
ICANN86 Seville | PF – GAC Discussion on New gTLD Program Next Round
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GULTEN TEPE

Welcome to the ICANN86 GAC Discussion on New gTLD's next Round Session on Tuesday 9th of June at 14:45 local time. Please note that this session is being recorded and is governed by the ICANN Expected Standards of Behavior, ICANN Community Participant Code of Conduct, and the ICANN Community Anti-Harassment Policy.

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NICOLAS CABALLERO

Thank you very much, Gulden. I hope everybody had time to enjoy the fantastic Spanish food at this point. So, welcome to this session. This is our discussion on New gTLDs. This is our ninth session here in Seville. And can you move on to the next slide, please?

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

As you can see on the agenda for today, we're going to have, of course, the introduction and walkthrough with Marco Hogewoning from the Netherlands, and then some updates on the 2026 round, and we have Marika Konings, Kristy Buckley, and Elisa Busetto, some key takeaways from capacity development sessions.

I assume, Tracy, you will be joining us here at the head table in 10 or 15 minutes. And then Marco is going to work us walk us through the government preparations for the next round and hopefully a good 10 or 15 minutes for a Q&A session. So, that's the agenda. Over to you, Marco.

MARCO HOGEWONING

Thank you Mr. Chairman. Also from my place, welcome back everybody. Hope you had a nice lunch as Nico said. We have 75 minutes, so we can be a bit flexible on time, yet, we know that time flies. So, without further ado, and of course, yesterday, we already had a lot of information from ICANN Staff pertaining to the next round.

So, let me welcome back Marika Konings, Kristy Buckley, and Elisa Busetto back to the stage for providing us a further update, and I believe you also are going to get into some of the current statistics of the ISP program. So, there is some new information here, but for now, I'm happy to hand over to, I guess, you Marika?

MARIKA KONINGS

Yes, thank you very much, Marco. Hello, everyone, we're back. My name is Marika Konings, and I'm the lead for the New gTLD program. As Marco said, we did already spend quite a bit of time yesterday with you, walking through some of the background and key information in relation to the program.

So, I think for some of the information that you may have seen yesterday as well will go pretty quick, but as mentioned, there is also some new information in here that, of course, we want to share with you as well. Of course, if you have any questions, do feel free either to post comments in the chat or after the session, we're also available to take any questions you may have.

So, we go to the next slide please. This is just to note what we'll be covering today. I'll briefly give you an overview of where we're at with the 2026 round. Kristy will talk about the Applicant Support Program. I have some slides on objections and appeals.

And again, we'll focus on kind of what is new, what we didn't cover yesterday, and then some information on readiness resources that are available for those of you that have questions or want to know more, and I think then you have indeed your separate conversation on emerging considerations and practical approaches. Go to the next slide, please. And the next one. And one more. Too many placeholder slides.

So, we shared this with you yesterday, program has opened its window for applications on the 30th of April. The window for applications will remain open in the 12th of August. Probably also

worth mentioning here that at the same time as we opened the window for gTLD applications, we also reopened the window of applications for registry service providers to apply.

You may recall that they were able to apply during what we called a pre-evaluation window, but this is an opportunity for those that did not apply throughout that window to do so now. This may also be worth reminding those that may be involved in an application or supporting applicants, please do not wait until the last minute to submit your application.

If you're encountering issues, it's much better and much easier for us to assist you earlier. Because also note that the due date for payment is seven days after the close of the application window. So, again, please do not leave things to the last minute, because otherwise you may be penalizing yourself. If we go to the next slide, and again I won't dwell on that one, this is maybe just for those that were not in the room yesterday.

This is a slide that we've shared with you previously as well that is setting out the key milestones for the program over the next couple of months. Important reminder here is again these are projections. These are based on the assumptions and planning that we've done up to date on the assumption of receiving 2,000 applications.

Once the window closes and we're able to assess the actual number of applications received as well as the type of applications that have been received, we'll be able to update our planning, and

on that basis as well, confirm the dates for these different milestone events.

And I think the main one or at least the initial one is, of course, specific interest I think to many of you is Reveal Day which is the first time we'll be publishing all the strings as well as application related information for everyone to start reviewing and assessing, which then a number of opportunities for input and objections kicking off the moment we publish the final list of strings and applications on String Confirmation Day.

Then we can go to the next slide, I think. Just something for you to flag or a little bit of a promotional update. Later this week, there is a session across community dialogue on the feasibility of a platform for ASP supported New gTLDs. This is taking place, Thursday, last session of the day. I know it's maybe not the most popular slot, but we do hope we can welcome a good number of participants to participate in the conversation we would like to have here.

This is the result of GAC advice that was provided originally in ICANN79 and then follow up at ICANN80 and there were subsequent exchanges with the ICANN boards relating to the concept of leveraging contracting and potentially financing a platform for ASP supported New gTLDs.

I think the focus of the session is going to be as well making sure one understands what is the role of a registry service provider, what are some of the barriers that may exist for these services, and

potentially as well for ASP applicants to access these types of services so that again there can be a mutual understanding of what problems may need further work or needing addressing.

The session will be moderated by Becky Burr who I hope you're all familiar with, a former Board member and very knowledgeable in this space. And we'll have speakers and panelists from the GAC, GNSO, ALAC, as well as RSP providers.

So, again, we hope that will be a good conversation and will help everyone align and understand and appreciate the activities in this space, the different roles that these providers play in the ecosystem, as well as what barriers may exist that need further conversation or addressing. So, with that, I think my bit is done. I think I'll hand over to Kristy.

