
ICANN78 | AGM – GAC Capacity Dev Workshop (2 of 10)
Saturday, October 21, 2023 – 10:30 to 12:00 HAM

GULTEN TEPE OKSUZOGLU: Hello, and welcome to the ICANN78 GAC Capacity Development Workshop GAC Priority Issues session being held on Saturday, 21st of October at 8:30 UTC. My name is Gulden Tepe Oksuzoglu and I'm the remote participation manager for this session. Please note that the session is being recorded and is governed by the ICANN expected standards of behavior. During this session, questions or comments submitted in the chat will only be read aloud if put in the proper form as noted in the chat. Interpretation for this session will include six UN languages and Portuguese.

Please click on the interpretation icon in Zoom and select the language you will listen to during this session. If you wish to speak, please raise your hand in the Zoom room and once the session facilitator calls upon your name, kindly unmute your microphone and take the floor. Before speaking, ensure you have the selected language you will speak from the interpretation menu. Please state your name for the record and the language you will speak if speaking a language other than English. When speaking, be sure to mute all other devices and notifications. Please speak clearly and at a reasonable pace to allow for accurate interpretation. To ensure transparency for participation in ICANN's multi-stakeholder model, we ask you to sign into Zoom sessions using your full name. With that, I will hand the floor over to Tracy Hackshaw and Pau Hunter. Tracy.

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TRACY HACKSHAW:

Thank you very much, Gulten. How many people have seen Oprah Winfrey? How about Jerry Springer? All right. So that's what we're doing now. All right. Choose, pick your poison. So talk show format, guests, hosts, questions, no fighting, hopefully, although it's DNS abuse. Let's see. Pua, join me here as we introduce the session with our colleagues from ICANN and from the DNS abuse institute. Pua.

PUA HUNTER:

Thank you, Tracy. Welcome back, everyone. Thank you for being here on time. Hello to who are they again? So it's Russell and Graeme. I was actually thinking about the host show that Tracy was talking about earlier on. But anyway, without further ado, let me introduce Russell and Graeme. They're here to talk about DNS abuse. And this is before we actually break out into sessions later this afternoon to discuss more about these issues. It's a big issue now, not just in ICANN, but also in our own countries. I know Tracy asked the question before about what ICANN related issues are at your national level. From my own country, it's not really an issue. But when you look at it in the region, it is an issue. So to top off, it is an issue.

So welcome again, everyone. And let's hand the floor over to our speakers. I'm not sure it's up to you which one to go first. Thank you so much.

RUSSELL WEINSTEIN:

Hi, everyone. Can you hear me okay? Is this on? All right. I'm Russ Weinstein. I'm with ICANN. I'm the vice president of GDD Accounts and Services at ICANN. And what my main role at ICANN is, is working with the registries and registrars and responsible for the contracts and the contract administration and the account relationships with our registries and registrars. But I have a dual responsibility at ICANN, where I'm also responsible for our DNS security threat mitigation program cross-functionally across the whole organization.

And that's really where we talk about DNS abuse at an organizational level. DNS abuse has been a conversation that we've been having in the community for a number of years and traces well back even into the prior to the last round, the concept of security and DNS security threats was something pertinent to that round. And many obligations found their way into the registry agreement today and the registrar agreement today.

DNS abuse has remained a strategic priority for ICANN. It's in our current strategic plan that expires in another year or so and part of the discussions about building the next strategic plan for the next five years across ICANN. In that strategic plan, we think of DNS security threats and DNS abuse as something of shared responsibility and awareness. It's not something that can only be solved here within the ICANN model. It's something that registries and registrars have a role to play, but it also goes beyond that because there's many harms that take place online and not all of them can be resolved within the ICANN ecosystem. And so it does include going beyond and working together with our partners.

You can see in our new CEO's goals that just got released, I don't know if you paid attention to those, but for the first time in a long time at least, one of the CEO goals is related to combating DNS abuse and enhancing how we do that across ICANN and across the ecosystem. One of the three primary objectives of ICANN's DNS security threat mitigation program have been for ICANN to provide research and information to the community so that you can have fact based discussions about internet policies and policies within this ecosystem.

The second one is providing tools for combating DNS abuse and mitigating DNS abuse. Those tools are both in the form of actual software-based tools as well as publications and best practices and information that we can provide out there. Our team does a lot of training across the world to a lot of governments, in fact, and so if you're interested in that, please come find me or come find another person from ICANN and we can connect you to getting on the ground training either in person or virtual trainings about DNS security threats and roles governments can play in combating that stuff.

And the third pillar of our program is about contractual enforcement and enforcing the obligations we have in the contracts, holding our registries and registrars to account on this front. And one of the main things we've been doing over the last year that you've probably heard quite a bit about, I've come and spoken to you guys at the last couple meetings, has been about contract amendments that we're working on with the registries and registrars. This work started about a year ago. This time, I think we started talking about potential contract amendments with the registries and registrars to further enhance how we hold ourselves accountable for DNS abuse.

In May, we released the proposed amendments for public comment and those amendments covered primarily adding an obligation to the contracts that didn't exist before that requires registries and registrars to take a mitigating action when they find DNS abuse and a well-evidenced case of DNS abuse in their zones. This is something that didn't exist before, as I mentioned. There were requirements about responding to complaints, but not really a step that required mitigation action. And so this is a big deal and a real improvement. Some of the things that the contracts also do is define what we're talking about when we're talking about DNS abuse.

Depending on exactly who you're talking to, the frame of reference may be different, but when we're talking within the ICANN ecosystem and within the contracts, we're now going to be talking about DNS abuse as phishing, malware, botnets, farming, and spam when used to deliver one of those other harms. And so that's really important to really nail down what we're talking about in the context of within ICANN. And why do we limit it when we're talking about ICANN? ICANN's not the police of the entire internet, remember. ICANN's about the DNS and the domain name system. And it's not about policing the content on the domain name system. It's about how do the names function and how do we make sure that the connections happen the way they're supposed to happen.

And so this is really about when the name is being used for one of those harms, what's the obligation for a registrar and it's to take a mitigating action. And that's what we're working on right now. So as I mentioned, the contract amendments went out for public comment in May. We published a public comment report towards the end of August and the

contracts are now being voted on by the registries and registrars. We actually opened that voting about a week and a half ago. They get a chance to vote for 60 days and they need to approve the amendments to those contracts as each registry and registrar gets a vote.

For the registries, the amendments take about a 60% threshold to get approval. And for the registrars, it's actually almost a 90% threshold for approval. So we basically need almost every registrar to vote yes to adopt these new obligations. And that's what we're working on right now. And so you'll see a great deal of effort from my team as well as from the registrars and led by the registrar stakeholder group to get people aware and to make sure that they vote at this time right now.

So those are the main highlights of what's going on at ICANN right now. We're also doing quite a bit of work on the research front. There's a number of things going on in the academic world first related to technical research about DNS abuse that will soon be brought in more into the ICANN context. So right now they're still being worked on in more of the academic space, about how domains are being used, about reputation block lists, which are a good source of information of threats that feed into the mitigation efforts of registries and registrars, and about root causes of what are things that attract or dissuade abuse concentrations at registries and registrars.

