
DEVAN REED:

Good morning, good afternoon, and good evening to everyone. Welcome to the Operations, Finance, and Budget Working Group call on Thursday, the 9th of September, 2021 at 19:00 UTC. On this call today, we have Holly Raiche, Vanda Scartezini, Sebastien Bachollet, Cheryl Langdon-Orr, and Maureen Hilyard, Raymond Mamata, and Ricardo Holmquist. We received apologies from Satish Babu. From staff, we have Heidi Ullrich, Claudia Ruiz, and myself, Devan Reed, on call management. We have French and Spanish interpretation on this call today. Our French interpreters are Isabelle and Jacques and our Spanish interpreters are Lilian and Veronica.

A friendly reminder to please keep your microphones when not speaking to prevent any background noise and to please state your name when you're taking the floor. With this, I turn the floor over to you, Holly.

HOLLY RAICHE:

Thank you very much. Welcome to this Operations and Finance Working Group. A reminder before I start introducing. That is that there will be a webinar that ICANN Planning are putting on, on the 15th of September and at two different times to accommodate the different times that are convenient for people. One is at 00:00 UTC and one is at 15:00 UTC. I will actually send the e-mail around with a link. It will be probably very useful for all of you. Also, it would be a good preparation for our next meeting because for the next meeting, we will have Becky Nash back, probably with Victoria, talking about the PTI IANA budget, which we're now starting the consultation with budgets.

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But for today, we're going to go on with our discussion about initiatives, if you remember—the strategic initiatives. There are 15 of them. They are the initiatives that the ICANN Org identified and discussed as part of the initiatives to achieve their strategic goals. Therefore, they are important for us to understand the sorts of activities that ICANN Org is looking at towards achieving its strategic goals. And the reason we're looking at the initiatives, from our perspective, is when we contribute to the budget comment, we're going to be doing it from the ALAC perspective and what are important to us.

So if we go back a month now, we actually had a poll amongst ourselves as to what was important of the initiatives for ALAC, the last meeting, we had a presentation from Marita on MSM, in terms of looking at the initiatives and tying that into the prioritization work of the subgroup.

The next two are initiatives that were identified by this group as important for ALAC were, first of all, universal acceptance and also Planning at ICANN. So that's what we're going to focus on today—what those initiatives mean for us. What are the initiatives? And then, we can discuss their importance for ALAC.

That said, what I'd like to do now is go over to Vanda, who will be presenting universal acceptance and what it can mean for ALAC. Over to you, Vanda.

VANDA SCARTEZINI:

Okay. Thank you. Unhappily, Satish will not be able to join us. But let's talk a little bit about the universal acceptance. The next slide, please. Okay. Universal acceptance is, in fact, a work in progress. We already

have some important documents, like a quick guide and detailed guide. This year, we had two important training processes inside the program. It was some online in the Asia Pacific region and one from the LAC region, dedicated to ISPs.

What is important is must of the users, the only thing that they can do about universal acceptance is demand that their providers are able to accept all the universal ways to e-mails, to websites, and so on. So those things are important to have a focus on. Two main issues—ISPs and the country codes, especially the small ones that are not so aware about what's going on, on the ICANN area and especially universal acceptance.

So we had that experience this year, this May. It was quite an interesting experience. Just to share with you also that from 2018, from my software association here that is also a member of the Business Constituency, we started to make those studies by ourselves. So Mark Datysgeld, that is now GNSO councilor, he was part of my group here. And we started developing those websites for accepting of e-mail addresses, just focused on Brazil and supported and sponsored by our association.

And then, ICANN joined and we make a joint effort to make a global evaluation of websites for acceptance of e-mail. And this becomes the Universal Acceptance Steering Committee, 025. And finally, this year, we had another group also together. We developed another study that is about all domain names in open-source software. And this becomes another document that is 033.

So this Universal Acceptance Steering Committee has several other contents in this area. And I put some links here. For all that have never

accessed all those, there's 35 documents, and suggestions, and the studies. There's been a lot of information that is quite interesting for our groups, our ALSes to take a look and understand the importance of universal acceptance. So the next slide. Devan, yeah? The next one.

