
ICANN79 | CF – GAC Strategic Planning Discussion
Sunday, March 3, 2024 – 4:15 to 5:15 SJU

GULTEN TEPE:

Hello, and welcome to the GAC Strategic Planning Discussion on Sunday, 3rd of March at 20:15 UTC. Please note that this 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 be read aloud if put it in the proper form. Remember to state your name and the language you'll speak in case you'll be speaking a language other than English.

Please speak clearly and at a reasonable pace to allow for accurate interpretation. And please make sure to mute all other devices when you're speaking. You may access all available features for this session in the Zoom toolbar. With that, I will hand the floor over to GAC Chair, Nicholas Caballero. Over to you, Nico.

NICOLAS CABALLERO:

Thank you very much, Gulten. Please, everybody, take your seats. If you mind closing the door, please. Thank you so much. Thank you very much. So welcome everyone, and thank you for your contributions online to the GAC strategic planning effort. If we can move on to the next slide, please, Gulten. So this is the agenda for today, and I'll pause for a moment till everyone is seated. Thank you so much.

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

So again, welcome everybody. So let's start with a very basic question, which is why a strategic plan for the GAC? I would ask the question the other way around, why not? And I was actually very surprised at the beginning of my tenure to find out that the GAC didn't actually have an annual plan, and even less, a five-year strategic plan.

For everybody who works in public administrations, you understand perfectly well that we have different names for the same thing, in Spanish, it's called POA, which would be Plan Operativo Anual, which is annual operating plan, something like that. You might have different names for that, and then you have the pay, as we say, in Spanish, which is Institutional Strategic Plan, which is the five-year strategic plan.

We have different names for the same thing, basically. And again, I don't want this to be taken as any kind of criticism or anything regarding the former chairs, Manal, Thomas Schneider, or anybody else. I understand they had more complicated problems, more urgent issues to deal with at the time. And as a matter of fact, being realistic, it's very difficult to find the right time for planning.

As a matter of fact, it was very difficult to organize that retreat about a month ago or two weeks ago. And then last year we had another sort of like retreat where we came up with the idea of having this strategic plan and the annual plan. So let me go over the agenda, that's basically, and we're gonna get into the details a little bit later. So then we'll discuss approaches to developing a GAC Strategic Plan, and steps one and two.

Step one being the proposed strategic priority areas and step two, the strategic objectives of each priority area. Then a good 30, 40, or 25 minutes, it's up to you. for Q&A. And then we'll talk about the next steps. Again, at any moment, please feel free to interrupt, to give your opinions, but most importantly, if you have any better idea, more than welcome as usual. So can we move on to the next slide, please, Gulden? So going back to the question-- yeah, sorry, sorry. Egypt, go ahead, please.

MANAL ISMAIL:

Yeah, just very briefly. So first of all, I'm fully committed to the planning thing, it's an excellent initiative, and thank you for doing this, and I hope it turns out to be very successful. On why not doing it before? Frankly, it was not the prioritization thing, but rather because as an advisory committee, it's not easy to put our own plan where we don't have control over our own work. We normally advise on the work that's being done by other SOs and ACs.

So this is a little bit challenging to be proactive and put our own plan, and at the same time, we have some dependency on the work of others. Having said that, fully committed, I hope it turns out to be extremely successful. It's always good to be proactive rather than being event driven. So thank you, Nico.

NICOLAS CABALLERO:

Thank you so much, Manal. Thank you, Egypt. That was precisely the idea, to try to be a little bit more or a lot more proactive instead of having to be reactive a hundred percent of the time. If we can find a

balance, let's say 50% and 50%, I would be happy, but at this point, and correct me, I stand to be corrected at any given point, but at this point where, I would say 99% reactive on everything, almost everything.

And again, if you finally decide that this is not the right way, if anybody, any distinguished GAC member has a better idea, let me say again, more than welcome, more than welcome to analyze that idea. So going back to the question of why a strategic plan for the GAC, you can see on the screen, the GAC's role is naturally reactive as provided under the ICANN's bylaws as correctly pointed out by Manal and probably by the former GAC chairs as well, Thomas Schneider, Heather Dryden from Canada, and the ones before.

So in addition to providing advice, the GAC has increasingly provided policy input. I don't wanna get into the details, but basically this approach- Excuse me? Sorry. So should be extended across all areas of government's interest as they relate to the Internet's unique identifiers. That's the basic reasoning. And again, the second main reason is for increased readiness to provide timely and effective advice and policy input. And the third point is for communicating GAC's priorities with governments and stakeholders. And you can read the details there. I don't wanna waste too much time there. Can we move on to the next slide, please?

I don't wanna get into details here either. And this has to do a little bit with the way ICANN develops its own strategic plan as you can see there. There's a five-year operating plan. Then you have the annual operating plan and budget, ICANN community, consultation,

stakeholders, input, and so on and so forth. Then an evaluation, achievement and progress reporting.

Then the validation of the strategic plan, mission and vision statement, and so on and so forth. We could follow that path, we could follow that model, but it would take years for us to do that. Two years at least, I don't know how many. My tenure is only two years, and where we have already invested four months into developing the strategic planning, it doesn't make any sense to me.

We should have done it in two months or in one month. But again, this is the Governmental Advisory Committee, I understand that we need to talk to each other, give our opinions, and so on and so forth. But again, if we take one year to develop our-- I mean, it wouldn't make any sense. And I stand to be corrected, anybody with a better idea, again, more than welcome.

So I don't wanna get into the details, but as you can see, under ICANN bylaws, section 22. 5b, and so on and so forth, and the draft strategic, that's part of our remit. So we're not trying to reinvent the wheel, we're not coming up with crazy ideas about finding a solution for life on Mars or anything like that, or maybe we are and we're okay with that. I don't know, we will decide that altogether. Can we move on to the next slide, please?

So, as I was saying, these are the gag operating principles. They basically don't prescribe or prevent a specific approach, however we wanna develop it. Getting to the gist of it in principle two, you can read that the GAC should provide advice and communicate issues and

views to the ICANN Board. I don't wanna read the rest because I'm just highlighting the most important parts.

