
ICANN85 Mumbai | CF – Get to Know the ICANN Community: ccNSO and ISPCP
Sunday, March 8, 2026 – 15:00 to 16:00 IST

FERNANDA IUNES

Thank you. Hello and welcome to Get to Know the ICANN Community: ccNSO and ISPCP. That is the Country Code Name Supporting Organization and Internet Service Providers and Connectivity Providers Constituency. It is a mouthful. My name is Fernanda Iunes, and I am a participation manager for this session.

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will speak if speaking a language other than English, and speak clearly and at a moderate pace. And with that, Siranush, on to you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN

Thank you, Fernanda. I know you are tired already, but we are still halfway until the end of our onboarding sessions. These two communities and constituencies are a very important part of the ICANN multi-stakeholder model. I would like to introduce a very good friend of the fellowship, the NextGen, and the Newcomers program: Biyi, who is always coming to talk to us. I am sure you will enjoy listening to Biyi, who will tell us about the ccNSO, the Country Code Name Supporting Organization. Biyi, the floor is yours.

BIYI OLADIPO

Thank you very much, Siranush. Good day, everyone. I know there are people joining us online, so wherever you are on the globe, good day. To the fellows, if you are a first-time fellow, welcome to ICANN. If you are a returning fellow, welcome all the same.

My name is Biyi Oladipo. I am from the .ng ccTLD for Nigeria, and I am also Vice-Chair of the ccNSO. ccNSO means Country Code Names Supporting Organization within the ICANN ecosystem. By now you will know that our community is a community of acronyms. I do not know how many of the acronyms you have been able to grasp for now, or maybe you are still struggling with some. Do not worry; you are in very good company. For some of us, it took

five meetings to understand what was even going on before we were able to find our footing when it came to the ICANN ecosystem.

I would like to start by saying that what we are doing here is something that is extremely important as far as the global community is concerned. It is important for us to give attention to it and take advantage of the opportunities that we have to be here and contribute to something that is a lot bigger than all of us.

I would like to ask this question: How many of us sitting in this room know what a Country Code Top-Level Domain means? ccTLD. Let me see a show of hands. Excellent. I will ask a second question. How many of us know who our Country Code Top-Level Domain manager is? Your ccTLD manager is the organization or individual that manages your country code top-level domain. Excellent. The third question: How many of us have had any kind of contact with your Country Code Top-Level Domain?

A few. You know why I like to do this? When you ask the first question, almost everybody will put up their hands because they know what a ccTLD is. When you say, "Do you know the managers?" the hands reduce by a few. And then when you say, "Have you contacted them?" the hands reduce further. The question usually is: Why haven't we taken interest in knowing who manages it and having contact with them to ask questions? The resource does not belong to the individual or the organization managing it; it belongs to the internet community in your environment. You should take interest in knowing who is managing it and how they are managing

it. While we leave this meeting and go back, please take a bit more interest in knowing who your ccTLD manager is.

Within the ICANN ecosystem, the ccNSO is the home for the organizations and individuals that manage the Country Code Top-Level Domains. We are part of the ICANN multi-stakeholder ecosystem. There is a joke within ICANN that the ccNSO brings the legitimacy into ICANN because we are bringing the sovereignty of all our different territories, countries, and geographical locations into the ICANN discourse. That shows how important the ccNSO is within the ecosystem. We represent all Country Code Top-Level Domain managers.

Within the ecosystem, ccTLDs represent five out of the top ten TLDs in the world, which is about forty percent of registrations. That is quite substantial. If you have a hundred million names, forty million are ccTLD names. We represent countries and territories online. It is also the digital identity of your territories and countries.

What is the uniqueness of the ccNSO or the ccTLD? First of all, the regions are across all five ICANN regions: Africa, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, North America, as well as Asia Pacific. The diversity that we bring is across all of those regions, and we bring that into the conversations that we are having here. It is only within the ccNSO that you actually see that extreme diversity. In terms of governance models, unlike the gTLDs, our governance models differ across the number of ccTLDs that we have. There is

no one prescription of a governance model, and the ccNSO does not get involved with how your ccTLD is governed.

