ICANN84 | AGM – GAC Capacity Development Session on Emerging Technologies and PDP Basics
Sunday, October 26, 2025 – 13:15 to 14:30 IST

GULTEN TEPE

Welcome to the GAC Capacity Development Sesson on Sunday 26 of October at 13:15 p.m. local time. Please note that this session is being recorded and is governed by the ICANN expected standards of behavior and community participant code of conduct and the ICANN community antiharassment policy.

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I will now hand the floor over to GAC Chair, Nicolas Caballero. Over to you, Nico. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO

Thank you very much. Welcome back, everyone. Some housekeeping details before we actually start with the session. We're going to have actually two sessions today. The first 35 minutes, we allocated this time for the AI and Machine Learning in

the DNS Ecosystem session so to say. And then right after that we'll go ahead with the PDP… What was the name, Marco? Help me out.

MARCO HOGEWONING PDP Capacity Building Session.

NICOLAS CABALLERO There we go. Thank you so much, Marco. PDP Capacity Building Session for another 35 minutes. And right after that, we'll have a coffee break for 30 minutes and right after that, we're going to have the meeting with the GNSO Council. That session is going to be running for one hour. And then another coffee break and the meeting with the ASO, which you can just check the block schedule. It's going to be divided into two parts as well.

The first part is going to be the actual meeting with the ASO and the second part, we're going to have the WSIS+20 discussion, but we'll also be welcoming the WSIS+20 co-facilitators. And then we'll have the GAC Social, of course, at 17:30.

So without further ado, let me introduce Hailan Wang from the Technical University of Munich. She has two master's degrees, as a matter of fact, one in politics and technology from the University of Munich, and another one also from the University of Munich on development, production, and management in mechanical engineering, with a focus on management.

Also, she's actually an engineer from the Technical University of Hamburg in general engineering science, correct me if I'm wrong,

Hailan, and many other. I mean, she's more than qualified for the session. So, without further ado, let me give you the floor, Hailan.

Just before I give you the floor, let me remind everyone, you can ask questions, considering this is a little bit technical, but we did our best to keep it as low-code as possible. You're more than welcome to interrupt and ask questions, or you can do that at the end, whatever you prefer is okay. More than welcome, again, anybody to chime in and ask questions, especially as related to the DNS ecosystem in general or the DNS industry.

So again, without further ado, let me give the floor to Hailan. All yours.

HAILAN WANG

Thank you very much. Hello, everyone, and good afternoon. My name is Hailan and I'm really, really happy to be here today. Also thank you for the invitation, organizer, ICANN community. Like Nico said, I'm an engineer and I'm also a policy advisor. I'm passionate about the intersection of technology, society, and policy. So, that's also the lens I will use today for my presentation.

Today I'm going to talk about artificial intelligence and machine learning and how they are applied to the DNS ecosystem. I want to give you an insight about how modern data-driven techniques can help improve and strengthen the DNS, not just technically, but operationally and also strategically. Let's dive in. Next slide, please.

So to start off, I bring one number and this is a big one, like you can see. A top-level domain like .com receives around 1.5 billion queries per day. So each single one of those queries produces also metadata, information like the time of the request, location, and more. This makes the DNS industry inherently data rich. And as many of you might already anticipate, machine learning thrives in exactly this kind of data rich environment. So, the DNS in that sense provides a perfect opportunity to apply and benefit from AI and machine learning models. Let's unpack a little bit more. Next slide, please.

This brings us to our agenda today. At first, I want to give you an introduction to AI and machine learning to clean up a few key terms and concept that we will use for the further use cases. Don't worry, it's easy. On that foundation, I will show you three core use cases of how AI can be used in the DNS in the context of abuse mitigation, traffic optimization, and accessibility.

Finally, I will close with a few general best practices, things we should keep in our minds to ensure that we reap the benefits of AI in DNS without falling into the common pitfalls. Next slide, please.

So let's start by talking about some of the key terms and concept in these terms, because AI, machine learning, deep learning, generative AI often get mixed together. Everybody talks about AI, but what do we mean exactly when we say that? As you can see from this chart, AI is the largest domain. It encompasses a wide range of concepts and methods.

The European Commission define AI as a machine-based system designed to operate with varying levels of autonomy, and that can generate outputs such as predictions, recommendations, or decisions.

What is often used almost equivalently, but is a technical subset of AI, is machine learning. Machine learning means building models that learn from data. They extract patterns, make sense of them, and then generalize those insights into new situations.

What is deep learning? Deep learning is a subfield of machine learning and deep learning describes a family of model architectures with multiple layers of interconnected neurons that can capture more complex patterns and relationships in the data. And finally, generative AI, most of you know that, the application.

NICOLAS CABALLERO ChatGPT.

HAILAN WANG ChatGPT, which refers to models that can create new content. For example, text, images, or speech, as well as applications in areas like drug discoveries or protein folding. So, that was the general landscape and a key concept and now let's see how this concept actually works in practice.

To illustrate how we approach a machine learning project, I bring this figure with me. Here you can see three stuff, or three elements. On the left side, the inputs. On the right side, the outputs and in

between, the model, which captures the relationship between the input and output. Think of it like an equation with three variables. If we know two of the variables, we can solve for the third one.

We also have two different phases. In the training phase, the two variables we know are the input and the output. Having these two known enables us to solve for the model and that describes the relationship between the input and the output. That process of finding or learning this mapping is what we call training.

Now we have the trained model, we want to use it and this is the inference phase. Now we have two different nodes, the input data and the model itself. What we don't know yet is the output so now we can fit the model new input data, and it produces new predictions, also the new outputs.

