
ICANN85 Mumbai | CF – Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Working Session
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ALBERT DANIELS

Hello and welcome to the Small Island Developing States, SIDS, working session. My name is Albert Daniels and I am the Participation Manager for this session. Please note that this session is being recorded and is governed by the ICANN Expected Standards of Behavior and the ICANN Community Anti-Harassment Policy.

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I will now hand the floor over to Nigel Cassimire, the Deputy Secretary General of the Caribbean Telecommunications Union, who will be one of the co-chairs for this session. Nigel, over to you.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE

Thank you very much, Albert, and good morning, good afternoon, good evening to everyone attending this meeting, some in person, some online from all over the world, because that's where you will find SIDS, all over the world. Very happy representing 21 member states and territories from the Caribbean. We have the CTU,

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Caribbean Telecommunications Union, here at our SIDS space session today. I think I should let my co-chair also introduce himself, Mr. Andrew Mollivrae. And Andrew, would you like to say a few words of introduction.

ANDREW MOLLIVRAE

Thank you, Nigel. I hope that everyone can hear me clearly.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE

Yes.

ANDREW MOLLIVRAE

I'm Andrew Mollivrae from Vanuatu representing the regulated service here in Vanuatu and also member of the GAC for Vanuatu. I'm happy to join this session with Nigel Cassimire. Thank you.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE

Thank you very much, Andrew. And our ICANN stakeholder engagement, our senior manager of stakeholder engagement in the Caribbean, Mr. Albert Daniels, did the introduction for us. And we do have the agenda for this morning's session on display. We just completed the welcome line and we will now ask Mr. Rodrigo de la Parra, the ICANN Vice President for Latin America and the Caribbean, to give us a little background on this session. So, I'll hand over now to Rodrigo.

RODRIGO DE LA PARRA

Yes, thank you very much, Nigel. This is Rodrigo de la Parra for the record. Welcome, everyone. It's good to have you here. And just to provide a little bit of background on why this session is happening now. A couple of years ago, there was a request coming from some of our stakeholders from the Caribbean, and since then we have been having a couple of formal meetings like this one, which is on the agenda, and then some others which were informal gatherings.

And as you know, the official five regions of ICAN, and as Nigel has said, SIDS are all over the world, so we try to coordinate internally to try to showcase some of the activities that we are doing in the different regions, but that pertain also to the Small Islands and Development States.

And as you can see from the agenda, we're going to go through some of these activities coming from the different leads in the different regions of the stakeholder engagement team, which is Oceania, Africa, and of course the Caribbean. In parallel, we're going to see this initiative emerging from the office of the CTO, OCTO.

This is about a capacity building program proposal. Many of you know that in previous discussions we were thinking about what is that we can do as a group, as concrete outcomes. And we of course highlighted the need of building capacity in this region, or rather these regions.

And of course, we found with your support other relevant items for today's agenda, as you can see as well for their 2026 round of gTLDs and application from the Cook Islands. And then also we will hear about the evolution of the IGF seats, which is something happening at that internal governance forum level. So, welcome again. And that's it. I will hand it back to you, Nigel. Thank you.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE

Thank you very much, Rodrigo. If we follow the agenda, we will note that we plan to review follow-up activities from the last SIDS meeting, from the last meeting of this SIDS space, which was at ICANN82 in Seattle, I believe it was. And we did have a representative from the CTU also co-chairing that session. So, Albert, I don't know if you have that document that maybe you could share for us the notes from that last one.

ALBERT DANIELS

Are you seeing it?

NIGEL CASSIMIRE

Yes, yes, yes, indeed. All right. Mr. Shernon Osepa was the city representative at that particular meeting, and Andrew also co-chaired. And they basically went through some of the background to the SIDS space session. And maybe we could just go to the bottom of this, where they have the... no, I think you've gone too far. No, upper. I think, Proposed Action Items And Next Steps. The

bottom of what, this second page, maybe? Right there, right there. Right, right.

So, we could probably just review what were some of the things that we intended to do after that last meeting. And Albert had committed to circulating information on the SIDS mailing list and the centralized wiki page. Maybe, Albert, you could inform those of us who maybe don't have all the background about the mailing list and the wiki page.

ALBERT DANIELS

Okay. So I've made it very simple for everyone. There is a one-page document in the session notes down at the bottom when you're clicking to go into the session on Zoom, which actually indicates how you can connect to the wiki page and also how you can subscribe to the mailing list. So, on the schedule, when you click on SIDS, there are three documents on there, this one, which is the notes from the last meeting, the agenda.

And the third document, it's a document which explains how to, well, it doesn't explain, it just gives the links to subscribe to the mailing list and the link to access the wiki page. So, as soon as the last session was completed, we actually set those up and they are now available to SIDS from all over the world.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE

Okay, thank you very much for that. At that last meeting as well, there was proposed a concrete project to deploy Anycasts, well,

certainly encouraging deployment of Anycasts servers across SIDS regions to enhance DNS resiliency and stability. I don't know if anyone attending this meeting could maybe give any information on any progress having been made in any of your regions. I'll pause for a few seconds. Yes, Save.

SAVE VOCEA

Yeah, this is Save Vocea, the regional VP for the Oceania region. So, the last time we met, we've got a new local host in Cook Islands now that's hosting an instance of a root. So, I was going to include this in my presentation, but since you've asked the question, so I thought I'll just say that now. One of the things that we're doing as well as engagement folks from ICANN is to look at the existing arrangements that we have with the current hosts.

When we implemented this program a few years ago, we didn't really look at the age of the hardware and equipment that's been hosted at these sites. So, one of the things that we are doing now is to go back to the hosts that are currently hosting L-root instances to show. to share with them the need to upgrade this hardware for some of them that's on our list. So, we'll be reaching out to them. Thank you.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE

Thanks for that, Save. I didn't mean to steal your thunder there. So, I'll probably keep it in mind that we will have some updates from the various regions, so we may not need to follow through

everything right away. Certainly, the group agreed on the importance of documenting and sharing success stories.

And one of the items on today's agenda is to hear some of the activities and developments in the Cook Islands, which could be of benefit for SIDS around the world. And the last page of these particular notes, I think we've heard already from Albert about the mailing list and the wiki. And basically, I think he has added the documents that were intended to be added. So, yes, thank you. I see a hand from Claire Craig. Please go ahead, Claire.

CLAIRE CRAIG

Hi, thank you so much, Nigel. I just wanted to go back to the proposal to deploy the Anycast servers across the SIDS, I think this is a really good initiative. I want to suggest that there is going to be a CaribNOG meeting next month in Jamaica, and while one of the things that we do is deploy Anycast servers on the Internet Exchange points, that when Albert is doing his IOG update, that this is something that he would want to mention so that persons in the Caribbean region who are tuned into that Caribbean meeting can be aware of this and get some more information concerning it. Thank you so much.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE

Thank you very much for that, Claire. So, any other comments related to anything from the last meeting of the SIDS space? If not, I would move on in terms of the agenda to get the current updates

on ICANN SIDS activities from the various reps in the region. So, Save started just now to tell us about some of the developments in the Cook Islands, and maybe I'll hand back over to Save to complete his update.