KRISTY BUCKLEY

Thanks, Marika. Hello, everyone. My name is Kristy Buckley, and I serve as the lead for the Applicant Support Program, or ASP. If we can go to the next slide. This is the section I'll provide a brief status update on the Applicant Support Program.

So, those of you that may visit the website may see that we have a number of tables on the statistics of the website, those are updated monthly. But this is a consolidated table that provides essentially all of that information in one place. So, here you see on the far left, dark blue column, and the far right, purple column, the regional distribution of the applications that we've received for the ASP.

And I'll just take an example of these to walk for you. So, in Africa, the top line here, we had a total of 10 ASP applications. Thank you. Of those 10 applications from Africa, eight are small businesses, two of which are still in application processing, and six have already qualified.

Two of those applicants from the Africa region are nonprofits or charities. And one of those is still in process and one of those has qualified. In Asia Pacific, the row below that, we have a total of 36. The distribution of the types of entities that these were, were split between small business, nonprofit, and social impact entities.

And at the bottom of the table, you'll see a row that shows the total number in process or qualified for each of the entity types. So, hopefully, this is a helpful synthesis of the statistics that we provide on the ASP website. Just a couple of things I'll note at the bottom. The totals do not include any withdrawn or ineligible applications, though so far, we've had very few of those.

I'll also note that we did have some applicants apply under more than one entity type. So, they may have applied as a nonprofit and a social impact, for example. So, the data that's in the table reflects the category in which the applicant ultimately qualified, even if they applied under multiple categories. So, I hope this is a helpful update on where we're at on ASP processing. I know that a number of GAC representatives and other community members have asked about ensuring that we get ASP evaluation results as soon as possible.

The team is working as efficiently as it can. We did receive over 80% of all ASP applications in the final month that the application window was open in December, which created a bit of a bottleneck in terms of the processing, but we have added additional resources. The outside evaluator has added additional resources and we're moving through as quickly as we can. With that, I will turn it over to my colleague Elisa to cover briefly about objections and appeals. Thank you.

ELISA BUSETTO

Thank you, Kristy, everybody. Next slide, please. So, yesterday we spent quite some time discussing the different ways the community and GAC members and observers, as well as the GAC as a whole, have to provide input on New gTLD applications. Today we're only going to give a very brief update regarding objections and appeals and funding available to national governments to file objections and appeals.

Here's just a quick overview of what objections and appeals are. Parties withstanding may file objections against applications to have them considered by a panel on different grounds that are listed here. As a reminder, the main objection window takes place for 104 days following String Confirmation Day. Panel determination can be appealed, unlike the last round, and there are certain costs associated.

And in the next slide, please. Here you can see that funding is available for national governments to file one objection and one

appeal subject to certain conditions. And to submit a request, the governments will have to fill out a form and send it to ICANN at a dedicated email address within a specified timeline. We will perform necessary due diligence and inform the government of the result.

The funding is only meant to cover filing fees and costs, but not legal fees or similar, and payments will be made directly to the dispute resolution service provider from ICANN. So, we just wanted to share with you that the detailed instructions on how a national government can request funding to file objections and appeals was just published on the New gTLD website, and the link is included in the slide that I think will be published soon. And this was it from my end. And back to Kristy, I think.

KRISTY BUCKLEY

Thank you, Elisa. If we could go to the next slide. So, another hat that I wear in the New gTLD Program is supporting readiness for the community, for applicants, for staff, and for vendors that are involved. So, this slide outlines resource materials that we have available, and this is tailored specifically for the GAC. So, as Elsia mentioned yesterday, of course, the authoritative source is the 2026 round Applicant Guidebook, and we know that 400 pages of very dense information is not necessarily easy to digest.

And so, there are a number of other resources to help GAC members and observers and maybe other colleagues that you may have that you would like to brief on this information is available

here. So, we have information about the community input, objections, and appeals, including a workbook for the GAC that we presented during ICANN85, I believe.

We have key topic overviews available that are sort of one to two-page briefing documents on things like early warnings, GAC consensus advice, objections and appeals, and so on. So, those may be helpful for a quick briefing. And as always, we have a lot of information available on the website that we regularly update, so keep an eye out there. And with that, I believe I'm turning it back to you, Nico. Is that right? Okay, thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO

Thank you so much, Kristy. And thank you very much for this overview of the 26th round, Marika, Kristy, and Elisa. As a matter of fact, I would kindly ask you to stay with us for a mini Q&A session now for maybe, I don't know, 10 or 15 minutes before we move on to our key takeaways from the capacity development sessions. But at this point, let me open the floor for comments, questions, or anything you would like to ask our distinguished colleagues. I have China, Indonesia, and the European Commission. China, please.

GUO FENG

Guo Feng from China for the record. Thank you for this presentation. Actually, my question is about the Applicant Guidebook. Last December, ICANN released the V1 version of the Applicant Guidebook, and besides the English version, we have

other language available. But however, this April, we see that the V2 version of the Applicant Guidebook is released and I can only find the English version, but I think there will be a couple of applicants from Chinese community to apply for the New gTLD.

So, I'm taking this opportunity to ask whether we have another version of the Applicant Guidebook, including a Chinese version for the V2 version of the current Applicant Guidebook. Thank you.

MARIKA KONINGS

Yeah, thank you for that question. That's a good point. I will need to take that back. It is worth reminding everyone that the translated versions are made available for ease, that the authoritative version is the English version. But I think you raise a good point that we may want to look at the translated versions that are available, that we also make sure that they align with what the latest version is. And I think we are easily kind of tracking what has changed, so it shouldn't be a major lift. But we'll take that back, but thank you for pointing that out.