So to summarize it, training means learning the relationship between inputs and outputs, and inference means using that learned relationship to make predictions on new data. You can think of training as teaching and inference as applying what has already been learned. This was the basic cycle behind each machine learning system. From a simple spam filtering to a complex DNS optimization model. Next slide, please.

Let’s dive in more about the different types of learning. In machine learning, we often distinguish between different training regimes or also ways to find the model. The main types are supervised,

unsupervised, and reinforcement learning. Let's begin with supervised learning.

Supervised learning means learning from example. Within that, we have two main applications, classification and regression. Classification means sorting data into categories, for example, separating good queries from malicious ones. And regression, means predicting continuous values, like estimating future query volumes.

Unsupervised learning, on the other hand, works with the data that isn't labeled. Here, techniques like clustering, which means group similar objects together, while dimensionality reduction helps summarize redundant or overlapping features.

Down at the end, we have the reinforcement learning, where an agent learns by trial and error, gradually improving by maximizing a reward. So, each of these methods can be useful in a DNS context, but it depends on the problem we are trying to solve. Next slide, please.

So before we jump into concrete examples, I want to emphasize why DNS is the perfect environment for AI. As you know, as users query resolvers millions of times per day, those resolvers generate logs. These logs include incredibly rich and high-frequency data about global network activities. And these logs also provide the data foundation on which we can build models. Once trained, these models can be used to optimize DNS resolvers in many

different ways, from improving security, to enhancing performance and accessibility. Next slide, please.

Now we have set the stage, and let's move on to some practical examples. I have chosen three different use cases that showcase how different AI models can help make the DNS safer, faster, and also more inclusive. Let's begin with the first use case.

Every DNS resolver sees millions of queries per second and some of them hide malicious behaviors. Traditional systems rely on static block lists. They are simple, but they are reactive. They only stop what is already known. But AI, by contrast, can learn what malicious looks like based on patterns.

So if you can see the chart, on the left side you can see an example data set, Joe from Resolver Logs with different, malicious and good ones. And we can use decision tree-based models to classify queries as benign or malicious. Clustering method can then group similar queries together, highlighting new patterns that might require human review.

This combination, classification and clustering form the backbone of AI-driven DNS filtering. This has already been used by major industry players. It allows threats to be detected automatically long before we as humans would notice them at scale. So, clustering and classification help us analyze current traffic and regression, which I will talk about next, help us look ahead.

Now we have the regression, and DNS traffic follows patterns from daily, weekly, even seasonally, resume, and query values rise during working hours, drop overnight, and spike during large events. Here you can see a simple example. The blue line shows observed traffic, and the dotted green line shows the model's forecast.

Once a resolver can predict load, it can also act in advance. It can pre-worm caches for popular domains, shift roles towards underutilized data centers, or balance demand across the network. In short, prediction enables optimizations, and that means smoother performance and better user experience. Now let's look at the third slightly different example, one that uses AI to make the Internet more inclusive.

So, the last example involves deep learning and its ability to capture meaning. In the figure here, you can see how a deep learning model can map domain names into a semantic space. What is semantic space? It's kind of a mathematical map where similar meanings cluster together. This approach can improve universal acceptance, which means recognizing and supporting all domain names, including those using non-Latin scripts like Arabic, Chinese, or Cyrillic.

Because the model encoding means domains that refer to the same concept, even across languages, are positioned close together in this space. Meanwhile, malicious domains that imitate legitimate ones for phishing or deception appear further away. So, this model

can help handle internationalized domain name fairly while also strengthening defenses against homograph attacks.

That wraps up our three examples, security, performance, and inclusivity. Now we have seen what is possible. Let's turn to what it actually takes to enable this kind of intelligent learning DNS ecosystem. Next slide, please.

I bring this pyramid to make one point clear. Quality data is the foundation of everything. At the base, we have data. In the middle, on the top of that, we build models and from these models, we derive insights. So if the data isn't good, the rest collapses or as researchers always say, garbage in, garbage out. Having more data helps, but what really matters is about better data. So, what does better mean? This means well-structured, well-labeled, and also responsibly collected.

That's where organizations like ICANN can lead, by setting standards and promoting trustworthy, privacy-respecting data practices that make responsible AI possible. Without that foundation, the learning internet can't learn the right things. Next slide, please.

So, what do we actually need to make this vision of learning internet a reality? I bring up four key pillars that together build the foundation for trustworthy and effective use of AI in the DNS ecosystem. First, we need stakeholder collaboration between technical operations, researchers, governments, and service society because no single actor has the full picture. So, when this

perspective comes together, we can align technical innovation with public interest and build systems that are not only efficient, but also fair and accountable.

Second, we need to invest in research and education because AI is moving so fast and understanding how it affects core internet infrastructure always requires new expertise. We need academic and industrial research to test and validate these models and educational initiatives that help policymakers, regulators, and a broader community understand what is actually possible and what is not possible. Only then we can make informed, evidence-based decisions rather than reacting to hype or fears.

Third point, we need high-quality data. We need transparent data sharing frameworks. Clear standards for data quality and labeling and mechanisms that ensure privacy and security are respected from the start. If you get this right, we can unblock enormous value while maintaining trust and compliance. First, we need a sense of shared responsibility.

The DNS is part of the public corn of the internet so if we embed AI into that system, then remaining is integrity, openness, and reliability becomes a shared duty across all the stakeholders. Okay, let's put it simple. The DNS has always been about connection. Now it is also about learning too. Like make sure it learns the right licenses.

That concludes my talk for today. Thank you very much for your attention. I'm very happy to take questions and I will be glad to

continue the discussion if we do not have enough time during the coffee break or also later as well. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO Thank you. Hello, can you hear me? So, thank you very much, Hailan, for this. If you can go back one slide, please, Gulten. Before I open, and I see there's already a queue formed, I just wanted to mention that this is one of the topics that the concept of regional training centers, the first one coming from Latin America, as I mentioned yesterday, is heading towards. Research and education, and again, training in different tracks, the diplomatic training for the policymaking and all things related to policies in general. And also, the technical track for your technical teams, or in this case for Latin America technical teams.