And so like I said, that stuff is being worked in our technical groups right now and in the academic community and can soon be brought into the ICANN space after it's been peer reviewed and we get to some real established science on that stuff. So those are the main highlights right

now from ICANN and I'll turn it to Graeme and then we'll open it up for questions if that worked for you, Tracy.

GRAEME BUNTON:

Hello, everybody. In the spirit of making sure we have lots of time for questions and interactions, I'll keep this relatively brief. So my name is Graeme Bunton. I'm the executive director of the DNS Abuse Institute. The DNS Abuse Institute was created two and a half years ago by Public Interest Registry, who operate the .org TLD, as well as a couple others, to fill a sort of gap within the community that we needed some place to do work on DNS abuse both within and outside of the ICANN context. And so here I am.

My job is to serve as a resource to the community to build tools and training and best practices and education for registries, registrars, and people like yourselves. And so I am always available to talk and discuss and share ideas about DNS abuse. I'm going to talk briefly today about some of the projects that we're working on currently and then we'll get into some Q&A, I think.

Next slide, please. So we have two main projects that we're working on currently. One is called Compass. This is a robust, transparent, and academically rigorous project to measure DNS abuse. Because if we really want to understand this problem and make a difference, we need to have good data to base those decisions on. You can find the project by probably Googling DNSAI Compass or feel free to click that URL. This is a free project. And as an aside, the Institute doesn't do anything commercial. We don't sell anything. We don't do any cost recovery. So all of this is just out there for the community. We produce monthly

reports. We should have one coming out this week that display aggregate trends for DNS abuse across the entire industry.

So you can see what the prevalence and malware and phishing is, how that's changing over time. You can see how that's changing over time. You can see how that splits between malicious domain names. So domain names registered explicitly to cause harm and compromised websites. So that websites that have been hacked, say, and are then engaged in phishing, but not deliberately so. We can see mitigation rates, how much abuse is being mitigated. We can see time to mitigation, really important stats for understanding DNS abuse.

Next slide, please. So how is this project moving forward? Well, we've started moving into providing top 10 lists in our monthly report that have both high and low rates of observed abuse normalized by per 100,000 domain names for ccTLDs, for gTLDs, and for gTLD registrars. We've also relatively recently begun providing dashboards to both TLDs and registrars, and TLDs, both generic and country code, that allow them to log in and see their abuse stats so that they can see how they're doing, how they compare to their peers, and begin to inform their actions. And Russ talked a bit there about the amendments to the registrar and registry contracts that are being voted on right now.

We've been monitoring the situation, and what we really want to do is and what we really want to make sure we're doing is that we're prepared, if these come into play, that we can measure what the impact of these changes is going to be. So we think we already have that work in place. We're ready to go. We'll be informing the community as this continues. And Russ said it, but I'll reinforce it here, too. To the extent

that anybody in the room is engaging with registries and registrars, especially in your own jurisdictions, encourage them to vote. I think it'd be a great idea. Getting the vote, especially on the registrar side, is incredibly important.

Next slide, please. Oh, this is an example of one of the dashboards, or a piece of the dashboards that we're providing to registries and registrars. This is for .org. You can see on the left graph how many abusive registrations there were for .org, and I think this data is from July, both in absolute numbers, and then per 100,000 domains on the right. The other bars are other TLDs. They've been anonymized here so that I'm not displaying other people's data, but you can get a sense of what information is available for registrars and registries.

Next slide, please. NetBeacon. So NetBeacon is another project that we've been working on for the community. There is still, I haven't quite solved everything yet, although I'm working on it, people who have abusive domains and want to report them. They've encountered a fish. Maybe they're a cybersecurity organization. Maybe they're a national regulator where they've got data on malicious domain names, but reporting them to registrars is really difficult. There's a lot of diversity within the ecosystem. There's not a lot of standards on how to report abuse, and so that is a difficult problem.

On the other side, for registries and registrars, primarily registrars in this case, the abuse reports coming into them were by and large terrible. They were un-evident. They were duplicative. They were poorly formatted. Sometimes the domains didn't belong to them, and so registrars were spending lots of time and energy dealing with these

abuse reports for very little value. They weren't making the internet any safer because they're just going through this flood of unstructured abuse reporting, and so no one on either side of this equation, the people reporting abuse or the people who could deal with it, were happy, and everybody felt like they were doing lots of work and not enough was happening, and so what we've built and we offer to the community is this service called NetBeacon.

It's a free, open, standardized centralized abuse reporting system that makes it easy for anyone to report abuse to an ICANN accredited registrar. We've been operating this since June last year. That sounds right. June last year. Is that right? I'm looking at Jeff from CleanDNS who helped us build this project. That sounds right, right? Well, we launched it at The Hague. Thank you, Jeff. We've done somewhere north of 12,000 abuse reports this year, and the number per day is climbing, and for me that's a big win. That's quite a lot of abuse that we're helping get to registrars, and we can see bad domain names coming off the internet every day, so we're excited about that.

One of the other key bits of this project is that we've started integrating country code TLDs into the service so that you can report abuse not just to generic TLD registrars, but also to ccTLDs, and so big thanks to UK, NZ, AU, and CH for participating. There's some more in there as well. If you have a relationship with your country code and you'd be interested in participating in NetBeacon, please reach out.

Next slide, please. I think that's just it for me. So there's my contact information. Feel free to reach out. As I said, my job is to engage with the community, to offer expertise as much as I can, and so please don't

be shy. And I think that's enough from me on what our particular projects are, and then let's see if there's questions from the audience, from myself or Russ on the issue of DNS abuse. This is a capacity building workshop, so there's no silly questions here. I think if you want to engage or understand this issue a bit better, now's a great time to do that. So please feel free. I don't know how, Tracy, you want to manage the queue?

TRACY HACKSHAW: Question time, question time. Here we go. Mics are around on your desks. We have mics. 10 minutes of questions. If you don't ask, I'll ask you. So everybody's got a DNS abuse. Everybody's happy. Question in the front. Introduce.

SHELLEY-ANN: Good morning. Thanks, Shelley-Ann Clarke-Hinds from Trinidad and Tobago. What are the trends in terms of DNS abuse?

TRACY HACKSHAW: Good question. So the question is, what are the trends?

GRAEME BUNTON: So we've been collecting data as part of our Compass project for about a year and a half. I find it a little hard in there to have a strong opinion about whether abuse is going up or down. The number of absolute domain names that we see, I think, is trending slightly down. But I think it's hard to say that way. It's not like an academically robust response

to say that abuse is going down. And so I'm hesitant to put that clearly on the record there. Also, domain names, as some will point out, is the best way that we have, I think, to measure DNS abuse. But it is not a measure necessarily of harm. And so a single domain name can be way more impactful than some other one.

And so one needs to be a little bit cautious about drawing too much inference from just measuring domain names. But I would strongly encourage you to check out our Compass reports because that's going to give you a much better picture of what's out there.

