
ICANN85 Mumbai | CF – Joint Session: ASO and RSSAC
Sunday, March 8, 2026 – 16:30 to 17:30 IST

OZAN SAHIN SAHIN

Hello, and welcome to the joint meeting between the Address Supporting Organization and the Root Server System Advisory Committee. My name is Ozan, and I'm a participation manager for this session. Please note that this session is being recorded and is governed by the ICANN Commit to Participant Code of Conduct, ICANN Expected Standards of Behavior, and ICANN Anti-Harassment Policy. Please observe the following guidelines to participate in this session. I will also post them in the chat for your reference. Only questions posted in the Q&A pod will be read aloud during this session as time permits and when directed by the chair of the session. If you wish to speak, please raise your hand in Zoom or otherwise as directed. When speaking, please state your name for the record and speak clearly at a moderate pace. I will now hand the floor over to Jeff Osborn.

JEFF OSBORN

Thank you, Ozan. I'd like to thank you all. It's an honor to have our friends and colleagues from the ASO here, and I know I've been looking forward to this presentation for a while. So, without further ado, let's just hand it off. This will be interesting.

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HERVÉ CLÉMENT

Thank you, Jeff. This session is one of numerous joint sessions with the different organizations of ICANN. I will say that with you it's specific because you are from the technical part. You have followed our work for a while. There is a connection between your work and our work. Also, you have a Vice Chair, as I can imagine, who knows the governance system somehow.

We are here, the ASO AC. To be non-polite, I will start with myself, Hervé Clément, the chair of the ASO AC. Amy Potter and Esteban Lescano are the Vice Chairs, and we are very happy to have Jero, who is the chair of the NRO EC this year. We are here to speak about the update of the ICP-2. It's a document and the principles behind the document which could be important for you as well because we can have a common discussion or interacting discussion between us. This presentation is about the work we are performing for the ASO AC. You can go to the next slide.

I don't know if it is very necessary to repeat what we do in terms of the ASO AC council. We oversee the global policy. A global policy is a policy which is common to all the regions dealing with the distribution of resources from the IANA to the different regions. We appoint the members of the board and somebody to the Nominating Committee. This year, the main work we will have to do for an additional year will be the review about ICP-2. We will start the election of the seat of the ICANN board at the end of the year. You can go to the next slide.

We are here, and you will be happy enough to see twelve out of the current thirteen members of the ASO AC here. Only Ricardo Patara could not go on site, even if he wanted to. You can go to the next slide. There was a part when Jero presented something, but I don't know if you want to add one or two words or not.

JIA-RONG LOW

Thank you. To introduce myself, some of you may not have met me before. My name is Jero. I'm the CEO for APNIC. I joined APNIC in October 2024, so I'm relatively new. I think we did have a session together in Istanbul when I was there, but Hans Petter Holen was the chair at the time for NRO EC. So this year I'm rotated in as the chair for NRO EC. You'll see me at all the ICANN meetings. For the other sessions earlier, we did have slides to talk about what RIRs are and what our role is, but I think your group is the only one we don't have to cover this for. So unless you ask for it, then I will talk about it, but otherwise, I think we dive straight in.

JEFF OSBORN

I think we're okay.

HERVÉ CLÉMENT

Excellent. Thank you, Jero. We can go to the work we have performed until then regarding the ICP-2 review. For that, you can go to the next slide. Just a piece of history, but one more time, you know the history of the Regional Internet Registries: ICANN was not established first; the first one was the RIPE NCC. Via the ICP-2,

which is a document adopted in 2001, this document served to establish LACNIC and AFRINIC. This document is by definition a quarter of a century old. Life has changed since then. It was necessary to update it. The other issue with the document, because ICP-2 is a list of criteria to recognize, establish, or create a Regional Internet Registry, this document, if we update it, needs to be used to audit and survey how a Regional Internet Registry goes, and in an extreme situation, having the possibility to derecognize a Regional Internet Registry also. Next slide, please.

For the different reasons I mentioned before, the NRO EC asked us in October 2023 to work on two tasks specifically. First, to review the implementation procedures. It was a draft provided by the NRO EC, and it was our task to review this draft. The goal of this draft is to use the criteria for the ongoing life of a Regional Internet Registry and to see if they are compliant with these different criteria. The most important one, which we have worked on since the beginning of 2024, is to update and strengthen the ICP-2. The idea of this work is to strengthen the governance as a whole. You can go to the next slide.