NICOLAS CABALLERO

Thank you, China. Thank you, Marika, for the answer. I have Indonesia next.

ASHWIN

SASONGKO

Yes, Ashwin from Indonesia for the record. Just a simple question.

SASTROSUBROTO

It was mentioned that ICANN will be funding to file objection and appeals. So, my question is if we want to file objections, do we have

to pay for ICANN, and if you have to pay, how much is it? And the cost we have to prepare for ICANN. Thank you.

ELISA BUSETTO

Thank you. So, if you want to file an objection or an appeal that has a cost, and what ICANN is doing is providing funding to cover for the cost of that objection or appeal. So, you will not have to pay up front, but you will have first to send a request to ICANN which will be reviewed.

And after the approval of the request that you have sent to ICANN, you will be able to file the objection. If the request is approved, you will not have to send any money directly to the RSPs, but it will be us taking care of that. And I think that it would be helpful if you could take a look at the instructions that we have just published on the website. I will also share the link on Zoom so you can refer to that.

NICOLAS CABALLERO

Thank you, Elisa. I have the European Commission.

MARTINA BARBERO

Thank you very much, Nico, and thank you everybody for the presentation. I have one question. Sorry. One question on the timeline. As we all understood the change of location of ICANN87 and I see that the Reveal Day is in October. So, I know it's impossible probably for you to tell, but do you have any sense of

whether you will try to have Reveal Day before we all gather in Indonesia for the AGM or afterwards.

And then a small comment from what we heard from European stakeholders that are dealing with the system for the application, there seems to be a lot of US grounded terminology and requests for documents that do not entirely or exist in the same format in the European jurisdiction. I'm sure that ICANN Org is aware of this, but I just wanted to reiterate that it would be important to provide guidance.

And I'm particularly concerned about new applicants because what I heard was from applicants that already experienced the previous round and I had figured out how to submit these non-European existing documents. But for new applicant it's very important to have very specific guidelines on how to find, for instance, proof of good standing which seems to be a non-European concept.

MARIKA KONINGS

Thank you very much. Maybe starting with that last question, I think in many cases it will say or equivalent to what exists in your local jurisdiction. I know that same concept doesn't exist in Europe, but I know I can go to my commune and get a certificate that says that I don't have any conviction. So, again, we expect applicants to provide something that's equivalent.

However, should we determine that that's not exactly what we were looking for, that will of course be a clarifying question going to applicants and say, hey, actually, we need this information. So, it's not just because you haven't found it that that's immediately an issue. And that's also where if an applicant has doubts, feel free to reach out to our global support colleagues to ask for clarifications.

But I think where possible, we've indicated equivalent but I know that's not always potentially easy to find. On your question, and I think from our perspective, obviously, yes, if we're able to and it fits within the timeline, we think there is probably a benefit, especially for groups like the GAC to have that information available prior to the ICANN meeting.

But as I said, we need to do our assessment and make sure that we have everything in place and everything ready to be able to do that, but we definitely recognize the value there is for groups that come together here to potentially start their work on assessing and reviewing that information.

NICOLAS CABALLERO

Thank you so much, Marika. I see no more hands in the room or online. So, at this point, let me handle the floor to my distinguished colleague Marco from the Netherlands on topic number three.

MARCO HOGEWONING

Thank you. If we can advance the slides. And my colleague Tracy has also joined us. Moving on, please, to -- one slide further, I think, or two slides further. One more. Okay, while we sort this out, what we're doing next, and again thank you for the staff for providing us with a lot of information yesterday as you recall. What I thought and felt like was a very successful second half of capacity development.

It seems those interactive sessions do attract a lot of people, and it also seems to get you off your feet. It was quite nice to see, sort of sit in the back for a bit and see those lively groups discussing with flip charts. What we're trying to do next, and if I can get the next slide, is the takeaways. Now, of course, yesterday, we had already a bit of a wrap-up and we took note, and that somewhere in my mailbox are pictures of the slides we use.

But as you can see here, we have several opportunities, and our staff just highlights early warnings, we have advice, you can, may or may not file objections provided you have standing and funding. There's the public comment route, and also thank you for reminding us about sort of the criticality of certain timing, and I think that's also to reiterate also so for us here.

There is a lot of options for GAC, for the community to provide input into the process, but a lot of those times it requires timely input. Once Reveal Day is there, once string confirmation is there, we are bound by timers that are encoded in the AGB, so there is not a lot of leeway for us to delay, we have to move.

And of course, then we also talked a bit yesterday about how do we prepare ourselves and then with ourselves not only us here in the GAC room but also the people back home in capital, our colleagues in different departments in different agencies. You see the question here on the screen, but I don't know if, Tracy, you have anything to add here?

TRACY HACKSHAW

Yes, thank you, Marco, Tracy Hackshaw here. One of the things I think we came up with yesterday was the discussion around whether or not those for those members who were not involved in 2012 have things changed in terms of modality. So, for 2012, the majority of our meetings were done in-person, even intercessionally, we were still very much an in-person driven organization.

And of course, since then and certainly since 2020 or thereabouts, we've moved a lot of the work to online type work, so calls online and also email online. So, an interesting point that came up yesterday which I thought was very pertinent was can we do, given the timing issue, can we actually do what the work that we want to do intercessionally and potentially utilizing the technology that's available.

So, in other words, is it possible to generate advice online utilizing email collaboration or similar? Obviously, a call. And is it possible to do the consensus building and discussing with others, if not

entirely with the GAC, but certainly amongst ourselves in that model?