There are three basic types of governance models. One, we have some ccTLDs that are managed by governments. We have some that are managed by academia and universities. Then we have ccTLDs that are managed by the private sector. The private sector could either be not-for-profit, like in the case of .ng. We are a multi-stakeholder not-for-profit. In our governance, we have people from government, the private sector, and different constituencies representing those interests within the ccTLD. We also have commercial entities that manage ccTLDs. For example, some are managed strictly for commercial purposes. How many of us know .tv? That is Tuvalu. A lot of people think .tv means dot television, but .tv is a ccTLD managed for commercial purposes. How many of us know .co? That is Colombia. That is also a ccTLD. A lot of people do not understand that some of those things are actually ccTLDs.

The policies within the ccNSO are not general policies like you have in gTLDs. The ccNSO policies are broad policies. Your registry models are also different. There is no one prescription as far as registry models are concerned. Your number of domains, employees, and the way you run your organization differ. This is a comment from one of our members, Jodie, and it alludes to the geographical diversity I mentioned earlier. She says, "Our built-in geographical diversity lets the ccNSO bring a unique lens to the ICANN-wide discussions." Because we come from different locations and backgrounds, the conversations are completely

different. Jodie is one of the leaders of one of our committees in the ccNSO.

Within the ICANN structure, the ccNSO is one of the Supporting Organizations. We know ICANN is made up of SOs and ACs. SOs are Supporting Organizations, and ACs are Advisory Committees. The ccNSO occupies seat eleven and seat twelve on the ICANN Board. Seat eleven is currently occupied by Patricio Poblete, who is from the Chilean registry, .cl. Seat twelve is occupied by Byron Holland, who is from the Canadian registry, .ca. Currently, we have one hundred and seventy-nine members across all five regions. We have forty from Africa, fifty-seven from Asia Pacific, forty-seven from Europe, twenty-nine from Latin America and the Caribbean, and six from North America. This membership also includes three IDN ccTLDs. IDN ccTLDs are those that are not in the ASCII script but are in local languages, like having .egypt in the Arabic script.

We drive policies, we build knowledge, and we connect different stakeholders together. In terms of policy, we undertake policy and policy-related work. I mentioned earlier that the ccNSO does not make individual policies; policies on registration are per ccTLD. But policies on things like the retirement of ccTLDs are general. If a territory ceases to exist, what happens? Those are the kind of general policies that we make. We also make policies around how we bring IDNs into the ccNSO.

We cooperate and learn within ourselves. Tomorrow, we have what we call Tech Day. Tech Day is a learning opportunity for ccTLDs and

other registries who want to look at technical things regarding running a registry. It is a whole day session happening in Hall 1D tomorrow, and you are invited if you are interested in the technical parts of the discourse. As ccTLDs, we have different sizes. Some have been around for a long time, while some are just coming up. We all cooperate, ask questions, and learn from one another. We also have the TLD Ops Working Group, which helps to look at the security and stability of registries.

We engage with all other stakeholders within the ICANN ecosystem. We usually have joint sessions with the ICANN Board, the GNSO, the Registry Stakeholder Group, and different groups. Currently, we are joining the GNSO in their DNS abuse policy development process that they have just launched, and we are participating as members of that committee.

The ccNSO Council, of which I am one of the Vice-Chairs, helps to guide the global conversation. It comprises eighteen members. Fifteen are elected from the five regions, meaning we have three from each geographical region. Then we have three ICANN NomCom appointed councilors. We administer and coordinate the affairs of the ccNSO and lead when there is a PDP to be made. I am always very careful when I use that acronym. Where I come from, the first thing that comes to mind with PDP is a political party called the People's Democratic Party. In Nigeria, I quickly explain that I mean the policy development process. The Council leadership includes Alejandra Reynoso as Chair, and myself and Jordan Carter

as Vice-Chairs. Alejandra is from .gt, I am from .ng, and Jordan is from .au.