In principle three, you can read that the GAC shall report its findings and recommendations in a timely manner to the ICANN Board. And that's another important concept, timely manner. I don't see the use in developing a strategic plan or an annual plan one or a year and a half into your tenure, which would be my case.

Principle four, the GAC shall operate as a forum for the discussion. And we're gonna have an interesting discussion about the possibility of having a forum submodule, but that's for later on, that's a different kind of discussion. And you can see principle 44, principle 47, principle 48, I'm not gonna read the whole thing because this is publicly available for everyone. This is just in case, I mean, especially for the lawyers in the room who might find some sort of problem somewhere.

And we'll be glad to discuss about those potential problems. Can we go to the next slide, please? So this is the approach to developing the GAC strategic plan. Different horizons of time require different perspectives, as you can see here, there are long term objectives, midterm objectives, and immediate or short-term actions. Next slide, please.

This is more or less the way we devised the planning. The strategic objectives should feed, so to say, the expected outcomes, which in turn should prompt the action items. At the moment, and then-- yeah, yeah, yeah, go ahead, please. Go ahead.

Next slide. Yeah. And then, an iteration there, revision, refinement, fine tuning, however we want to call it, and inform at obtainability of expected outcomes, which would inform achievability, if I may, and so on.

Next slide, please. At the moment, we're very good, extremely good at the short-term action items. And again, I'm not criticizing, it's just the way it is, and it is the way it's been for the last 25 years, by the way, which we're celebrating today.

And I'm not saying it's necessarily wrong, we just thought that there might be a more efficient way to deal with the unknown. So some examples are the GAC action decision radar, the GAC working group, work plans, and so on and so forth. And this is where we want to concentrate today. The proposed five-year strategic plan, the annual plan would be an outcome of the five-year strategic plan in simple terms.

Next slide, please. So, let me stop. Go back one slide, please. I want to pause here and see if we have any questions or any better ideas, of course, which will be more than welcome, as I always say. Do we have any question, any comment, anything you would like to contribute at this point?

Seeing none. Okay. Let's move on to the next slide. This is more or less the approach to developing the strategic plan. Back in December, 2023, the GAC leadership, the GAC chair and Vice-chairs suggested topics to the GAC topic leads. That was step number one, proposed priority areas. And as a matter of fact, we also performed a mini analysis of the last eight GAC communiques which basically give an

idea of the issues we were discussing during those eight ICANN meetings.

The second step was to develop strategic objectives that happened during January and February, 2024, where GAC topic leads enter into a consultation period, so to say, and editing was performed later on by GAC leadership including the Brussels retreat about a month ago, or three weeks ago. I don't remember exactly at this point.

And then, GAC, broader GAC, full GAC, I would say, consultation, which happened between February 19th and February 27th. So the idea is to adopt the five-year GAC strategic plan with whatever edits, whatever changes, whatever modifications we decide altogether to do at this point.

And then for the details, the next logical steps are step number three, which is develop expected outcomes, and we'll have some more time for that, because that's like shorter term targets for further consultation of GAC topic leads, and then the full adoption of the annual plan in Kigali, Rwanda during ICANN80. So this is more or less, the background. Happy to take any questions at this point, or any comments. Spain, please go ahead.

ANA MALDONADO:

Thank you, Nico. This is Ana Maldonado from Spain. First of all, I would like to acknowledge all the leadership team, your effort for coming up with these good ideas. I think it's excellent to have a strategic plan. And I just wanted to make the question that I was trying to make through my email the other day that I don't understand

in this slide if the priority areas are the strategic objectives or not. In the document that you sent a few weeks ago, we could read the five or six priority areas that you distinguished, but I couldn't find the strategic objectives of each of them. I don't know if those points that you show are priority areas or strategic objectives.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: So I don't know if any of my --

ANA MALDONADO: Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: -- vice chairs would like to chime in. Go ahead, please.

CHRISTINE ARIDA: Yes. Thank you, Spain, for this question. Actually, the priority areas are the topics that are more or less the work of the GAC across all the analysis that were done for the past. So it's an aggregation of all the work of the GAC put into different priority areas after many discussions to not to have repetitive things, but we will discuss them more. And if you go down the document, under each one of them is what we believe would be the strategic objective for that priority area or for that specific topic. Thank you.

ANA MALDONADO: Thank you. Thank you for the explanation. The problem is that I was expecting like a list of set strategic objectives for each of them. If you say the first one, strategic area role of governments in ICANN, I would expect like a list.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: And that will be explained by the UK. Each area will be explained a little bit later, if you don't mind, but thank you for the question, it's very logical as well. But yes, each one of the strategic objectives of each priority area will be explained by a distinguished GAC member. And I have the UK. Rose, please go ahead.

ROSALIND KENNYBIRCH: Thank you chair. Rosalind KennyBirch from the UK. Just really to congratulate yourself, the chair, but also the leadership team and the wider group of GAC colleagues that have fed in to this strategic document. I think it's a really excellent opportunity for the GAC to streamline its work and think a bit more about the connections and interplays between different policy issues, and also look ahead to longer term strategic issues in a more focused manner. So just to express a real congratulations and express full support for the work done on this. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Thank you so much for that, UK. I have Papua New Guinea.

RUSSELL WORUBA: Thank you, chair and distinguished colleagues, for the progress made on this our strategic plan. I wish to share the sentiments raised by our colleague from Spain, but taking your comment, chair, that we will go into details for each of the sections, I just want to say at this juncture that maybe it'll be covered but because our role as raised by Egypt, that we are advisory, having quantifiable outcomes under each of them could give focus to our prioritizing over this period. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Thank you very much for that, Papua New Guinea. Any other comments or questions? If not, let's dive into the details. And for that, let me give the floor-- I mean, we're gonna be discussing as one of the top priorities, the role, this is a Shakespearean question, to be or not to be, the role of governments in ICANN. And for that, let me give the floor to my distinguished colleague Nigel Hickson from the UK. Nigel.