The GAC members and observers think about that modality because I think that's important in our new situation given the timelines, et cetera. And also, it's very important I think for us to look carefully at the previous case studies that we went through yesterday. We went through a few of them, at least certainly in my group and I think in a few other groups.

There's existing work that was done in 2012 that could inform what is happening in 2026 and beyond. And I think it will be helpful if you take a look at that material from the early warnings and the advice to get a sense of what could potentially happen and how we might be able to deal with it in 2026. Thank you.

MARCO HOGEWONING

Thank you, Tracy. And indeed, yeah, fair point. If we look at the timers, one on the four days, at best, we have two meetings. And that's all we have. So, I think really taking away your point, there probably will be a need to do something intersectional. Good.

With that, and handing it back to the floor now a bit, is you as members, as participants, looking back at what we just heard, what we've been discussing yesterday, what can we, and we've also been discussing this as leadership also in our retreat, what can we do collectively as GAC to help each other, but also what can we do as

leadership, but what can we ask from staff in facilitating, what's the next step?

And Tracy said, there is of course also the materials from 2012 that we can look at, but also to remind you that over the last few meetings, we have developed a brand-new early warning process. That's essentially final now, I think it's in last call. So, we've done, but what's the next step? What can we do? How can we help us and help our colleagues back in capital to get into this workflow?

As Martina said, somewhere in October, November, there is this long list, hopefully a few thousand domain names, and how are we going to do this? How are we going to find each other? So, I guess I'm done talking here. I'm looking for hands and I already see a few online. So, first one up is the United Kingdom, correct?

CRAIG STANLEY-ADAMSON

Thank you very much. Craig Stanley-Adamson, UK GAC for the record. I'd first just like to say that the interactive session yesterday was fantastic, so thank you very much to everyone for putting that on. It was really useful and it was great to see so many colleagues taking an active part and yeah that was particularly useful.

Obviously, we have another meeting coming up in October just before, so it might be an idea to have another similar kind of session particularly that we might have GAC representatives in that room that have not made it to this. I think potentially another option is looking at some of the intersessional things we can do as

a GAC. Virtual calls, for example, across the different time zones. Just for example, the UK is very happy to share some of the experiences we have had.

Hopefully other colleagues might be able to do the same. The UK has started our preparation in earnest. We are at a good stage. Very happy to share our experience, noting that others will do things slightly differently, but it's perhaps useful for all GAC representatives just to understand how others are approaching it. So, please do feel free to look to the UK to help in some of this intersessional work if that's how the GAC decides to go. Thank you.

MARCO HOGEWONING

Thank you, Craig, and much appreciate the help. We're taking notes. We'll come back to you. Ian, Australia.

IAN SHELDON

Thank you, Marco. And just to support the UK's comments there, I thought it was a particularly good session with excellent participation from a good sweep of the GAC members.

What I found particularly helpful was the exercise, at least, that we ran in that corner back there, trying to map out the process from pre-early warnings, early warnings all the way through to advice, and kind of taking your point around making sure we are hitting the right things at the right time, we understand the steps we need to go through, how to make sure that if we do issue advice, it is useful and well understood.

And in our corner, we started to map out some of those steps in order. I'm wondering if there might be some value in collating some of the notes collected on Butcher's paper and start mapping a couple of those quite basic steps out, because I think it was quite useful, at least in our group, to compare experiences and flush out some of those steps which may not have been completely apparent to all of the participants.

So, suggestion from myself and maybe something to consider with the assistance of support staff and the leadership that we could take away. Thanks.

MARCO HOGEWONING

That too is a nice suggestion. My queue right now is the European Commission and Switzerland. So, Martina, please.

MARTINA BARBERO

Thank you very much, Marco. I think I want to underline how the human collaboration dimension is very important and was being highlighted by all my colleagues. Sorry my voice is a bit low. But since we are in the AI age, I also wanted to reiterate the request to ICANN Org to provide data on the application in machine readable format that can be easily processed by whichever AI tool we do have as public authorities in their respective countries which can help. At least we complement human intelligence of the GAC with some automated tools when possible.

NICOLAS CABALLERO

Something like CSV or even PDF right whatever? Marika?

MARIKA KONINGS

Yeah, and thanks. I think we've previously confirmed that we will be able to do that.

MARCO HOGEWONING

Thank you, Marika. Jorge, Switzerland.

JORGE CANCIO

Thank you, Marco; Jorge, Switzerland for the record. So, just to support what Marika and others have said. And on the intersessional preparedness, maybe also our support staff can help us, especially also the leadership, in preparing some intersessional online meetings already now between the October, the autumn meeting and the spring meeting because we will need them and we have very good experiences.

I think very good experiences in the past both when we were in the IANA transition and accountability where we had to develop consensus positions even in December during Christmas, things like that. I hope we don't need to use our holiday time, but we can do consensus in an online setting. And we demonstrated this also under the leadership of the former chair, Manal Ismail, during the pandemic, where we developed many tools to make consensus advice online possible.

So, we are prepared. I think we just have to take everything from the different shelters where we have it and really start planning to have those meetings online during that intersessional period, which will be critical and which is quite long until the spring meeting.

MARCO HOGEWONING

Thank you, Jorge. I'm recapping my sense and reading back. I hear two tracks emerging, I think. One is sort of building on what Ian said, provide some documentation. That sort of helps us with the timing, helps us understanding the steps and how to get from A to B. And that also then feeds into Jorge's probably on how to do that outside of meetings.