What are the emerging challenges and areas where we are putting our attention? Issues around resilience and how ccTLDs can remain stable in times of disruption. We are having conversations around DNS abuse, which is getting more vicious. We look at internet governance and how to ensure ccTLDs are involved in multi-stakeholder discussions. We look at operational excellence and universal acceptance. How can the internet speak everyone's language? In our different locations, we have countries that have as many as two or three hundred languages. How do you ensure your ccTLD speaks a language that everyone understands for inclusion? We also look at how ICANN is governed through the SOPC, which makes contributions to ICANN strategic plans and budgets.

This is where the work happens: study groups, standing committees, and working groups. We have the IANA Public Record Study Group and the IANA Disaster Recovery Study Group. We have the Strategic and Operational Planning Committee, the Onboarding and Mentoring Committee, the Meetings Program Committee, and the Guidelines Review Committee. If you go to the ccNSO website, you will be able to see all of this. If you aim to be a ccNSO member one day, join the Guidelines Review Committee to understand how the ccNSO functions. They are like the internal police of the ccNSO that helps ensure we keep on a straight path.

How do you get involved? Start small, but think global. Have a plan. When I joined the process, I actually just came to enjoy myself. It was my holiday time. However, as time went on, I asked myself what I wanted to get out of this. Today, I have joined working groups and committees and was voted in as Vice-Chair at a time when I was not even expecting it. My Chair then, Katrina, told me I could do it. I was worried about the time commitment, but she told me that my participation in meetings was enough. I contested, I won, and today I am here. If you manage a ccTLD or have anything to do with one, please join the ccNSO.

I have a word from my Chair. Alejandra actually wanted to be here. To make it interesting for you, Alejandra started as a fellow. She came into the ecosystem as a fellow, and today she is the Chair of the ccNSO. This shows you that there are no limits to what you can achieve within the ecosystem. You might be a fellow today, and tomorrow you could be chairing a constituency. Your dedication makes the ccNSO stronger. It is an honor to work with you, whether you join in person, remotely, actively, or as an observer.

Where can you see us this week? The ccNSO room is Hall 1D, which is about three doors from here. Tomorrow is Tech Day. Tuesday and Wednesday are the members' meetings. You can join us, and we will be very glad to have you in our midst. Jennifer Lopez is also on the ccNSO Council. Thank you so much, and I am open to any questions. If you see anyone from the ccNSO in the corridor, just grab them and ask them questions. Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN

Thank you. We probably may be able to take one or two questions, and I will be taking them from those who never asked questions during this session. Yes, please go ahead.

ALTANGEREL ALTANKHUYAG

Hello, everyone. My name is Altangerel from Mongolia, and I am an ICANN85 fellow. In Mongolia, our country domain is .mn. When we started domain registration many years ago, we did not create categories at the second level. People now register names directly under .mn. Now we are planning to introduce second-level categories, such as .me for individuals. But this creates some problems. First, some names at the top level may be the same as new second-level domains, which may create confusional disputes about who has the right to use the name. Second, current domain owners may feel they need to buy the same second-level domain again under the new category to protect their brand. We want to avoid creating unnecessary pressure for registrants. I am interested in learning how other countries manage similar issues. Can you share your opinion? Thank you.

BIYI OLADIPO

The question you have asked is ccTLD specific. Caveat: we do not get involved with specifics as far as ccTLDs are concerned. It is the prerogative of each ccTLD to decide on the policies they want to use for registrations and how they want to govern their ccTLD.

However, my own advice to you is to look at the profile of the things you have and determine how you want to resolve your disputes. You will always have disputes. With .ng, we have a dispute resolution policy which we adopt to ensure we do not have conflicts when it comes to names. For example, our registration policy is first come, first served. The first person to grab the name is the one that gets it. This is not a recommendation from me; I am only telling you what we have done. You know your environment and how easy it is to resolve things. If we meet outside, we can have further conversations on it because this is specific to your ccTLD. I would not like to make a public recommendation.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN

If I can request you and Jasbinder, I think we do not have time for you to ask now, but you can talk to Biyi during the break. He will stay here until the end, I hope.