NIGEL HICKSON: Yes, thank very much, Mr. Chairman. And it's a pleasure to discuss this particular objective, and we're indebted to the input that's been made on this framework. So the role of governments in ICANN probably can't be articulated through a number of bullet points. It's more a philosophy, it's more a belief, it's more a concept, but has to be written down. And it is something that will evolve over the years.

For those of you that will have studied the history of ICANN, of course, may well reflect that when ICANN was formed in 1997, there was no Government Advisory Committee. That's why we're a bit late in

celebrating our 25th birthday. At the start of it, there was no governments to issue communiqués, governments didn't have a role.

But over the years, it was seen that because of the public policy work that ICANN clearly did, that governments should have a role, that governments have a public policy duty, both nationally, regionally in various groups, and of course, globally, whether we're at the ITU or the UN or somewhere else, we have a public policy duty, we have a public policy undertaking.

And therefore, it seemed only consistent that as ICANN developed, as the domain name system developed, so the GAC or so governments coming together in the form of something called the Government Advisory Committee would have an enhanced role in public policy issues.

And so really what this objective does is to recognize that role, to recognize that we have a duty, we have an obligation to give our public policy perspective on decisions that have been made within the ICANN community and within the ICANN organization. Now, we're not gonna give advice on the menu in the canteen, we're not gonna give advice on the salary of the CEO, we're not going to give advice necessarily on internal financial issues or how many board members there might be, or perhaps we will.

But our role is a public policy role. And how that public policy role is expressed, of course, depends on the mechanism, it depends on the evolution of ICANN, and others that have been in this organization much longer than me, Manal and of course, other distinguished GAC representatives here will of course, remember the days when ICANN,

sorry, when the governments, when GAC didn't take part in public policy processes, didn't take part in a PDP process, either because we didn't feel that we could contribute much to it, or perhaps we weren't invited or whatever.

And it really is only in recent years that governments have been integral in the public policy process. Certainly, under the IANA transition, the role of governments, the views of governments were not already welcomed by the wider community, but were sought after by the community.

The community wanted to know what the governments thought of the IANA transition. And as much they want to know what we think about this RVC and PICs discussion that's taking place tomorrow, in which we heard Susan talk about earlier, the community welcomes the input and views of the Government Advisory Committee.

And how we do that, of course, is something that will evolve over time, what sort of advisory role we play, what sort of mechanisms we take part in. And I'll stop in a second, but articulated by this morning, by the work that RO and others have been doing Argentina before that in this work on applicant's support. I think it's fair to say that back in 2012, this wouldn't necessarily have taken place.

NICOLAS CABALLERO:

Thank you so much for that. As a matter of fact, I have a question for the full GAC at this point. Would you like to stop after each one of the items and allow for questions and answers, or would you like us to go

through the full eight topics and then allow for Q&A? What would you prefer? One or two? Ah, I'm sorry. Christine, go ahead.

CHRISTINE ARIDA: Can I suggest that at least we take number two in conjunction with number one, and then we can stop after that and maybe go to the substantial ones?

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Perfectly fine with me.

CHRISTINE ARIDA: If that's okay with --

NICOLAS CABALLERO: And I see nothing, so. Okay, Christine, please go ahead with the second topic.

CHRISTINE ARIDA: Okay, thank you, Nico. And Christine for the record. So the reason I'm saying that is because the point number two is strategic objectives. Like Nagel was saying, that looks actually outwards towards the work of the GCAC within the wider community of ICANN. Whereas number two is actually focusing on inwards, a bit inside the work of the GAC. And the leadership team has had a discussion whether those two points should be merged together in one point or should be separate.

And we've had a substantive discussion about that, and we decided to go that way. But again, obviously subject to further discussion with the wider GAC colleagues. So the second point talks more about the effectiveness of the work of the GAC, how the GAC operations and engagements is speaking for the work and is effective to achieve what the GAC would like to achieve.

And in that sense, the strategic objective would be to actually increase participation, to enhance the effectiveness of our participation within the multi-stakeholder process, and to ensure that whatever we identify as important to be put forward is actually expressed as the voice of governments and is duly taken into account in policy and strategic outcomes.

And to make this a bit closer to what we were thinking just to give you a few examples. So that strategic objectives would look at the barriers that we have to participation, to engagement, to how we need to increase engagement, to outreach into regional engagements to governments, but also maybe development of agendas, what should be done in that.

So all the tools and mechanisms that the GAC uses in its operation in order to achieve a better and effective its work. And so things that will also fall onto that objective would be look out at our capacity development programs, our onboarding, possibly also the HLGGM modality as such. So I don't know if that's makes it a bit closer, but yeah, I'll stop here. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Thank you so much. UK and Egypt. So let's pause at this point and see if there are questions or comments from the floor or online. And I have Switzerland. Please go ahead.

JORGE CANCIO: Thank you, Nico. Jorge Cancio, Switzerland, for the record. Just to be clear what we mean with one and two, could you perhaps elaborate shortly what is the key difference between the strategic objective number one? And the second one? I have my own idea, but I would like to hear it from you.

CHRISTINE ARIDA: Okay. So as far as I understand, one is more towards how does the GAC engage with the wider community? What are the modalities there? How do our participation in the different working group happen? Whereas the second one looks more at our internal modalities of work? So for example, one of the ideas was to have regional groups and engage on a regional level work with maybe with feed from the ICANN engagement teams to do that. So it's our external participation versus our internal work. And I don't know if someone from the [CROSSTALK].

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Yeah, I can give you a more direct example. The first one would be, for example, if the GAC chair should be a board member or a voting board member. We're not gonna discuss that now, it is just an example. But yeah, you have another question, Switzerland.

JORGE CANCIO: Jorge Cancio, Switzerland for the record. Just very quickly. So I understand and I get the gist of what Christine was saying, but perhaps it would be good to, and I don't pretend to do it now, to have a look at the wording, because there's some overlap in the wording and it gives the impression that the second point is also about, yeah, that the, as it says, that the voice of governments is duly taken into account in the external.

