

YESIM SAGLAM:

Good morning, good afternoon, good evening to everyone. Welcome to the APRALO monthly teleconference taking place on Thursday 20th of January 2022 at 06:00 UTC.

On our call today on the English channel, we have Satish Babu Cheryl Langdon-Orr, Harish Chowdary, Aris Ignacio, Amrita Choudhury, Pavan Budhrani, Lianna Galstyan, Priyatosh Jana, Ali AIMeshal, Gunela Astbrink, Shah Rahman. Currently, we don't have anyone on the Chinese channel. We have received apologies from Justine Chew, K. Mohan Raidu and from Gopal Tadepalli.

From staff, we have Gisella Gruber and myself, Yesim Saglam on today's call. And I will be doing call management. As you know, we have Chinese interpretation provided, and our interpreters are Sandy and Ray.

Before we get started, just the kind of reminder to please state your name before speaking, not only for the transcription, but also for the interpretation purposes in case someone joins our Chinese channel. And with this, I would like to leave the floor back over to you, Satish. Thank you very much.

SATISH BABU:

Thank you very much, Yesim. Good day to everybody. Since this is the first call of 2022, I'd like to wish all of you a very productive year ahead. I note that some of our speakers are missing. I think Maureen has not joined. She had told me that there may be some interruptions for her. I

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also don't see Holly or Naveed who was supposed to be updating us on the policy. So I will probably request Cheryl to step in, if she's willing, for the policy update.

I also see that we have a guest speaker today, Harish Chowdary. We have requested him and he has kindly agreed to speak on UA initiatives for the region. I also see Gunela is on the call. So when I give an update on APSIG, I will also be mentioning what is being planned for Internet governance-related training for people with disability, that's being planned with Gunela.

So with that, on the membership side, we don't have any individual member application pending. We do have a few, maybe four applications which are on hold, three of them are on hold and we will be moving the 320 also to on hold because we have not kind of heard back from them. So during this year, I think we have to perhaps think of some ways of stimulating more individual members or organizations to join us.

With that, we will move into the policy part of it. Cheryl, would you like to take a shot at this policy update?

CHERYL LANGDON-ORR:

Oh, hello, guys. Satish, certainly. I tried to type in my responses, "okay" to you. Between my last meeting and this one which you're attending, my keyboard has decided when I put in the letter "O" and "K," I'm going to hit random numbers or punctuation marks. So I think I need to restart my computer, but not before we do this meeting. Okay, so it's not a terribly taxing amount of work in the public comments for

decision and upcoming public comment proceedings, none of the new ones of which have any particular concerns specific to our region. But in general, our region should be interested in at least two of them.

The update to GNSO statements of interest procedures and requirements, that really is internal GNSO Council stuff. It's all terribly interesting if you're highly motivated to follow all of that very tightly. It's probably going to be interesting to watch the debate that goes on in Council, again, if you're interested in all of that, but it really doesn't have a particular impact, either to our region, or would we be making any comments or suggestions which really would be relevant from our region, because the balance in the case of all of these sorts of things in the GNSO doesn't even require any sort of regional identification for domicile or nationality.

The [NCAP] study is something that those of you who are interested in the risks of name collisions, so those of you who are going to be particularly involved in the stability aspects of the working domain name system that we all certainly want to have continuing on, the studies themselves, there are several that have been lined up. They are beautifully managed, and very effectively managed by extremely highly qualified project managers within the Security and Stability Advisory Committee that are all experts in their own right.

Basically anything that comes out of the SSAC very rarely need much more than a dotted I and a crossed T to be looked at. But those of you who are interested in this, I would certainly suggest you would benefit by reading it just to simply get yourself more information in the field. But we will be coming up for a public comment of the draft report later

on, probably somewhere around the ICANN 73. And I would expect also that at ICANN 73, there may be some briefing opportunities. So again, not something that is specifically regional focused, but is of general interest to those of you with that particular bent.

