

## EOI Bastiaan Goslings, following a nomination to be the Euralo ALAC Voting Delegate to the NomCom for 2020-2021

ICANN is facing challenging times. There are growing uncertainties with regard to its budget, it's being faced with tighter regulations and legislation, we do not know what the future usage of the DNS is going to be like nor how to deal with systematic online abuse and what ICANN's role should be in that respect. All of this while ICANN prepares itself for a new round of gTLDs - and we're still dealing with the previous round and questions that need to be answered as to what we need to take on board and implement as lessons learnt. In the meantime there are fears of mission creep, and how all the codified intentions following the IANA transition are put into practice. And the more transparent and accountable the organization attempts to be, the more lengthy and complex internal processes become. How to engage people to feel a sense of urgency, and volunteer to put countless hours in defining and implementing very, for the outsider, abstract 'policies'? On top of that we need to deal with, at least for the time being, the consequences of Covid19 and the fact that all the community's work, including the consensus building process, is an online exercise only.

Working 14 years for one of the world's largest Internet Exchanges, until January the 1<sup>st</sup> this year<sup>1</sup>, I have seen the Internet, the services offered on top, associated technologies, commercial interests, and the power play that comes along with all of this, change dramatically. Whether it is market dominance by a handful of global players, governmental authorities that are stepping up their game because of growing dependencies (Internet infrastructure as 'critical' infrastructure) and perceived market failures when it comes to e.g. online-abuse handling, the tensions between the values ('internet invariants') that made the Internet the phenomenon it now is versus other political and commercial interests: it remains imperative that the bottom-up and multistakeholder model is preserved and protected, a message that needs to be repeated ad infinitum, and that is partly a responsibility for those appointed by ICANN's NomCom. ICANN is the prime global example of the multistakeholder approach put into practice, and it's success, or failure, is there for everyone to see.

Having been responsible for regulatory affairs and compliance for an IXP at the heart of a global Internet hub, I interacted with public authorities and politicians, wrote input for public consultations, drafted contracts and policies, lead participation in public tenders and other projects, coordinated the role out new IX-services, and took care of SLA management and data protection responsibilities. I helped set up an industry body to act as the voice for Dutch neutral digital infrastructure providers. As such I am very much used to dealing with public and regulatory authorities, as well as private sector entities, to get things done. I know a lot about the Internet's technicalities, and in order to have a nuanced opinion one needs to know 'how things work'. But obviously most people do not know what happens under the hood, and they are very much affected by the digitalization of our societies nonetheless. Which is important to keep in mind, and one needs to adapt one's tone and communication because of that.

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<sup>1</sup> I intended to take a sabbatical after leaving the IX, but because of the Covid19 pandemic, and to give myself more structure also because a number of offers were put on hold, I decided to take on paid for, self-employed, assignments from the Digital Infrastructure Netherlands foundation. See <https://www.dinl.nl/>, in Dutch only. I started working for them as of April the 1<sup>st</sup> 2020.

I have worked in many public-private cooperational settings, especially with regard to abuse handling, DDoS mitigation, as well as helped Dutch Ministerial reps for positions to be taken in Brussels, the ITU, ICANN etc. I have dealt with groups consisting of very different stakeholders in order to reach consensus and bring shared positions to Dutch government and/or the European Commission. Besides engaging and working with others via the RIPE community, Euro-IX, the GSMA and different IGF's. And of course the last three years I was an ALAC member, which gave me more than enough insight into the idiosyncrasies of the very particular multistakeholder driven ICANN universe.

Like the global Internet itself, which does not keep jurisdictions in mind, it comes natural to me to interact with people from very diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. My former employer for instance had 60 employees, the Dutch by far a minority group, from more than 25 countries. Because the organization's limited size, I was involved in a number of hirings. For me it has always been very important to (try to) understand where someone else is coming from and why, instead of judging her/him and then putting your own (group's) agenda first. Simultaneously I am very much aware of the political sensitivities that come along when dealing with other stakeholders. I know I'm soft-spoken, and tend to act more in the background. I do try to be as factual, rational and well-reasoned as I can - I also know, partly because of that, that I have the diplomatic skills to build bridges between people: which I think is essential as at the end of the day we have to trust that those involved believe in ICANN's vision and mission. So then it becomes more about the how instead of the why. And that might hopefully make life within the ICANN world, and getting things done, somewhat easier.

If appointed by to be an ALAC Voting delegate to the NomCom, I would like to help attract and nominate the best, and as diverse as possible, group of people who will contribute to steer ICANN into its challenging future, guarding that it does not operate outside of its clear technical remit as explicitly set in its bylaws.