So, that's probably also part of that guidance then to figure out a way to develop certain inputs lacking a physical face-to-face meeting and I think important indeed to note that as scary as it sounds to do everything online, we have the experience. We went virtual for two years. It can be done, including GAC advice, GAC communiqués, so not to worry too much.

And then the other thing I still sense, and that's picking up from the UK's proposal is to continue with this sort of capacity development, learning from each other's experiences and probably create a few calls or other ways to interact with each other after this meeting to carry on and learning from each other and learning from our past

rounds. Is that sort of a rough correct summary of what I'm hearing?

NICOLAS CABALLERO

Thank you, Marco. So, again, let me just make sure that we have good feedback on this specific topic before we move on to the next. So, as regarding the key takeaways from the CDS sessions, the Capacity Development Sessions, anything we should add, taking into consideration as well that some of this might be needed to be included in our communique? I have the European Commission. Please.

GEMMA CAROLLILO

Thank you very much, Nico. One thing we discussed, I think it was in Marco's group, was about the fact that we should not, especially when reporting back home, overemphasize the role of the advice because it's important that there is proportionality in the use but also in the way this is proposed because in the end, this is really last resort and we know how difficult it can be to be achieved when we are talking about interests that might be attached to applications.

And I have a question due to the lack of experience from the previous round. When a GAC member wants to file an early warning, I understand there is no obligation to inform others. But do we want to have a mechanism so that others get to know before we file an early warning. I hope this will never happen, but still.

MARCO HOGEWONING

If I may, Mr. Chairman. Well, there's two elements here. Of course, any individual GAC member can file early warnings. It might help if you already know that people are thinking roughly around the same lines or might have a similar issue to build coalitions. That's not necessary. But what is encoded in the process, and I'm pretty sure we as leadership make care of that, is that every early warning will be published.

So, we will, as soon as it's issued, it's visible also to others. So, in that sense there is no secrecy here. Anything that will flow, we will make sure that it will get published, let's say, within 24 hours. And again, to recall, Marika, that also probably means that please don't wait until day 10 to file your early warnings. The sooner the better.

That way we can also learn from each other and cater for any eventualities. So, the sooner the better. But rest assured, everything we do in terms of early warnings will be public. And of course, you can do it on your individual capacity.

NICOLAS CABALLERO

Thank you, Netherlands. Thank you, EU, for the question. I have Japan next.

TOMONORI MIYAMOTO

Thank you, Chair. Tomo from Japan. My comment is relating to the Gemma's point, and I think that it would be great if we have some opportunities to share the rough idea for the early warning, because submitting our early warning is a decision from the

government, so it should be difficult to make sure whether we submit it or not. But if we find whether our colleagues will think about submitting early warning or not, then our internal process will be encouraged from what other governments are thinking. Thank you very much.

NICOLAS CABALLERO

Thank you so much, Japan. Well noted. Indeed, that is a good idea. I see no more hands in the room or online as regarding our third topic. Again, CDS, Capacity Development Sessions, outcomes and insights. So, if you all agree, maybe we can move on at this point in order to cover topic number four, which is Government Preparations for the Next Round of New gTLDs, and the shepherd will be Mr. Marco Hogewoning from the Netherlands.

MARCO HOGEWONING

Thank you, Nico. Yes. You now think, hey wait, didn't we just do this? Yes, it was also part of our little breakouts yesterday, but I want to take a slight pivot here in terms of readiness, and it seems to be a bit sort of fluctuation of what we understand with readiness. So, in the previous topic, we really looked at what can we do as the GAC.

But the question we also asked yesterday, and where I want to come back to is, and that feeds a bit into also where Craig went, is what are we doing back home? What are we doing to prepare our

colleagues, our different law enforcement agencies? I mean, I'm speaking from my own experience.

We've been in close contact with the authority for combating online child abuse and giving them a heads up, that's going on.

I've heard yesterday in my breakout session, people talking about working with Chamber of Commerce and certain groups that might have cultural or intellectual property interests in this to prepare them for what's coming. Again, the questions for discussions. What have you done so far? What's your line in preparing colleagues and how can we all learn from that? What can we get away as back practice? Where do you see challenges?

We just discussed that there is a lot of opportunity for GAC members and community to provide feedback. What's your experience? What are your expectations looking at this from capital? What can we learn looking back to 2012? All the early warnings are also still online, so we can look back at them. What can we take away from that? What's the key thing?

And I'm sort of gently looking at my colleague from Australia here who filed a substantial amount of those early warnings earlier on. So, please help us. And again, the bottom line is, can we share this? Can we somehow build this into something you can take away as a rough template for yourself in preparing this?

So, again, happy to toss it back to you. We already got collected quite a bit of feedback. I know that the Swiss had sort of an

elaborate introduction of what they've been doing back home in the run up to this. What do you see as challenges, good practice, and then what can we do to help each other? Happy to curate the queue and Nico is first.

NICOLAS CABALLERO

No, no, I was going to run the queue, precisely. So, thank you so much, Marco. We have China first. Please go ahead.

GUO FENG

Thank you, Marco, and thank you, Chair. Guo Feng from China for the transcript. Actually, with this topic, I have a comment to share with the whole GAC. So, this new round of New gTLD application has entered a critical implementation stage. So, I think this is an important expansion of the global internet naming system in more than a decade and will have an impact on the internet industry and the digital economy and global internet governance.