So what we have, unhappily, is not enough. What do we need? Everything is in English. So the whole world is, unhappily, in the same language. So we need translations to ICANN languages of all documents from this steering committee. So although the studies are in English, a lot of people cannot follow it. In especially ISPs around the world, a lot are smaller. And we need them to get—pay attention on that and make sure they really do what is needed to be compliant with the universal acceptance. So this is the first one.

The second is to promote local workshops in local language to alert the users. They need to push their providers to guarantee they are compliant with the universal acceptance. As suggested by this last study, practical capacitation to ISPs and the small CCs is needed. A Regional Road Show to hands-on capacitation. Focus on those. It's not enough, as we did here, just online training. We need to reach out and explain how to do most of that. So it's another suggestion.

The last suggestion is involvement of software developers to pay attention on universal acceptance. Reach out to universities—even associations of software around the world—and maybe alert them that it's quite important to do so. So next slide, please. No. Not this one.

Yes. What may demand some budget? Translation efforts. May reduce the costs if we involve regional community with a small amount of budget, using local currency, much less than dollar. Regional Road Show.

Focus on regional since nowadays, we are hearing that ICANN is finally focusing on regional meetings and so on. We need to think about Regional Road shows to train ISPs and small CCs. And even LACTD's event, for instance, in my region, and the AP TLDs, and the European TLDs, whatever. That is important to have those training.

Keep it regional. Not only reduce budget, facilitate the language and can associate it with your other regional and local ISP events, for instance, as we did here. So regionally, interaction with developers community also reduces the budget, facilitates the language. So that is what we may think about—demand some budget for the next fiscal year.

And that's it. That's all we have to show here. And the next slide is just any questions that you may have. And just appreciate and thank you. So if you have any questions, I am here and able to try to answer any questions.

HOLLY RAICHE:

Vanda, thank you. I think it's really important that we understand that, in fact, this is an item. This is something that's pretty high on the ALAC agenda. Are you and Satish working with ... I know that there's a group within ICANN—a group who is dealing with universal acceptance and some of the technical issues. You're working with them, aren't you?

VANDA SCARTEZINI:

Not exactly but we have a LAC effort here. So in the LACRALO, we have a group that is led by Sylvia Herlein. And we have done all those trainings, and all those things, and Mark is helping us to make those presentations. So it's a lot of regional effort because most of us have a

more deep knowledge about the technical aspects of the universal acceptance. And what we are trying to do is sharing with our ISPs and trying to explain to our region here. So that's what I said. That could be important for other regions to try to make it regional and share the knowledge that, in some places, already exists. For the other hand, ICANN staff is open to help.

HOLLY RAICHE: That would be fantastic. Vanda, do you know ...? It's a pity Satish isn't here because India is another place where there's lots of languages.

VANDA SCARTEZINI: That is the importance of doing regionally these things because like we did here, we make it all in Portuguese and Spanish because we have people from Columbia, from Argentina attending our meetings. And certainly, we can do this in Spanish because from one side, Portuguese-spoken people understand Spanish. The opposite is not real. So we are doing some of those in Spanish.

But anyway, what is important is to reach out the ISP and the small CCs because the user itself cannot do nothing but push to their ISPs to make them be alert and try to do that. But many of those small ISPs have no knowledge enough to do that.

HOLLY RAICHE: Yeah. That's one of the things, in listening to some of the presentations in ICANN meetings, there were two issues that came up. It's something that Jonathan also mentioned, was when you've got ... You have the

new gTLDs but also, particularly with different languages, there are technical issues to resolve going from ASCII. And my understanding was that for the smaller ISPs, that's a bit of a challenge.

VANDA SCARTEZINI: Yes.

HOLLY RAICHE: Okay. Is there acceptance from the user? Are the users happy? Have we done any work on whether the users actually appreciate having—

VANDA SCARTEZINI: Yeah. We will do an online meeting here for the users this October and make some surveys or something like that to understand better what they understand from this side because sometimes, the users are not able, even, to understand what is demanded from that.

HOLLY RAICHE: So there is a clear need for financial support, isn't there, to have the reach out to ISPs and also, I imagine, to publicize the value.

VANDA SCARTEZINI: Yes. Publish it in the languages of ICANN.