RUSSELL WEINSTEIN:

And if I could add to that, we have studied data over the last five years or so. We've operated a project called the Domain Abuse Activity Reporting System, sort of a predecessor to Compass. And we've been collecting data since about 2017. And I agree with all of what Graham said. In terms of what we've been able to observe through that project, we call it DAR, is an acronym here in this community to refer to that tool. We've observed that the total number of domain names being used for DNS abuse has gone down over that time.

But again, that counts the domain names within the gTLD space, for one. And it does not capture the harm those domain names are causing. But the trend we've observed over that period has been a decline. And we published a report about that in 2022 in March. I'd be happy to link you to it. Thanks.

TRACY HACKSHAW: There's a question in the back. Go ahead, introduce yourself. And yeah.

KENNY HUANG: Kenny Huang, Chair of APNIC and Chair of TWNIC, speaking in my personal capacity for the record. Thank you. Two questions. The first question is, thank you for providing the net big come. I think that's very useful, especially for people willing to participate. My question will be, is it open for participation, or do you have any accreditation system to prohibit, only limit, only qualify, notify a participant?

Second question will be, do you allow, for example, you've mentioned about technical abuse. How about the others, such as financial crime or any cybercriminal, and it's all can be reported through your system. And what kind of evidence should be provided? Thank you very much.

GRAEME BUNTON: Thank you. So those are NetBeacon questions. I think the first one was, just to sort of reiterate what I heard, was how do we prohibit people from sort of abusing the system, people submitting reports. And then the other one was expanding it to other types of crime. So on the first question is, we have the ability to monitor the abuse reports going through the system, and have mechanisms for registrars to tell us if the abuse reports they're receiving are good or bad, essentially. That allows us to begin building the pieces for a reporter reputation system so that we can flag for registrars if they're getting abuse reports from someone who's really good at it. They're sending through high quality abuse reports. Their domains get actioned all the time. That's useful information.

On the other side, there are people who are perhaps submitting spurious low quality abuse reports. Ultimately, we can prevent them from using the system. We have not had to do that yet. On the other end, on the other types of cybercrime, so right now, NetBeacon can accept abuse reports for malware, botnets, phishing and spam. We have some consideration to expand that list of harms, mostly because registrars often accept abuse reports for things beyond that list voluntarily. And so we want to make sure that they can get all their abuse reports through this service, if that's useful to them. And so we're working on that, but it'll take a little bit of time.

TRACY HACKSHAW:

All right. Nothing from Russ. All right. Great. So there's a line in the back. Go ahead.

ROSEMARY SINCLAIRE:

This is a hot topic. Rosemary Sinclair from .au. I think what I want to do is share our experience and perhaps get some reaction. We've been working very hard on DNS abuse in .au because of our objective to have a very trusted domain for internet users. What we're finding is that 70% of the cases, which we actually manage one by one, rather than in a blanket kind of way. But 70% of the cases relate to small businesses with out of date software rather than malicious registration of the domain names. So our issues really relate to how do we scale our effort? We think it's very much an education and awareness campaign. So that was my first contribution.

My second contribution is that even when we do our work really well, we're finding it very difficult to get someone off a DNS abuse list. And that, of course, creates exactly the kind of difficulty for small businesses that we're trying to prevent with our case by case approach. So I'd like to table that as an issue. I think it's not going to be solved quickly. But it's something that we've found out since we've been doing our work that I'd like to share with the community. Thank you.

GRAEME BUNTON:

Thank you. Those are two really important and interesting points. So the first one on malicious versus compromised. The ratio of those two types of DNS abuse varies by TLD and varies by registrar. For some, compromised is a much bigger problem. And it's much more difficult to figure out what to do. So if it's a malicious registration, someone's registered a domain name, which is going to be something like bankname-login.tld, where it feels pretty clear they're trying to pretend to be a bank. The domain was registered two days ago.

You can suspend that domain name or delete that domain name quickly without real consequences and feel pretty confident that you've done something about a harm. If it's someone's been running a small business for five years, they haven't logged in to update their content management system, there's a hole in it, and it gets hacked. And that hacking happens at scale. It's not like an individual hacker is sitting in front of their computer and trying that website specifically. They're running a script across the entire internet to find that old software. And so then they end up, as you say, on a list. And then how do you get to that person to tell them to clean up their website?

So one of the things we're working on for NetBeacon is to be able to report to the hosting company as well as to the registrar. Because the registrar cannot do anything typically about the hacked website. What needs to happen there is the registrant, the website operator, and the host need to get together in some fashion and clean up that hack. That's a long chain. There's a lot of people in there, and it's complicated. There's no easy solution. I think engagement with the hosting industry needs to happen more on these conversations. Registrant awareness and education is a big piece of that as well.

The second piece about lists. The key source of information about bad domain names comes from what are called RBLs, Reputation Block Lists. These are provided by security companies primarily for network blocking. They're really not meant for mitigating DNS abuse. And that creates some problems because for them, it's much easier to add a domain name to a list and you maybe get it wrong and you overblock.

And there's very little consequences for that if you're protecting a network. If you're trying to understand abuse and help people, it can be really difficult to work with those vendors to get those names off those lists because they weren't malicious in the first place. And so that again requires more education and outreach to that industry help them understand as this community gets better at dealing with DNS abuse that being responsive to these needs is important.

RUSSELL WEINSTEIN:

Thanks, Graeme. That was really good. On the reputation block list path, we are doing some work with that community and with those providers. We have some papers that have studied different reputation

block lists and evaluated them for the purposes that we use them for, which is identifying and mitigating DNS abuse and are coming out with some research papers about quality of block lists and how we evaluate them, which ones are best suited for this purpose within our space. Like I said, that work is still in the academic world right now and going to be brought into the ICANN community in the not too distant future.

TRACY HACKSHAW:

As we get to the end of the session, there's a question in the back, but there's also one online. So I'm going to pose both. I hope you can answer both. Question online comes from Julius Kirimi. Is it possible to see real names of malware or links from the two tools? Question in the back. Introduce.

AMRITA CHOUDHURY:

Thank you, Tracy. Amrita Choudhury for the record from APRALO. It's great that these initiatives are on at least to kind of reduce the number of DNS abuse. But there is also a question of many DNS abuse being unreported, which is why the trends may be declining, but in reality it is not. So what are the, I would say activities which are, which perhaps you all are thinking of doing to at least inform people that these are the processes in which you can report an abuse, because as it's been mentioned, there are small medium companies, there are companies who do not know, at least in the majority of the world as to how to raise these issues. They may go to law enforcement, but they don't go to someone else. So I think that's also something perhaps which needs to be looked at.

GRAEME BUNTON: So awareness is a real problem. It's very difficult to do that outreach across the entire world. It's a problem on my plate that I think about. And so we come to sessions like this, and we do outreach where we can. We were recently in both of us in, sorry, half of us in Vietnam to do outreach in the APAC community. But that's a big, thorny one. So there's no shortcut to informing the world about how to report abuse and get those names so that people can do something about it. To the first question, it should be relatively easy to find both NetBeacon and Compass online by doing a search and remalware names. If you're really wanting to dig into malware, I would look at a service called abuse.ch, which is run out of Switzerland, which is probably got the best free repository of current malicious malware related domain names and IP addresses. And it's a good project to check out.

