

## **My Fellow Members of LACRALO**

As announced, the Board of Directors of Devnet, Guyana nominated me to be a candidate in the election to be one of the LACRALO representatives on the ALAC. Let me first state how honoured I am to be nominated and also thank those who showed the faith in and understanding of my capabilities to second my nomination.

I am the current chairman of Devnet, an ICT4D non-governmental organization that specializes in the development and implementation of initiatives to provide internet access and connectivity in the rural, hinterland and economically disadvantaged areas.

I am on the national Prime Ministerial steering committee providing oversight of the management and policy direction of the country's .top level domain (TLD). I also serve on the Caricom ICT Steering Committee for the implementation of a fully functional information society by 2015. Last but certainly not least I am an ICT professional with over 20 years experience in providing solutions to the public, private and civil sectors.

I believe it is this range of experience that would be crucial for the effective representation of LACRALO on the ALAC. Principally, I respect and to a large extent share ICANN's core mission and values. ICANN's primary role is to effectively manage the integrity of the internet space and infrastructure. Its focus therefore is understandably narrow but however does not necessarily take into account the needs and desires of a constituency like LACRALO. More importantly we must ask ourselves how LACRALO has sought to address this fundamental issue.

Devnet is one of the founding members of LACRALO. I remember well the weekend we spent in Buenos Aires crafting the principles that were supposed to govern the direction and spirit of LACRALO. I also remember distinctly as a group we affirmed the right of civil society to be equal partner in the processes and function of Internet Governance. It was one of the fundamental reasons for being part of this organization; another one was that it gave us a chance to reinforce the ties that bind us with our Latin American brothers and sisters.

Four years later I am not convinced that we are fulfilling our mandate. LACRALO is supposed to be a champion for our constituency. LACRALO must be constantly aware that constituents are not among most affluent and therefore by extension not the most connected. It is the role of LACRALO to ensure that ICANN, despite its narrow mandate, works on the kind of initiatives that will address the issue of the millions who still can't access the internet on a persistent basis.

There is a feeling that ICANN seems on reneging on commitments. Civil society still does not participate fully in the management, directions and policy of ICANN and internet governance as a whole. My experience in Devnet and values received therein

tell me that LACRALO must return to its principles and champion the beliefs that it proclaim itself to represent. We as internet users and civil society must ensure that we have a greater say in matters of internet governance. This is however is not trying to kick down doors. It is about bottom up consensus building, reaching out to other groups who have a similar interests and progressive mandates and most importantly, ensuring that all members of LACRALO feel that they will get a chance to participate in the process. It is this type of representation that I believe is required at the level of the ALAC and with the support of my fellow members I promise that is the kind of representation that I will make every effort to provide.

Again I am honoured to be nominated and be among those well respected colleagues who have been nominated as well.

Warm Regards

**Lance Hinds**  
**Devnet**