We had very interesting talks with ICANN org, ICANN CEO Kurtis, and I'll be having some conversations with John Crane, ICANN CTO, and the participating governments from the Latin America region. It would be good if we had a couple of more regional initiatives like this. And again, not only for the benefit of the whole DNS ecosystem, but also and more importantly, for the security and stability of your own DNS infrastructures. So, I'll stop here and I'll open the floor for questions. I see India, Switzerland. India, please go ahead.

T. SANTHOSH

Thank you, Chair and it was a nice presentation, which alludes how AI would be helping the DNS and the DNS ecosystem. My question to you is, the data set which you have taken, is it a real data set or is it a dummy data set?

And the second question is, now what are the parameters you have taken while distinguishing? Because you had mentioned that during the machine learning there are processes like cleaning and all. So, have you put some value into it? Because one has to put zero, one, two, three and all, I mean, which is basically to identify whether it is a benign or a non-benign thing. How you put it did you use some other technology? Thank you.

HAILAN WANG

Thank you very much for the question. The data sets I bring up is an example. So, it might be a real one, but I created for better understanding and visualization. I think it's better to understand starting with some simple examples.

NICOLAS CABALLERO

Thank you for the question, India. There were actually no data sets, just concepts and the way the algorithms work, and the kind of, I don't know, linear regression or clustering. We were talking about that, you remember, during the last session, how a real-life problem could be explained in terms of single-variable linear regression, as we spoke before during the last session or

multivariable linear regression. But again, correct me if I'm wrong, but there were no data sets--

HAILAN WANG No.

NICOLAS CABALLERO -- actually implemented for this presentation. Thank you so much for the question, India. I have Switzerland next.

JORGE CANCIO Thank you. Jorge Cancio, Switzerland for the record. First, let me congratulate you for this very interesting presentation. I think we are seeing this in different registries, registrars, that they are considering the use of algorithmic systems for DNS abuse prevention, things like that. Just wanted to ask you if it's possible to disclose any examples you would think are noteworthy from ccTLDs or registries, registrars that are already implementing such measures? Thank you.

HAILAN WANG Thank you very much for your question. There are a lot of implementations of this kind of AI techniques and machine learning techniques are using already DNS abuse mitigation especially, for example, in phishing detection or also to do some forecasting. Like my example has showed, there are a lot of use cases and like I said, examples, I've referred that to the five types--

NICOLAS CABALLERO Classification would be one for sure. Random forest would be…

HAILAN WANG Yeah, okay. I want to refer to the five different types of ICANN defined mitigations. Abuse threats like botnets there are a lot of use cases. For example, with deep learning, you can also identify complicated patterns, and then to see patterns that we as humans could not detect or cannot easily find. Does this answer your questions?

NICOLAS CABALLERO I have Switzerland, and then Shiva. I don't know where Shiva is from, but anyways, I'll give the floor to the Netherlands. Going back to your question, Switzerland, I would say classification would be one, and random forest would be another technique suited for that. I mean, we can discuss that a little bit later in order not to get too technical, but yeah, those are two examples. I have Netherlands next.

MARCO HOGEWONING Well, sorry, that was just to draw your attention to a question that was asked by Qasim Pirzada in chat, where he asks how can AI and machine learning be effectively integrated into the DNS ecosystem to enhance security and prevent cyber threats? That was his question.

HAILAN WANG Thank you for the question. I think AI is a monitoring tool and we can additionally apply AI to existing trust models, like DNSSEC or other security models. AI will never replace the trust models I think for the decision, because AI doesn't make decisions, but it can help to monitor threats. The decision should be made by the human at the end so AI is kind of a tool that helps us to make decisions.

NICOLAS CABALLERO Thank you very much. I have two more questions and then we need to wrap up for the sake of time. I have Shiva Upadhyay. I don't know which country he or she is from.

SHIVA UPADHYAY Hello.

NICOLAS CABALLERO Would you please put your country name next to your name so that I can distinguish? And then I have the CTU. Shiva, please go ahead.

SHIVA UPADHYAY Sorry, I'm just an observer. Can I talk a little about--

NICOLAS CABALLERO India, right?

SHIVA UPADHYAY Yeah, India, but I'm not an alternative or GAC representative. I'm just an observer. In the capacity of an observer, can I ask the questions?

NICOLAS CABALLERO Go ahead.

SHIVA UPADHYAY If you allow. Yeah, I will take an analogy, maybe that fits here or not. I don't know. So, in the banking domain, they develop a lot of models to assess applicants at different levels. Application, behavior, scorecards, and different models they have. When the application comes at the registration level, they assess customer, whether it will be wise to give that kind of a customer loan or not.

The second type of model is behavior model, where they assess the customer how they are behaving, like all the registered domain name if we fit the analogy. How they are behaving, whether we need more investigation around this guy, whether we can increase the limit or not. And third type of model they develop for the regulations type [CROSSTALK – 00:32:52].

NICOLAS CABALLERO Sorry to interrupt you, but please get straight to the point. We're running out of time. What is your question?

SHIVA UPADHYAY Okay. So, in the case of domain, who is going to perform the regulation part? Because if we try to have a model like this, and all the other registrars and registry is going to implement these kinds of models, who is going to play the role of registrar in that scenario? Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO I don't really have an answer for that. It depends on the country. It depends on the administration. It depends on many different things. I don't have an answer for that, do you?

HAILAN WANG No.

SHIVA UPADHYAY Okay, no problem. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO I can take one more. As I said before, the CTU. Please go ahead, Shernon.