So I would really make a differentiation between the first one, which is more outward, looking more at a very high level, the role of governments in the ICANN multi-stakeholder system. And the second one is we as GAC, how we operate and how we improve ourselves, et cetera. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Thank you so much for that, Switzerland. I have Indonesia, Denmark, and I think that's Australia. In any case, Ashwin, please go ahead.

ASHWIN SASONGKO: Thank you. I think Nigel, when you mentioned about the purpose to get strategic this objective for the role of government with ICANN, and it's something like cooperation with the government and communities and so on. Don't forget that many governments today are using the so-called collaborative government governance to raise the country, to develop the country, starting from the making of the law up to the implementation.

The making of the law, we have to invite so many communities, so many academicians, business, and so on and so on. And when it is implemented, even in the ministry, we also have some sort of multi-stakeholder-based decision making. So I think the way that you talk ICANN is a multi-stakeholder based governance is also carried out also in many countries for the government. So it is not much different, actually. It's just my comment. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Thank you, Indonesia. I have Denmark.

FINN PETERSEN: Thank you. Finn Peterson from Denmark for the record. And thank you for producing the document. I have only one question here. When I read it, I can see that GAC will seek, GAC will work, when it's a strategic objective, why don't we say GAC will reaffirm? It seems we are trying to, not sure that we will do it, we will seek it, perhaps we should phrase it, GAC will perhaps seek to within five years to-- so from my point, I will perhaps make it a little more affirmative.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Thank you so much for that, Denmark. As a matter of fact, it was put like that on purpose because we didn't know, as a matter of fact, if it would tell us go to hell with that strategic planning, which might have been the case. We didn't see that kind of reaction online or with the emails we received so far, but it was a possibility, so it was tentatively put that way. And sorry for the language, I tend to be very straight. I

have, that's Mr. Fabien Betremieux, and then I have Morocco. Fabien, please go ahead.

FABIEN BETREMIEUX:

Yeah. Thank you, Nico. And I apologize for not being in the room. Hopefully I should be in a few days, I'm being delayed. But Nico, I wanted to contribute to the discussion of Switzerland's question as to the difference between one and two. My understanding in your consultation of the topic leads and the input that was provided is that the second paragraph of number one here might be quite pinpointing the key difference, whereas the strategic objective in terms of the role of government in ICANN, to me, I understood it as to be about what plays the areas for governments in those ICANN processes, which the GAC does not have an operational control over. So, for instance, in the initiation of A PDP in a GNSO, in a charter drafting group, is there a seat for the GAC?

NICOLAS CABALLERO:

Sorry, Fabien, could you please speak a little bit closer to the microphone? I'm having trouble hearing you. Sorry about this.

FABIEN BETREMIEUX:

I'm trying to be as close as I can. I don't know if our technical team can help in the room. Is this any better?

NICOLAS CABALLERO:

Yes. Just go ahead, Fabien. No worries, no worries.

FABIEN BETREMIEUX: And so, I think this second paragraph really is a key difference. What place is there for governments and the GAC in those processes at ICANN? That to me seemed to be the, the key differentiator between those two first strategic objectives. Hopefully, that's helpful. And I think we're taking notes in any case of the suggestions that were made by the various commenter here. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Thank you for that, Fabien. I have Morocco. Nouar, please go ahead. Morocco? Nouar, please go ahead.

BELAID NOUAR: Thank you very much. I will speak in French, please. Thanks for this document, it's captivating. We believe it is full of insights with regards to the objectives. When one addresses objectives, one must address figures, but also objectives that are reachable. Let's remember that we are part of an advisory committee that has a reactive role. The GAC reacts to issues that are dealt at the strategic level of ICANN.

Our strategic plan must be a result of ICANN strategic plan. As for the objectives one and two, we believe that objective two could be folded into objective one. Indeed, the GAC has a crosscutting rule, and this must be seen in every action that the GAC undertakes, and we believe that the item number two should not be on this sheet. So I repeat myself, the item number two should be folded into the item number one. Thank you very much.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Thank you for that, Morocco. Well noted. I disagree with you a hundred percent, but that's something we can discuss a little bit later. To begin with, and this is my humble opinion, but if we tie the GAC strategic planning to the ICANN's five-year strategic plan which has many different pathways, different timing, different actors, different everything, we would be buying a problem. But we can discuss about that a little bit later. Anyways, this is my opinion. Yeah, Egypt, go ahead, please.

CHRISTINE ARIDA: Yes, Morocco, thank you very much for your comment, which you also put on email. And I'd like briefly to respond, I don't if it'll make more sense, but objective number one and number two are both actually crosscutting for the substantive objective or for the theme-based objectives. So they are more directed towards processes, operation models, whereas from three to eight are more towards the substance or the topics.

So I do see your point that they are crosscutting, but the reason why they are put is because we will need to work on them in terms of actual action items. So if we're talking about enhancing our effectiveness of work, we might need to look into our operating principles, we might need to look into different modalities and review them. And so putting this as a strategic objective for the first strategic plan could be beneficial because it'll make us work on achieving the other objectives. So, just wanted to clarify that. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Thank you again, Morocco for your comments. Thank you, Egypt. I don't see any other hands, so let me give the floor to Jorge, or is it-- sorry to you, Rita, for future rounds of new gTLDs. We'll do three and four, if you don't mind, and then we'll pause to take questions. That is future rounds of new gTLDs and then DNS abuse shepherd by Martina, and then we'll pause there to take questions. Please go ahead, Rita.

RITA: Thank you, Nico. I've been asked to speak on future rounds of new gTLDs in place of Jason Merrit from Canada, who is the topic lead, my colleague. So just providing a brief update here. As we know, the last round of new gTLDs was in 2012, it's been a while, and there's been lessons learned since then. Some of these that the GAC is taking into consideration for the next round expected in the next couple of years. So to start, we're looking at promoting competition, consumer trust, consumer choice in the new round, contributing to reducing the digital divide, in particular through the support of applicants from underserved regions and underrepresented regions, and the promotion of internationalized domain names as we all heard in our earlier presentations from today.