RUSSELL WEINSTEIN: Abuse.ch.

TRACY HACKSHAW: Russ, you want to respond?

RUSSELL WEINSTEIN: In addition to what Graham said about awareness, it's a real, real challenge. There's only so many people paying attention in this community. And so I think you need to think of yourselves and all the people that we touch as liaisons and ambassadors to the rest of the world and the rest of the community. And so I think the work Graeme's

doing on NetBeacon is outstanding and it's something we promote as well in our capacity development sessions. Again, if you'd like to set up capacity development sessions within your governments or within your countries, please reach out to us. And we have we have ways to do that that can help build that awareness across your space. So thank you.

TRACY HACKSHAW: Thank you. And I think there's one final question from Mauritania. That's final for this session. Go ahead.

MOHAMED EL MOCTAR: Thank you, Tracy. Mohamed El Moctar from Mauritania. From an institutional perspective, do you guys work with cyber security agency at a national level? Thank you.

GRAEME BUNTON: I do on occasion. Yeah. I engage with basically anyone is my job. And so sometimes that's national law enforcement, cyber security, consumer protection, regulators, could be businesses, could be private industry, cyber security. We'll work with basically anybody.

RUSSELL WEINSTEIN: And I can we have a number of people plugged into the cyber security world, both at the national levels and regional levels and the business aspect of it as well. So happy to engage if there's more opportunity to do so.

TRACY HACKSHAW: I'll hand over to Pua. Again, if you have any further questions on this email addresses, so Graeme is on screen. Russ is I think Russ.

RUSSELL WEINSTEIN: I'm part of the ICANN staff. So you can find me at Russ.Weinstein@ICANN.org or you can go to the staff page. You can find me and I think there's links to email.

TRACY HACKSHAW: Plus, catch them in the halls, catch them in the coffee breaks, catch them anywhere during the meeting. Pua, back to you.

PUA HUNTER: Thank you. Thank you, Tracy. And thank you so much, Russ and Graeme. It's a very complex topic. Tracy's telling me to stop talking. Anyway, it's a very complex topic. So thank you so much for your time, for making the time to come here and talk to get colleagues and everyone in the room. And thank you again, everyone, for your participation and engagement with Russ and Graeme.

RUSSELL WEINSTEIN: Thank you guys for having us. And this was a really cool format, too. I haven't done one of these like this before. So kudos to you guys for setting it up and for the interaction. I think it's really, really helpful. And let's do it again.

GRAEME BUNTON: Agreed. Thank you very much for having us. Really appreciate it. Feel free to reach out. Thank you.

PUA HUNTER: Thank you. So we got our next topic, which is the New gTLD Program Next Round. And to help us put this next session into context, we've asked one of our GAC members, the topic lead for this particular topic next round of New gTLD matters. Jason Merritt from Canada, if I can ask you to come to the front. And also Bob from ICANN, if he's around, if not, you're on your own, Jason.

TRACY HACKSHAW: I just wanted to say, we forgot to say there are interpretation devices, I believe, outside the room. So if you don't speak English, please do collect the devices that are to my left by the flip chart boards. I know some people may need to get devices. Don't sit there and not understand. Get the devices we have. Look at the interpretation behind there. Please use it. Thank you. Thank you again, guys, for coming up without further ado. And given our limited time, I'll hand over to you, Jason. Thank you.

JASON MERRITT: Sure. Can everybody hear me? Perfect. Well, welcome to another ICANN. It's my pleasure to come in and give a few remarks to the GAC at this capacity building session. My name is Jason Merritt. I'm the GAC representative from Canada. Been participating in ICANN in this digital space internationally, in a policy area for quite some time. It's a really

exciting organization to be a part of. And what I wanted to do was just talk a bit casually today about some of my involvement within the GAC as it relates to the New gTLD program and some of that work that's going on in CELD Pro and hopefully contextualize some things and just give some experiences or some insights from my perspective.

So if there, I'm not sure that there's any slides, but if there is, they can flip through. That's fine. So really what I wanted to get across today was Canada and myself has been active in this space on SubPro for quite some time. We were part of the original policy development work that had gone on for several years. And then we have dovetailed that into continuing our participation in the implementation review team, which is now taking the SubPro recommendations, putting them into operational policy and ultimately drafting the new applicant guidebook. So we've been participating in that process and found it very valuable.

One of the other areas that we've been active in that relates to SubPro was on closed generics, which is a topic that is very, very top of mind for the GAC. So we've been there amongst a handful of GAC colleagues from other countries working in a cross-community effort to resolve or try to come up with solutions to problems or issues that have come up that ultimately feed into the SubPro process.

I think from a capacity building perspective, what I really wanted to get out was as a GAC member participating in these cross-community type policy development opportunities has been extremely valuable for me in being able to connect with the various parts of the community, build relationships, understand much more deeply how ICANN works, how

the policy process works, what are the different constituencies within the organization, what are they thinking on issues.

It has been incredibly helpful from my perspective being a part of this, specifically the IRT and closed generics and this SubPro related work for that purpose. I work in other multilateral forums as part of the Government of Canada and ICANN truly is unique in some ways where you get the opportunity to come in and talk with government colleagues, your GAC partners, and do all the really great work that the GAC does. But the actual policymaking and the actual work being done within the organization, we have opportunities to get involved and have our voices heard and be champions on behalf of the GAC and really interact and that was really the main point that I wanted to get out was to share that kind of valuable experience that I've had in participating.

Just being able to be part of the community and feel like you're making an impact, feel like you're advancing interest, feel like you're working collaboratively in a multi-stakeholder model is really kind of rewarding to be honest. That's why we're all here. We are in a lot of ways champions of this multi-stakeholder model of policymaking and so being active in the community if you have the capacity and getting out there I would really encourage. We're going to have a few sessions throughout the week on SubPro so you'll probably see me again once or twice talking a little bit more about the issues and some colleagues of mine specific to the GAC and some of the things that we're tracking as part of these initiatives.

But here I just wanted to just have a bit of a candid and casual conversation about my experiences and sharing that and encouraging

people on this topic to reach out to me directly. My email is available via the GAC or at these meetings business cards if people still do those I don't know. Please like I'm open to talk about any of the issues explain anything or have meaningful interaction on the subject. So I've been talking for a while I'll pause there and that's really just what I wanted to convey and get out to you guys and thank you for the time and happy to engage or have any questions or conversations. Thanks.

BOB OCHIENG:

So thank you very much Jason for that introduction and sort of opening context on the topic at hand. Tracy, I'm just double checking probably how much time is left for us because this topic as can be a whole day or can also be 10 minutes.

TRACY HACKSHAW:

So we have until 11 just about 11:30 so you have about maybe five to 10 minutes and then we take about five to 10 minutes of questions.

BOB OCHIENG:

So 10 to 15 minutes if I over rush anyone who to blame isn't it. Agreed. Thank you very much morning everyone always glad to be before this audience and really happy to see how this capacity building workshop series has evolved looking at why it started at the regional levels hosting a few of them in Africa and I think some of you have been part of this process right from the beginning. My name is Bob Ochieng and I serve as a senior director in SubPro and before I say that again if you hear too many acronyms between now and the next 15 minutes I think Jason

already started in that line but please feel free to stop me and ask of course whenever we present here anytime if there is something that you don't understand. Because this is a very short...