SHERNON OSEPA Yes, for the record, Shernon Osepa, Caribbean Telecommunications Union. First of all, thank you very much for your presentation. I think we are noticing some great disparities with respect to what is happening with AI in the global north and global south. So coming from the development world, especially

small island development states, Caribbean in this particular case, I would like to know how can we also take full advantage of the AI developments that we are seeing globally? Thank you.

HAILAN WANG

Thank you so much for the question. As I said in my presentation, data is the foundation and the quality of data is the foundation for decision making. I think it's very important to be aware of unbalanced data collection. So, we should start to think about from data collection and then the analyzing process and then at the end the decision-making process that we have more diverse data and also more balanced data.

I will also say, we should also promote open access to AI tools and methods that we use. So, everybody should have access to the AI use, keywords, more transparency, also open source. I think that will make the innovation more efficient and more inclusive. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO

And we have time for one more question. I'll give you the last one, Colombia. Please keep it short and sweet.

THIAGO DAL-TOE

Thank you so much, Nico. Thiago Dal-Toe for the record. Given the influence on core infrastructure like the DNS, I'm here by the way, what are the most pressing governance questions that we need to

address to ensure that its use of AI in the DNS system remains safe, stable, and aligned with our multi-stakeholder model?

HAILAN WANG: Thank you for the question. I think it's really important to have shared norms also regarding transparency, privacy and security. As I said in the presentation, I think cooperation is always the key, right? So, we need more collaboration and better cooperation. Everybody's welcome can be heard so we can complement each other with our strengths and weaknesses. I think with more collaboration and also education and shared norm, we can achieve a better future. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Thank you so very much and that's all we have time for. Let's give a big round of applause to Hailan.

HAILAN WANG: Thank you so much.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Thank you so much. You can stay with us, Hailan, for the next session. More than welcome. I'll give you the floor for that, Marco. Let's welcome our next guests.

MARCO HOGEWONING Let's welcome our next guests. Now I can't actually see who we all have here, Sebastien, but yes, thank you. Sorry.

NICOLAS CABALLERO I do know Sebastien and Steve, of course. All right, you'll do the intro. Okay.

MARCO HOGEWONING I'll let Sebastien introduce his team and himself, but just to remind everybody that this was in response to some things raised in Prague, that there was a definite need, and we have to recognize there is many very new GAC colleagues amongst us.

To look into the basics, how does a PDP work and how can the GAC members effectively participate in the PDP as volunteers? I hope that this answers all your questions. I also hope that this can serve as an inspiration for GAC members to become more active. We've got a couple of PDPs starting. So, thank you, Sebastien. Thank you for the GNSO to take time out and educate us. The floor is all yours.

SEBASTIEN DUCOS Thank you, Marco. My name is Sebastien Ducos, and I am the GNSO liaison to the GAC. You'll see me a bit later this afternoon because we have a bilateral. I've come with two friends of mine who are from ICANN staff on the support team for the GNSO, with Caitlin Tubergen and Steve Chan, who I have been working with for many years and actually know what they're talking about, so it's going to

be great. I don't have much other introductions to do. Maybe we can go to the first topic. Steve, you can take it.

STEVE CHAN Thanks very much, Sebastien, and thanks for having us. Again, my name is Steve Chan. I'm the VP for GNSO support here at ICANN. We are actually going to go to the section one slide, please. The idea here is, we have about 35 minutes, it's not a ton of time. We're going to do a preview of what the GNSO does. I'd say it's maybe the 10,000, maybe even the 100,000-foot level and we want to make sure we leave the time for questions. So if it's lacking a bit of detail, that's why. First slide, please.

This first slide talks about what consensus policy is. We are emphasizing this because this is sort of the core of what the GNSO does and there's two elements to this. There are ICANN accredited registrars and there are registries, and they have requirements that are captured in the contracts. So, those contracts can be amended through bilateral negotiations between the contracted parties and ICANN.

The part that is maybe more significant to this group is about consensus policies. So, this is a pretty unique situation, I think, generally speaking. You have this ability to have bilateral contract negotiations, but in addition, the registries and the registrars can have new requirements imposed on them via the development of consensus policies adopted by ICANN. And so, then the question becomes, how do you go about developing new consensus policy

recommendations? That is where the policy development process comes in.

These consensus policy recommendations that are developed through the bottom-up multi-stakeholder model in the context of the policy development process. And like I said, it's a pretty unique requirement or a unique arrangement where these contracted parties can have new requirements imposed on them by the multi-stakeholder model. Next slide, please.

This is what we colloquially or conversationally call the picket fence. Because of that unique arrangement where new requirements can be imposed on the contracted parties by the policy development process, there needs to be restrictions, essentially, or limitations. And so, these limitations, they're captured in the bylaws. It references it on this slide. It's Annex G-1 and G-2. It's at the very end of the bylaws and it's about ensuring the stability and security of the DNS.

It's there in place so that there are no inappropriate or unexpected requirements put upon the registries and registrars. It's essentially a safety net or lane to ensure that consensus policy is developed in the right way. Next slide, please.

This slide, the intention here is really to give a sense of what the GNSO Council is constituted of. I don't know if folks have maybe seen an older version of this presentation a few years ago. There's probably 12 slides on this, so it's condensed into a much smaller piece here, but the core responsibility of the GNSO is to develop

and recommend to the board substantive policies relating to generic top-level domains. The GNSO has the sole responsibility to develop policies as it relates to gTLDs.

The council itself, they are the manager of this policy development process. They are built of a number of constituent parts. There are four stakeholder groups and then within some of these stakeholder groups, there are a further set of additional constituencies. So, there are a lot of different parties and a lot of different interests represented within the genus. I think I touched on the last part, which is the remit, and council is their responsibilities to manage the PDP. Next slide, please.