The DNS as a core infrastructure of the global internet, it's secure expansion and the compliant operation is not only a technical issue but also closely related to the public interest of the global digital society. China believes that while promoting innovation and a competition, it is necessary to always stick to the principle of the public interest first. For applications for the top-level domains involving Geographic names, sensitive names, or public resource attributes, the laws and the regulation of each territory, country,

culture, traditions, and social public interest should be fully respected.

So, we, as members of the GAC, may want to utilize mechanisms such as GAC early warnings and GAC advice. Strength in communication and coordination jointly maintain the stability, security, and trustworthiness of the global internet naming system, and try to avoid disputes and risks caused by imperfect process design we may have. Thank you very much.

NICOLAS CABALLERO

Thank you very much. China, I have the USA next.

SUSAN CHALMERS

Thank you, Chair. Susan Chalmers for the United States. In response to the first question, we thought we would share a little bit about our preparations. So, as the US GAC representative, NTIA will coordinate an interagency review process of all applications, ensuring that the various equities of the US government are taken into account. NTIA's general preparation process for ICANN meetings includes discussion through an interagency working group.

And we have created a subgroup from this working group which will convene regularly following string confirmation day when applications are published. Agencies have been provided with background on the Next Round program as well as guidance that we've prepared for reviewing applications.

Through this channel, NTIA will coordinate and address any policy differences arising within the interagency on applications and work collaboratively to determine a whole-of-government approach to resulting engagement at ICANN and within the GAC. And we are also interested in hearing from others on their preparations. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO

Thank you very much, USA. Well noted. I have Canada next.

DAVID BEDARD

Thank you, Chair, and thanks everybody for this really useful and interesting discussion. Very similarly to my colleague from the United States, just in terms of our own preparation, we're really working at the working level as well as the management level, and really to promote the next round, both what it is, the importance of it, and potential overlaps with mandates of various ministries within our government.

And I think I just want to really place the importance of other folks in your ministries and governments knowing that you are the point of contact as a GAC member to be looped into any discussions that might be taking place regarding concerns that other ministries might have with applications.

And I think I just want to impart that lesson just to make sure that communication with you as the GAC rep throughout your government is really important in this process. We've established

an interdepartmental committee that we chair as the GAC rep, and we have found that so far, I mean, it's early in the process, but so far, it's been a really useful mechanism. So, thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO

Thank you very much, Canada. I have the UK next.

CRAIG STANLEY-ADAMSON

Thank you, Chair; Craig from the UK. Again, quite similar to those who have just spoken. We have most very recently written from our permanent secretary, so our senior official in our department, to all UK government departments as well as devolved administrations to inform them of the process, stressing that our department, the Department for Science Innovation and Technology, will be the sole coordinator, and similar to Canada, as through the GAC representative.

We've also asked for points of contact from all of those ministries, so that when we do send out the full list, come reveal and confirmation day, we can have that simple coordination in identifying any potential implications in that. We will also be hosting cross-government information sessions across the summer. We've made efforts to be aware of our intellectual property and legal constraints that we might be operating in here from a UK context.

We have also raised or seeking to raise awareness through our ministries just to note that each ministry in our government will

have responsibility for their own sectors and we are raising awareness through all of those sectors whether that be through business, et cetera, as well. And of course, we are having continued engagement with our UK Internet governance stakeholder groups as well, that continues on a regular basis on this issue. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO

Thank you very much, UK. Thank you, Craig. And by the way, I heard that tea will be served for free during those sessions. Sorry. I have Australia next.

IAN SHELDON

Thank you, Nico. And I guess unsurprisingly, Australia's process looks quite similar to a lot of my other colleagues. But the one point I did just want to expand upon was we're also looking to undertake significant public consultation as well, leaning very much on our domestic multi-stakeholder community, helping to understand a lot of communities' interests, needs, and worries. And that's one of the mechanisms we will be using to help guide our effort in this.

We could see quite a large number of strings come forward and it'll be quite hard to work out where to put the energy, the time and effort in reviewing those. So, we'll be working with our domestic community as much as we can to work out where those core points of concern are and be guided by those multi-stakeholder processes as much as we can. Thanks.

NICOLAS CABALLERO

Thank you, Australia. Germany, please.

RUDY NOLDE

Thank you, Chair. Just to share what we as a German government have been doing very quickly. I don't want to repeat what others have said. I think we try to really do capacity building. So, what we do after every ICANN meeting, independent from the new round, is we brief other ministries about the different ICANN topics, how they have proceeded.

So, I think what is very important is that we have tried very early on to raise awareness on ICANN's work, including the new round, but also other topics. And I think we can now build on that knowledge in other ministries. And they are not surprised when we suddenly come to them shortly before the new round.

So, they already know what we are talking about. And as a federal country, I know there are others that are in a similar situation. We do have 16 German states. We have hundreds of municipalities that are also quite anonymous in their decision making. So, we have also already last year established contacts with them. We have mailing lists.

We work with associations of these municipalities, especially on geographic names. So, we are well prepared at this stage once we know which applications have been submitted to quickly involve them into the discussion. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO

Thank you very much, Germany. So, still on this topic, on government preparations, any other distinguished members? Yeah, okay, Netherlands, please go ahead.

MARCO HOGEWONING

No, yeah, thank you. No, it's really interesting to hear what I'm wondering and I'm really open to ideas here. How can we capture this? How can we turn this into best practice? I mean, we have this video now, we can replay it, but kind of trying to move this forward, is there anybody, for instance, who has, because that's what I'm talking to when I start talking to a random colleague in a random other government department and I go like oh you know that ICANN is expanding domain names.