The applicant support program is taking on a big heavy lift this time around, so that effort continues. We'll also be incorporating appropriate security, stability, and resiliency safeguards, and including appropriate procedures and capabilities for the GAC to address unexpected issues arising from certain categories of applications such as geographical names, which I know is of interest to

many GAC members. I will leave it at that for now and pass over to my colleague to speak about DNS abuse. I think Martina. Oh, Manal has her hand up.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Oh, I see a hand from Egypt. Please go ahead, Manal.

MANAL ISMAIL: Sorry to interrupt. I was going to comment before you go to the thematic part. I was just wondering, and this is an open question for colleagues if they agree whether we need to add another thematic of interest to the GAC, another theme of interest to the GAC related to our discussion today on IP addresses and the discussion we had today.

At least from Egypt's perspective, I'm not sure if it is a re-perspective that is being shared by the region. There is interest in discussing the IP issues and IRS and the numbering part of ICANN. So it's just food for thought whether we should add an additional theme or not. Thank you. Personally, I do.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Sure, sure, sure. If you ask me, I would be glad to include it, but it's for the whole GAC to decide. I don't see any kind of problem from a strategic point of view or from a logistic or internal mechanics point of view, by no means. But again, I stand to be corrected. We'll decide altogether, that's for sure. And thank you for your comment, Egypt. So with that, let me give the floor to Martina. Go ahead, please.

MARTINA BARBERO:

Thank you very much, Nico. For the thematic objectives on DNS abuse, I think what we tried to do was to condensate indeed this idea of something that could hold for the next five years. And so as you see from the text, we encompass the overarching objective, which will be to engage proactively in the work of the ICANN community and provide advice on the activities of ICANN as they relate to government concerns regarding DNS abuse.

And here I referred to a DNS abuse statement that was made by a GAC a few years ago. In order to, and then we have some objectives which are to premier the security, stability, and resilience of DNS, reduce the incidents and harm of DNS abuse in the new gTLDs, support the continuous improvement of DNS abuse, mitigation and prevention standards, and their effective enforcement by ICANN, and final review, and identify best practices in preventing and mitigating DNS abuse for wider adoption.

Also, in the way, we will deploy the strategic objective, we will keep in mind the ever-evolving nature of DNS abuse. So part of our strategic objective implementation will be to continue to seek survey of GAC members and observer to better understand their concerns and how they can be met together with their expectation. So this is a bit in a nutshell for DNS abuse.

NICOLAS CABALLERO:

Thank you, European Commission, Martina, thank you so much. At this point, do we have any question, comment, anything you would

like to add? If that is not the case, then we'll continue with the presentations, and then we'll take questions at the end, if you don't mind. Seeing no hand up. So let me give the floor to Ken. Kenneth, please go ahead. Sorry, USA, USA, of course.

KENNETH MERRILL:

Yeah, Kenneth Merrill, I'm on the US delegation and also a member of the EPDP GAC small group. I'll just go over some of the thinking that went into this section from the topic leads here. We wanted to keep this pretty high level and achievable. I think that we highlighted continued access to registration data which obviously is a reference to the current efforts on the RDRS to inform an eventual SSAD.

And then also efforts to gain a clear picture of accuracy of registration data. And I think here, we wanted to just sort of flag for the GAC, our continued interest in getting a clearer picture of the state of registration data under ICANN's contracts, sorry, straight of accuracy under ICANN's contracts.

And then finally, sort of building on the sort of forward leaning approach of this strategic plan, we sort of wanted to highlight some of the evolution that's taken place within the registration data sort of space since the GAC principles on WHOIS services were published way back in 2007. So we touched here on sort of the growth and the number of entities such as resellers and privacy proxy services that can sometimes sit between the registrar and the registrant like the underlying beneficial user.

And so, I think the idea here was that by flagging this and flagging some of these changes in the industry, it would allow the GAC to engage in more of an evidence-based policy development on these registration data issues. I'll stop there and hand it back over to Nico. Thank you, chair.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Thank you very much, USA. I see no questions or comments at this point on this topic, so let's move on. And for that, let me give the floor for the topic of universal acceptance to Egypt. Christine, please go ahead.

CHRISTINE ARIDA: Thank you, Nico. And I think this one is a pretty straightforward one, and I think the objective here is actually to achieve universal access of domain names, inclusive of new top-level domains, IDNs, and email addresses, and to ensure that they are treated equally and to support the achievement of a multilingual internet, which I think is a relatively important topic to the GAC, and we've already had the discussion today morning, so it's fresh in our mind. But we are having a working group standing on that, so I think it's pretty straightforward unless there is someone that would like to change something here. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Thank you very much, Egypt. And I see, again, no hands up, no requests for the floor, which means that we're okay to move on to

topic number seven, which is impact of new technology on internet unique identifiers. And for that, let me give the floor to Zeina Bou Harb from Lebanon. Please go ahead.

ZEINA BOU HARB:

On the seventh objective after discussion and consultation with the topic leads and all the GAC members that were really interested in providing input, we agreed to have this objective as it's presented on the screen. The GAC will increase understanding and raise awareness of the challenges and opportunities of new technologies as they relate to the internet unique identifiers.

To that end, the GAC will leverage the expertise in the ICANN community governments and beyond to share information and consider potential implications for the benefit of GAC members and all stakeholders. Why we have this topic here as a strategic objective because we still remember that we had a capacity development workshop on that topic in Hamburg. It was added to and mentioned in many of the last communique.

And also yesterday, we agreed when we were discussing the HLGm agenda, that this is one of the topic that should be included also in the discussions of the HLGm. So this is a topic that is really of high importance for the GAC. And it can cover many of the new technologies.