This last part, I'm sort of touching on it, that left part of it about the structure of the GNSO. This is a little bit more detail on the nature of those different stakeholder groups and constituencies. You can see those on the slide, but I think the other important part here on the right side is that it's not limited to just the GNSO that can participate in PDPs.

A big reason why we are speaking to you is to make sure that you're all aware that the GAC has a role to play in PDPs. And so, you can see that the GAC, the ALAC, the ccNSO, and all the different parts, the SOs and ACs within ICANN, they all have a role to play in PDPs.

I make this point, it's probably obvious when you have this many different groups and constituencies and interests, it means that consensus building is a challenging thing. Trying to get everyone on the same page to agree to new requirements that will be

imposed on the registries and registrars, we like to think of it as a feature, not a bug. It's difficult, but it's a worthwhile pursuit to get to the end where everyone's aligned on what these new requirements can be.

So that is the very, very, very high-level explanation of the GNSO Council and then their role as the manager of the PDP. So back over to you, Seb. Thanks.

SEBASTIEN DUCOS: Thank you. Next slide, please. Actually, you can go ahead.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Sebastien, before we move on, let me check if there are questions from the floor on the structure, organization, or components. Anything you would like to ask at this point as regarding the GNSO? We're good? I don't see any hand, online, so back to you. Thank you. I just wanted to give them a chance.

SEBASTIEN DUCOS: Absolutely. Thank you. Thank you very much. I just wanted to describe the points of interaction that we have through the PDP process and we'll look and broadline that process and then Caitlin will go in more details about it. Next slide, please.

We have different points of interaction and actually, let's go there. The first point of interaction is the liaison. We have established liaison. I am the GNSO liaison to your group. There are two people

from your group that are liaisons to us. Manal from Egypt. I'm not seeing her. Oh, there she is. Sorry, the light in front of me is very bright. Manal and Rita from Canada are co-liaising. It used to be only one liaison the previous time, but that works well.

We have then the bilaterals, like we will have later in this afternoon. Capacity sessions like today, and I'd like to be able to find in everybody's busy agenda also more time for that intersessionally in order to help you get up to speed with everything that's happening because things seem to move slowly, but they move and need to be updated with. Yeah.

NICOLAS CABALLERO We have one hand from Egypt. Okay, go ahead. Sorry for interrupting.

SEBASTIEN DUCOS I think Manal was just saying hello. Last is the GAC advice, or actually the GAC communique. On a regular interval, after every ICANN, you produce a communique. In that communique, there is potentially advice, which the GNSO has to respond to and elaborate on for the board to consider. But also, topics of interest that actually shared with us, where you may ask questions about what we're doing, how we're doing it, and we try to respond in the best possible way. Next slide.

It was actually suggested to me in June to print a T-shirt to wear to present to you guys. Caitlin will go into a lot more detail than I

have, this process for the PDP both explains all the steps that we're going through and where you can interact in it and where the GAC and the rest of the community can interact and where we're invited.

It also explains, to a certain extent, the seemingly slow pace of processes in this organization because at every step we want to hear about the community. We want to hear about the different delegates from the community and to our working groups. We want to hear through public comments, and you'll see for every process there is step, public comments, sent to this group, sent to that group, verify and et cetera, to make sure that we're doing things in full transparency. That everybody has constantly the ability to interact, to intervene, to question and et cetera.

So, I'm not going to go into the details. Caitlin will do much better job than I do, but again, if I need to print a T-shirt with this for the next sessions, I'm happy to do it. In any case, come to us if you have questions. Next slide. The Z--

NICOLAS CABALLERO Hold on, just one second, and sorry to interrupt you again, but we do have a question from Egypt. So, let's give Egypt the floor. Go ahead, please, Manal.

MANAL ISMAIL Thank you, Nico. It's not a question and thank you, Sebastien. I'm here.

SEBASTIEN DUCOS No, no, I can see you. It's just that light it's right in front of me.

MANAL ISMAIL So just to stress what you mentioned on the previous slide, before the Z-shaped thing, ongoing and early engagement of not only GAC colleagues, I mean, but all the community would be definitely very welcomed and encouraged so that any divergence in views or any concerns are taken care of and taken into consideration and a smooth conclusion of the PDP would be in place.

In addition to the non-PDP things you've already listed, Sebastien, I would also add your good suggestion of putting the topic leads of both constituencies in direct contact. You have already suggested this, and we've been putting topic leads from both constituencies in direct contact, and I would say it's working great so far. So, I'll leave it at this. Thank you.

SEBASTIEN DUCOS Thank you for mentioning. I was going to mention it, but thank you for proceeding this. Indeed, in our meetings in January, the GNSO has a meeting, a sort of a gathering just to prepare for the coming year. Well, I proposed, but we agreed that we would establish bridges between our working groups, small teams, PDPs and other working groups and the equivalent, the topics, groups that you have internally on who is on accuracy, on other topics. Which I started doing in March for the topics that were already ongoing on

our side. We started two new small teams in May and I established this bridge.

Right now, the only thing that we have is an email share. People know who each other is. I don't think there has been much of a conversation happening. Part specifically on the topic of internet governance, and I see Anna just in front of me here, because this year with WSIS and everything, there was a lot of conversations. But it's the only topic where that conversation really went into much depth.

I'd like to encourage that and I will work with you, with Manal, with Rita, and the topic leads, again, intercessionally, that we don't wait for the bilateral to find out what each other are doing. That we're not surprising each other, that we're hearing each other early on in order not to create any sort of false expectations or misunderstandings. But we'll work on that topic in progress, and thank you, Manal, for bringing it back together. So, two slides down.