Now, the one that we all should be interested in, however, is in fact now I think just about coming to completion. And this is one that is under Holly's stewardship in the Operation Finance and Budget Working Group. The operation Finance and Budget Working Group, which is the counterpoint to the Consolidated Policy Working Group, which is the one you tend to hear more about, has been working on and is very close to completion of drafting, I believe, the response to the ICANN draft financial 23 to 27 five-year operating plan, and the draft, FY 23 operational plan and budget.

These are very large documents, 100 pages or more long, and then there's annexes. We are well represented and our interests are well represented, I think, Satish, by the regional leadership, your leadership team. And we certainly know that Holly also ensures that nothing that would disadvantage Asia Pacific could get through unnoticed.

I think that's just about it from where we are. But after March, after ICANN 73, there's quite a few things queued, and there will be a number of probable public comments coming out, including on a number of important [inaudible], such as those that involve IDNs. That, we certainly need to prepare for. That's it off the top of my head.

SATISH BABU:

Right. Thanks very much, Cheryl, for stepping in there and updating us on the current developments. As Cheryl has pointed out, this has been fairly end of the year and holiday season and all that. So it's been kind of light workload, many people are still on vacation, and we are gradually kind of warming up for the year. And for us, this particular meeting is also hopefully going to be lightweight. And we now move on to the next part of the agenda, which is about the APRALO update.

The first update is on the mentoring program that we are currently carrying out. And this is being managed by Lianna and Amrita and Ali. Lianna, over to you for the update.

LIANNA GALSTYAN:

Thank you, Satish. Just to give a little bit of update about the mentoring program. As you mentioned, we are in a holiday season after the December and with this new year. So the program and its development is slowly growing on. And just to remember about the mentoring, that it's an individual pace, it's not a coaching program. Everyone goes in it, turning its own frequency and development.

But we do have created the WhatsApp group with our mentees and mentors, and everyone involved in this program. And we do share some discussions individually and in the group there. I should report that some of our mentees are quite active in different working groups and particularly in CPWG and some others. So, when we go and attend these meetings, we see them attending as well.

Honestly, I need to say that we need to bring the program into more lively discussions. We plan some interesting things with Ali together

with Amrita to have some interesting discussions and also—well, some program is over there. We will be discussing it and once we have it ready, we will share it and give the update to the group as well. Other than that, I don't have more updates. If colleagues would like to jump in. Thank you.

SATISH BABU: Thanks Lianna. Amrita, would you like to add anything?

AMRITA CHOUDHURY: Not really, Satish. Lianna has said it all. The issue is that each of the mentees also have their own work and other engagements. So perhaps it's difficult for everyone to get time. So as Lianna mentioned, we are trying to work out something which is a win-win for everyone. Thank you.

SATISH BABU: Right. Ali, would you like to add anything here?

ALI ALMESHAL: Not at all, Satish. Thanks. I think [inaudible].

SATISH BABU: Cheryl, please go ahead.

CHERYL LANGDON-ORR: As you can see in chat, typing didn't work. I forgot my keyboard was playing up. What that should have said is how excellent it is to see this engagement in the various working groups, including the CPWG from our mentees. I just wanted to raise that perhaps this is also an opportunity for anyone who wasn't sure, felt a little conflicted, should they or shouldn't they join, for example, a a CPWG meeting, that you're not the only new kid in camp that. Our mentees are also in there now and it might be a nice [inaudible] buddy support system. You might find that you feel more comfortable coming along at this point in time starting off 2022. I'll try not to type anything else for the rest of the meeting. Sorry about that.

SATISH BABU: Thanks, Cheryl. It's really weird to see. This kind of keyboard—interesting kind of a thing. Right, so the next is the update from NomCom. Ali, over to you.

ALI ALMESHAL: Thanks. Hi, everybody, good morning, good afternoon, good evening. Long time, haven't seen all of these great faces. Looking for the face to face, hopefully sometime this year.

