said that the applicant should prove that its application meets the objectives of public interest. How do we do that? How that applicant knows the public interest of the 8 and a half billion people? I'm sorry. We are super simplifying the situation. They push it. I cannot agree with that.

MANAL ISMAIL: Okay, Kavouss, your point is noted and is reflected on the screen. It now says it is not agreed by GAC consensus. I just want to set the record clear. The outcome from the small group is going to go through formal PDP. It is going to be out for GAC, subject to GAC comments and subject to the whole community's input.   Not only the GAC, but the wider community, all SOs and ACs and normal public comment period. So this is just a proposal from the small group for the community's consideration.

Nothing is going to be just adopted by the working group and enforced on the community. I hope this is clear. And regarding public policy, as you have rightly mentioned, Kavouss, it's coming from the Beijing communique. So we started by the GAC communique of Beijing, and

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this was the starting point of the working group. With that, I'm giving the floor to Egypt, and I hope we can move on afterwards.

CHRISTINE ARIDA: Thank you, Chair. Christine Arida for the record. So initially when I asked for the floor, it was to take out the text that we did take out, because it looked to me as if we're trying to impose something on the group, which I don't think this is something we could do. But in looking at the text as it stands, I think I'm seeking clarification whether there is a process actually for the small group while working within the facilitated dialogue, which we're actually welcoming here or continue to be committed to, to come back to the GAC and seek consensus within the GAC.

So I'm not sure do we have a modality for that to happen within the work of the group, noting that, as I understand, the facilitated dialogue is meant to not have the extremes on the table, but rather to find a middle ground which can then be taken again and discussed and looked at. So I'm not sure, while I understand the point proposed by the distinguished colleague from Iran, I'm not sure if we do have actually a process and a modality to actually implement that. Thank you.

MANAL ISMAIL: Thank you very much, Egypt. I see Canada, Brazil first, then Canada, then Iran. So Brazil, please. Luciano.

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LUCIANO MAZZA: Yes, thank you. Thank you, Manal. Luciano here. Just I'm reading here a comment from Geoffrey. I think perhaps we're mixing up different things. I don't know if we need to reflect in this paragraph how the GAC fits in a specific policy process. We can simply assume that, if necessary, the GAC will issue another GAC advice whenever it wants. And then I think it's just a matter of finding the right drafting here. Possibly I agree that it makes sense if there is a decision to take part in this small group in deference to the -- including not to undermine our colleagues that are engaging in that process, we have to refer to the work that's been done there. And my initial understanding was that no satisfactory solution was found within the scope of the activity that has been developed by that group. But then again, GAC can decide whatever it wants.

So perhaps, I don't know, a suggestion might be to have a full stop if no satisfactory solution is found, and then say something else, that any future solution will require a GAC consensus or something like this, or GAC will consider future advice on this matter if necessary, something, I don't know, something along those lines. But I think in logical terms we're talking about two separate issues, it seems to me. Thank you.

MANAL ISMAIL: Thank you very much, Egypt and Brazil. And I think we're almost there. So leaving the work of the group to the group, whatever the modalities are, but then reinforcing that the GAC will work into reaching consensus, which is the GAC working methods that we are committed to, and nothing goes out without the GAC consensus. But it doesn't necessarily mean that the working group will be submitting the work to

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the GAC in terms of a process. I have Canada and Iran. So Canada, please.

JASON MERRITT: Thank you very much. A couple of things here. So I'm indifferent to the text that's there or the new text proposed in terms of require GAC consensus. But I just want to sort of one more time try to ease a bit of anxiety around this, that this is a small process within a much larger process. There is nothing about what's happening here that binds the GAC to anything. There is nothing here that prohibits the GAC from issuing advice at any time as in under the normal channels that it would for any other issue.

And if anything, I would like to just highlight one more time, there is an opportunity here for GAC members to help the process along in the remaining time that it has by providing their input, because I think that all of this is extremely important. So just trying to simplify it a little bit that the process is a micro process. Nothing stops the GAC from doing its normal operating procedures and that there is actually an opportunity here to highlight some of these things. So hopefully that's helpful. Thanks.