HOLLY RAICHE: I've hogged the time for questions. Does anybody else have any questions? Ricardo?

MAUREEN HILYARD: Ricardo's got his hand.

RICARDO HOLMQUIST: First, thank you very much, Vanda, for the great presentation. Last year, if I remember that, the ICANN budget has an additional \$500,000 for the UA and IDNs. At the very beginning of the comment, I thought that was very low. And based on your presentation, it's clear that it is very low. I don't know if we have, maybe, three, four months in advance from here up to January, when we have to submit our comment. I don't know if it leaves any time. We can figure out how much money is needed for this point that you mentioned.

VANDA SCARTEZINI: Yeah. We can work on that because it's something that there is acceptance for the group that this is important. And we can work in each region but we need more people to work with us from each region because each reality is completely different from the other.

RICARDO HOLMQUIST: Thank you. The other point was ... You have very good points on your presentation. Maybe when the initiatives are presented by the ICANN people, we will need to match or at least look at the initiatives you're mentioning—they are in the ICANN budget itself because they look

great. Maybe they add some other ones but just to find out if they want your information in their presentation. It's a very good beginning because we didn't have anything last year. So it's great to at least have something this year.

VANDA SCARTEZINI:

Yeah. Probably, from our region, we didn't get any support. That was all [inaudible] support. But I believe that that amount of money—the small amount—went to the main region where IDNs is quite important. It's not so important for us as languages in that region. But as part of the global issue, we need to accept the others' information that comes to us because most of those information, in general—for instance, for e-mail—goes to garbage if the ISP is not prepared.

So it's something that I already suffered in the past when I was invited by Chinese government to make something there. And I didn't get that. I didn't get the invitation. Only when one of our colleagues called me by Skype or something like that and asked me if I “have interest to come to work with us here blah, blah, blah.” I said, “Wow. Sorry. I didn't know that.” And I finally understood that my ISP just sent it to the garbage automatically because they didn't recognize that that e-mail is something valid because it was an IDN--.cn in Chinese.

HOLLY RAICHE:

That's really interesting.

VANDA SCARTEZINI: And this is happening a lot because most of those ISPs around the world is not alert to that. We have 9,000 ISPs in Brazil only. So that, you can imagine. Look for other countries—large countries. It's almost impossible to reach everybody in the same language.

HOLLY RAICHE: Vanda, I imagine if universal acceptance starts to be used by the larger ISPs, the smaller ISPs will see that they have to come on board. Sebastien, I have a question for you. What is happening with universal acceptance in Europe? Because not all of you speak English. No answer?

SEBASTIEN BACHOLLET: Yeah. The question is not too much in Latin characters. Therefore, it's more for Eastern Europe, with Cyrillic mainly, and with some in other countries. But it's not a very huge problem, even if we have the same problem with the size of the domain names or with additional characters. But it's not the main topic here.

HOLLY RAICHE: Okay. Thank you. I think probably with Cyrillic, Eastern European. And certainly, I know for Satish, it's a huge problem.

VANDA SCARTEZINI: Yeah. I believe Arabic countries and even African countries, in many regions, Asia especially.

HOLLY RAICHE: I'll tell you what. What we'll have to do ... Thank you, Vanda, because this is high on our agenda and we realize now it's an important item for budget. What we've got to do now is move on to Ricardo and talk about planning but this has been a really important presentation to understand one of the things that are important for our objectives in continuing work in the many areas in the globe that actually should be looking at universal acceptance and how we can support it. So thank you. Thank you very much. And I'm sure—

VANDA SCARTEZINI: Thank you. And sorry, Ricardo. I need to join the meeting for NomCom so it's conflicted, unhappily. But I will listen to you after. Thank you.

HOLLY RAICHE: Thanks, Vanda. Ricardo?

RICARDO HOLMQUIST: Thank you. The first four slides of this presentation are just initiatives as it was presented in the Fiscal Year 23 to Fiscal Year 27 Operational Plan for Planning at ICANN, as this initiative is called. I just added, in these four slides, in bold types, the most relevant things I found out.