So we are looking at this year now for eight seats on ICANN positions, and we have a good number of them. We have the PTI seat which is for a three-year term. We are looking for three seats for ICANN Board. As you all know, we are always looking for those positions as a leadership, and this is what ICANN always do when people start from the fellowship until they reach to those positions or sometimes we find someone from

outside. So we are looking for three ICANN Board member. This is for a three-year term, one for PTI for three years, and we are having two seats for ALAC, one for Europe and one for North America. And we have one seat for GNSO and one for ccNSO.

So all of these seats that are available and the timing is until 11 March, if I'm not mistaken. Next slide, please. Yeah, 11. March is the last date and time to submit the application. So I would encourage you to promote this in your country, in your society, in your areas, events and anywhere you have any conference. So we are looking for those leadership positions that can fill and support the ICANN community and ICANN mission and vision. And the community as well. So if anybody knows, and if you have any recommendations, you want to pass it to me, you want to [inaudible], and anything you need from an ICANN, from the NomCom itself, please let me know. I'll be more than happy to support. Back to you, Satish.

SATISH BABU:

Thanks very much, Ali, for the update. Does anybody have any questions for Ali? Okay, I don't see any hands. So if there are any questions, you can contact Ali directly after the call also. The next update is from Aris. Aris has just taken over as our contact in the Outreach and Engagement Subcommittee. So over to you, Aris, for an update from your side.

ARIS IGNACIO:

Good day to all and thank you, Satish. So for the Outreach and Engagement subcommittee updates, as of the moment, the

subcommittee is still scheduling our first meeting for 2022. There was a Doodle poll earlier on, but that was cancelled because of some unavailability of some key personnel within the subcommittee. So there will be another Doodle poll that will be coming out in the next few days. So just keep everyone posted if there's a need for it. The schedule, the bottom line of this one will be schedule for the first meeting will still be final. That's all for the update. Thank you.

SATISH BABU:

Thanks very much, Aris, for that update. We now move on to some other updates. The first update is from Harish Chowdary, who's one of the UA ambassadors. Harish will be talking to us about his plan for UA-related activities in the region. Harish, over to you.

HARISH CHOWDARY:

Thank you, Satish, I am Harish Chowdary for the record. And it's a pleasure and honor to be here today in the meeting to give the updates. So, basically, we are working on the various workshop and webinars for the year. And I have to say that because universal acceptance is the key to the expansion of Internet as it ensures that the new extensions and email addresses can be used by all Internet-enabled applications, and in India, it is very important because we have 825 million Internet users as per the latest reports, and a lot of people are not familiar with the current languages on the Internet.

So, basically, recently we have organized workshop on 4th of December, in the presence of the Minister of State Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar of the Ministry of Electronics and IT Government of India, wherein which

we have invited all the browser companies as well as the email service providers, so that we could flag issues related to the universal acceptance, what are the problems which are present in their solutions and products. And we have also shared the way forward for them, what are the problems and what could be the possible solutions related to the universal acceptance.

So, basically in the email services, Microsoft, Gmail, and Indian companies like Xgen, Rediff Mail, they all are present, Mozilla is a browser operator and including again Microsoft and Google, all companies are present with the government email service providers. So, they have all reached the consensus that there would be a working group on the universal acceptance and then there would be solutions to the problems as per the consensus in the universal acceptance working group within the country.

In addition to that, I'm planning expert talk series in 2022, including future engagements as well as to set up some testbeds to test how much our websites and emails are compliant to the universal acceptance. And we're also planning to provide a report to the UASG by conducting some research studies.

I have to also mentioned that we have conducted six universal acceptance workshops, including the code sessions in India and we are again planning to conduct more, but because of this COVID situation, as we know it, we are just waiting for that to ease out because there is another way we know it. So, that is the update from my side. Thank you.

SATISH BABU: Thanks very much, Harish, for the update. So, UA is a very high priority item for India because of the considerable diversity of languages and scripts. So, it's good to know that there are a number of activities going on. And there's a question for Harish from Amrita, how can community members become UA ambassadors, what is the process?