SAVE VOCEA

Yeah, thank you, Chair. So, this is Save again, and I'd like to acknowledge some of the fellows and GAC reps that we have from the Pacific that's here on my right. Welcome to ICANN meeting. For some of them, it's a first meeting. So, for the Oceania region, we've explained in the past, there's about 29 country code top-level domain registries that includes economies and little territories.

One of the things for our engagement is really to look at driving the adoption of ICANN-promoted security best practices. And when we look at the small islands from the Pacific, some of the vulnerability that they have, one of the things that we focus on how can they adopt DNSSEC or even one of the best practices under the kindness initiative that ICANN has put forward.

Now, we recognize that some of the small island countries have outsourced their registry backend services and they are well looked after in that regard, but there are a few that are running the registry as a standalone entity like little telcos. And so, we continue to try and raise that and advocate for DNSSEC adoption and also UA, which are some of the main topics in ICANN. And we do this through the NOGs as well.

We have the Pacific NOG and we have working with partners that are also participating in these NOGs to promote and handle and run workshops. And we work very closely with our Internal teams like OCTO, Champika, who's sitting on my left, will talk about it more. So, that's been going well in the Pacific. I mentioned about the L-Root initiatives as well, the Anycast. In the region now, there's 14 economies that have L-Root presence in their countries.

Yeah, as I was saying, one of the things now that we need to do is looking at the renewals of the hardware. So, that has been done. At the moment, we're reaching out to point of contacts from those organizations because when they want to host a root server, it's a decision they have to make as the entity, as the ISP or telco. But now we are also branching out to look at inviting ISPs and data centers that are established in our region to also consider hosting these instances.

So, just to also talk about some of the things that we do is that we don't work alone as ICANN. When we go to the region in the Pacific, especially when we talk to various stakeholders, and I'll give an example here, like for governments, they want us to come together in a collaborative manner. If you go alone, they would say, oh, you're taking up some of my time.

So, we found ways to work collaboratively with other partners, like working through the Pacific IGF, even with multi-stakeholder development partners. We've even supported some of the initiatives where a registry like, for instance, Australia had brought

together country code operators from the region to have its meeting, and we would be there to support them as well.

One of the key events that was held last year was the ICT officials meeting and also ministerial meeting. We were lucky to be included in that forum so that we are able to engage the leaders and also talk about ICANN and the activities that we're doing in the region.

One thing probably I want to throw in the room while we have participants here and who might want to listen later, is to ensure that we need to update the point of context, especially from the supporting organizations and advisory committee. We know people move on, and we need to have this context updated. So, I'll stop there, Chair. Thanks.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE

Thank you, Save. A quick question on that ICT ministers meeting that you mentioned. Is that a one-off or is that a standing sort of?

SAVE VOCEA

It's not a one-off. One of the things that's being revived in the Pacific, there is a Pacific ICT working group to look at how we can bring together ministers and the leaders of ICTs in government. And lucky enough, one of my colleagues, who is a Tonga GAC this week, has shared with me that there's going to be another ICT ministers' meeting in Papua New Guinea in August. So, I'm looking

forward to that. So, it's going to be hosted in Papua New Guinea. Thanks.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE

Okay, thank you very much for that. So, we found out what's going on in Oceania, the Pacific, and so on. Let's move across, according to the agenda, across to Africa now and get an update on their SIDS-related activities in that region from Yaovi Atohoun.

YAOVI ATOHOUN

Thank you very much, and then I'm happy to join this call. And I will start with the answer to your question, which is linked to the L-Root. So, you'll see that in my talk. The first one is about Comoros, where we have also a recent deployment of the L-Root instances in the country. So, through our engagement with our technical engagement team, we are able to do awareness about the importance of the L-Root.

So, this initiative came from a desire from Comoros Telecom to have an instance in the country. And I should mention that the equipment, the appliance, the various costs were supported by Comoros Telecom. And then what we did was global engagement, civil engagement team is to provide them what is needed about the process, and then we work closely with our DNS engineering team for the technical aspects.

So, that is something we really appreciate from the country because they understand that it is not for the institution hosting,

but this has a global impact in the country, so that is Comoros. And if I want to mention Cape Verde, Cape Verde is in the process of full deployment of the DNS protocol at the country core top level domain area for the organization.

So, our team, we've also technical engagement last year. We were in Cabo Verde for capacity development. So, we have included academia, and then also the ISP and the ccTLD operation entity. And then this was really a full week, and then it was in relation to when you see our five-year strategy goals, they drive the objection of ICANN promote security best practices.

So, like KINDNS, DNSSEC, so it is a way of contribution to this objective that we have this activity in Cabo Verde. And currently, Cabo Verde is still working closely with our team because the full implementation of the DNS protocol is not completed yet, but we see a lot of commitment from the country, from the ccTLD, and we hope that very soon this will be completed.

And I want to link that to what we call the Coalition for Digital Africa which is an initiative of ICANN. But we are working with a lot of partners in Africa, and it is for capacity development, for meaningful connectivity and also working at some point on infrastructure, but what is linked to ICANN for example. So, we have the association of LUSNIC for Portuguese. LUSNIC, which is the Association of Portuguese-Speaking ccTLD.

So, we have Cabo Verde and Guinea-Bissau ccTLDs speaking Portuguese in Africa. So, for this initiative, they are part of the

capacity development activities led by LUSNIC, which is the Association of Portuguese speaking ccTLDs. So, they have achieved capacity development activities this year. They were supposed to also meet physically last year in Ghana, but we were not able to make it physically, but it was completed in February by a webinar and online activity.

So, the objective is to have this country code top level domain management organization to share back practices to be more equipped to handle the ccTLD operation technical aspect and also the business aspect. And on my table, you can see that we mentioned ensure inclusive stakeholder representation and enhanced collaboration. So, we continue doing our engagement with these countries to have active participation. We have seen some of the members, the community members from some countries, very active in some SO/ACs.

So, this is why we want to continue. If you can see in the fiscal year 27, we want to continue working more with some of the countries. Because my colleagues have mentioned equipment renewal. So, we have some L-Root instances in some of these islands, in Mauritius, in Seychelles. And then we need to work with some of these entities who have to renew their equipment.

So, if in this session we have some participants from Mauritius, from Seychelles, please feel free to reach out to me. I have my email I will put in the chat room. So, if you are from one of these countries, Seychelles and Mauritius, please feel free to reach out to

me so that we have some discussion. And I want to stop there. This is what I want to share about our activities in this country in Africa. Thank you very much.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE

Thank you very much, Yaovi. Any questions that anyone might want to raise at this point? If not, we can go on to the next region. And we'll have Mr. Albert Daniels, who is the Caribbean representative, to give an update on activities in the region. So, Albert.