Just to see that we have done a lot of work until today. We are now at the final review, which is a blue rectangle, and we hope and it's our goal to complete this work before the end of this year. You can go to the next one. That is the list if you want to read the slide, so you have details of what we have proceeded with so far. I won't go through that, but you can go to the next one.

We have completed the first step, which is the proposed principle, because we started with a list of core principles which will serve after as a basis for the drafting of the governance document. You can go to the next one. You have a first QR code. It's a joke I do every presentation, so I think my colleagues are totally fed up with that. The first QR code can make you reach this document, which is the list of the core principles. What is very important is that we have performed consultations. We have performed in total three consultations within the two years. The reason for that is that the community is key for the adoption and the legitimacy of the document we want to draft. From the very beginning and from this very document, which are the core principles, we went through consultation through the different regions and through ICANN as well. I'm sure that you responded to the first one at the very beginning as the RSSAC. We analyzed the different inputs. The first consultation was held between October and December 2024. We analyzed the different answers.

If you go to the next slide, there were issues and some concern about this document. This concern, held by the different communities, helped us to draft the version one of the governance document. There was a question about the clarification of the role of the community or the different communities. There were questions about the definitions of the process for recognition and derecognition. It was new, so it was totally normal that the different communities asked questions about that. You can go to the next slide.

With that, we were able to draft the version one of the Regional Internet Registry governance document, which is a completed version. You can go to the next one. Another QR code, but the ongoing, unjoking and boring one. This QR code is to access version one of the drafting document. This document clarifies the scope and the lifecycle management, formalizes governance structures, and strengthens operational requirements. Next one.

Yes, QR codes. The first one is to go to the outputs and the answer from the regions regarding the consultation held between April and May 2025. It was a consultation about the version one of the document. The second QR code is to read the answer regarding ICANN. This time the first QR code is to read the report of the different answers we had from the communities also. Next one.

With that, we are able to draft version two of the Regional Internet Registry governance document. Next slide. Key changes compared to the version one include a little change about the title and another thing which is important because we noticed that among the different questions we had from the different communities, there were questions out of scope of the document we had. So it was important to add a preamble to the document to say specifically what the scope is and what we are working on. We have some exercises and some discussion about the implementation procedures, recognition, derecognition, and audits. When I give the floor to Amy and Esteban, they will speak about audits, for

example, because it's something which is still under open discussion.

There is a point about emergency continuity because if a Regional Internet Registry is unable to perform its services for one reason or another, there is a process to put in place for that. You can go to the next one. QR code this time to go to version two. Next slide. To help the communities and everybody to read the version two of the document, we added a document which is a Red Line of Change. We clearly show the differences between version two compared to version one. If you go to the next one with another QR code, we have created a document that explains when we made each of those changes. Next one.

You can complete your collection of QR codes with the different answers from the third consultation and the first consultation, which were held between August and November 2025. There are outputs from the region community, outputs from the ICANN community, and the report reproduced regarding the different answers we had and regarding the version two of the Regional Internet Registry governance document. Next slide, please. And where we are now, it will be my pleasure to give the floor to Amy this time.

AMY POTTER

Hi. Next slide. All right, so following the third consultation, we met as a group in Montevideo to go over all of the feedback that we received during that process and address those issues for our next

version. We put together a status report that we've published that includes an outline of what are the open issues that we are still discussing and what are the issues that we have closed, have enough direction on, and are moving forward to drafting the language around those issues. So I'll go over the open issues now, or the in-progress issues. Next slide.

Here we are in the timeline, coming towards the end of it. As Hervé mentioned, we're hoping to finish up this year. Next slide. And one more QR code for you for our latest status report. Next slide.

The topics in progress. I guess the first of these has to do with the process for recognizing a new RIR. When a candidate RIR submits a proposal to be brought into the RIR system, if the existing RIRs do not unanimously recommend recognition of the new candidate RIR, the candidate RIR can basically submit an appeal to ICANN, who will then review the recommendations that the RIRs made. If it turns out that any of the RIRs are determined to have made a substantial error of fact or provided inadequate justification, then it goes back to the RIRs to consider again.