So how can you interact formally? What we were just discussing with the topic leads, that's more on the informal side, but informally you have a number of tools that are here. Maybe you're going to discuss this more in detail. So, then I'll go.

You can request an issues report. The GNSO will, and with the help of staff, produce a report on whatever topic work in the GNSO. You have what is called a quick look mechanism. This is when we're issuing a preliminary report, and this just happened on the topic of

DNS abuse, you have the ability to raise your hand early on before the report is submitted and published to make sure, again, that we're not surprising you. That nothing in there is going to cause alarm and all the way to your possible advice.

Then obviously, as you will have seen in the Z graph, at regular interval, there is public comments and we've strongly encouraged public comments. We've received public comments. I've been managing an RDRS topic for now a few years. There's a report that is about to be issued. You submitted comments to this, and it's very, very valuable. It's important, and we want to hear about it.

There is also, not in this slide, and I'm not quite sure what the next slide is. I don't want to preempt it either. I thought it was the last one. Maybe the next one. There is, yeah, participation in the PDPs.

The PDPs are not just in the GNSO thing and not just the GNSO account. It's the whole community. I have to commend particularly the PSWG, for example, who's been for years participating in our PDPs on everything that has to do with registration data and it's fantastic help. It brings your point of view, PSWG being largely law enforcement, it may be very biased there, but it is still government point of view and find it absolutely valuable. I know that Gabriel Andrews is not here now, but if he's listening, hi, tremendous support.

Again, requests for early input, we've seen that in the last year with the Latin diacritics. As far as government is concerned, we're able to give their point of view and make sure that we weren't charting

work that we think wasn't going to work for everybody. Sorry, I'm getting lost here. Yeah, again, public comments, intervening, raise your hand, all of this is very welcome and participation.

This community and our work is in dire need of more hands, more help and your help early and your points of view early are, not only very welcome, but absolutely useful and indispensable to us getting that work done. I think that's my last slide. Caitlin, it's all yours.

CAITLIN TUBERGEN

Thank you, Sebastien, and hello, everyone. My name is Caitlin Tubergen, and as Seb noted, I help support the GNSO on the policy team. I'm going to talk a little bit about the theme of the timing for the policy development process, because I know one of the concerns that we've heard from the GAC and others in the community is that the PDP process takes a long time. So, I'm going to talk a little bit about that. You've already seen this graphic, the Z graphic or the Z graphic, which apparently Sebastien's going to be putting on a T-shirt so we'll go to the next slide.

This slide endeavors to break down the bylaws mandated PDP steps. You'll see that they're color coded. So, all of these steps appear in the bylaws. The steps that appear in red have timing periods that are mandated in the bylaws. And so, there are public comment opportunities, and thank you again to the GAC for participating in the public comments, where the GAC will have an opportunity and others to comment on a PDP working group's

initial report as well as their final report. Those time periods are in the bylaws.

In the bylaws, it's 30 days each. Based on feedback from the community we've heard that's not enough time and so we have a standard of a 40-day public comment period. As you can see with those time periods, the time starts to add up.

Also on this slide, there are the average time periods associated with each of these bylaws mandated steps. The two green portions, the initial report and the final report, you'll notice that those are variable because those periods are highly variable. But we'll talk about some opportunities to shorten the time associated with creating an initial and a final report. If we can go to the next slide.

This slide shows how variable the timeline is in a PDP. So, you'll see that some of the recent PDPs have been very long and just to be clear, this is from when the council initiates a PDP to when the board votes on the PDP. This doesn't include implementation of those recommendations, but you can see the shortest example on this slide, which the GAC participated in was the phase one of the EPDP temporary specification.

The longest on this slide is the subsequent procedures PDP. That was in part because there was an added step onto that PDP of this operational design phase, but there's reasons that some are shorter and some are longer.

We've had a lot of lessons learned as we've gone through these PDPs, but one thing to point out for the long ones that you're seeing, particularly the rights protection mechanisms and the subsequent procedures, those PDPs had a very large scope and a lot of questions to answer, as well as very large working groups, which contributed in part to these long timelines. If we can go to the next slide.

This is the opportunity to shorten those timelines and some of the things that we've learned over time can help reduce the duration of a PDP. So, the first factor is meeting frequency. When the community sees that there's an issue of importance and wants to move quickly, we can move more quickly if the groups meet more frequently.

Also, we've seen that dedicated face-to-face time is an important component in shortening the time frame of a PDP. Of course, this requires resources, both budget resources as well as the ability for people to leave their jobs and home life and come discuss these issues outside of ICANN conferences. We've also seen success with the use of external facilitation, particularly for some of the more contentious issues that groups discuss.

And I think the most important note on this slide is the last factor, which is the narrow scoping of the issue. If the PDP is scoped narrowly and it's tailored to address key issues that are likely to achieve consensus, the work can move more quickly. Next slide, please.

This is the example of the EPDP phase one timeline of how the group held its first meeting in August, and the board voted on the report in May. It was nine months, but there were some trade-offs with that timeline, which I'll discuss next. Next slide, please.

What did it take for the group to get from first meeting to board voting on final report in that short time frame? Sorry, next slide, please. Yeah, thank you. The first was that group had two two-hour plenary meetings per week at minimum. They also had some small team work tracks that were meeting in addition. They had two dedicated face-to-face meetings that were two and a half days outside of the ICANN face-to-face meeting time. Importantly, that group was working with an external deadline. In other words, they had to complete their work due to this expiration of the temporary specification.

And as I noted, there were also some separate work tracks, small teams working on dedicated issues. I'll also note that these plenary meetings, which I think the GAC reps that participated in this group can attest to, those groups were meeting and having constituency prep meetings to prep for the plenary meeting, so there was a lot of meeting time. And then lastly, that group had external facilitators to assist in getting the group to consensus, as well as access to legal counsel.