ALBERT DANIELS

Thank you very much, Nigel. I would like to quickly just highlight two initiatives that we've been doing in the Caribbean. One of them is an initiative, ICANN Near You. This is an initiative that we've been doing across Latin America and the Caribbean. And we recently had an edition of this in the Caribbean territory of Guyana.

The difference between ICANN Near You and the typical seminars and conferences that we have is we pay a lot more attention to one-on-one direct interaction with the stakeholders. And we do that with the objective of actually hearing from them what they are interested in, what their concerns are, and so on. And there is also a big element of partnership.

You've heard that from both Yoavi and Save partnership with other organizations. In the case of ICANN Near You in Guyana, we partnered with the University of Guyana. That's where we actually

hosted the event. And coincidentally, the Internet Exchange Point for Guyana is actually housed at that university. And they were a critical part in organizing the event and getting participants to come out.

And also, the country code top-level domain name for Guyana, .gy, played a big role. They also hosted at the University of Guyana. And another significant partnership was with the Internet Society. And one of the days of the event in Guyana was actually dedicated to presentations on ISPs and the Internet Society and so on. And it was a full day given to ISOC as one of the partners of ICANN.

So, although it was an ICANN organized activity, it was very important for us to include ISOC and the university in the event in a substantial way. So, on the first day of the event, we did the basic things, what is ICANN all about and why is it important to participate? But then we went on to do some capacity building.

We had one of the ICANN engineers, our representative for Latin America and the Caribbean, Nicolas Antonello, and he did some introductions to the domain name system, to DNSSEC, and we also covered topics like DNS abuse and so on. And the whole idea was that this was targeted to ISPs, to security professionals, to the university, and so on.

And we also paid very close attention to looking at how we develop relationships with a social event on day zero before the whole ICANN Near You event started. We had a little social event in the evening. And you know, when you have these social events, you

have the opportunity like during coffee breaks and during lunch, to meet people and understand them better. And one interesting thing is that at the time that we had the event in Guyana, the national budget had been called.

So, many of the ministers were not actually able to participate directly in the event, but one or two of the government representatives came to the social event and we were able to develop pretty deep introductions and relationships with them for future actions.

Very importantly, at the ICANN Near You in Guyana, and this is something which can be replicated, we had a representative from the CARICOM Secretariat, Jennifer Britton, who is actually the GAC representative, and she was gracious enough to stay with us for some of the sessions, and she offered in the end to assist with the outreach in making sure, Nigel, you'd be interested to hear that, that the message reaches our governments across the Caribbean region.

So, that was very important. Some of the other topics that we covered were Universal Acceptance. And there is some interest from the University of Guyana in integrating some of the Universal Acceptance modules, which have been developed by ICANN into the university curriculum. And there are several other actions, follow-up actions that have come from that.

So, quickly, in the last 15 seconds that I have, I wanted to talk a little bit about what we've been doing with CaribNOG. CaribNOG is a

very strong partner in the Caribbean for ICANN, and CaribNOG has two meetings every year, but they also have intersessional activities.

And what ICANN has been doing in the Caribbean is partnering with CaribNOG to bring our technical presentations to their meetings. And because in the Caribbean, individuals wear many hats, even though it's a technical event, we are able to do outreach for end users and for other areas of ICANN. So, you heard Claire mention that she's expecting me to talk a little bit about the root servers again at the upcoming CaribNOG meeting. So, that will be done. And we pay a lot of attention in CaribNOG, and we do that at every CaribNOG meeting to the DNS, to DNSSEC, to KINDNS. And at all of the meetings for the entire last year up to now, every time we presented, we promoted the New Generic Top-Level Domain name program up to the very last meeting that we had in Dominica last year. So, that's my five minutes. to tell you a little bit about what has been happening in the Caribbean. So, Nigel, I will hand back over to you.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE

Thank you very much, Albert. So, we've heard from basically the ICANN representatives in the various regions, and I'm wondering if there are any other comments that anyone else might want to make that might not have been covered by the ICANN representatives. I mean, individuals might be aware of certain

things that are happening that might not necessarily involve ICANN. So, I see Tracy Hackshaw here in the room.

TRACY HACKSHAW

Sure, I was going to say AOB, but it might be useful to bring it up here. So, I'm with the Universal Postal Union, and for those who don't know, I head up the .post Registry and also the Cyber Resilience Program at the UPU. And what we've done over the last year is create a program for SIDS in cyber resilience, which has attracted some donor funding.

And for the Caribbean, we are working with, let me see if I can remember exactly how many, so it's Anguilla, Grenada, Guyana, Belize, St. Lucia, Turks and Caicos, and maybe one more on building out the postal operators e-commerce platform, which did not exist, and also strengthening their cyber resilience posture.

So, doing capacity development in DNS security and overall, like a small cyber drill. This project is not only for the Caribbean, I'm bringing it up now because it's the Caribbean, but for SIDS and LDCs actually. We've just gotten a request from Tuvalu. So, Tuvalu is about to join this. And I would just like to make an open offer to all who are interested in this.

We have some funding available, and we could probably try and attract further funding to build out the Honor.post platform, so this is why it's relevant, a secure platform for e-commerce, secure transactions, and overall cyber resilience, and perhaps the other

security and security issues we could deal with under that project. And not only that, as I mentioned, we're doing capacity development as well.

So, please approach me if you wish to have a capacity development activity for your territory that focuses on, let me be very specific here, it's what we're calling the e-commerce logistics sector, which means that everybody who's involved in transacting e-commerce, so we're talking about not just the post, but also couriers, shipping companies, airlines, payment providers, banks, and so on, everything in that supply chain, we would like to attract them to provide that cyber resilience strengthening.

And we do focus heavily on DNS security. So, as I said, the Caribbean is benefiting the most from it right now. So, that's an update on the Caribbean side. But hopefully we'll get more than Tuvalu onboarding. And I see all of my colleagues from the Pacific in the room.

So, I'm putting you guys on alert that if you have ability to speak to your ministry, which has the postal operator in it, please do reach out to us so we can reach out back to you and utilize these funds to strengthen your environment, and or do capacity development activity.

It's falling under what we're calling our postal and logistics sector information sharing and analysis center project, which essentially is a project that tries to bring global stakeholders together across

the sector to share information on cyber resilience and to improve their cyber security posture.

So, for those who are being attacked or suffering DNS abuse and those issues, we're putting a platform together where you can share either something that has happened, something that is happening, or prevent future incidents from happening. Thank you.

ALBERT DANIELS

Nigel, I see Maureen's hand but one of the things I had here in my notes to mention was that there was a very significant development in the Caribbean in the recent period. We were able to have the ICANN CEO, President and CEO, visit the Caribbean in a collaborative endeavor with the Caribbean Telecommunications Union for their ICT week.