I'm starting with what is the DNS, what is a domain name, and I've never heard of ICANN. If anybody has any one-line guidance on how to introduce that to people and I'm also happy if staff can provide one, please do. But to throw it a bit back to the room, anybody has any ideas on how can we carry this forward in a way that it becomes portable, that it really becomes something that [CROSSTALK].

NICOLAS CABALLERO

Thank you, Netherlands. We already have a queue. And by the way, try explaining DNS resolution to your minister. I have UK, Germany, and India. Please, go ahead. Sorry, that was an old hand, UK?

Okay. Germany, is that an old hand as well? Oh, all right. So then I have India. Go ahead.

SUSHIL PAL

I understand that we can pose questions on any of the topics, right? Thank you, Chair. Sushil Pal from India for the record. I think while we make preparation for the next gTLD round, I think given the possibility of a high volume of application, which is likely to be expected, I think the ability or the effectiveness of the government will depend on various other factors rather than only access to the information or access to the application.

It might depend heavily on the application, on availability of the tools that can actually enable efficient identification, categorization, filtering, prioritization, which are likely to raise public concerns. In this context, it would be useful if the application management system can include certain functionalities and certain tools which the various governments can actually use to synthesize those information which are available there. Thank you.

NICOLAS CABALLERO

Thank you so much. I would add it would be interesting to also have the source code. Thank you so much, India. Any other comments or questions before we move to AOB? By the way, we can actually jump into AOB right now. Is there any other business, any other thing you would like to include at this point that we didn't

discuss yet and that you think is actually important to be included?
Netherlands.

MARCO HOGEWONING

Well, maybe putting on my hat as one of the New gTLD topic leads, and as Nico said, I think we've covered quite an extensive ground, but we are a small team, we're keeping track of things, but as people previously noted, we've got one meeting left before this all really becomes reality and we have this long list.

As an AOB, I'm happy to take cues from the community, either right now here or in the hallways, what should be our priority, be preparing for the Bali meeting, where probably our last chance to look into readiness, making sure we are prepared.

We may already have the list of strings available, we might not, but there's really only one meeting left and then we know meeting time is always really scarce. So, if there's anything right now on your mind you say like, hey you haven't covered this, please let us know straight away.

NICOLAS CABALLERO

Thank you Netherlands. I was going to ask exactly that. And in that sense, let me ask Marika, Kristy, or Elisa, is there anything we didn't cover that you think would be important to mention at this point. Is there anything we're not aware of? Well, that would be kind of difficult not to be aware of. After all the sessions we had together and after all the information you gave us, anything important that

you think we should consider at this point that we haven't talked about?

MARIKA KONINGS

It sounds you're all very well prepared and you know what is happening. I think indeed like making available the application information in an easy searchable format and being able to use potentially new tools. I did want to comment because actually the TLD application management system is not where we will be publishing that information. So, that is not a system that's just used by applicants, ICANN staff, and vendors. So, that's not something we will make available.

We have a separate platform where all that information will be available just for the record and you can slice and dice that in in different formats. But again, I think having these conversations for you to think through how you can engage share information what time and meetings you may need to do that, at least from my perspective, it sounds that you're kind of thinking about the right things.

One thing that we've shared as well, of course, I think in a previous meeting, certain parts of the applications are publicly posted. As you kind of prioritize where to focus, you may want to look at what is most important to me, where do I need to look, and again, search for those specific sections to help you.

But as I said, to me it sounds that you're very well prepared. Looking at my colleagues if there's anything they would like to add. And obviously, we're here. If you have any further questions or anything we can do to support you, and I know you have an amazing support team in the back as well that is helping you too, so I think you're in very good hands.

NICOLAS CABALLERO

Thank you so much Marika. Greatly appreciated indeed. Just one more thing before I forget, so as regarding the formats, I just want to make sure that we'll have CVS format, PDF, and maybe ODF, the three of them. Don't want to get into the details, but those three at least would be very important. You think they will be available?

MARIKA KONINGS

I believe the first two were confirmed, the third one I can take back.

NICOLAS CABALLERO

ODF is Open Document Format.

MARIKA KONINGS

Yeah, I'm not sure about that one, but I can check back.

NICOLAS CABALLERO

Okay. Anybody? I don't see. Ah, there's a hand. Okay, okay, okay. I have the CTU, sorry. CTU, please go ahead.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE

Over here. Thank you. Nigel Cassimire, CTU. Just the question was asked as to what we could focus on for preparing going forward. In the discussion yesterday there was a lot on the, and today in fact, the early warnings. It appeared that the template for open warnings was I guess still being finalized and I did put a query into the chat about is there any procedure to join an early warning as opposed to having to create your own subsequently with the same justification as one that has previously been made.

So, I'm wondering since early warnings is basically a GAC process, that we could take some time to review it, especially since we are still finalizing the template. And to piggyback on what Ian said earlier about mapping the process between early warning and GAC advice, kind of thing, we could take into consideration that question about whether or not we can facilitate other members joining an early warning.

It might be something as simple as adding a field for supported by that is updatable as time passes on. But I think that process and the process mapping are two of the areas that we should focus on. Thank you.

MARCO HOGEWONING

Thank you. It's good ideas. Just to recall, we have been touching on the early warning process and we've presented various drafts in previous meetings. The final one is out and I'm looking to the back

staff might be able to put the link in chat or circulate it again on the mailing list. I think your suggestion is good just to note that the Applicant Guidebook has specifics on what should be in an early warning.

So our initial step when we created the template is simply we looked at the requirements from the early the Applicant Guidebook, which says like there has to be this, this and that in. So, that's where we come from. I think your point in support might be a useful field to add if we can match it with the requirements of the Applicant Guidebook.