MANAL ISMAIL: Thank you very much, Canada. And I also see in the chat support to the Brazilian suggestion from Australia, Denmark and Lebanon. And I have a hand up from Iran and the UK. Please go ahead.

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KAVOUSS ARASTEH: Thank you, Manal. If after the satisfactory is found, we put fullest up and continue that such solution would be subject to the GAC consensus agreement. Such satisfactory solution would be subject to the GAC consensus agreement. We are not taking advice. Consensus agreement. So we separate the actions of the group. We leave them to come up with something that they are already cooking. And if in the view of the 12 people it is satisfactory solution, it comes to us, but it is subject to our consensus agreement. We are not talking of advice. We are talking consensus agreement. Thank you.

MANAL ISMAIL: Thank you very much, Kavouss. So you're basically agreeing also with the Brazilian text, which is great. So I think we're converging here. I have UK next.

NIGEL HICKSON: Yes, thank you very much. And yes, I was going to support the Brazilian text as well. And also the comments by Canada that at any time, of course, the GAC can use its established processes to give advice or whatever on these issues. So this to me is absolutely right that the GAC would need to agree that any output, if there is an output, is appropriate. And if they didn't agree, they don't agree. Thank you.

MANAL ISMAIL: Thank you very much, UK. So let's, and indeed, whatever the outcome from the small group, it doesn't undermine the GAC working methods and how we are going to operate next. So I think we're good to move

on. Thank you, everyone, for the constructive discussion. And now we have. Sorry, I'm just trying to see the part that we need to discuss next. So the paragraph that starts the GAC reaffirms.

Let me read it from the beginning. Obviously, this is the beginning of the whole sentence. The GAC reaffirms its continued interest in increasing the number of applications from underrepresented regions in future rounds of new gTLDs through the applicant support program and reiterates its, and then we added quotes here to the part that we are extracting. So its support for proposals to reduce or eliminate ongoing ICANN registry fees to expand financial support."

So the extract we're getting, it doesn't include the word sufficiently. Yet, we would like to stress that sufficient time should be given. So we have taken this out of the quotes because it's not part of the quote, and it now reads sufficiently covering all applications. And I'm pausing here. So the only thing is that we took sufficiently from within the quotes and put it outside the quotation marks. So I'm just bringing this to your kind attention as this was not the text adopted in the earlier session. And seeing no requests for the floor, I think we can move on.

And I'm just checking what else needs to be reviewed for now before we have six minutes for this session before we have a 30-minute break. I see two requests for the floor, but before giving the floor to UK and then Egypt, I'm just also flagging that the text that Iran was concerned about regarding regional and local authorities, thanks to Argentina's flexibility, is already striked through now. So also bringing this change to everyone's kind attention. UK, please go ahead.

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UK:	Thank you, Chair. I was just going to suggest a request to start coverage of the emergency assistance program, as I don't think we'd had time for that. Looking at the clock, though, if we don't think time allows, perhaps we could start that off with the next session. Thank you.

MANAL ISMAIL:	We have already done a read-through. I'm happy to go through it again before we conclude. It's a short text, but first allow me to give the floor to Egypt.

CHRISTINE ARIDA:	Thank you, Chair. Christine Arida for the record. I'm sorry to ask again about the paragraph we just left, the one that talks about GAC reaffirms, and I'm wondering if we could use something a bit stronger than continued interest. I think, but I just can't find the word. So commitment would be too much, but interest seems to be quite weak. Thank you.

MANAL ISMAIL:	Thank you, Egypt. So let's highlight it in yellow for now, unless someone has an immediate suggestion. Otherwise, we can maybe think it over the coffee break. The GAC reaffirms, the importance. I see nodding from Egypt. So is it okay to say the GAC reaffirms, the importance of increasing the number of applications? Any comments? I see none. So if we can please delete its continued interest in. Thank you, Egypt. And I think we're good also with the highlighted part in

yellow. We have deleted the text that was controversial. And I have the US, please go ahead.

SUSAN CHALMERS: Thanks kindly. Chair, just a point, I think we should add the word application fees. Just to make sure that these don't -- just to specify which fees we're discussing is my understanding.