So, on the right hand of the slide were some of the trade-offs of having that fast of a timeline. As noted, a lot of increased volunteer hours. Some of the reps that participated in that group felt very

burnt out from all of that meeting time. Additional resources were needed for the face-to-face. As I noted, that was volunteer time as well as budget to make that happen.

An important thing to note is that, while the group reached its policy recommendations in a relatively short time, comparatively speaking, the time to implement those recommendations was not short. In fact, one of the recommendations still is not fully implemented and that was in part because some of the recommendations, for example, one of the recommendations that GAC might be familiar with, left certain things to implementation. And so, they were moving at that really fast speed under that external deadline so they weren't able to make all the agreements in the policy phase, which made implementation more complicated.

Also, the group went in knowing that achieving a consensus is challenging. Steve mentioned that earlier in his presentation. That's a feature, not a bug, that comprises necessary in the multi-stakeholder model.

Then lastly, I'll note that when the community decides to prioritize a certain topic, it impacts other work in the portfolio. So, if there's a certain topic the group wants to move very quickly on, the community has to say no, be disciplined about saying no to other work because there isn't enough resources to make all of the work happen. So, if something's going to move quite quickly and have all of these additional meetings to move things and the things

needed on the left-hand side to make things move quickly, there are other impacts.

I think that's all of my slides on timing. So, I'll pass over to Nico to see if there's any questions.

NICOLAS CABALLERO: Thank you so much. Indeed, we do have a hand up from Switzerland. Please go ahead.

JORGE CANCIO: Thank you, Nico. Jorge Cancio, Switzerland, for the record. I'm not sure if this is the right time, but the presentation and also the meeting we had today on DNS abuse certainly raised some thoughts in my head.

The PDP looks very much like a very traditional, sequential waterfall model of doing things, which might have had some sense 15 years ago, but nowadays we are working in a very different way, even in governments where we achieve, for instance, new laws on AI or new international treaties on AI, just to give an example in question in a matter of months or in a matter of one or two years.

And if I think about the SubPro PDP where I participated, it was seven years of policymaking and we are still in the implementation. So how many years is that? It's about 10 years. I know this is well above many of the people's pay grade on the podium. I think we

need to have this conversation. We need to really think about this, how to introduce new ways of working together.

I think, for instance, the DNS abuse session today was a very good example of where we may go, having less sequential and more common discussions, really interacting actively and trying to solve things as quickly as possible. Also, by trial-and-error method where we allow ourselves to make mistakes if it's not in really vital issues. So, that's one reflection I wanted to share with you.

In the end, complexity. We see this set, and I need new glasses definitely, but I cannot read what's in the set from here, it's super complicated. Complexity kills openness and inclusion and meaningful participation. Only those with very heavy resources and defined interests are able to participate. That's why it's very difficult for my colleagues here and even for a rich country like Switzerland to actively participate in such PDPs.

So, that also leads me to the reflection of, not only trying out more innovative methods, but also overthinking the current waterfall method also in terms of simplicity of really focusing on the policy questions that we have to solve and accepting that implementation details must be given really to GAC or to GAC in a real IRT, which doesn't duplicate the policy discussion.

Just to finalize, and sorry for being so long, I would like to draw your attention to the Sao Paulo multistakeholder guidelines. It would

be nice to map or assess this Z in light of the process steps of those guidelines and see what we get as a result. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO Thank you so much for that, Switzerland. I just want to make sure I give the opportunity to all other GAC members to ask questions or comments or suggest. I have the USA next and then Netherlands. Please, USA, go ahead.

SUSAN CHALMERS Thank you, Chair. Susan Chalmers, United States. Adding new strings to the internet will increase the surface area for phishing and other types of DNS abuse, and that's why the United States has been pressing for sound and effective policies for these new gTLDs ex ante before that happens.

So timing, I can't agree more with my colleague from Switzerland on the length of the PDP process. Though I do also want to appreciate this presentation because it really has helped set a baseline for understanding. I think the question here and how we move forward is how can this be enhanced, improved, streamlined? Simplicity is key. So just wanted to add that as well. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO Thank you, USA. Sebastien, because I have Netherlands next, would you…?

SEBASTIEN DUCOS Let's have all the questions together.

NICOLAS CABALLERO All right. Netherlands, please go ahead.

MARCO HOGEWONING Thank you. Well, I'll try to be a bit briefer than what Jorge said. This is all about timing indeed and I'm happy to see some progress. I agree with Switzerland, there is plenty of more I think we can do to notwithstanding the process, see if it shortens.

I'm happy to see that people are still here, that you haven't scared them away by showing how long this will take. And that kind of also brings me to the point I'm making, and that's probably less to the GNSO. No matter what we try, no matter how much effort we put in, in trying to shorten timelines, work smarter, not harder, this takes an incredible amount of resources. We often reach out as leadership also to the GAC mailing list looking for volunteers and it would really help us if we can broaden the pool of those people and guides.

I know some of you spent a lot of time and then the PSWG especially was mentioned, there are also a couple of people who are not in the room who spend a lot of time on the PDP on behalf of the GAC. So, this is more a call out to you all as GAC members is, we do. As they've shown, there's plenty of ways for us to interact with

this process at various steps and wholeheartedly encourage you to make use of this.

GAC advice is not the only way to influence things here in ICANN, so more my question to you is please reach out if you think you have a bit of spare time, you are interested, find us or find the people in the GNSO and participate in this process. Thank you.

SEBASTIEN DUCOS

So, this is Sebastien Ducos again. To the timelines, and maybe we should go one slide down, there are things that are mandated. It's clear on the screen, if you start adding the mandated portions of this, so everything is not green, it already takes the better part of a year to get from the beginning to the end without having done any work. That's by law. These are things that we can discuss together, but these are not things that we can change on our own. These are steps there to make sure that everybody gets their voice.