One is, as you see there, I propose that ICANN needs to begin to plan in the long term. The scope, I find is interesting in this one because ICANN is wanting to improve the quantification of resources, evaluation of needs, prioritization, flexibility, and transparency of the management of ICANN's resources. That's something that I understand ICANN was doing before. I can't [put] in mind any company that didn't make any planning

effort. I understand also that the Board has some kind of planning effort. But we were not included in this planning. Next slide, please.

So the goals and what is ICANN ... I'm just showing these because this is the way that ICANN is presenting any initiatives. And was mentioned to Vanda, the idea here is to look at the goals that ICANN wants to achieve in each of these initiatives and the targeted outcomes that they are expecting so we know what ICANN is working for. Sorry. Next slide, please.

How the progress is tracked ... Here you see that research, analysis, design, and implementation of a work prioritization approach in collaboration—this is the important thing—with ICANN Org, ICANN Board, and the community. This the first time we are included in this planning beforehand. Next slide, please.

And here are the resources. And one of the resources, you will find out, is ... ICANN is telling us what kind of resources they are applying for these initiatives. And in particular, for the Planning at ICANN, for the Operation Plan, ICANN says they will not spend additional money. This is maybe not entirely true because they make a [reorganization]—a change in the Planning and in the Finance Team.

So they now have a planning. So Becky Nash, for example, moved from Finance to Planning now. So they made some changes there last year for this Operation Plan. You didn't have the Planning Team by itself. Now you have a Planning Team. You see Becky working for that. I understand maybe the quantity of people is the same—sorry, the amount of people is the same. But they're getting people for these activities. So maybe it's

not exactly—they are not investing any more money. But the result is that, yes, at the end they are doing that. Next one, please.

These are the considerations for the Operating Plan [by itself]. These are the considerations that ICANN thought would be the result of this planning. One of them is the lack of organizational support for cross-collaboration efforts may delay an effective planning process. This is one of the results being not in a dictatorship way but in a multistakeholder way. But once you involved all the community, one of the bad outcomes. Sometimes you delay the process. The process is not timely sometimes. This is one of the things that we need to take care as a community because this is new and we want to be involved. Next slide, please.

And here are my comments from [there] also. The idea from us is to have these comments to these initiatives. The first one is yes, there is a Planning Team at ICANN and there is a Planning Committee for the Board but this is the first time, I understand, we are included in planning. Becky is telling us right now, in the last two months, this planning she is expecting is not for the Fiscal Year 24 to 28 but for Fiscal Year 25 to 29 because we are adjusting the process to get involvement of everybody.

Our involvement was at the very end when the plan was already there, although we have 45 days to say our [goals]. It was at the end so it was minimal, the adjustment we can achieve at the end. Although we have the final other [solution] that we can say at the end, “We don’t approve that,” as an empowered community, that was not the idea. But being involved from the very beginning is great. Next slide, please.

But being there from the very beginning means we need to give our ideas. We, as a community, involved there means we need to give our thoughts. So it's great that we are doing this kind of meetings from three or four months ahead so we have something to add to whatever is being planned by ICANN. So the ball is in our court right now. It's not in theirs. And we need to take the racquet and pass it there again.

Planning is an important as budgeting. It's not only how much money but how we're going to spend the resources. And all the resources here are very limited—not only the money. Also, our—as a resource, are very limited. You can see this year in the meeting, we are no more than 15 most of times. So that's the presentation. If you want to add something, that would be great.

HOLLY RAICHE:

Ricardo, thank you very much. You said the critical bit. The planning, the ball is in our court now. Now that we've been invited to participate from day one, we have on our shoulders now what are the priorities, which is why it was so useful to hear from Vanda some of the things that we could use this money to support universal acceptance. But there are other things.

I think this ties in with our subgroup because our subgroup has been coming up with—prioritizing all of the—heaven knows how many recommendations. What is it that is important to us? Therefore, what is it that we should be concentrating on it responding to the budget?

So with that, I'll just open the floor. Any comments or questions of Ricardo. First of all, Ricardo, thank you for this presentation and making our job very clear. Any questions? Questions, comment?

DEVAN REED: Hi. [Inaudible].

HOLLY RAICHE: Maureen?