One issue that is still currently being re-reviewed related to that is when ICANN is involved in this sort of reviewer appeal process, whether or not we're going to have ICANN use an independent third party to do that review, or whether or not ICANN wants to do that in-house themselves. The current status on that is we're just getting some clarity and feedback from ICANN on which route they would prefer there. Next slide.

A similar issue that comes up within that same process of a new candidate RIR applying to be recognized is that after ICANN or the independent third party conducts that review on appeal, and if they do determine that one of the RIR's recommendations not to accept the candidate RIR was based on a material error of fact or they provided inadequate justification, the current version says that it goes back to the RIRs to reconsider in light of the feedback given by either ICANN or the independent third party. If they make another recommendation, and at that point, if all of the other RIRs except for one, so unanimity minus one occurs, then the process can move forward and that candidate RIR can be brought into the system there. Technically, it goes to the next stage where ICANN does its review. But they're able to move past the initial rejection based on unanimity, with unanimity minus one following this appeal process.

Right now, we're considering the issue of whether or not there might be a conflict of interest issue that occurs at that point. Anytime a new candidate RIR comes into the fold, necessarily they will be taking some portion of the geographic region of an existing RIR, and that might create a conflict of interest there. We're considering different approaches to deal with that to make sure that there is a fair decision that can be made that isn't overwhelmed by the conflict. Next slide.

Another separate issue that we are considering right now is that during both the derecognition process and a separate process that we have for ad hoc audits, both the ad hoc audit process and the

derecognition process can be initiated by three different parties. It can be initiated by an RIR or a group of RIRs, it can be initiated by ICANN, or it can be initiated by the members of the concerned RIR. We're talking about here still what the threshold should be for those situations, and whether we should have a lower threshold for initiating an ad hoc audit than we have for initiating derecognition, because derecognition is a more serious outcome. We've received a variety of comments about whether or not we should lower the threshold for the ad hoc audit initiation, and we also are thinking about whether or not there's a possibility of abuse of that process. We want to be careful not to provide too low of a threshold where new ad hoc audits will just be requested and waste the time and resources of the RIRs. We're trying to balance those interests as we're considering that issue now. Next slide.

All right, we are also talking about the emergency continuity initiation and renewal procedures. We have this process that we're calling emergency continuity, which is if an RIR is unable to continue to provide the necessary services to their communities, there's this emergency continuity process that comes into place prior to derecognition that allows another entity, either another RIR or substitute entity, to come in and take over to provide services to the relevant community for a limited period of time, for ninety days. We currently have it set so it can be renewed, but we're considering how many times we should allow that process to be renewed. Currently, the initiation of the emergency continuity process, where another entity comes in to take over services for an

RIR, requires unanimous agreement among all of the other RIRs and ICANN. We're looking at that criteria, as well as what the criteria should be for extending emergency continuity to prevent this sort of constant cycling through. Next slide.

ESTEBAN LESCANO

Yes. Finally, we want to share with you that there are some items that are under drafting. Next, please. Those items have already been discussed by the SOAC. We have an agreement, but we need to show that agreement in the next version of the document. For example, one of these is the structure of the document. We want to make some changes in order to provide better readiness and flow in the document. Next, please.

Another one is regarding the transition and the continuity process, because we receive feedback that maybe we should have an article or a provision that addresses with more detail the transition in case the recognized RIR hands out to an interim or a successor entity as directed by ICANN. In that case, we got this recommendation, and we are going to include some wording to ensure continuity of services and protection of resource holder rights. Next, please.

Regarding the audit obligation, another of the issues is that we need to clarify the RIR's obligations. There are two types of audits. One is the periodical audits that can be performed in periods of three years or five years. But we also have these ad hoc audits in case the threshold is reached in terms of membership or ICANN or other RIRs. One issue that appears on the consultation is that the

text does not provide a specific obligation for the audited RIR to follow the conclusions of the audit process, and then we are going to include that. Next, please.

Regarding the recognition, one of the suggestions we received is to include an ad hoc audit as part of the recognition process. We analyzed that and discussed it in Montevideo, and we understood that it's not needed because once the recognition process is initiated, it has to finish in a short time, and to include an audit there will make the process longer. In that case, our status is no change. We will not change the provisions on the documents regarding the recognition process in regards to the audits. Next, please.