And this was very impactful from the perspective of engagement with government ministers. He had joint sessions, for example, with the Council of Ministers and the Executive Council. He spoke at the opening ceremony on various topics, and also, he had one-on-one bilaterals and discussions with various countries looking at the topic of WSIS+20. I just thought that I should mention that because this was something that was very important to the Caribbean in terms of engagement at the highest level with ICANN bringing the CEO and president. Sorry for the interruption, Maureen.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE

Yes, thank you for that, Albert. And yes, that was quite impactful. That Jamaica event was, I mean, even beyond the ICANN CEO's presence, that certainly raised the profile and it actually enhanced our outputs as well from the Jamaica event. Tracy, from what you just mentioned, maybe you could put your email contact in the chat for people to reach out, if anything, thereafter. I also saw Maureen's hand up. Maureen, you still wanted to intervene?

MAUREEN HILYARD

Yeah, thank you. Thank you so much. I just wanted to make a brief intervention here relating to a recent program that was provided by Netsafe in New Zealand. And I understand, like it was to do with cyber safety, training sessions for the elderly. And I understand that we were the second group to take part in this operation after Tonga.

And they're actually involving themselves in other islands across the Pacific. And I think we really appreciate the participation of programs such as Netsafe making themselves available for training throughout the Pacific. And I know that APNIC is also engaging in a similar sort of training and it's really important because we don't often get those opportunities.

And it really good, it was very well appreciated by the people. It was well, I think about nearly 30 people attended, which was very

good for a training session. Thanks. I just wanted to mention that. Thank you.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE

Okay. Maybe you could share some information on that or point us to where we could get some information on what the program was and that sort of thing to see if it might be of interest or repeatable in other regions.

MAUREEN HILYARD

Yeah, sure. I will write up a report and send it to our website. Thank you.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE

Okay. Thank you. I see a hand in the room. Please introduce yourself when you speak.

JASBINDAR SINGH

Thank you, Chair. My name is Jasbindar Singh, and I'm from the Fiji Islands, and I'm a first-time ICANN fellow at ICANN85. I'd just like to add on to what Mr. Vocea said in terms of what's happening in the Oceania region, in the Pacific. So, I'm an academic, and I'm from the Fiji National University.

And what we have done this year to refresh the ALS space within Fiji is we've registered ALS. And through that we plan to contribute as much as we can because we are a university which has national reach, and we also have events that happen annually, and one of

the major ones is a conference which is on IT, and it brings together the business community, the government stakeholders, and we also invite people from the region as well to come and contribute to that event.

So, we want to leverage that platform as much as we can and align it back with ICANN's initiatives and capacity building because one of the unique issues that we have across all SIDs is that knowledge management and retention, the migration of the skilled people. So, we are trying to push that as hard as we can so that we can leverage it as much as we can.

So, just putting it out there that that is some of the things that we're doing. We are already in a very good place in terms of what we are doing as a university because we have done smart island projects in Rotuma, and we're trying to put in UA in there by ensuring that we can translate the curriculum into other languages for Savakaviti and Fijian Hindi as well, which is Etoke and Hindi. And there's similar other programs that we are engaged in. So, just a bit from my end. Thank you.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE

Thank you for that. I saw another hand on this side, did I?

SELUVAIA KAUVAKA

I might as well share. Selu from Tonga, ICANN85 fellow. And while we're sharing on Oceania side, I just also want to update on some awarenesses that a small NGO conducts in Tonga, where we

initially conducted a UA Day awareness for the first time ever in Tonga, and it showcased the importance of having more awareness as a small island nation.

We don't get enough of this awareness out, so having this UA Awareness Day in Tonga was very good. Thank you, Champika, for joining us online and conducting training, and also highlighting that we would like more capacity-building opportunities.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE

Thank you for that. So, some things are happening. I see another hand in the room.

NANCY KANASA

Hello, my name is Nancy Kanasa. I'm an ICANN85 fellow for the record. I just want to update on what we are doing in Papua New Guinea. I work with the government, I have my deputy secretary sitting there, Mr. Jesse Secura. Last year we had a digital ICT summit with around 3,000+ participants, including global participants from Starlink, Google, AWS, to name a few.

And this year we'll be also having another one in June, and we're looking forward to having people in the Pacific to come on board, and we're planning to have it bigger and better. I also talked with Tracy to have GAC come into our space to do awareness. Yeah, so just letting you guys know.

JUDITH HELLERSTEIN

The ICT summit, the PICT.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE

Yes, thank you very much. So, there is stuff going on from PNG.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER

Maybe just adding on to my colleagues, just an update, and also in concurrent with, as you mentioned about the Pacific ICT dialogue that's currently happening within the Pacific region, I think my minister actually attended one of the IT events, and there was a gap in terms of the representation. So, that was the initiative that came from that meeting, and then we actually established that forum, and that forum has been successfully adopted within what we call the PIF, Pacific Island Forum, and it's currently been established under that forum to actually, I believe it was adopted just last week.

So, one of our lead officers are currently seconded to formally establish that office. I just want to compliment what Save has mentioned in terms of the Pacific... as a Pacific Islander, we are also organizing ourselves in terms of adoption of the emerging technologies, but of course aligning ourselves properly as a PIF and SIDS within the Pacific region.

But of course, sorry, I didn't get the name, but of course, in terms of the capacity development is one of the, I think, important areas that we need to focus on. Other countries have mentioned in terms of capacity, but especially for the developing states, I think capacity development is from our end in terms of Papua New

Guinea. We have a very huge gap in terms of the capacity development. I welcome the opportunity to engage with my colleague, probably outside of here, to engage how best we can maximize on those opportunities to have our stakeholders.

So, just to give you some context in terms of how we are approaching it, we have digital transformation offices within our government, and some of these digital transformation offices are not up to the skills that is expected of the government organizations to actually adopt the evolving technologies. So, those are the opportunities that from our department we sort of coordinated all of government in terms of upscaling as well.

So, those are opportunities that we have to explore and we look forward to some of those opportunities that may arise and we're open to engage. And I look forward to further engagement in terms of some of this. But of course, in terms of the ICANN, and we had some side discussions with Save in terms of we had some gaps that we need to... we are in the process of reforming our ICT space as well in terms of our country.

So, it's my first time on the record, so I'm just learning as much as possible and also seeing some of the gaps that as a country we can align in terms of the evolving space. So, it's good to be here as well, and thank you for the insights. Thank you.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE

Thank you very much for that. I see Tracy Hacksaw has put in the chat some more details about the UPU initiative, so you can get the information from there. Andrew is the co-chair. I don't know if, Andrew, you want to make any intervention at this point as we are closing off this particular agenda item about activities in the regions.