HARISH CHOWDARY: So basically, for that, the process is available on uasg.tech website. So there is a blog by the UASG chair which is "UASG welcomes six new UA ambassadors," and there is a link which has the document explaining how to join and what is the selection process, what is the purpose. And if you want, I could also share with Amrita and in turn, Amrita could share that document with all the participants and the interested people, but everything is available on uasg.tech website.

One more addition, I want to explain very important information here that the government of India has enabled sarakaar.bharat in the Devanagari script, which is equivalent to the gov.in. So, now, this sarakaar.bharat is available online and the website is active. So, this is one of the lead and one of the very important things by the government of India that they are actively supporting the universal acceptance and multilingual Internet.

SATISH BABU: Thanks, Harish. What Harish mentioned in the last was that India already had the different ccTLD equivalents in multiple scripts. Now, this new one is a government, gov has come into second level, in also the same Devanagari script which is used for writing Hindi. So we also have

the second level. Harish, if we can share the documentation that maybe our community members from other parts of the Asia Pacific region— Gisella says she'll be happy to kind of pass it around. So please share the information and we'll be happy to take it around so that people in other countries also can try. So thanks very much for that update.

HARISH CHOWDARY: Thank you. Thank you.

SATISH BABU: Right. So we now move on to the next update, which is on the Asia Pacific school on Internet governance. So this is somewhat interesting primarily because it was a face-to-face event conducted mid-December last month. There are some learnings there which will be useful for other people who are planning to run events.

So this was a face to face event in the phase of COVID. All the challenges that COVID brings along. And in the initial phase of planning, we had community members from other organizations, partner organizations, APNIC, APRIGF and so on. So in the planning phases, the local presence, the .lk, the registry of Sri Lanka, they were very strong, and they were very happy to support us. And it's only because of their support that we were able to kind of manage the event even in the phase of COVID.

We did have significant warning. So for instance, APNIC told us, "Look, we are fully supportive of APSIG, but please note that this is an extremely risky thing to do, to have a face-to-face event." And of course, we recognize that. We understood that this is being made in

good faith, the feedback. But the local host, .lk, and the ISOC, they felt that there is no question of a shutdown now. And currently, even in the face of the new variant, people are trying very hard not to have any shutdown in South Asia.

But we had an impact on the diversity. So we had selected the fellows from multiple countries in the region. We had sent them invitations asking them to plan their travel to Sri Lanka. And then we found that many people started dropping off saying that their country is not supportive. We have to be on quarantined for 15 days, when we came back from Sri Lanka, or there's a travel ban to Sri Lanka, or the tickets are frightfully expensive.

So there were all kinds of reasons for people to drop out. Except South Asia. So South Asia did not close. So what ended up happening was that we went down the waiting list and then we found that as people from the top began to drop off, from the Philippines, we started taking the next in the queue from the waiting list. And the end result of that is that we did get 25 fellows as planned, 26 to be precise, because we had two APTLD fellows also. But the diversity of the original selection was considerably diluted and the majority of our people were from South Asia.

Now this is a matter of concern, but also looking at from another point of view, the model that APSIG tries this year was to go to Sri Lanka, bring together 25 international fellows, but also 15 local fellows, and develop capacity in the country, and also in the region, South Asia.

So next year, if we were to say go to Philippines, then we will be focusing on that subregion around Philippines, maybe Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Indonesia, etc. So therefore, the model of country to country and building capacity in the subregion might work. It's still open to discussions and debate.

So finally, the event was a very successful event looking at it from the participants' perspective. We didn't have any health emergencies. We have been tracking our alumni even after they got back, there has been no alarm at all. We did spend a lot of money on COVID-related things. For example, we had to do initially antigen tests, and then we had to do an [inaudible] people left back for home. And we had to bear all the cost. We had to give single rooms, and again, we had to bear the cost. And some more things.