MAUREEN HILYARD: Thank you, Holly. Yeah. I just wanted to comment on Ricardo's presentation. I think it is an excellent starting point for us. We need to know what it is that ICANN is doing. And I love the comments that someone's starting to think about what changes have happened, even as a result of ... As Ricardo mentioned, in the beginning, we didn't have any say. And I really think that over the last few meetings that we've had, the risks that they identified in their Operating Plan have actually been addressed. They're wanting to be more engaged with the community. And we're very lucky that we have actually provided that opportunity for them to get into our community. And really, it'd be great if we had more people from our community listening to what is actually happening here and how they might be able to contribute to that process.

We're identifying already, through Vanda's presentation, that there should be a budgetary consideration for universal acceptance, except we don't know. There probably already is. And this is like one day, after

we've gone through a lot more of these presentations and delved into making sure that we've got our i's dotted and t's crossed as well, that we can ask Becky those questions—like have they got an appropriate budget set aside for something like UA, which has already been identified as an important issue anyway? So I would say that anything that is in their operating plan at the moment is a priority. So that's something else we can ask.

But I think, too, that what it does highlight for us is that when they put out a request for public comment on the finance and budget, it's going to be a team effort. Normally, it's been poor Ricardo who's actually made a comment and we've forwarded that because that has been from someone who's really passionate and interested in the numbers side of it. But really, it's not just numbers. It's an operating plan. It's how they use their budget appropriately.

So this is where we can ... We're looking at five issues—five of the 15. And of those five issues which we have prioritized, there are going to be various issues that we want to focus on. We've identified one already. Well, we've identified two because multistakeholder model is also a priority for us and we've had a presentation from Marita on that.

So I think that these presentations, any updates that come about through—for example, with this finance one. I just sent out an ALAC notice this morning and it highlighted that there's a meeting with the ICANN Board's Finance Committee on the 13th, or 14th, or something, or 12th. And the next day is the Finance webinars.

But it's those sorts of things that this committee really does need to attend because they're relevant to what it is that we're looking at—what

we prioritize, what's important. So those Finance meetings are meetings that the OFB should be attending so that we can contribute to anything that—for example, people who are interested and want to join Ricardo in this particular topic. It's good to have a team that you can bounce ideas off—bouncing in the court—but bouncing ideas off together so that to an update, we're actually getting more ideas coming through from the committee itself.

So I think these have been two really brilliant introductory presentations on these two topics and I think that this is where we really do need to have little subgroups, just on e-mail, just contributing. So if you've got any comments that you want to make on Ricardo's comments or on the initiative itself, you know you've got a go-to person to send an e-mail to, just so that Vanda, and Satish, and Ricardo, and Dave—yes, Dave—they can work together and start putting some kind of update on their presentation the next time it's pulled up. But I think this is a great start. Thank you.

HOLLY RAICHE:

Thank you, Maureen. I noticed Judith and Alfredo are also at the meeting. I'm tempted to ask you if we could have, maybe, your feedback on the meeting at the next meeting because the next meeting will be Becky and probably Veronica talking about the budget itself. But maybe, Ricardo, Judith, we could have feedback on the meeting of the 14th as well.

The other thing I'd like you all to think about ... There's been a lot of work on the prioritization. This would be Cheryl and Sebastien. At what point do you think you want to report back? Because what we're doing

is identifying the sorts of things that are important to ALAC. So we might have a chat offline as to how to bring that information into a response to the budget.

Okay. Are there any further comments or questions? Otherwise, we will meet in about two weeks' time. We will be talking to Becky and probably Veronica about the PTI IANA budget. And probably, Ricardo, I'll be wanting—maybe Ricardo and Judith—a feedback on the meeting on the 14th as well.

So if there are no ... First of all, thank you, Ricardo and Dave. And thank you to Vanda for a very interesting presentation. And you all have nine minutes back of your morning, afternoon, or evening.

And just a reminder. Heidi, could we either put in the chat or send an e-mail to remind people of the webinar on the planning process? That's on the 15th. It's at 00:00 UTC and 15:00 UTC. I would stress that it's important for everybody involved in the planning process to attend one or the other of those meetings. Otherwise, thank you all and talk to you in two weeks' time. This meeting is adjourned. Thank you.

DEVAN REED:

Thank you all for joining. Have a wonderful rest of your day.

[END OF TRANSCRIPT]