Subject: [Ext] Re: URGENT FOUAD - Brief statement / CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR THE 2022 ALAC, RALO AND ALAC DELEGATES TO THE NOMCOM

Date: Friday, May 6, 2022 at 6:57:26 AM Pacific Daylight Time

From: Fouad Bajwa

To: Gisella Gruber

CC: ICANN At-Large Staff

Statement:

Dear APRALO Community,

I extend my greetings from Pakistan where we have been actively working in collaboration with the Internet Society to connect rural remote communities to the Internet through the Digital Dera smart village so they too can benefit from the power of the network and realise their full potential. Our rural communities have been deeply affected by the negative impact of the COVID pandemic, climate change and are on the losing side of the digital divide. We have always felt it to be our responsibility to connect them to the Internet and the rest of the world as they too are integral stakeholders of the Internet. They represent 70% of the country's population.

Connecting humans to each other or the Internetwork continues to drive my motivation even for my APRALO community. My aim has always been to empower our members to connect and actively participate and contribute to the aims of the APRALO Internet community to actively represent the user voice in At-Large and ICANN. I want you all to realise your full potential and actively engage within our community. The energy, time and participation that you voluntarily contribute to APRALO is highly valuable to the community and ICANN. I do not want you to sit on the sidelines and feel left out. Community building and its sustainability requires a great deal of sharing and caring for all and not just a few. When things remain usual for long periods of time, empathy seems to fade away and the community deteriorates to a gathering of the same few. We need to bring back the positive energy into our community and work together to develop our capacity in terms of both community leadership and technical capabilities to address ICANN policy issues for the region that positively impacts its users.

I have volunteered to chair APRALO as a member who has always been there for you, open to respectfully hearing your concerns and willing to be of help; ready to offer ethical and empathy empowered leadership when and where possible. These values really matter to all of us belonging to the Asian-Pacific community. Values are close to our heart as is our community. I will lead our community towards improved participation in the processes that require APRALO's commitment and contribution. I will work with you all to develop the capacity and capability to increase community ownership and respond to the diversity of issues and challenges that Internet users face and need the support for. I will not, I repeat, I will not restrict resources and opportunities to contribute to a handful few and keep repeating the same faces across all areas that our APRALO community needs to contribute to.

My leadership will be driven by values and respect for our APRALO community and we will share these values to increase your participation and engagement with APRALO as well as increase our membership. The power of community lies in mutual values and shared respect for each other, in inclusiveness and ensuring the active involvement and engagement of members in the organisation's work while ensuring that everyone is allowed to learn, grow and participate within the roles and responsibilities of APRALO. I keenly look forward to serving and contributing to the APRALO community as its Chair, actively engaging you all and being available as a colleague and friend who shares and respects.

You can read more about our remote rural connectivity efforts here:
https://www.internetsociety.org/issues/community-networks/success-stories/digital-dera/ [internetsociety.org]
https://www.internetsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Pakistan-Case-Study-EN.pdf [internetsociety.org]