KAREL DOUGLAS:

Hi Karel Douglas for the record just to intervene I know we're using acronyms but SubPro that word for many of us it's not we're not familiar so maybe just before you launch could you give us a little background just SubPro.

BOB OCHIENG:

Thank you and that is I think a caveat to subsequent acronyms. I'll try as much as possible to explain them if I don't right away it means that there is a proper explanation down downstream so don't worry. So we'll go through this outline today quite fast. It's a lot of content. I'm part of a big team in ICANN Org that is stewarding the implementation of the next round of New gTLD s. We are calling it next round because there is a New gTLD round that is still on. So we'll try to differentiate the two so that we don't lose anyone in between. With me in the room is my colleague, Chris. Chris, you can just wave where you are. So if there is a specifically very difficult question, Chris is around to back us up. So with that, we'll try to move very fast and hopefully you follow me along the way.

So next slide, please. So we'll talk a little bit on the history of this and history in five minutes can be very many things, but let's see what we have there.

Next slide. So the New gTLD s, as we call them, probably it suffices to say that there are two broad categories of domain names as we know them today. We have ccTLDs or country code names and generic top level domain names or gTLDs. So when you talk about New gTLD s, we are on the gTLD side, not the ccTLD side, if that makes sense. So that is a broad category of domain names.

Now there's a long history on how domain names have been gradually introduced into the DNS space or the domain name system space over the years. And you can trace this back all the way to the year 2000 when the first what you'd call a proof of concept on whether this was actually possible was done. So in the year 2000, a proof of concept on the possibility of introducing new domain names in the namespace was done.

And out of that, seven top level domain names were introduced in the domain namespace. And you can see .biz, .corp, a list of seven. The same process followed in 2003. And in 2005, following the success of both the 2000 and the 2003 processes, a proper policy development process was launched to really guide and come up with recommendations on how to procedurally introduce new domain names into the DNS space.

Now, this was a multi stakeholder process. As you know everything around policy development process within ICANN is multi stakeholder. And this is why we are speaking to governments today as part of that very important stakeholder grouping. So as a result of that 2005 process, it is only in 2007 that a final report was produced. And it is only in 2011. So how many years later from 2005 that the board actually

approved the recommendations of the 2005 policy development process. It is that approval that initiates or transitions the policy development process into an implementation process. So that the final recommendations can then be implemented by the organization. So that only happened in 2011.

And if you look at the next slide. So maybe a little bit on what exactly or why this is important. So what is the New gTLD program? Because I said there is a New gTLD program next round. Meaning there is a current round, which is still a New gTLD program. So I want to ensure you don't mix the two. So when I talk about the New gTLD program, I am referring to the 2012 round. And when I talk about the New gTLD program next round, or the New gTLD subsequent procedures program, then it is the round after 2012, if that makes sense. So this was a community driven initiative, multi stakeholder in nature. And of course, managed by ICANN, meaning that you expect a bottom up process.

Now, the reason driving this process was among others to ensure that the DNS or domain names as we know them today responds to different needs of the community, that they could be competitive, that the DNS could provide a broader consumer choice, variety for end users, but also can promote innovation. Consumer choice in the nature that if I wanted bob.bob, and it's not available, probably I could go for bob.london or bob.hamburg. So as a consumer, as an end user, I have a broad set of choices for me. And that is only possible if those choices have been made available. And that takes this holistic multi stakeholder process.

Now, SubPro, to your point, I turn you to your question, became the term that would then define next rounds after the New gTLD program, which was in 2012. So when you hear the term SubPro, which is the short form for subsequent procedures, is the term we are using to define or to refer to the current program that is a successor or that will come after the 2012 program. And by that, we are also trying to say that the 2012 program is not fully concluded yet. There are still applications that are yet to be concluded from that round. So that is why it is still alive. So in essence, we have two sets of programs running parallel or in parallel today.

Next slide. What is the value of New gTLD s and probably why should governments care? Why does it matter to governments? I think in addition to what colleagues have already discussed here, including things like DNS abuse, but New gTLD s enable users to access the internet in their local languages. I think that's a fundamental value. As we are seated here today, we could be speaking as many languages as we are. But is that the same for domain names? Can you write or consume domain names in as many languages as we are today? Maybe not. So this is an attempt to ensure that the same variety, the same diversity of language and script is available on the DNS space.

So if you write to me with an email address that is fully in Arabic, it should arrive in my mailbox, which is not using Arabic script, for example. So the multilingual value or nature of the domain names or DNS is a key element that is being promoted as part of the New gTLD program. And I think we all know that it is only then that you could say that the internet is fully inclusive if that is achieved. That is over and above making the DNS more competitive, having it encourage

innovation, but also a thriving domain name market as a business place. So the multilingual nature of the namespace is critical for the internet. And this is why this program is very important.

Next slide. So very quickly on the next, on the 2012 round, which is almost concluding, it was opened in January 2012. And we had, just close to 2000 applications for those of you that remember. And it is only in March 2013 that the first set of applications were successfully delegated. Delegation is a term used to really bring a domain name, a new one, into the DNS so that it is usable, so that you and me can start using it. So if .bob today were to be delegated, it means we can start having emails and domain names that end with .bob. That's what delegation means.

As of January 2023, this year, a total of 1241 New gTLD s had been delegated as a result of the 2012 round. So from the 1930 applications that were received so far, by January this year, that is the most current figures, not much changes after that, 1241 new domain names had been delegated. That is new choices, new options, new varieties of domain names for you and me from various languages, including IDNs. IDNs is what you call, what stands for internationalized domain names. Domain names that are not written in zeros or in A to Z, but are written in other writing scripts like Japanese, Cyrillic, Arabic, and anything else that is not ASCII. And that link, which will be provided on the same session, if you go there, we'll give you the page that tracks all the domain names there to date.

Next round, please. So to the subsequent procedures policy development process, I do hope that we are now familiar with that

term. Began in 2015 through the GNSO. I do understand that we are familiar with GNSO, ccNSO, and the SOs that are normally within our ecosystem so far. We call them ACs and ASOs, advisory committees and supporting organizations. So the GNSO Council initiated a policy working group to look into the possibility of reviewing the last round, but also coming up with a report on the possibility of adding more domain names in the domain space. So you call that a PDP process, a policy development process. As usual, multi-stakeholder process.

Such a final report goes through very many stages, including input from the entire ICANN supporting organizations and advisory committees like the GAC. So in 2021, they produced the final report, which had many outcomes grouped into affirmations. That is, if it agreed with what is already in the 2012 or in the past report through the 2007 report. If there were affirmations with modifications, if they proposed a few changes on what existed, if there were new recommendations, or if there were implementation guidance. So their report had got different sets of outcomes or outputs grouped as such. Interesting is those four affirmations that you see on the screen, 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3.