ANDREW MOLLIVRAE

Thank you, Nigel. I think my colleagues there have covered much of that. I think as Save discovered briefly the activities that are happening in the region. One thing that we lack in the region is probably what you mentioned about the DNSSEC alignments within the ccTLDs in the region.

And of course, with the support of the .au, we were able to start some discussions alongside Pacifica Jet to see where getting started discussion on how to get the Pacific ccTLDs some sort of equal footing so that we can be a trusted space within this region. So, the idea was also to promote the ccTLDs as the brands for business in the region.

One thing that has yet to transpire, and I would say this to colleagues from the Caribbean, is the establishment of an ISP in the region. We still haven't got one, although every island has gone so far in getting it cables into the countries from all over, but we still have that challenge in the ISP. I think the national initiative might

have been there, but there is none where we have something in the pacific.

So, maybe we can learn from what's happening in the Caribbean and in Africa on how this has impacted communication and security within those jurisdictions. So, thank you, Nigel. I just wanted to add that to what my colleagues and Save have said. Thanks.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE

Thank you for that, Andrew. And in fact, I think we could take a note that maybe that ISP idea, we could explore it a little further in a future SID space session. You don't necessarily have to wait for that, but in between there could also be opportunities for us. And in fact, later on in the agenda, we'll probably hear of one. I saw one more hand in the room. Let me just take that one.

DESSYO SIONEHOLO

Greetings, everyone. My name is Dessyo Sioneholo. I'm from Niue. I attend this meeting as a second-year fellow, and I really appreciate the opportunity to hear what's happening in our region as well as finding out what's been offered in terms of capacity building, which is in last year's my first fellowship in Seattle, I became aware of ICANN offering DNS root server software.

And from that meeting, I have to thank Save for assisting this service to be now operated in Niue and APNIC for helping with the setup of that process. And that's been operating now for, I believe,

two months, probably the last country in the Pacific to have a root in their server operating there. And like I said, we appreciate the opportunity to be present in these meetings to see what's available in terms of training, capacity building in our region.

So, we contact our friend here from GAC, which he suggested before, to make connections and take advantage of that. And like Maureen mentioned, we are in a way involved with the program that New Zealand is doing in the Pacific in cybersecurity, but it was never enough. We can always get more when it's available. Thank you.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE

Thank you for that. We will certainly take more time on these updates. But I think part of the reason for having the SIDS piece is for us to share. So, I think it's time well spent. One of the things --

ALBERT DANIELS

Nigel, I see a hand from Claire.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE

Oh, yes. I missed that one. Claire, please go ahead.

CLAIRE CRAIG

Thank you, Nigel and Albert. This is Claire Craig for the record. I just wanted, going back to the conversation about the ISP not happening, I think it's in Fiji, I'm not sure where it was. But I want

to suggest that CaribNOG has done a lot of work in the Caribbean with respect to the implementation of ISPs.

And we have also worked closely with the CTU to implement those in some of the French islands. And we would like to, of course, share our expertise and share some of our experiences with you if you're willing to take that, to hear from us what we could do to make that happen. Thank you.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE

Thank you for that, Claire. And that's exactly what I had in mind, and I think we can take up that particular point after the meeting to see what might be a good next step for this. Right. Moving on in the agenda then. Everyone is aware of the next round of gTLDs that's coming out, that's to be opened shortly.

And certainly, we in the GAC have been advocating for an Applicant Support Program so that the, I guess, operators within that gTLD space could be diversified. And the Applicant Support Program was opened. It's now closed. And we had been trying, we meaning the CTU, had been trying to see if we could draw up support for some applicants from the Caribbean. I don't think we were successful.

In fact, we are not successful as far as the Applicant Support Program is concerned. We will wait to see if we have any intrepid entrepreneurs coming forward during the next round when it

opens. But I was very pleased to find out that among the Applicant Support Program applicants was one from the Cook Islands.

So, I think it would be quite instructive to SIDS around the world to understand what they're thinking, what their business case, what their objectives are with respect to the gTLD that might be relevant to other SIDS going forward.

So, we've invited DotAsia, who in fact are probably leading the Cook Islands Trust in this particular instance, to tell us about their particular initiative. And they will be able to say a lot more than I just said in terms of the specifics of it, and we should see the value of it. So, I'm not sure who's going to present, if it's going to be Evin.

ALBERT DANIELS

It's Evin.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE

Yes. Evin, I'll ask you to introduce yourself and then get into the presentation. Thanks.

EVIN ERDOĞDU

Sure. Thank you so much, Nigel. Hello everyone, Evin Erdoğan speaking. I'm here with Edmon Chung today down at the end. We're from DotAsia organization, Maureen is also with us today in Zoom and she kindly suggested our engagement. So, we're very happy to present to the SIDS space today about the sustainable business case for TLDs in the region, as well as related internet

governance initiatives that DotAsia supports in Asia and the Pacific Islands.

If we could go to the next slide, please Thank you. So, you'll see a brief agenda here. For context, DotAsia is a not-for-profit organization with a mandate to promote internet development and adoption in the Asia-Pacific community. DotAsia operates a sponsored top-level domain designated for the Asia-Pacific community, and it's part of the core global internet infrastructure. It's the first gTLD to be headquartered in Asia, and every DotAsia domain registration contributes to internet development for the Asia Pacific.

We also operate the first and only TLD to have made it through the last Applicant Support Program from 2012, the DotKids TLD. We're using our experience both with DotAsia and DotKids to help bring other NGOs and organizations in APAC into this space, both in the next round this year as well as going forward into the future. Next slide, please.

So, as was mentioned, we have been working with two of our nonprofit Applicant Support Program partners in the Pacific, including the Cook Islands Internet Action Group, and also in Papua New Guinea to bring youth into Internet governance. And today we can share a bit about both initiatives, including how a sustainable business case can be made for a TLD in small island developing states. Next slide, please.

So, whether you're building a brand or spotlighting a geographic region or language on the world stage, uniting a cause or launching a business to offer domain names under a new registry, a new gTLD can be a really powerful tool for commerce and communication.

And as a mentor in the ASP and in the next round, which is about to open end of April, DotAsia is helping provide organizations with a range of financial and non-financial assistance, including access to volunteer professional services and training, some of which you can see on the screen. Asia itself is experiencing the largest Internet growth globally driven by the rapid digital transformation, technological advancements, and increasing digital infrastructure investments, as well as a very large youth population now coming online.

And the Pacific region itself, including other small island developing states, are among the most important regions to develop and bring online into this space to leverage the great benefits of having a TLD. A sustainable business case for a top-level domain revolves around creating long-term value by balancing economic profitability with social impact, and moving beyond short-term registration volume to focus on registry stability, trust, and purpose.