BIYI OLADIPO

Yes, I will be here until the end.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN

Thank you very much, Biyi, for being here. Now we will talk about one of the hardest acronyms for me to learn. It took me several meetings to know what ISPCP stands for. Thankfully, I learned that this is the Internet Service Providers and Connectivity Providers Constituency. It is my pleasure to introduce Lars, who will tell us

what they are doing and what ISPCP stands for as part of this multi-stakeholder model. Lars, the floor is yours.

LARS STEFFEN

Thank you very much for having me. I am Lars Steffen. I am the Vice-Chair of the ISPCP, the Internet Service Provider and Connectivity Provider Constituency. Like every constituency, we also have a website; if you go to ispcp.info, you will find all the information I am sharing today and everything beyond.

When I am not at ICANN, I am the head of Digital Infrastructures and Resilience at the eco Association. eco is the Association of the Internet Industry. We are based in Germany, but we have members all across Europe, North America, and many more countries. We have a membership from more than sixty countries, so we have a quite international scope. I am also the current Vice-President of EuroISPA, which is the European umbrella association of national ISP associations.

Here at ICANN, the ISPCP has been around since 1999. When you take a look at the charter of the ISPCP, you get an idea of who the members are. Members are ISPs, internet service providers, and connectivity providers that operate the internet backbone network, or they are offering access to internet users or other content providers. These are ISPs like the ones providing access to your home or to companies. Internet exchange point operators are also among our members.

We count around sixty members. We have a quite diverse membership when it comes to regional distribution, with members from all continents. We also have members of different sizes, from very small ones to very large corporations, and a number of different ISP associations. I am here as a representative of an industry association representing a number of internet service providers.

The ISPCP belongs to the GNSO, the Generic Name Supporting Organization, which has a layered structure. Inside the GNSO, you have the contracted parties and the non-contracted parties. We are part of the non-contracted parties. The non-contracted parties are split into the Commercial Stakeholder Group and the Non-Commercial Stakeholder Group. We belong to the Commercial Stakeholder Group bucket. This is our home next to the IPC, the Intellectual Property Constituency, and the BC, the Business Constituency.

On the ICANN Board, there are two seats for the GNSO in total. We have to negotiate with the other constituencies inside the GNSO about the representatives on the Board, so we do not have a direct connection like the ccNSO does. Our mission here inside ICANN is to represent the interests of our members, contribute to the multi-stakeholder model, and contribute to the policy development processes, mainly in the GNSO.

I will cover the relevant topics later, but first, here is a brief overview of the ISPCP structure. We do not have the size of the

ccNSO Council; we have six individuals. We have one Chair, Philippe Fouquart from Orange. I am the current Vice-Chair from eco. We have Shantanu, who is the executive officer. We have two representatives on the GNSO Council, Susan and Osvaldo. We have one delegate, Fiona, appointed to the NomCom. We still have room for a membership coordinator, so if you are interested in participating in the ISPCP, we have one seat available. Together we comprise the credentials committee. When we get applications for new members, it is a joint effort to do an assessment regarding eligibility based on membership criteria and the onboarding process. Participation in the ISPCP is free. If you meet the membership criteria, there are no membership fees involved.

Our day-to-day work involves a mailing list and monthly community meetings on Zoom. We try to rotate the times a little bit to make it accessible for everyone across the year. When there are different working groups inside the GNSO, we appoint representatives to participate in those policy development processes. As a joint effort, we draft statements and provide input and feedback to those processes. Sometimes we participate in processes outside ICANN if we think it is relevant.

The ISPCP's main work is to contribute to policy development processes inside the GNSO, primarily when it comes to the stability and security of the DNS. As internet service and connectivity providers, we provide the basic infrastructure, such as the fiber in the ground and services on top of it. Most ISPs operate resolvers for their end customers, and this is our main touchpoint into the

ecosystem you meet here at ICANN. When we participate in those policy development processes, our main goal is to achieve consensus.