And 1.2 is interesting that it affirms that the New gTLD program must be administered in an ongoing, orderly, timely and predictable way. Meaning that this is anticipated to be a continuous process. That was the recommendation of this very elaborate PDP process. On March 16th, this year, the board accepted a number of those recommendations from that report. And that is why we are here today. That decision of the board transitioned the report into implementation. And we'll very quickly look at what has happened on the

implementation front since the board accepted the recommendations of the SubPro working group.

So in the next slide. So this is like a timeline of events in the next round. Remember, I'm now talking about the next round, not the New gTLD program. So the next round is this, the subsequent program, isn't it? And not the 2012 one, this one that we are now working on. So final report in 2021, February. In March, the board accepts recommendations. Of course, in September, very recently like last month, they accepted additional recommendations. What is outstanding today is only 13 recommendations out of the almost 135 recommendations from that report. So you could say that the board has adopted almost 90 something plus percent of the recommendations.

In July this year, we published what we are calling an implementation plan, which was a requirement of the board resolutions that accepted these recommendations. And that implementation plan sets in motion a number of things, which I would want to go through in the next slide. But before I do that, I wanted just to highlight why we are speaking to the GAC today. Because in the process of the New gTLD program from policy development phase, if I put it that way, to the implementation phase, which we are in today, the GAC has had a lot of input or has continually engaged with that specific program in a number of ways. In 2020, the GARC provided a comment on the final report, which you'll find there. In June, the GAC further provided comments.

In other words, this is really to highlight to you that throughout this process, you as a GAC member or as a group have got the opportunity

to comment and give feedback either to the policy process, meaning to the GNSO as they develop the work, or to the board if that report has already been submitted to the board. So the GAC engages very actively. And this is just an example of specific interventions that the GAC has had with the process. In the last meeting, ICANN77 Washington, in the GAC Advice or in the GAC Communique was very specific on specific topics on the PRO in the final report, as we have it, topic two, topic nine, and topic 17. So topic 17 is on applicant support, which we look at shortly, is something very close to the heart of the GAC.

And of course, issues of concern on SubPro touching on topic 30, 30.4.2 and 0.6. So if you're not familiar with this, don't worry. The final report, which is highlighted here, is very structured. So if you want topic 17, a specific recommendation, you'll find it referenced there. So this is how the GAC has interfaced. And this is just one of the programs or processes that the GAC has paid attention to in the community of very many other policy processes that are going on.

So next slide, please. So I wanted to very quickly just go to the timeline chart next so that we save some time. Next slide. And the next one. So you blame Tracy for missing those two. But I wanted to just very quickly look at this and probably stop there. Now, this is the high level implementation plan. And the reason I wanted to highlight a few things here is for you to note some specifics. So here, you will see the projected timeline for opening. But you'll also see the projected timeline for very specific components of the program. The first one is what we are calling Application Support Program, or ASP, or topic 17, as you saw it. You see that it is projected to open in Q4 of 2024 and will run all the way to Q1 of 2026.

Then there is registry service provider evaluation. This time around those people that would like to provide registry services or registry platforms or be backend providers for different applicants will be pre-evaluated and qualified or pre-qualified, if that makes sense. It will also open for applications in Q4 of 2024 and will run all the way to Q1 of 2026. The policy implementation process which Jason just talked about through the IRT is supposed to result in what we are calling an applicant guidebook or AGB. And that is projected that the draft will be out in Q2 of 2025 and a publication of what approved AGB by end of Q4 of 2025.

Now, if you add those two plus one year to really operationalize within the org after the AGB is out, that takes our projection for opening the next round to Q2 of 2026. So this is what we are working with today in terms of critical timelines to open the New gTLD program next round. So with that, I commit that these slides will be available for your review. And in the interest of time, if you allow me, I'll stop it and back to Tracy. Thank you.

PUA HUNTER:

Thank you so much, Bob. And thank you also, Jason. We don't have much time. So I think the important thing here is both Jason and Bob have offered their availability and also Chris's availability to give you any answers to questions that you may have, but we're going to keep them on stage and invite our next speakers, Tracy and Ross, Rosalind KennyBirch to come on stage. And they're going to talk about, their topic is focusing on key government concern for expanding opportunities for new generic top level domains to many potential applicants who may be interested. And so they're going to be talking

about the applicant support program. Thank you so much. Over to you, Tracy.

TRACY HACKSHAW: Thank you. Well, let's go over to Rose who will start it off and I will support Ross.

ROSALIND KENNYBIRCH: Great. Can you all hear me? Perfect. Thanks. So we'll try to keep this relatively brief because we want to allow a lot of time for questions and feedback. But I just wanted to do a quick canter through the history of how the applicant support program came about and the GAC's interest in it. And I'll be handing over to Tracy who was there through a lot of this to fill in some color and detail as well. So I wanted to start with a quote from 2006, so quite a long time ago from the GNSO council New gTLD committee who first noted that there was merit in graduated application fees.

So that gives you an idea about how long the importance of applicant support graduated application fees has been discussed in this community. And throughout the years after 2006, there was increasing discussion of this. And that leads us to 2009 where the GAC advocated for applicant support, stating that a single fee structure creates limitations, notably by skewing the market in favor of applications from the developed world and those with significant financial resources. So that was back in 2009 where the GAC said that and indicated support.

Subsequent to that, there was a joint community working group to establish applicant support that did work to help create an applicant support program in the lead up to the 2012 round of New gTLD applications. So part of the reason I mention all this work and these dates in particular isn't to get bogged down in the weeds of that, so to speak, but just to demonstrate how long the GAC and the ICANN community as a whole has been interested and supportive of this concept.

And that leads us up to the present day where we're working to really ensure that we can have a successful applicant support program, enabling and encouraging those from underrepresented regions to go ahead and apply for domain names and do so in a fair, financially feasible way for the next program in order to facilitate better global diversification in the next gTLD program.

There's a lot of work to be done. Last time, I think it is worth mentioning in 2012, I believe there were only three applications, one of which was successful, so we've got to make a big effort to make sure that we're raising awareness, that people know they can apply, are aware of the benefits of doing so. So those are some of the bigger picture points I'd like to point out to kick us off, but over to Tracy to add some more color into this.

TRACY HACKSHAW:

Thank you Rose. Hello. So unfortunately or fortunately, I was there during that time when that was meant, not far back as 2006, but around the 2012 time. The GAC involvement in the process was fairly limited. If I recall correctly, the at-large community led that process substantially.

I see my At-Large colleagues in the room, Maureen and Jonathan, who might provide some feedback on this subsequently, but back in 10 years ago or plus, there was a lot of advocacy for getting support to underserved regions, communities that were not served by the DNS industry, which is what we mean by that. And several things were done, but not enough. As Ross said, only three applications and one successful.

One of the things that we recognized, afterwards you'll read that in the reports, was that the basic things like communications and outreach, if I may say, were challenging. And reaching the communities in those underserved areas were done through the internet, if you think about it for a second. And if they are not using the internet, especially 10 years ago, then they would not be reached. So you're preaching to the converted a lot. So the message didn't get to where it needed to get to. So we'd like to fix that this time and show that the message gets to where it needs to get to, utilizing more traditional communication methods as far as possible.