So, targeting niche communities like the small islands, values-driven organizations, or specific industries that prioritize small islands community can create a loyal, sustainable customer base and higher engagement. There's also an element of your brand, or

reputation, so to speak, TLD offers enhanced trust with stakeholders and with the public. The TLD would eventually return surplus for your organization or community and attract long-term registrants and investors.

So, by adopting these practices, a TLD registry could ensure that it doesn't just exist for short-term financial gain, but provides a stable, trusted, and sustainable digital space. And as, again, you can see on the slide, there are a number of services we offer to our ASP partners and wish to share with the broader community, including SIDS. We look at our collaboration over the long term, so not only in terms of supporting the application process or the operation of a TLD, but also supporting regional Internet governance and engagement.

Next slide, please. Thanks. So, as mentioned, DotAsia operates a top-level domain designated for the Asia-Pacific region as part of the core global internet infrastructure, but we also develop and manage the DotKids TLD. This is a specialized, safe internet space launched in 2022 to support children's rights and welfare online. It was the first and only application to have made it successfully through the last Applicant Support Program during the last round in ICANN.

So, we're already excited to see that this round for the Applicant Support Program has received 75 applications, including 12 of our nonprofit partners in the Asia Pacific, including the Cook Islands.

Next slide, please. So, here on the screen, you can see, sorry, the graphics are a little funky, but the .kids domain has been performing over the years with a steady growth in domains under management, or DUMs.

Following its launch in 2022, .kids quickly garnered support from over 50 registrars, which generated significant interest in its first months of availability. And our most recent numbers show a healthy DUM count exceeding 6,000 domains. So, you can see from the top to the bottom there, it's been steadily growing. For context, it took about three years for .kids to achieve operational surplus, and the price per domain fees can vary as well as the target market, but we use .kids as a benchmark for understanding with our TLD partners who are entering this space.

In terms of marketing, we have a spread of relationships with registrars all around the world, so it's a strong registrar reach. We had a big marketing promotion during the launch and over time gradually gained awareness for .kids. We also have regular marketing promotions with partners including first-year crate promotions. And in terms of engagement, we also host related events in Asia and around the world including World Kids Day and any national Children's Day events in Malaysia and Vietnam for instance.

So, .kids and non-profit NGO partners in Asia and Pacific Islands region are demonstrating success and engagement in the region by coming online including increasing engagement for small island

states. If you're interested in learning more about the financial activities and the general operations of a TLD, please find us after this session and we can share more specifics there. And we'd now like to share a little more about our related engagement, not only in operating a TLD, but also bringing developing regions into Internet governance. Next slide, please.

So, this is the EcoInternet Index. It was developed by DotAsia and the APNIC Foundation. It's the first of its kind to compare climate and Internet infrastructure data across APAC. This is especially of interest to many small island states who face some of the more immediate threats of climate change. We started out in 2021 with a pilot and expanded in a 2023 study to 14 APAC jurisdictions.

This year, we're expanding to 20 jurisdictions. In subsequent iterations, we're aiming to reach all of APAC and then use the Eco Internet Index as a global example. The index uses three key metrics. One you can see on the screen is the economy, which compares carbon emissions to the digital economy's advantages. The next one is energy, which measures the use of renewable energy in the grid in each jurisdiction.

And then finally, efficiency, which analyzes network capacity, speed, and bandwidth utilization. So, this is a pretty critical tool for monitoring the environmental impact of the growing Internet, ensuring that digital growth aligns with environmental responsibility. And while we're all here, please do engage with us during ICANN85 as we develop new data for this report. We do have

some Pacific Islands in the list, and we'd love to get more. And we want to help this inform policymakers, but also the industry and civil society. And we'd love to have a small island state be featured as a case study for this report. So, please reach out to us there.

Next slide, please. So, lastly, this was right here in ICANN85 in Mumbai. We'd like to go over a bit of our Internet governance, which includes a growing youth engagement in the Pacific Islands and Asia region. DotAsia currently serves as Secretariat for the Asia-Pacific Regional Internet Governance Forum, or APriGF.

Since 2010, the APriGF convenes annually under a designated theme with a multi-stakeholder approach. There are also smaller national IGFs in the region, which we support, and we're always available to help new jurisdictions, such as small island states, to come into the IGF world. As many of you are aware, our Applicant Support Program partner, the Cook Islands Internet Action Group has been active in mobilizing the Pacific Islands region in the Internet governance community, and we're also contributing to engaging youth in particular in the region.

We're working with the state and indigenous community of Hawaii to launch the first school on Internet governance and youth Internet governance forum there. And in Papua New Guinea, we're launching a youth capacity building program in cyber defense including case studies in DNS abuse mitigation with local students. So, I note that there are a couple of representatives here in the room with us from Papua New Guinea, so that's great.

We would love to also work with you there. We're working with Russell Deka Harada, who's in a local university there, so it would be great to connect the dots there. Next slide, please. Okay, so then finally, DotAsia supports NetMission, which is the longest-standing youth internet governance program in the world. NetMission promotes APAC youth engagement in internet governance, including training of youth and students in the NetMission Academy program.

And each year we receive hundreds of applications training the next generation of leaders in internet governance. So, we hope to also get more interest from small island developing states as well. Next slide, please. Okay, so those are some initiatives that may be of interest to the Small Islands community, and we hope you all found this helpful.

I know we're probably running a little tight on time too, but we're happy to take some questions, and we encourage you to please reach out to us after the session to learn more or collaborate with us on these fronts. So, thanks very much, everyone, for your time and attention.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE

Thank you very much, Evin. I'm just wondering, with respect to the Cook Islands initiative, whether there is any information that could be shared right now in terms of what the use, I guess, the gTLD

might be put to for them. I don't know if that's disclosable right now.

EDMON CHUNG

Edmon here. Maureen is -- yeah.

MAUREEN HILYARD

Edmon, I'll just do very, very briefly, just before you come with your wise words. But this opportunity sort of came upon us really through Edmon's interest in involving small island developing states in this new project, of course, which he's going to explain to you, I hope. But like we really, I just realized that it would be a great opportunity that DotAsia has actually offered us to sort of like, even to be part of the applicant support stage, which is where we're at the moment.

But I think that, I've sort of got a special sort of like interest in this, which I sort of can't explain at the moment. But I do want to say that we really appreciated the support that DotAsia has actually given us as a small island developing state, a very small island developing state, to actually be part of this major project, which I hope Edmon will explain, because it's quite a comprehensive project in itself, but it does give -- what DotAsia is actually offering is like a very inclusive project, which as Evin said, is really trying to encourage more participation from organizations that may not ever really get an opportunity to be part of an application process, such as ICANN's offering at the moment.

But I'll let Edmon explain it to you better about what were the underpinning objectives were with regards to the project that we're actually working on at the moment. Edmon, over to you.