So looking back on it, it is pretty hard to kind of organize a face-to-face event. And given the fact that the regional diversity can be adversely impacted, we have to be doubly careful when planning face-to-face events. But having said that, the quality of interactions is of course significantly different. So we have to consider that as well.

One last thing about this is that Gunela has been a part of our session on people with disability. She didn't of course travel to Sri Lanka, she joined online, but we also had a local lady who Gunela had recommended and who was a great speaker, because she is blind. And she's an excellent speaker. So the session was very good.

At the end of the session, there was a proposal that we should consider Internet governance-related capacity building for people with disability.

So we had discussed that, and then Gunela has proposed a new program jointly with the APSIG. I'll ask Gunela to speak for two minutes on what she's proposing. Over to you.

GUNELA ASTBRINK:

Thank you very much, Satish. And yes, it is very exciting to look at a possible program for capacity building in Internet governance for persons with disability. It was very encouraging to know the impact that Manique Gunaratne had in that particular inclusion session, and it's very, very early days in discussing how we're going to do it. We're planning a meeting in in a few weeks' time. We're looking for partners to work with us. And some of the things we're looking at is quite an intensive capacity building program, maybe over six months, maybe longer, in in regards to building some general leadership skills in persons with disability and communication skills, looking at Internet Governance issues in general and that are important for persons with disability. And then hopefully having some APSIG fellows with disability to participate at the next APSIG.

But this is all in planning. So nothing's set in concrete yet. It's fluid and we welcome any partners from other organizations. Certainly, ICANN would be fantastic. And yeah, we're looking broadly at how we can do it. But it's something that's needed, it's something that we've basically talked about for quite a while. And it looks as if we can do something now in the region. So it's very, very exciting.

I also just wanted to finish off by saying that I've also been asked by APRICOT, the Asia Pacific Regional Internet Conference on Operational

Technologies. So it's mainly network operations. Annually, they have a session on diversity in technology, and gender has come up a number of times, and this time, there's going to be a session on disability and accessibility on the 2nd of March. This is breaking news. It's not on the program yet, but keep an eye open for that. So it means that disability and accessibility is going to get a bit more focused in 2022. So it's all very positive. Thank you.

SATISH BABU:

Thanks very much, Gunela. Congratulations on the APRICOT opportunity. Indeed, I think we have started out on a good note this year with the focus on people with disabilities, which is good.

One last thing I'd like to mention about APSIG is that elections were conducted end of the year, December, and for the next term, the term is two years, the new team has taken over. The chair is myself. And this is my last term, because we are term limited in APSIG according to the bylaws. The two vice chairs are Babu Ram Aryal from Nepal, and Mubashir from Pakistan, the Secretary is Sagarika from Sri Lanka and [inaudible] Sri Lanka. And the treasurer is Shah Rahman who is on this call right now. So this is just for your information. Lianna, please go ahead.

LIANNA GALSTYAN:

Thank you, Satish. I just wanted to complement what Gunela was speaking about, the capacity building for the people with disabilities. I'd like to discuss with her the details and see what we can do for the region. Because, as you might know, the ISOC Armenia chapter is quite

active in this topic, and we also have good experience with building the capacity for this people. And I'd like to partner with her. So obviously, there is something we can discuss and see what we can do together. And since it's just been a discussion phase, we can have discussions together. So just wanted to mark this.

And also another comment about the APSIG, about this organization. Since I've been a fellow sponsored by APTLD, I wanted to say my congratulations to the program committee, to the whole executive committee of APSIG. That was quite an excellent program. I just sent my report to APTLD. The most impressive one for me was the organization itself and the program and interactions. Obviously, the face-to-face meeting has its advantages over the engagement and interactions. So this kind of hybrid meetings, we could see more frequently coming in with this COVID friction. So congratulations with this APSIG program. And I'm sure whenever it goes to other subregions and countries, it would be successful as well. And congrats to you, Satish, for taking the term as a chair one more time. Thank you.