Now, maybe we sped up life with AI and these sorts of things to prepare a response, and we are able to do in a week things that we wanted four weeks to do, but all in all, we can reduce these things if everybody's agreed to it, but let's talk about it.

In terms of, what is marked here, the initial and the final report, let's talk about DNS abuse, for example. Everybody has an opinion on it. I have opinions on it too. Very few of us in this community have work experience, have actual hands-on experience to be able to have an objective view and be able to discuss these things. We

need to have these discussions, but there's very, very few people actually that do the work that are here.

I'm not talking about the fact that in any given group in this community you'll have some locomotives, you'll have some individuals that are a lot more active than others. We all have day jobs. We all have different jobs and this is not my job. I have another job at home. This is my pastime and we're all a bit in that situation.

On topics like DNS abuse, there's only very few people actually in this community that day-to-day because they do the work, they know what they're talking about. Which means that we can paralyze, we can do all these things, but it's always going to be the same 10, 20 individuals that are going to be responsible for different tracks of the same work, different tracks of the same implementation afterwards.

We've only talked about the GNSO because we're GNSO. There is, next slide, on the timeline, for example, of the very short EPP phase one, it's less than a year for PDP, five years for implementation. There were children that were born at implementation and went to school before we were finished because there were so many stones not turned during the PDP. So, we need to take all that into account when we create our expectations of going faster.

Yes, the world is developing faster, but there's only so many few people that are able to spend that much time, and they have day

jobs of their own. They're also doing this on the little spare time that they're able to do.

So, I would like actually to bring this topic in January. We will have, as I said, a GNSO retreat as a topic to look into. There will be new management, a new chair of the GNSO. I'm very happy to bring that sort of topic back to them. I think it is very topical. I think that we've heard the community wanting to do these things faster, but I need to set expectations here.

Again, the number of people that are experts in these fields and able to really discuss these problems and not leave stones so unturned that it takes us years to implement, they're few and far between.

NICOLAS CABALLERO Thank you so much for that, Sebastien. I have one last requirement for the floor. USA, please go ahead.

SUSAN CHALMERS Thank you. Just a suggestion for future sessions on this topic, especially capacity development sessions for GAC representatives, that PDP processes and the implementation processes be discussed together. Because I think we're only seeing one part of the picture here and it's taking a bird's eye view of the whole process from beginning to end of developing a policy and seeing it reflected in the agreements at ICANN. I think that would be of interest to governments. Thank you.

SEBASTIEN DUCOS Excellent suggestion, but then in terms of organizing, we then need to invite staff that looks after the IRT. It is not GNSO and that's why we didn't want to speak to it.

NICOLAS CABALLERO Let me add something. Thank you for that, Sebastien. Before we wrap up, I really think we have like an original sin kind of situation here. That original sin being… If you can go to the Z, there we go. If we do simple math, you don't need to be an engineer or anything, but a best-case scenario there would be 32 months if everything goes well, right? There are 16 steps, let's say, and from two to four months for each step. Simple math, right? So, we're talking about 32 months if everything goes incredibly well, everyone agrees, everything's fantastic, or 64 months.

Even though governments work in a top-down fashion, so to say, but we also go through a multi-stakeholder process called elections in democratic countries, every two years, every four years, congressional, presidential elections, and so on and so forth. So, if I go and tell my president, "Yeah, if we need to decide between," and I always give this example, "tea or coffee, yeah, come back. We'll have a report after 10 months if you see the process there." So, after 10 months, we produce the first report. Okay, we'll drink Irish coffee after and we'll have a report in that regard.

I know it's a ridiculous example, but the original sin concept is, and this is my humble opinion, we need to do something in that regard. Maybe the problem is precisely the bylaws mandated PDP steps. I'm just saying this as the GAC chair. Of course, we need consensus and our own processes for that, but I really think this is important because of that original sin. I'm sorry to use religious terms for this, but I'm not very good at giving examples. Go ahead. I have Steve, and then Sebastien.

STEVE CHAN

Thanks, Nico. This is Steve Chan again from staff. Maybe to close this out on a slightly positive and optimistic note, the slide that showed the average timelines for different PDPs and especially that New gTLD one that shows seven years, all of that represents opportunities for learnings. And so, what I want to make sure that we all know is that we have recognized that that is far too long for a PDP to take. That is unacceptable.

And so, what we tried to do is put a number of different improvements into the process so that you can get closer and maybe not hit the EPDP Temp Spec P1 every time, but closer to that. My optimistic plea here is that the DNS abuse PDP hopefully represents opportunity for us to be able to do something that people appreciate, it gets to a good conclusion, results in something that makes a meaningful difference. So, optimism. Thanks.

NICOLAS CABALLERO Thank you so much, Steve. Sorry for going over time. Sebastien?

SEBASTIEN DUCOS Just one thing. When you're doing work and you're full-time, it's 40 hours a week. Our volunteer hours are at best four-hour weeks. That's the reality of having volunteers participating.

NICOLAS CABALLERO Thank you so much for that. Understood, Sebastien. So maybe the system is wrong. Maybe there are some changes to be-- We're not here to tell the GNSO what to do, by no means, right? We're just saying that we do have to deal with-- Seven years, try explaining that to your minister or your president, so that would create a political problem. We don't have time for that. As a matter of fact, we'll be meeting the GNSO Council right after our coffee break. Sorry for going six minutes over time.

Thank you so much, Steve, Sebastien, and Caitlin. Thank you so very much. Let's give a big round of applause to our colleagues. Thank you. We'll reconvene at 3:00 p.m. Enjoy your coffee break.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]