EDMON CHUNG

Yeah. Thank you, Maureen. Just adding two quick things. One, well, DotAsia has been supporting a number of different NGOs and especially internet community organizations to make use of the ICANN Applicant Support Program for new gTLDs. But the thing is, there's still a rough road ahead. Just because we go through the Applicant Support Program doesn't mean we can get a new gTLD.

There is string contention, a lot of things. So, the whole process could be a bit daunting, but I guess that's where DotAsia can provide a little bit of support through the application process and string selection, and dealing with string contention and so on. The second thing I want to add is a lot of things that Evin mentioned is in early stage, although, yes, the applications have been submitted, but the new gTLD application hasn't. In fact, the window hasn't even opened.

The other thing is about NetMission and the youth programs, those are some of the things that we like to bring to our partners as well. And in PNG, for example, we were exploring various different things and right now exploring maybe gathering some of the young people from PNG to talk a little bit more about internet governance and connecting them to the youth networks around Asia Pacific.

Those things are in very much an exploratory stage, and that's why we're here, we want to talk to all of you. And we've traditionally, we have to admit, we've traditionally been more active in the main of Asia, but we are from the Asia-Pacific community as well, and we're working hard with Maureen's help to reach out to the Pacific Islands.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE

Thank you very much. It sounds like we may want to revisit this topic at a subsequent meeting. I'm looking at the time, and I think it is useful for us to try to get to hear from the ICANN office of the Chief Technical Officer, because there are some opportunities available for SIDS capacity building that we've been talking about. Let me invite Mr. Champika from the ICANN OCTO's office to tell us a bit about that. Over to you.

CHAMPIKA WIJAYATUNGA

Thank you very much. Just for the record, I'm Champika, and I am from the ICANN Technical Engagement Team that comes under the office of the CTO. So, I basically cover the capacity building technical engagement in the Asia-Pacific region. And just like myself, we have our team members covering the other regions as well. So, we have team members covering the North America, the South America, the Caribbean, Europe, Middle East, Africa, and Asia Pacific.

So, we have been doing a lot of these technical engagement capacity building in the region. So, my colleague David Hoberman, who was there during the last discussion with you, I guess, during the last ICANN82 SIDS meeting. So, based on those discussions, there have been some work happening around this capacity building program that we'd like to propose in the small island developing states.

So that's what I wanted to share with you, and my colleague David has actually worked with Albert as well, I think, on this, and then put together this draft so that we can look into that. So, let me try to share that and then quickly go through that as well. Okay, of course, you can refer to this. I'm not going to go through every minor thing here. But the whole idea is that, to come up with say, a three-day type program.

Now, this can be variable because we try to cater for different audiences. And then, because during the last meeting, I was not there, but then what I got to know was that there have been some discussions on this, and then there were some things like limited awareness of ICANN and then lack of technical capacity, DNS resilience gap, and low participation in ICANN ecosystem. Some of these things were identified as some of the challenges in SIDS countries.

So this is why this program is trying to actually have some more collaboration with different organizations, ICANN, and then various other subject matter experts in the region. So, we try to have some

more collaboration and put together this capacity building program. Now, the main target audience that we are looking at here, first of all, we try to target for like 30 to 60 participants. They can be drawn from different host countries that we are referring here in different regions. We can also try to attract some of the neighboring countries as well. If you go to a certain country, we can try to attract those nearby countries.

Now, mainly the audience, they can spend for three different tiers. One is the government and government officials and regulators and so on. They will get to know more about ICANN, then having some awareness about ICANN activities and so on. And then the other audience group is the technical operators. So, they are kind of more technical stakeholders, like the ISP engineers, it can be ccTLD operators, and network engineers and so on, telcos, ISPs especially. So, these types of technical staff here we are talking about.

So, we try to achieve more hands-on technical skills here covering DNS, DNSSEC, and root servers, and security, and so on. And the other audience group is actually the civil society and broader stakeholders here. So, these can be ISOC chapters, then the At-Large structures as well, academics, and even private sector, and so on. So basically, they will be focused more in relation to the content covering ICANN multi-stakeholder process and so on.

So, these are the main three audience groups that we are looking to target out of this capacity building program. Now, with regard

to the delivery team, as I said earlier, we are trying to have some more collaboration with different stakeholder organizations, and so on. So OCTO TE, this is our team, is involved here. So, we plan to have one staff from the OCTO team covering that particular region.

So, for example, like myself in the Asia-Pacific region, or Nico in the Latin American and Caribbean region, and so on, right? Then we have the stakeholder engagement staff, just like what Save said before. Even for that matter, myself, Save, we have been to a lot of these SIDS countries as well in the past. So, we try to have that collaboration within our organization with different teams.

And of course, the technical engagement staff will be the main resource person in terms of the technical side of it, the training delivery aspects and technical contents and provisioning of the lab infrastructure if there's a need, things like that. And whereas the stakeholder engagement staff will cover more to the ICANN awareness-related contents and also coordinating the logistics and things like that.

And then we also plan to have some more subject matter experts. These experts can be one or two experts. They can be from network operators because in many of these countries there are network operator groups as well. And then there are ISP operators, ccTLD managers and so on. So, we can try to tap into those resources and try to get some subject matter experts who can also contribute to this program.

And also, there are RIRs as well, because some of these RIRs, they have their capacity building programs, so we could tap into those resources. And then we also actually want to have some local champions. This is mainly to have some resource people from that particular SIDS country as well. And they can, of course, contribute further because they are local people, and they can be involved more as well later on, especially for sustainability as well.

Now, so these are the kind of -- so we are planning to have, this kind of a group, so which can consist of three to four members who will be going out and conducting this program. Now, with regard to the program structure, again, I'm not going to go through every content matter here, but generally, this is this kind of proposed structure that we have. So, I said earlier that this can be a three-day program.

So the third day can be more optional for more technical engineers and who want to really go into more technical things, whereas the first two days can be more open to the others. So, day one, this is to create some awareness about the ICANN ecosystem, have some outreach there. And also, you can see who can lead these sessions as well. Based on our discussions earlier, we can give some understanding about how the Internet works, and then all these ICANN multi-stakeholder ecosystem and then the SOs, ACs and so on and their roles and how the SIDS can be involved in this process.

And we can plan to have some more discussions coming from them as well, share their experiences, have some more interactive

sessions and things like that, more panel discussions and so on. There is also some focus given to DNS resilience from that particular country's perspective, discuss more about the root server infrastructure, how we can have some more root server deployments, and then internet exchange points and so on.

And then to get them in to participate in the ICANN process as well so that we can go through things like fellowship program, how they can be involved in ICANN and ICANN Learn, for example, and then the At-Large ccNSO structure, the GAC, and so on. So, that's the kind of day one program, which is mostly targeted for the, in general, it can be the regulators, and it can be At-Large structures and so on. And then in the day two, we would go into more details into technical hands-on training.