When new PDPs come up, we vote on participating in those processes. We then appoint shepherds who take responsibility for meeting timelines, drafting the first statements, consulting the entire membership, and keeping track of the work. Together with the Chair and Vice-Chair, they vote on the final position.

Here is a brief overview of the latest policy statements drafted inside the ISPCP. You may have heard of the current work of the Address Supporting Organization; they are currently working on an update of the Internet Coordination Policy. This is of high relevance for our members regarding the coordination between domain names and those who are managing their IP addresses. The IP address part is of high relevance for ISPs. Last year was also dominated by the WSIS+20 process, so the evolution of the internet governance ecosystem and the future of the IGF were also very important to us.

On a broader level, the new gTLD program is of high relevance for us because some ISPs are also involved in the registration of domain names. When it comes to new gTLDs, you may have heard of the potential issue of name collisions. When there are issues that end users encounter, they might not know that there are other parties involved. Their first point of contact is the ISP where they book their internet connection. If they encounter issues, they call

the ISP to ask for help. This is why we have a strong focus on topics where we might see potential issues for our members and their respective end users.

We might be involved from time to time in the disclosure of WHOIS data, so this is a topic we are following very closely. Attached to this is the discussion on data accuracy for registration data and DNS abuse. You might have heard that there is a new policy development process starting on DNS abuse, which has already been mentioned by the ccNSO. The ISPCP is participating in and contributing to this process.

There is also work on the holistic review process, or the "review of reviews." This is a process where it is discussed that the GNSO is not a monolithic block. There is an opportunity to discuss if the structure of the GNSO still reflects the current structure of the industry. Over the years, there have been discussions if the structure of the GNSO with contracted parties, non-contracted parties, commercial and non-commercial stakeholders, and the ISPCP, BC, and IPC is still the right logic. At the end of the day, it is about a resilient and safe structure for the internet. That is always the main goal when we are discussing these things.

As an ISPCP, we are currently having a capacity building webinar series and hands-on sessions. There can never be enough membership engagement. If you are really interested in the work of one of the constituencies introducing themselves to you today, and you think this constituency feels like home and the topics are ones

you would like to work on, contact the ccNSO, contact the ISPCP, or contact any other constituency. This is why you are here and why we are here. Catch us after the session or in the hallway.

In my role with my national associations, I work very closely with ICANN Org to organize regular outreach, often in lunch formats. We invite companies and businesses that we think should be engaged in ICANN to follow the work here. Any business today relies heavily on a safe and secure internet. We reach out to them and try to engage them because we think their voices should be heard in these multi-stakeholder processes.

I would like to invite you to two sessions tomorrow afternoon. The first one is AI and machine learning and their relevance to DNS security. This will take place at 03:00 PM on the second floor, followed by another on universal acceptance, digital inclusion, and the AI factor in building an exclusive internet. Both sessions are organized in close collaboration with the SSAC, the Security and Stability Advisory Committee. You are more than welcome to join us in the afternoon and also attend our regular working sessions on Tuesday morning. We will also have a joint meeting with the Address Supporting Organization on Thursday at noon. I now open the floor if you have any questions.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN Thank you, Lars. Very interesting presentation and overview of the ISPCP. Any questions? We can now open the floor for a couple of questions. Yes, please go ahead.

ALTANGEREL ALTANKHUYAG Thanks for sharing. I want to know about the difference in policy focus between the ISPCP and the two advisory committees focusing on the security and stability of the internet, which are the SSAC and RSSAC.

LARS STEFFEN Thank you for the question. There is actually no difference; it is a matter of the level of expertise regarding security-related issues. This is why we work very closely with the SSAC for those two sessions tomorrow and the webinar series we are offering. When we want to discuss security-related issues in the ISPCP, we always invite the subject matter experts. We are not in different camps; we just have different focuses on our work. Depending on the topics, we always reach out to the subject matter experts in the different constituencies.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN Anyone else here in the room? I have a question from a Zoom participant, Deepak. The question is for both the ccNSO and ISPCP: what role do you see for young technical professionals in shaping future DNS and internet infrastructure policies? Lars, maybe you will start.