And we want your involvement. I think this is the point. Last time we had very few GAC members. The GAC was a lot smaller. There were less countries represented from underserved regions. Now there are a lot more. So we definitely want to see that diversity, diversification happen. So we want you, as GAC members, to join this process of writing the applicant guidebook, helping form the applicant support program. It's happening as we speak. So the train already left the station. There was a webinar recently where staff was already writing the program, writing the details of the program. There's some research

and they're doing the work right now. So there's an opportunity right now for you to join and get involved.

I want to encourage all of you to get involved. There's no limit to getting involved. They are topic leads, yes, but you can join. So please do not make the mistake that we made the collective 10 years ago. Let's all now join, get together, put our thoughts in, put our voices in, because you are from those regions. The error that was made before was that people from those regions did not participate fully in those discussions. Let's make sure we participate fully in those discussions now. And I think I'll hand over to Rose to explain just a bit about what's happening with the GGP and to show where you can jump into this now before we take questions.

ROSALIND KENNYBIRCH:

Thanks so much, Tracy. So I'm participating alongside our colleague Gabriella, who unfortunately isn't able to be here today in a GNSO guidance process focused on applicant support. The group came out with an initial set of recommendations this summer, and I just wanted to say a big thank you to all those that helped put together the GAC public comment in order to respond to these recommendations. The working group, the GNSO guidance process working group, is now working through the various public comments received, including the GACs through the community to try to refine and improve the recommendations in order to deliver a successful applicant support program.

What I would say is just because the GAC has fed in a public comment, your participation is still very much welcome. Please feel free to join

these calls. They happen every week on Mondays at 3 p.m UTC, I believe off the top of my head, as observers and feed into what you think could help improve the program going forward. My door is always open, and particularly I think it would be great if we could get developing countries, underserved, underrepresented regions. And no comment is too small. Please come grab me at the coffee breaks. Grab Tracy. And I think Gabby will be participating virtually later in the week because this program, it's really important that it works for all of these groups.

So really a call for your help, your input as this process continues. Applicant support is also an important part of the implementation review team's work for the subsequent procedures work that Bob was presenting on, Jason was presenting on. So the work doesn't just stop or end with the GGP either. There will be further opportunities. There's further work going on at present. So if you have any views for how we can successfully significantly diversify the next New gTLD program, we're really all ears. Thank you so much.

TRACY HACKSHAW:

You can reach out to ICANN staff in terms of how to join those applicant support tracks. Well, the applicant support track in the IRT that's happening now. I'm on board, Roz is on board. We want more of you on board. Please join that track as well as any other track on the IRT process. It's open. There's no limit to anyone joining. It's breaking out into separate tracks now. It's going to be a lot of work, but we need your help. Get your voices heard. Get involved. So let's take some questions now. I think the overall topic of applicant support and with the IRT and

subsequent procedures. So I'm being a moderator for a second while I see Rob and Karel. We're going to kill some time.

ROB HOGGARTH: We're not looking to kill time. We just wanted to remind you that you have some other speakers here as well. I don't know if you would like them up on the stage with you or intersessions from the floor.

TRACY HACKSHAW: So I thought they were going to join on stage, but if not, they can join from wherever they are. I know Maureen and Jonathan, keep free to join us, take questions, add your voices, up to you. I know Jonathan has a particular view, which he shared with us already in the webinar we did, which you can look at the recording. So Jonathan, maybe it's a good time to give your C at this point. Jonathan, good to see you.

JONATHAN ZUCK: Thank you. Good to see you.

TRACY HACKSHAW: As always.

JONATHAN ZUCK: This is Maureen, my colleague who's been participating on the GGP. I tend to give sermons, I think. And I think the way that this wants to begin is through mantra. What is the message? What is the core message about applicant support that we need to not just repeat in

working groups, but in every coffee shop, every restaurant, every hallway meeting, which is without the diversification of the registries, this round will be a failure. That is the sole purpose of having another round is to bring more people into the community. We have enough names. We have enough TLDs. The problem is the concentration of them in the global north, the US and Europe, and the last applicant support program failed to create a diversification of the registry class, if you will, of that cohort.

So that's got to be a core message that we deliver to everyone we talk to, that that is how we are measuring the success of this next round. This isn't just another part of the IRT that is in fact the measure. And I think that's something that we have to be continuously repeating. One of the problems with some of the recommendations that came out from the GGP is they said, well, if we have too many applications, we'll split up the budget, the \$2 million that we had. So then it asks the question, is there a minimum amount that makes it useful?

And I think we have to keep coming back to if it doesn't succeed in actually bringing about new TLDs from underserved regions, it is a failure. And we have to measure it based on results. And I think that's something that we have to continue to repeat as mantra. So that's my sermon for the day.

MAUREEN HILYARD:

Thank you, Jonathan. And I just wanted to support the work that Ross and Gabriella have actually done on the applicant support working group. But one of the things that I wanted to raise too was that, for example, there was only one applicant who was part of the support

program last time that actually was successful. And that was .Kids. And such was the support that was given to .Kids by Edmund Chong of .Asia. That support was really, really necessary. And it's something that the recommendations that we're actually trying to finesse for the IRT is to make sure that the applicants who need support, and I think too with the fact that there's been a really big emphasis on really reaching out to the underserved regions, and not all of those regions will have the IDN area, is going to need a lot more support than probably would have been considered earlier.

But also to recognize that support didn't necessarily stop once the application had been approved for that DOT, for example, for .Kids. That .Asia continues today, all these years later, to support .Kids until they are actually able to manage that domain on their own. So when we're looking at applicant support, it isn't just getting the domain. This is where we have to look at ensuring that the domain is going to be meaningful and useful to the communities that they were actually meant to serve.

TRACY HACKSHAW:

I just want to let you're looking at two very big heavy hitters in the ICANN world. Maureen is the past chair of the At-Large Advisory Committee, and Jonathan is the current chair. So although so new, these are the leaders of the At-Large community that are talking to you here. Let's ensure that we give them the necessary attention, because the GAC and the ALAC have been working together on this for some time. I think our views synchronize quite well, and let's ensure we do

continue working together on this. So maybe back to you, Jonathan, for any final observations.

JONATHAN ZUCK:

One of the things that we looked at after the previous round is what we call cohorts. In other words, we looked at businesses in underserved regions that were similar to ones that applied, but didn't, and asked the question why. For many of them, it was not understanding the business model. There was a lot less understanding about how you make money, for example, running a TLD. So ICANN, to its credit, is really starting earlier through education and building materials and business models. So part of our job is going to be, both as the GAC and the ALAC, is to find ways to get those materials in the hands of these cohorts to the kinds of businesses, the kind of communities that might be interested in a TLD, so that they're getting that message.

So I think we'll have a lot more resources at our disposal this time around, and it'll just be our job to help wherever possible in getting those resources in the right hands. But look forward to working with you on all of this, and feel free to reach out to any of us with questions as you're engaged on this issue.