MANAL ISMAIL: So are you referring to the highlighted part now?

SUSAN CHALMERS: Yes.

MANAL ISMAIL: So ongoing application fees, ICANN register application fees?

SUSAN CHALMERS: Perhaps and keep it in -- I'm just concerned that I understand that this is a quote, but I'm just concerned that it could be referring, could be mistakenly interpreted to refer to all fees.

MANAL ISMAIL: But again, if it's a quote.

SUSAN CHALMERS:	Okay, yes, I appreciate that. Okay, perhaps if it is just in the context of this session, then that shouldn't, this particular section, it won't be misunderstood. So happy to withdraw then.

MANAL ISMAIL:	Thank you, US. Thank you for your flexibility. And I have Iran next and then I think we need to wrap up.

KAVOUSS ARASTEH:	Thank you Manal. I don't know this part of address to whom. I can increase the number of applications. I don't think that I can push everybody to increase the number of applications. The number of applications should come from the underserved countries. So maybe I can duly respond to the increasing in number of, and so on and so forth. I don't think that I can go to a underserved region saying that please apply. I don't think that. This is not duly ICANN. So I don't know what this paragraph refers to.
	Unless we modify that, the GAC reaffirms the importance of duly or properly or timely responding to the increasing the number of and so on. So otherwise the paragraph, the recipient is not clear whom we are talking of that. ICANN cannot increase the number. The number will be increased by the countries underserved. ICANN should reply to that, respond to that duly, timely, and so on and so forth. So I have some difficulty with the current text and I just wanted to notify that. Thank you.

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MANAL ISMAIL:	Thank you very much, Kavouss, but this sounds now more like we're having an increased number of applications that we would like ICANN to respond to, which is not really the case. So maybe as a middle ground, can we maybe propose that the GAC reaffirms the importance of encouraging the increase of number of applications? I'm not sure, I'm just making this up, but I see Egypt not agreeing. So Egypt, please go ahead.
CHRISTINE ARIDA:	Thank you, Chair. This is Christiana Alida for the record. I think we're not asking anything in the very first part of the sentence. We're just stating that is important, the importance of increasing the number of applications, and that's not asking anyone in response to the question or to the comment by the distinguished colleague from Iran. What we're actually looking at is the second part of the sentence, and this is where we're actually asking for something to happen. But the very first part is just an introduction why we were asking for that. So we're just saying it is important to have an ecosystem that increases where the number of applications are increased. I don't know if this is clear. Thank you. So to be clear, I'm not for adding to the text. I prefer the text as it stood.
MANAL ISMAIL:	Thank you very much, Egypt, and I withdraw my proposal. If you can please delete encouraging the, and I'm giving the floor to Iran, and we need to conclude and reconvene after the break. We're already three minutes after the hour, but please Iran, go ahead.

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KAVOUSS ARASTEH: Thank you. Contrary to the views of the distinguished colleague from Egypt, this paragraph is not clear. Reaffirm the importance of increasing number of applications from the -- We don't know whether it's increased or not. Why we reaffirm? We don't know. Maybe we're not increased at all. What we reaffirm? So this is not clear. Thank you.

MANAL ISMAIL: Let me try to help out here. So it's more of -- it's important to increase the number of the number of applications we receive, and that's why we are requesting what's coming next. So it's just a reaffirmation that we would like to see the applications increased, but I have Argentina, and we really need to stop now after Argentina. Please, go ahead.

ARGENTINA: Thank you. My proposal is to include the and the GAC reaffirms the importance of geographical diversity with the increase of the number. I mean the concept we are looking for is a geographical distribution, maybe for Iran, if it agrees.

MANAL ISMAIL: So frankly, I think it's both increasing the number and the geographical distribution, because even if we have good distribution with three applications, it's not the ultimate goal. So I leave it at this now, and we can continue from here. We're already four minutes past the hour. I appreciate if we can reconvene at half past. Please be prompt, and if

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we manage to conclude today, we can have a late start tomorrow. So trying to give everyone an incentive. Thank you.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]

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