LARS STEFFEN

That is a very good question because we discussed this during our two-day workshop. We are looking for newcomers to participate and join the constituencies. Operating the internet and the DNS infrastructure might not seem as attractive as "hot" topics like AI today, but it is the basis for everything that builds upon it. If you are interested in making a difference in running the core infrastructure of the internet, you are more than welcome. There is a demand for new engineers and staff members to take over roles for those who are phasing out in a couple of years. There is a window of opportunity to make a difference; take the chance. This is why you are here.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN

Yes, Biyi, please.

BIYI OLADIPO

My answer is not very different from what Lars just said. This is a continuous conversation we have had in the ccNSO. When the people who are there now leave, what happens? This is not just about the technical part, but also the policy side. How do we ensure we bring more younger people into the fray? There are huge opportunities in this DNS ecosystem; we just need to identify where we want to play and get active. The ccNSO has a deliberate program to onboard people. We created the Onboarding and

Mentoring Committee to help younger people get up to speed and understand where they can find their place within the ecosystem.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN

Thank you, Biyi. Lars, there is a question for you from Francis: in what way do you help DNS resolvers to manage the impact of whether the internet remains a unified global resource or becomes a series of gated silos?

LARS STEFFEN

Thank you for the question. This is why we are here at ICANN: to participate in the policy development processes that have an impact on the industry and the way we operate the DNS. We want this ecosystem to remain a unified and interconnected global system rather than breaking apart into different subnetworks. The main goal is one world, one internet. That is the claim of ICANN, and that is why ISPs are involved to ensure it stays that way. That is the overarching mission everyone here at this conference is working on. If you want to be part of that mission, join and stay.

Working for an internet industry association, I know other parts of the industry, and I always tell people that ICANN is the friendliest place I know. This is the most welcoming and friendly community in the broader internet industry. If you like to be here, stay here.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN

Thank you. This is a very good call to action. A round of applause for Lars for being here.

[audience applauds]

Just to wrap up those Get to Know the ICANN Community sessions, these were the last two constituencies we had to learn about. Through these two days of onboarding sessions, you hopefully understand this multi-stakeholder model and the main groups within it. The other four days are for all of you to explore this community in action. You will have the opportunity to go to sessions, and each community has introduced what sessions they have during the day.

We have constituency day on Tuesday, where every community has their own session. We have Tech Day for the ccNSO tomorrow. Board meetings with different communities take place on Tuesday and Wednesday. This will be the opportunity for you to find out what sector you are interested in and do a deep dive. Please use this opportunity of exploring the ICANN community in action. Whenever you are online, you do not have that actual opportunity to see that work. When you have the experience of seeing them in person, it is easier for you to join virtually later because you already know where you are going and you know the community.

Please use this opportunity to participate in different sessions and ask questions. My personal advice is do not get stuck in one community. If this is your first ICANN meeting, go to different communities and see how they work. You might come with one

specific sector of interest in mind, but seeing this community in action, you may see that your capacity fits better in another community. Open your mind and explore this ecosystem called the ICANN Multi-Stakeholder Model.

I appreciate all our community members coming here and talking to you. Later you will see that it is very hard for those community members to attend two-hour sessions because they are busy within their own constituencies. They have their work to do during the entire week, so I really appreciate that they are eager to come and share about their communities. This is a unique opportunity for them to come to us, rather than us going to them. You now know a lot of faces. You can stop them in the corridors during networking hours or coffee breaks to ask questions and start becoming an active participant. As Lars mentioned, if you have the passion to stay, go for it. ICANN has a place for everyone. The ICANN community is open, and they need your voice to be part of this community. With that, another round of applause for Biyi and Lars.

[audience applauding]

We have one more session for today in thirty minutes, which will be in another room, Room D. We will talk about DNS fundamentals. This is a bit of a technical session, but for those who are non-technical, I encourage you to come and listen to what is behind the domain name system. With that, this meeting is adjourned. See you in thirty minutes. Thank you.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]