SATISH BABU:

Thanks very much, Lianna. So what you have just mentioned is an interesting sense of what we can learn on building capacity for people with disability for the region as a whole. So it's possible that if we work out something that's successful, which can be replicated, then we can share it with—it is not directly ICANN-related or APRALO-related, but we do have a community of ALSes and individuals who may be able to kind of utilize some of these things for their own community. So there is

ample room for collaboration on this particular activity. I see Gunela has commented also.

We have some time left. Does anybody want to provide any other comment or update? Naveed, please go ahead.

NAVEED BIN RAIS:

Yeah, hello, everyone. So actually, I joined a little late, 10 minutes or so. Is there something I can provide for from the ALAC perspective? Just because I saw it in the agenda, but since I joined late, I'm not sure if that has passed or not.

SATISH BABU:

No. You're free to speak of course. What had happened was since I didn't see either Holly or you on the call, I had requested Cheryl and she very kindly agreed to provide an update. Because she did provide an update, that agenda was covered.

NAVEED BIN RAIS:

Okay. I just wanted to update on the Finance and Budget Subcommittee, because currently, they're working on considering the ABRs for ALAC. And we received actually nine proposals there, three are individual and six are from RALOs. Specifically, I think two, from EURALO and three from LACRALO and one from NARALO, none from APRALO and AFRALO.

We had to submit the review this week, but we have requested for an extension till 31st of this month. So the review is ongoing. And the initial

comments are being passed to the submitters, and we are discussing on that. So I'm not sure if this is discussed already in today's meeting, but I thought about sharing an update on this.

SATISH BABU: Thanks very much. Very useful information. We had a discussion among the leadership team about ABRs. But finally, we decided that I mean— one possible area was UA. But finally, we did not have consensus to kind of go ahead with an ABR. So we didn't submit an ABR. I see that Amrita wants to speak on something. Please go ahead.

AMRITA CHOUDHURY: Before me, Lianna had her hand up, so perhaps she can go ahead.

SATISH BABU: Lianna, please go ahead.

LIANNA GALSTYAN: Thank you. I just wanted to give another update from the working group that I'm a participant and representative from APRALO, that is the ALAC appointee members. We did have the selected mentor for the fellowship program, for ALAC. And that person is for this time Lilian Ivette from LACRALO, I believe. So we do have a new mentor. Previously we had Aris in this role. And before him, it was Alfredo. But this time, we have selected Lilian. Just wanted to share this information with the community. Thank you.

SATISH BABU: Thanks very much, Lianna. Amrita.

AMRITA CHOUDHURY: Thanks, Satish. I just had a request to all of you that in case any of you have done any activities, even if it is in December or in January and you want to update it for the newsletter, please share it with staff and me by 25th. We want to have a new format of the newsletter [inaudible] because there may be some changes. And if there is anything else, interesting update from your region, your country, which may be of interest for APRALO, you could also send those updates. We'll try to incorporate them, but by 25th or 26th at the latest. Thank you, Satish.

SATISH BABU: Thanks, Amrita. Anyone else who would like to make any comments about anything?

HARISH CHOWDARY: Hello. Amrita, is it possible to share what is done on UA in December, to share with the APRALO to be included in the newsletter?

AMRITA CHOUDHURY: Harish, there is already a letter of UA separately, which comes out, newsletter which is dedicated to that. But it is primarily of ALSes or their members if they are individually doing something which we normally highlight, because we already have a separate mailing list.

HARISH CHOWDARY: Okay, fine.

SATISH BABU: Yeah. Thanks for that update, Amrita. So I don't see any other hands up. So at this point, I'd like to adjourned this meeting. I'd like to wish everyone a very productive year ahead. And I'd like to thank you for joining this meeting. In the next meeting, we'll have some more discussions around our APRALO Policy Forum. Justine was an apology in this meeting, which is why we had some spare time left.

So thank you again, and back to Yesim for closing this meeting. Thank you.

YESIM SAGLAM: Thank you very much, Satish. Thank you all for joining today's meeting. This meeting is adjourned. Have a great rest of the day. Bye.

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