For example, we discussed earlier the blockchain and its impact on the DNS identifiers. And also, maybe the artificial intelligence and how it can also impact the DNS and other issues as the Internet of things.

That's why we have it here as a strategic objective, and we will work together in order to like draft an action plan and develop the topic further. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Thank you, Lebanon. I see no questions, I see no comments, I see no hands up, which means I'll give the floor to the UK, Nigel, for topic number eight, which is internet governance, unless anybody in the room raised a hand. Is that Egypt? Egypt, go ahead.

ABDALMONEM GALILA: This is just a comment rather than a question.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Can you please actually speak closer to the microphone?

ABDALMONEM GALILA: This is Abdalmonem Galila for the record, Egypt. Actually, it's a comment rather than a question. Actually, I'm thinking that the title of the item number seven for strategic planning should be internet unique identifier and the impact of applying new technologies as one of the unique identifiers will have a problem on it, which is IPv6. We need to have it to blow it as well. We are not going for IOT devices or AI without having a new environment for IPv6. So that's my comment.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Can you repeat the title? I didn't hear very well, sorry.

ABDALMONEM GALILA: Yeah, unique identifier and the impact of new technologies. As unique identifier is limited at the moment, we need to have a solution for that.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Okay. Well noted. Thank you so much, Egypt. I see no other hand. So Nigel, UK, the floor is yours.

NIGEL HICKSON: Yes. Thank you, Mr. -- Oh, sorry. Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to reflect on the remarks just made, and I'm no expert here at all, but I think the sense of this was that in the debates we had in the Government Advisory Committee and the discussions that we had around capacity building on new technologies, the sessions that we, I think had in Washington.

The focus or the linkage on us discussing new technologies and emerging technologies was not to have, if you like, a debate about something interesting. Heaven forbid that we'd debate artificial intelligence, for instance. It was more that we would have a debate on how emerging technologies affected the work of ICANN.

So it was the linkage between the unique identifiers and the emerging technologies that we were focusing on. So I think that's why they were linked in this respect, but others will have views. Perhaps I could just mention internet governance, and the sense here is I think relatively simple, but again, perhaps requires some unpicking.

We sit around this table and we debate in the Government Advisory Committee public policy issues connected to ICANN, but these are linked to an extent, not always, to wider debates on internet governance. And as we've seen in recent ICANN meetings, we have taken part in geopolitical forums that are run by ICANN Org in relation to the WSIS process or to other debates going on elsewhere and how we might contribute to that.

So I think the sense is that keeping us up to date or being regulatory apprised of developments on internet governance is something worthwhile. Now, that's not to say, of course, that we are here as a group of governments to debate the position we should take during a UN discussion or during an ITU discussion or during any other regional or global discussion, that's not the purpose.

More the purpose is to, if you like, enhance our understanding that we might be debating universal. For instance, in the debate that took place this morning on universal acceptance, not the debate, the session we had on universal acceptance and international domain names, we were informed, of course, that these discussions as well as taking place in ICANN take place elsewhere, such as at the ITU or in UNESCO. So really, this particular objective is construed in that sense. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO:

Thank you very much for that, UK. Before we move on to the next steps, I have Iran and then Switzerland. Iran, please go ahead.

KAVOUSS ARASTEH: Thank you very much. I hope that you kindly and recognize that there's a time difference between San Juan and Geneva. Unfortunately, today is Sunday and we have family, and unfortunately, we had to be absent for about three quarter of hours to have a family dinner. I was not present when you discussed that. I have no difficulty with the objective to have a strategic plan. If you are still discussing that, please correct me. If not, don't continue. Are you still discussing the strategic plan?

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Yes, Iran, we're still talking about that. Yeah, go ahead please.

KAVOUSS ARASTEH: Thank you very much.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: And I hope you enjoyed your lunch with your family.

KAVOUSS ARASTEH: No, thank you. I'm very sorry. Yes, I appreciate very much your initiative to have a strategic plan, that is a good initiative and so and so forth. However, we have a strategic plan in every organization, then we would have operational plan. Operational plan is to implement that strategic plan. Then we may need something else, how to do that, but that is another issue whether you are talking of that or not.

However, the strategic plan should have some, I would say, very well structure. The first item should be the overview of the situation. Then

you need to have a strategic framework associated with the time. Then we need to have a strategic goal. Then you need to explain your goals or our goals, goals 1, 2, 3, 4, so on, so forth.

Then you need or we need to have priorities, and then go to remaining part and to the outputs and outcome, which are two different things. And then we need to have KPI. However, with respect to the GAC issue, it seems to be very difficult if you could have a KPI because we could not have the KPI of X number of governments.

KPI, which is the staff who implement that strategic plan or operational plan. So what I suggest, perhaps, very good, please continue, I encourage you, that is very good, but we need more time. We need more time to look at that one and to see what we can do and to see what are the period that you want to look, have this strategic plan.

Normally, maybe four to five years. I don't know, it depends on the wish of the distinguished GAC members, but it doesn't go beyond that because the situation or a strategy may change. So these are the comments that I want to offer you, and I hope that you would kindly allow us to have some more time to look at the matter, to see to what extent we could further contribute to that. But once again, sincerely, I appreciate very much your initiatives. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO:

Thank you so much, Iran. As a matter of fact, the plan is to reach an agreement on the strategic plan during ICANN79 and leave the operational, the logistics, and the internal mechanics for later on. As

you can see on the-- and thank you for that. For after ICANN79, hopefully for ICANN80, if everything goes well, what we're trying, and this is for answering your question and for the full GAC as well, the idea is not to take one year to develop an annual plan.

It wouldn't make any sense, in my opinion. I'm not saying that you suggested that, just this is for all GAC members. And then we will have enough time to do the operational plan and the details, and work with internal mechanics. Yes, go ahead, Iran.

KAVOUSS ARASTEH:

Yeah, thank you very much. Yes, I understand you. We need not to wait four years to have a strategic plan for four years, so we should be more quick and more precise. But however, I suggest that you could do whatever we could reach at this meeting, but postpone the strategic plan for ICANN80 in order to-- unless the point that I have raised, starting with the situation, starting with the strategic goal, framework second, the strategic goal, and so on and so forth.