But I think the most important one, and back to what Tracy mentioned, email is also a wonderful way. We have the GAC mailing list. So, if you consider sending in an early warning, it might just be as simple as sending a message to the GAC List saying, hey, we're building under this rationale. We think we are filing an early warning.

Anybody wants to join, please let me know. I think that would be the most effective way. And I hate to push it, but we are a bit under time pressure and also ensuring that everybody gets the right guidance. I was kind of hoping that somewhere in this meeting or in the next few weeks, we should really consider the EW process done and dusted, including the template because that also allows us to kind of put together a little publication and saying this is where you can find it, this is how it is, we need to maybe prepare a website for it or something.

So, I'm happy to take the considerations back home, but just a warning in advance about the feasibility to really go into an in-depth review of the processor right now, I'm not so keen, but that's my personal opinion.

NICOLAS CABALLERO

Thank you Netherlands, thank you, CTU. But in a nutshell, let's try to keep it simple. Writing to the mailing list should be enough. The simpler the better. Again, in my opinion, unless of course, any distinguished GAC representative has a better idea. And the floor is open. We still have ten minutes, eight actually, so we don't need to artificially extend the -- Oh, CTU. Yeah, go ahead.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE

Thank you. Just on your last comment, Nico, you said writing to the mailing list. That is at what stage? At the point of issuing the early warning or after?

NICOLAS CABALLERO

As soon as you see a problem. As soon as you identify, or your minister, or your country, or a group of countries, as soon as you identify anything that needs to be addressed, do it on the spot. That's my humble recommendation. But of course, I'm in your hands. I'm just the GAC chair. I will do whatever you guys tell me to do. So, that's just a simple idea. Keep it short and simple and straight to the point.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE

Right, no, I'm just trying to clearly understand what you're saying. So, suppose an early warning has been issued by a country and another country realizes, oh, I didn't think of that. I think that's a really good point that I would want to support. Are you suggesting that we can do it just on the mailing list?

NICOLAS CABALLERO

Yes, that's what I'm saying. Netherlands.

MARCO HOGEWONING

Yeah, I hear you. I think there's two sides to this, of course. Yeah, as I said, as soon as we see an early warning, we will make it public. And we'll have to take this back and probably consult with staff whether once it's published, whether we can still edit or could sort of add sort of like, oh, I'll second this. Not going through my mind now. I'm not sure how accommodating the process is.

But at any rate, two is more than one. So, if you think like, hey, wait a minute, that's an early warning, I think they're right. Probably always, as Nico said, keep it simple. You can always file another one. Good point. Keep it straight. So, that. The other one, and I see there's the commissioners in the queue as well. But I would like to note in terms of, as we just mentioned, there's always the GAC mailing list.

But I certainly recommend and hope also talk to your neighbors, work on the regional level. I'm sure that within the EU corporation,

I'm sure we will be working with our colleague EU member states and the Commission and I'm sure that in other regions, including with the CTU, there's probably also a good regional platform to discuss your regional interests and work towards this.

NICOLAS CABALLERO

Thank you, Netherlands. Before I give the floor to the European Commission, there's another way to do it, which is also very simple. It's just by adding another supported by to the forum, as Lars is pointing to us, that would be a very simple thing to do.

But again, let's try not to get over complicated about very simple. And there's another reason why. Because in any case, we would be including that topic for any of the three agenda setting calls we would have before Bali, I mean there's going to be ample time to deal with whatever issue you identify on the way. So, rest assured there are many ways to deal with this. European Commission.

MARTINA BARBERO

Thank you, Nico. Just in brainstorming mode and to keep things very simple, but maybe people that are about to submit an early warning can give an heads up to the mailing list. And so, you also have an heads up as a GAC leadership saying, we are submitting an early warning about this. Does anybody want to join? And then people can join. And you also know that something is coming your way.

NICOLAS CABALLERO

That would be another way to look at it. Yeah, absolutely acceptable. Again, except you tell us otherwise, because again it's for us to decide, right? Now the issue of adding some sections to the form would also help in order to make it more official, so to say. But again, it's up to us to decide. So, I guess we're okay either way. I have Chinese Taipei, please.

KEN-YIN TSENG

Thank you, Chair. Just to confirm that the email sent to all the GAC member on July the 1st about the final document for early warning, now it is considered by the leadership as unnecessary. Is that what you were saying?

NICOLAS CABALLERO

I'm not sure I understand your question.

KEN-YING TSENG

There has been an email sent to all of the GAC members about how early warning should be submitted and the form. But from what I heard, is that we don't need to follow the phone. We just send an email to the...

NICOLAS CABALLERO

No, sorry. Sorry, sorry. That was a misunderstanding on my side. I apologize if that was the case. No, no, no, this is not intended to replace anything. It's just an additional way to deal in case you

want to -- Of course, we will need to follow the document that was attached, I think, yeah, a month ago or something.

That's like general guardrails and guidelines and everything. But we were just referring to ways of raising concerns in case any country would look for support from another country or groups of countries. But the idea is not to replace what was sent to the mailing list, to your point. I don't know if that answers your question.

KEN-YING TSENG

Yes. Thank you, Chair.

NICOLAS CABALLERO

Thank you very much. Any other comment or question in this regard?

Okay, so we'll be finishing two minutes ahead of time at this point. Little by little, we're becoming more efficient. Thank you so much. Enjoy your coffee. Please be back in the room. Let me check this. For the session with the ICANN Board at 16:30 sharp. Enjoy your coffee. Thank you so much.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]