Now, we do the technical engagement team. We have hands-on infrastructure, actually. It is virtual infrastructure. Even now, when we go out to some of these countries, we try to provide these lab facilities virtual infrastructure so that the participants can get more hands-on experience, the real-life type of experience as well. So, we can go into more deep details here, and then things like DNSSEC deployment and so on, network security and so on.

And then on day three, as I said, this can be more optional. So, this is specifically someone who wants to have some more advanced contents, things like, say, if you are a ccTLD, you can go into more key management-related contents, key rollovers and signing zones and things like that. And then, how they can participate, again, in

the ICANN process in the future. You can go through more details later, but some of the expected outcomes of this whole exercise is to actually have some measurable results out of this.

So these can be measured, things like awareness, how much awareness that we can provide this and how we can engage with them. And then if we can see some new participants coming in, if we can even get five to ten new participants, say, for example, if they can even subscribe to a mailing list or even follow some ICANN Learn courses, or even if we see some applications coming for ICANN fellowships, for example, these are all measurable things that we can try to achieve out of this.

And then from a technical perspective, if they are practicing the best practices, there are some frameworks like kindness, for example. So, if they are joining the kindness program or the framework, if they are deploying DNSSEC and if we see some ccTLD signing their zones, these are all measurable things. And then we can also try to have some more regional connections as well. If they subscribe to SIDS mailing list and if there is some more traffic in these mailing lists, and then if they're contributing to NOG, Network Operator Groups in their communities and so on.

So, these are all measurable things that we can try to achieve. And then there are some little bit of things that, yep, I will just quickly summarize here. I mean, site selection is something that I think, for example, like in Latin America and Caribbean, there is this ICANN Near to You. Similar to that, we can look into some of the site

selection scopes, things like if we have not done much of the engagement in a certain country, we can try to prioritize those.

And then if we see that if there are some countries we don't have that much of ICANN participation in various ICANN SOs, ACs, and so on, we can try to give some more priority there. We can try to co-locate with some of the local events like NOG events and various other regional meetings and so on. So, we can try to identify suitable locations based on all these factors. And then finally, what are the success factors that we can try to achieve out of this program? We should not be working in silos.

Always have some collaboration with different parties, different organizations, different stakeholder groups and so on and try to achieve this, and then basically give some value to the small island nations here so that their governments and so on, they get some value out of this and then they can have some more DNS resilience in their infrastructure, especially in their critical infrastructure and so on.

Also, it will be good to have some kind of assessment before we get there. Things like doing some surveys and try to understand that particular economy, that location, so that we can try to cater the materials accordingly based on that. Because we can't put all the countries into the same level as such, especially even if you take the Asia-Pacific, it's very diverse and similar to the other regions as well.

And then to basically hold their hand and take them through these capacity building programs and to actually build their capacity. So, that's the sort of very quickly just wanted to share this draft document that we have put together. Thank you for your input as well, and hopefully we'll get your feedback. Thank you.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE

Thank you very much, Champika. So, one would interface with the ICANN stakeholder rep in the particular region to pursue this, as that might be necessary.

CHAMPIKA WIJAYATUNGA

Yes.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE

Okay, Karel, if you could make your intervention brief, I'd appreciate it.

KAREL DOUGLAS

Very brief. Thank you, Nigel. Karel Douglas, Trinidad and Tobago GAC. Of course, this is a fantastic initiative. And I just wanted to indicate very quickly that these programs, they need a component where there's going to be a lot of interaction. And I've noticed in the past, even from the capacity building exercises that we've done in the GAC, when it's too much of a one-way street, people tend to either become less interested or they don't have an opportunity to

explore things that they need to explore or understand things that they need to understand.

So, it's just to say it's a very simple comment. Make sure as far as possible, have an interactive session, a lot of interactive sessions so people could actually delve into the topics, and it's not just necessarily a one-way activity. And that's it really, Nigel. Thank you so much.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE

Thank you very much, Karel. We are kind of at time. There is one more item I wanted to mention, which was our SIDS IGF. This is an initiative that had been started by the CTU back in 2022. We've had two instances. Oh, I'm sorry. Yes, the CTU and the UN IGF Dynamic Coalition on SIDS, correct, that we had started back in 2022. We've had two instances, 2022 and in 2024. 2022 was totally online, 2024 was hybrid in that it was co-located with the UN's SIDS 4 conference in Antigua and Barbuda.

So, we had both online sessions and in-person sessions in that one. And we are planning to have a third SIDS IGF session this year. So, we've been on a kind of a every other year cycle, and this year we are hoping to have it be staged from Mauritius. So, whereas we had the first two based in the Caribbean, we're hoping to have Mauritius stage this particular instance of the SIDS IGF.

And the dates we have is somewhere between July 29th and August 1st. It's still in the planning stages, and I've put in the, or I am

putting in the chat, just for you to keep an eye on the CTU website at ctu.int for further information about the evolving SIDS IGF. We were expecting to have online the persons from Mauritius, but I didn't see them. I didn't see him come up. Oh, okay, so Maureen might have a further word that you can give us. So, Maureen?

MAUREEN HILYARD

Yeah, just, unfortunately, Mahin [ph] from Mauritius is unable to join us, but just very, very briefly. Yes, they are planning, the Hale Movement Coalition in Mauritius is actually planning on having their IGF, but they want to include, because they've been involved in our -- and now there are sort of like SID sessions in the IGF, and they want to include the DC SIDs group as well.

And the Mauritian group, of course, they've got Indian Ocean Islands. All the Indian Ocean Islands are actually sort of like going to be attending. So, it's an opportunity for all the SIDs to collaborate, if at all possible. So, this will be... it also is proposing to be the first in-person engagement, if we can get some representatives from the Pacific and the Caribbean to also participate.

So, we're probably going to be sort of looking at ICANN to sort of like see what support we can get from them. But it really is an opportunity, I think, for us to make a start on seeing about having the SIDS teams working together, and I think that this is an ideal

opportunity we should take advantage of if at all possible. I'll leave it there.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE

Yes, thank you very much, Maureen. I don't think we have time for any other business, but I think we've gone through quite a good bit of business this morning in this session. So, suffice to say, I'll say thanks to all the participants in person and online. Maybe give a word as well to my co-chair, Andrew.

Not hearing Andrew. Yes, he's probably off on another mission because we are a little bit over. So, yes, I'll say thanks to everyone. Thanks to ICANN for hosting us in this space. They responded positively to our entry to make a space for SIDS because it's not a natural part of the ICANN geographical division. So, we very much appreciate it.

So, thanks to all the presenters, thanks to DotAsia for providing the information. I think we'll be revisiting that later on this year or maybe in the next SIDS space session as well with respect to operating a gTLD and the possibilities for small island developing states. So, with that, thanks all and we'll see you all at the next one. Okay.

ANDREW MOLLIVRAE

Thank you.

MAUREEN HILYARD

Bye, everyone.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE

Thanks, Albert, for the help as well.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]