If that could be taken into account, I have no problem. But I don't think that we have been doing, I don't know 20 X years without that, another three months may not be quite critical. But you can have a draft, I would say. If at the next meeting, there is no changes to the draft, so far, so good. If it's a change, we'll still allow that so it might be better we have something satisfy everybody and complete, but it is not criticizing in any way what we are doing, or what you are doing, it's just to take into account point of everybody. Thank you. I offer that for your current consideration.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Thank you so much, Iran. And again, that was the original plan as a matter of fact. I was the one who suggested that we should go in a faster pace, in a faster way in order to have something ready for ICANN79. Maybe I was too ambitious, but let's see how it goes. I mean, I'm in your hands. I have Switzerland and then the Russian Federation. Please go ahead, Switzerland.

JORGE CANCIO: Thank you, Nico. Jorge Cancio, Switzerland, for the record. I'm going back to number eight, where we were, Nigel. So sorry. Just an addition thought is that how it's drafted right now, it's very GAC centric. It's like talking about what we do within the GAC. But I think on internet governance, it's of course very useful to reflect perhaps that we may also exchange with ICANN, with the Board, with the Org, the staff, and the community, the wider community on these issues. Just exchange, not telling them what to do, but just exchanging information, views, et cetera.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Thank you. Switzerland. I have the Russian Federation. Russia, please go ahead.

VIACHESLAV EROKHIN: Thank you, Chair. I will speak in Russian. Dear colleagues, I have two comments to make. One is about item eight and one is about the entire document as a whole. As for item eight, well, first and foremost,

I'd like to say that the Russian Federation has made an official generic comment, and it is integrated into this document, and it is at the very end of the document. So I will just voice out one message from this comment, which relates to number eight.

We believe that any updates and whatever news about the changes that are made in the ecosystem of internet governance is a reactive position. We would like to see something more proactive, a proactive discussion of challenges that the internet governance system faces. We suggest that we add not just the regular updates of the information about changes, but also the discussion of challenges.

As well as in item seven, we should probably borrow the wording GAC will leverage the expertise when GAC is not a decision-making body. However, creating expertise would be the correct way to go. It would be important to raise questions about the challenges and issues and problems that we face and thus promote their resolution. This is with regards to item eight.

Generically speaking about the document, I agree with the Moroccan representative and Iran representative that this is a generic conceptual document. It doesn't look like the strategic plans that we have in our ministries. Those are very specific, they have road maps and KPI and many details, but we should also think that we are not just a monolith organization, we're not just a group of experts.

We represent our governments, our states, and we need to use our international experience, which tells us that as soon as we start delving into the details, it becomes extremely difficult for us to concur on a document, to concur on different items, different wordings, et

cetera, et cetera. This is why I think that our strategic plan should be an overall high level plan, it should be declarative in nature, otherwise, we will actually spend four years discussing the five-year strategic plan. Thank you very much for your attention.

NICOLAS CABALLERO:

Thank you so much for that, Russia. Yes, indeed, the idea was to have something very generic, very open-ended, so to say. And going back to your point there are no KPIs. It would be impossible to establish KPIs among 182 different countries and 39 IGOs, that's one of the challenges we have, and that's precisely why we decided to have something very generic, very open-ended, and try to agree on this proposed strategic priority areas, and then trying to tackle the strategic objectives for each priority area.

That was the general concept. And I totally agree with you in terms of not spending four years for a five-year strategic plan or eight months for an annual plan, it doesn't make any sense, absolutely. So thank you for that, Russia. I have Iran. Please, go ahead.

KAVOUSS ARASTEH:

Thank you, Chairman. First of all, I agree with you that it is not only appropriate but impossible to have any KPI collectively with the entire GAC, it's impossible, because you cannot hold any government responsible that has not done his job, because KPI is some sort of measuring of what has been done, and we are not enabled or in a position to, I would say, evaluate the work of a given government, that whether they achieve that or not, so fully agree with you.

On the other hand, I think what you are doing that, in my view, it has a little bit mixture of strategic and operational, but it's the good steps. What I suggest that perhaps as a sort of starting point, we do it for two years only, and we see what will happen. Then after two years, we come with the experience that we gained, we would put a strategic plan in a more, I would say, stable and structural manner.

Like many others and you, I have some experience in the strategic plan, years in other organizations. I know a little bit of that, you know much more than me at least. But I would say I'm not totally unfamiliar with the situation, but I suggest that the lifetime of this strategic plan, if possible, should be shorter because it is the beginning. We should not put something that unfortunately puts us in a, I would say, impasse situation.

So if our distinguished GAC members agree that you do it for shorter periods without doing our best, I think your objective is to do it at this meeting, I have no problem, do it at this meeting, any correction that we have made, but without KPI, but the lifetime was that it would be shorter in order to gain experience and then come back after two years and so on and start something that takes into account the lessons which have been learned. If you agree with that or if you and everybody agrees with that. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO:

Thank you so much for that, Iran. Thank you, Russia. And for the sake of time, I have Egypt, and then we're gonna have to wrap up. Egypt, please go ahead.

CHRISTINE ARIDA:

I'm going to be very brief. Thank you, and conscious of time. Thank you, Nico. This is Christine for the record. I was going to just say that I have a sense that we are more or less agreeing on the strategic objectives that were put at hand. There were some very good ideas that I think could be captured, there was also a suggestion from my colleague from Egypt for additions, which we can maybe look at.

But I disagree that we cannot put any KPIs. We could put some KPIs, like to take the example of our increased engagement. We can have actually some KPIs for it, but this is maybe a discussion for a further time. So I personally would like to see that we at least focus on having some good objectives to work from, and then what we can achieve right away, we can then work further on that. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO:

Thank you for that, Egypt. I fully agree with you. And just for the record, we did take into account the comments provided by Spain, by Morocco, by Argentina, and by the Russian Federation, that's all part of the document, which will be sent to the GAC list, by the way. So in terms of next steps, so again, the idea was to agree on the adoption of a five-year, could be 3, 4, 7, or whatever number of years, the strategic plan. But if you all agree, maybe we can make that decision in Kigali in Rwanda and work intercessionally.