Another issue that is connected with the recognition is to establish a specific provision that as recognition is the last resource, we will in some way push for a rehabilitation process before derecognition. We have some provisions in the document, but they are not clear enough. We are going to include an amendment that states the obligation to attempt to rehabilitate an RIR before further derecognition steps are taken. Next one. Next one.

Here, it's just to share with you the different joint sessions and public sessions that we will hold here during ICANN 85. It will be very busy work for the SOAC. We are using these joint sessions to receive feedback and comments from the different communities inside the ICANN ecosystem that will allow us to finish our job to improve the document. We are not opening new issues. We are

working on those issues that are identified as open, but we are happy to receive feedback and comments. Next one.

Looking ahead, the next steps are our plan to finish the revision of the ICP-2 this year. We have to present it for approval to the NRO EC and then to ICANN. That is why we plan to work this week to begin with the drafting process of version three, which for us will be our final version, and to continue working between this ICANN meeting and the next ICANN meeting in Seville. The idea is to have finished the work by the next ICANN meeting. Next, please.

Now it's time for questions and for comments. For us, as I mentioned before, the community feedback is very important. In the case of your constituency, as you already provided some comments to our public consultation, we want to continue this dialogue, giving space for you to comment or to suggest what you want. Thank you.

JEFF OSBORN

Thank you very much. That was really helpful. I suffer, unlike apparently most ICANN people, in that I can read these documents and I have no idea what it means, and then you make a presentation and I go, 'Oh, I get it.' So I have a series of questions, but I want to open the floor first to see who else has a comment or question. And thank you very much. That was really helpful. Okay. Well, I'll go ahead. You have done a bunch of the brave, hard parts that we were concerned about in doing the governance piece.

And you used a term I hadn't thought of before: derecognition. Oh my god, isn't that what if you're a new age person breaking up with your special other is called? So what I'm wondering about is there's a series of steps that are not obvious, and since I started with the metaphor of dating, first you get divorced, then you split the property, then you marry. The interesting thing is: if you're an interested RIR, are you sort of a vulture circling, looking for a sick RIR to replace? Or do you wait for it to die first?

ESTEBAN LESCANO

I'd say that is a good parallel.

JEFF OSBORN

Yeah.

ESTEBAN LESCANO

No, but in that case, the recognition of a new RIR is not needed to be related with the death of an existing RIR. Okay?

JEFF OSBORN

Okay. That's a neat trick.

ESTEBAN LESCANO

Yes. No, that's important because it's like a general procedure, a general principle. Today, the world is covered by the existing RIRs, but the document establishes basis, principles, criteria, and procedures for the recognition of a new one. Okay?

JIA-RONG LOW

And let's see whether I can help in terms of the steps. Just thinking through, for example, with the RIR governance document in place, it provides the principles for which in implementation, we need to put in some steps in the event of a breakup happening, like what you were saying. Some things that we have to put into place would include a backup system between RIRs. Right now, we don't really have that. So if an RIR were to, for some reason, stop functioning, it's very difficult for us to effectively be able to support that RIR in continuing its functions of allocation and supporting the existing members. We don't really have those pieces in place. So the RIR governance document requires us to have a backup system, an emergency backup system, in case you need to do something very quickly to support an RIR for some reason, like a natural disaster. That's the first thing.

The second thing then becomes, in the case of what was just covered, audit as a first step before recognition. So if there is an RIR that fails the audit, we work towards rehabilitation rather than, like you were saying, a vulture waiting to take over a sick RIR per se. So we work towards rehabilitation to support the RIR to continue to operate or to go back to a service level that's good. Then it continues to run on its own. These pieces are the pieces that bolster the system to make it more robust, because right now we don't really have these pieces in place per se. Only when we reach

that last resort where an audit didn't work out and rehabilitation didn't work out, then it becomes what happens next.

It could be that one of us or the appointed backup operator would be supporting that region first until a time when, again, that's why we have to relook at the recognition criteria as part of the document, to update it so that we could then put another RIR back into supporting that region again. So it's not about whether, say, APNIC would come in to take over that region, but rather it's more how can the RIRs support each other so things can continue to go. But if an RIR were to fail, we reach that stage where eventually we will help find a way where that region will have its own RIR again. It's along those lines.