TRACY HACKSHAW:

So I think, so don't leave, per se, either stick around. Yeah, that's perfect. Q&A anytime. That's amazing. We have a lot of hands, couple of hands here. So let's start in front. Maybe you could I think it's Nigel. Yes, please, Nigel, identify yourself.

NIGEL HICKSON:

Yes, sorry, good afternoon. Was it good afternoon, or morning? Nigel Hickson, UK. Just very briefly, this is just so important work. And I don't need to repeat all that Jonathan has said, because I 100% agree with him. Many of us have to stand up on international platforms and talk about ICANN and talk about the domain name system. And this issue of diversity, this issue of multilingualism, this issue of equity is just so important. So, and I know that ICANN appreciate this, I know the ICANN board appreciate this.

And therefore, this work in this process that Ross and others are engaged in, and it's just so important. But it's not just money. And that's what really the group has to sort of not expand its remit or whatever, but it's not just money. It's the early ability now two years, three years out, or whatever we are, to engage in those communities, to understand where the potential applications might come, to work with these people, to understand their needs and aspirations and concerns. Because the application fee is one issue, but as GAC recognized in the communiques in the last couple of meetings, it's more than that. It's the ongoing costs, it's the technical capability and all that. So really important work and thank you so much for this.

KAREL DOUGLAS:

Thank you, Nigel. Do we have any other questions? I'll be fair to you from Colombia.

THIAGO DAL-TOE: Thank you so much, Tiago Dal-Toe from Colombia. Ross, I wanted to ask you in terms of our public comment, what should we expect in terms of the timeline, a response, and then do we get to elaborate on it? How do you see that going forward? Thank you.

ROSALIND KENNYBIRCH: Absolutely. Great question. So we'll be talking a little bit more about the GNSO guidance process working group specifically on Wednesday. We've got a slot for that, where we'll go into a bit more detail. But I think in general, we are hoping to wrap up work within the working group to finalize recommendations in December. It will then go out for a final comment and that will be another opportunity to feed in. But again, I would say in the meantime, there is work being undertaken on applicant support through the IRT or implementation review teamwork.

And as Tracy really highlighted, and I'd like to stress as well, there's no cap to the number of people that can participate in that in those meetings. There will be meetings off the top of my head on November 21st, December 5th, December 3rd, December 5th, all in those sort of weeks, late November, early December. So I'd really say in the meantime, there's work we can be doing as a GAC there. And certainly at this meeting in Hamburg as well, continuing to write, for example, on issues of importance or whatnot on the GAC's steadfast commitment to the applicant support program.

KAREL DOUGLAS: Thank you. We have a last question from Nigeria.

MISTURA ARUNA:

Thank you. This is Mistura Aruna. So I have a comment and I have a question. So are you putting into consideration if more than one, two entities apply for the same domain name, what happens? Then secondly, I remember the last time I was shocked to hear that an outreach was conducted around the smaller countries. And my country was one of the countries they actually came for outreach. And if we are not aware, such outreach has carried out in our country, then that means us coming to the meeting here is I don't want to use that word. So what are you guys doing to improve on that?

And I also want you to put into consideration using local languages to communicate to the people in a way they understand. So there is need for us to conduct need assessments to know exactly how to communicate with them, let them understand. And like Nigel said, we need to look at the fees again. Thank you so much.

TRACY HACKSHAW:

Thank you, Mistura. Now, we are really constrained for time. But unless there's some responses, I think you're going to say definitely, Ross.

ROSALIND KENNYBIRCH:

I was just going to say absolutely excellent points. And I think this is where I would stress to that beyond the GGP process itself, this is the type of thing the gap should be saying in advice issues and issues of importance, et cetera, specifically on the applicant support program.

This is something we've been trying to emphasize and communicate to the board.

And I think you put it so well there, especially communicating and thinking about creative ways to raise awareness, making sure that GAC members are empowered to go back and in their own countries be saying this is happening to specific companies and whatnot, and nonprofits, so that people are aware of the opportunities, local languages, making sure that people know what's going on in their local language as well. So absolutely couldn't agree more and think this is a message that GAC needs to continue to send up to the board as well.

TRACY HACKSHAW:

In addition to statement, you asked a question, which was about contention resolution when more than one applicant applies for the same TLD. And that is a very much an open issue right now being discussed in real time. And it is on the agenda for the ALAC GAC meeting that's coming up this week to discuss potential joint advice between the ALAC and GAC on that, because in the last round, there were these private auctions that took place and it was very bad optics and people were losing an auction in order to make money to buy for a new string. And it very much reinforced the idea that this was a game for millionaires basically.

And so really addressing the issue of private auctions with contention resolutions, we have something called community priority evaluation already in place, which is that if a community is applying for a TLD, they're given automatic priority in a contention. But we are looking at other ways to make the contention process more fair for smaller

entities, for underserved applicants, et cetera. And that's going to be part of that discussion in the ALAC and GAC meeting coming up this week.

BOB OCHIENG:

Quickly. Thanks, Mistura, for that follow up, especially on the engagement front. I think Zach has already touched on the contention resolutions. So I didn't touch on what has been mapped out in terms of communications, engagement and capacity building for the program specifically. But you can be assured that this time, this is going to be very elaborate. And you are right, we are going to work with our different teams within the org, so global stakeholder engagement team, government engagement teams, office of the CTO for very elaborate engagement and capacity building framework. If you look at the communication engagement slides, you will see timelines.

So what has happened is every region has mapped out specific countries of focus and are actively identifying stakeholders. So that when that program is rolled out, then what you are giving us the example of some stakeholders are not aware and especially government should not be the case or will not be the case. So this is going to be very elaborate. And the intention, as Jonathan was saying, is to ensure that the people that needs that information, the stakeholder that needs that information has that information at the right time. And based on that, they can make a decision. Of course, the final decision is theirs, but they need to have the right information at the right time and the right material. So we've got our way to try and achieve that this time around.

KAREL DOUGLAS: Thank you. Please, a round of applause for all the speakers this afternoon. I want to thank each and every one of them, Tracy, Ross, Rob, Zach, Maureen, Jonathan, and Jason Merritt for not just what this is about, because this, to me, is one of the, if not the most important issues for many, many countries in the GAC to go back and bring the message that this and there's an opportunity to be involved in the applicant the next round and also applicant support. So I want to thank everybody for that. I know we're over time, but I certainly believe this was worth it. This is time well spent. The next, so I'm going to ask, well, Pua sorry, if not Pua you'll let us know what has happened after lunch. We have a very interesting session after lunch concerning the high-level meeting.

So that's after lunch, but I want to thank you all. You have an hour, and how much time do we have for lunch? Just remind me. Oh, one five minutes. So we do reconvene at 1:05. Was it? 1:15; I'm trying to take some time from you, but 1:15.

TRACY HACKSHAW: 15 minutes past the hour for those who are online, and we're also doing breakouts after lunch, breakout sessions.

KAREL DOUGLAS: So that'll be very exciting.

TRACY HACKSHAW: Multilingual breakouts.

KAREL DOUGLAS: An opportunity for us to get together and discuss issues. So thank you so much and see you in an hour or so.

TRACY HACKSHAW: That's it. I think we're done.

KAREL DOUGLAS: Thank you.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]