I don't particularly like that way forward because I think we would be, I want to say wasting your time, but let me put it this way, we could be way more efficient. But again, I'm in your hands, I will do whatever we

decide to do altogether. Can we go to the next slide, please? The idea, and I'll just read this as a-- give me just one second.

The idea was to include this in the communique under GAC internal matters, and the text would've read, GAC Operational Matters: The GAC discussed the development of a GAC strategic plan and corresponding annual plans. The GAC adopted, that will not be the case anymore, but anyways, a set of priority areas and corresponding strategic objectives, which together form the first GAC strategic plan for the 2024, 2029 period.

The GAC will continue developing an initial set of expected outcomes for each of these objectives in consultation with the GAC topic leads, the GAC chair and vice chairs by ICANN80. This will constitute the first GAC annual plan 2024, 2025. The way it is now, obviously, we will do the wordsmithing and everything.

We'll have to do some edits, some modifications, and hopefully we'll be able to reach consensus by ICANN80, hopefully, hopefully before that, unless you tell me that we're okay, and we can actually adopt the plan as it is now, and leave the operational details for later on. What do you think? And I see Iran. Iran, go ahead, please.

KAVOUSS ARASTEH:

Yes. Thank you, Chair. I understand entirely, completely what you are saying, but I think it's still maybe good if we could postpone that to ICANN80. And then 2024, 2029, I don't think that normally strategic plan because of the technology development, because of the situation, would not be more than four years. So we should have four

years if you want to have 2024, 25, 26, 27, but not 29 because we could not see what will happen and so on.

So maybe that's the situation, but still, I agree with you, we should do something. This is the first good step, positive and take it, but starting from ICANN80, and let us, if you mentioned kindly, I agree with you, have some intersectional and so on to see what we can do. Unfortunately, that is a little bit early to do that one, but that is my humble suggestion to you. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO:

Thank you so much, Iran. I tend to agree with you because again, the original plan was to have the strategic plan for four years in order to coincide with the tenure of the GAC chair, which is two years, possibly four years, depending on reelection and so on and so forth. But that would make sense. I have Lebanon.

ZEINA BOU HARB:

Yes. Actually, my comment is regarding the text that we have in front of us, I think no one objected the strategic objectives. We have already eight strategic objectives, do we have someone objecting to adopt them as objectives and build around them our plan? I think this can be our starting point to draft a full plan, but we have already the strategic objectives as written on the text in front of us.

NICOLAS CABALLERO:

Thank you, Lebanon. I totally agree with you, but I have Egypt and then the CTU. Egypt.

MANAL ISMAIL: Thank you, Chair. I agree with Zeina, there is no issue with the eight strategic objectives that were proposed. Although, I have proposed the ninth, and I'm not sure whether it's being adopted or not. I think we need to seek feedback from GAC colleagues on this. And my question was why is it either ICANN79 or ICANN80, I mean, we have in between and we can adopt it. We don't really necessarily need to adopt it face-to-face, do we?

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Thank you for that, Egypt, thank you so much for that, and I agree with you. From my personal point of view, ICANN80 would've been one year into my tenure. So we would be adopting an annual plan one year into-- we can do that, we're not in a hurry. Yep.

MANAL ISMAIL: I'm saying otherwise, I'm saying we can adopt it intercessionally if we are done. I mean, we don't necessarily need to wait for the in-person meeting, this is what I was proposing. But I agree if we would like to adopt the initial phase and then add to it, but I'm just flagging that we are still pending the ninth thing. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Understood. Thank you so much, Egypt. I have the CTU, and then Morocco.

CTU: Thank you chair. I'm comfortable that we pretty much have these priority areas-

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Can you speak closer to the microphone, please?

CTU: Well, oh yeah, maybe straight. Yeah, I'm pretty comfortable that we are clearer on the priority areas. Like Manal just mentioned, there are some issues still in terms of the statements of the objectives that we have there. But I think we are close, and I think it makes sense that we use the intercession period going into ICANN80 to maybe get to a point by ICANN80, at which we can say, well, we've adopted some specific strategic objectives. Thanks.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Thank you very much, CTU. I have Morocco and then Switzerland, and we're already out of time, so I'll close the queue there. So Morocco and then Switzerland. Please go ahead, Morocco.

BELAID NOUAR: Thank you. Thank you very much. I will speak in French. Thank you for these initiatives, it's a good working document. As the Lebanese representative said, we also hold no objections, but some things have to be reviewed though. We are convinced that the ICANN80 meeting will feed into this document and make it more comprehensive. I suggest that we delay the adoption of this item and look at this during

ICANN80, during the high-level governmental meeting. And I believe we could leverage the discussions that will take place during 1980. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Thank you, Morocco. Well noted. I have Switzerland.

JORGE CANCIO: Thank you, Nico. Jorge Cancio, Switzerland, for the record. Just very quickly, and looking into the chat room, I think there was quite a lot of support for the proposal of Manal to try to, based on the discussion of today, finalize at least the objectives intercessionally, and then we can build the, the rest of the plan and present something following us Morocco to our high-level people in Kigali, but already with the objectives and the actions. So we could have a good discussion there and make progress.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Thank you, Switzerland. Are we okay with that way forward? Any objection, any opposition? And I don't see any-- that's an old hand Switzerland, right? Okay. I don't see any opposition objection online or in the room. So that's the way to do it. Thank you so very much for your ideas, for your contributions, for the collegial attitude, and your help, and again, your good ideas, which are always welcome.

Thank you so much. We're closing the session now. And by the way, we have our 25-year reception right after this. So more than welcome

to join us for-- to spend the next hour or so with some drinks. Go ahead. Thank you so much. The session is closed.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]