ESTEBAN LESCANO

And also let me complete that idea that the document established as a principle that the number of the RIRs will remain small, but not with a particular number. Small in terms of coordination, because it's a global coordinated system, then it's not infinity, but we established the principle and the procedures for in case there is a necessity to recognize another or a new one. Yeah.

JEFF OSBORN

I think one of the things that makes this so interesting, and I can't help it, but I'm comparing it to what we would do in our system, and the root server system is different in that you could layer ten thousand more root server operators and there's no problem. As

long as you don't run out of power and racks and bandwidth. But there is a fixed Earth, and there's a fixed geography. So it really made me wonder: do you always expect there to be geographic certainty that if you are Greenland, are you partially APNIC, or are you partially ARIN and partially RIPE ever, maybe? Or those hatched lines that they put on charts. When you were talking about somebody wanted to be a candidate, I thought, okay, so if you did poorly on your audit but didn't fail it, do you lose half your territory?

So it's all the in-between cases. This is like building a company. A one-person company is very easy to diagram. A hundred-person company is very easy to diagram. It's steps two through ninety-nine that are hard, and this looks like it's really easy to imagine a bunch of very awkward interim phases. The day you fail the audit, the timer's going off for, 'Oh, hell, we need a replacement and we need them now.' But you can't pre-announce that because they hadn't failed the audit yet. So, god, I am so impressed with all the work that you've done. But it just has a thousand questions, not because it's poorly done, but just because it's so interesting. So thank you.

ANDREI ROBACHEVSKY

Just to answer that question, for creation of a new RIR, none needs to fail. So it's quite possible. That's why we're saying that in normal conditions, an RIR can be created, taking part of the existing service region from another or other RIRs even. So the document allows for this situation. We can't consider all possible scenarios, of course,

but what we're trying to do is create a document high-level enough so it can provide guidance, so the community can figure out in future realities how to behave. If a document considers every possible situation, I think it will get outdated very soon.

Another thing that is different from the root ops is that it's really considered as a bottom-up process. It's not a beauty contest. It's the community coming together and demonstrating that they served by a separate RIR has materially improved the overall global RIR system. So if this is in place, yes, another RIR doesn't need to fail. It might need to shrink in their service region, but they do not have to fail.

JEFF OSBORN

Again, I've gotta say, I am so impressed by the work you've done, because we see this in front of us and sometimes I just despair, and you've got it. So well done. That's really, really impressive. Thank you.

ANDREI ROBACHEVSKY

It's publicly available, the document.

JEFF OSBORN

I'm gonna go back and try to actually grasp a policy document.

OZAN SAHIN

You're right. Let me say, we have the QR code.

AMY POTTER

I like your picture with the marriage and the divorce.

JEFF OSBORN

Does anybody—I'm sorry to monopolize that. It's just this has really been bothering me, and I'm so impressed with how that worked. Is there anybody else who has a question or an input? RSSAC is famous for ending meetings early. We might do it again. Do we think that's it then, Ozan?

OZAN SAHIN

Yeah.

JEFF OSBORN

All right. Oh.

JIA-RONG LOW

Thank you. Like was mentioned, for the ASO, we are speaking to each of the SO and ACs, and it's part of a consultation process. I think it's important that we get good questions and feedback, which is excellent from this session. Out of this work, when we have a final draft, we expect that ICANN will have to run its own process again, which likely would be that the final draft would go through ICANN's public comment. Then again, ICANN may collect some more feedback through a public comment process. That's what I expect to happen.

But as usual, we would appreciate from this group, if you think that what we have is good, the usual not saying anything is less than just saying, 'Good job,' you know? Any comment, even just to say that you support, is something that's going to be very helpful for us overall, because we have a diverse community that we have to work with. And as usual, if there is any group that comes in, not just to ask questions, but to also say that you support it, that really helps with knowing that the positive feedback means that we are in the right direction. Thank you.

JEFF OSBORN

All right. Well, if there's nothing else, thank you so much. That was really informative, and you all get back fifteen minutes. Thank you.

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