SO-AC-SG Leadership Call
Thursday, 17 July 2014 @ 13:00 UTC

David Olive: Okay; very good. We might want to change the agenda briefly, and let Theresa go after Fadi, because of her responsibilities with the London meeting. And I want to thank all of you for being on the call. Again, this call will be recorded and transcribed so you can share with members of your communities and stakeholder groups.

And with that, the agenda is -- some comments from Fadi, both on the highlights of ICANN 50, and some other matters of importance. We'll then move to the NTIA, ICANN Accountability update from Theresa. I'll then provide an update on our developments for improvements of the public comments, and also talk about next steps for our SO, AC and SG Workshop on more strategic issues.

With that, I think I will -- if everyone agrees that that agenda is fine, I will proceed to let Fadi talk about ICANN 50, and some other developments.

Fadi, the floor is yours.

Fadi Chehadé: Okay. Thank you, David. Thank you. Hello, everyone. It's good to hear the voices again, after London. I think Theresa couldn't get together the Coordination Group for the NTIA Transition together, but there were a few ICANN attendees at the ICANN 50 who are still lost in that hotel, so she gathered this morning, and I think they started today, their Coordination Group.

Did you find 22 or 27 of them there, Theresa, enough to get going?

Theresa Swinehart: Yeah. I know, I came across some; yeah, about 22 or 25, or so, yes; and some remote, who joined remotely as well. So, it was great to find them here again.

Fadi Chehadé: Okay. I can't believe you're back at the London Metropole. But anyway, I'm glad you are there, and it seems like this effort has kicked off this morning in London, and it's frankly very, very encouraging that ICANN, in the span of a few months, has facilitated this process. We should -- as a community we should all be, frankly, very pleased that this is coming together, and the effort has started.

I've insinuated before that not everyone was on the bus, and not everyone was completely pleased with every little detail of how this was put together, but I think all in all, ICANN should be -- all of us -- ICANN should be very pleased that we have been able to pull this off with multiple communities, with multiple needs, with very specific requirements from the U.S. Government, from the community.

So, congratulations to all of us that this has started today, completely transparent, completely open, and I hope that if we stay on track we will be able to manage the transition in a very good way. And I think also, in parallel with that, we should be pleased that the accountability track is also coming together. I think that we have received the comments from the community, and an

assessment of these comments is occurring as we speak, so that we can get that process going, as well, as soon as possible.

I have spoken many times before with you and others, that these two processes are clearly interrelated. When the training wheels are being taken off, as I said, many times, it's very important that we attend to the health of the bicycle and its readiness to go without the training wheels. So we will attend to these things, but we have to be, also, making sure that we do not, as we are busy tuning up the bicycle, which we should always do, and continuously do, we should not miss the one opportunity we have for these training wheels to be removed, and do it well, and do it with transparency and inclusiveness, and I think we will get there. I'm actually quite confident we will get there.

I think that the ICANN 50 Meeting -- and I would love to hear a little bit from you, hopefully, I'll speak less today and listen to you on this -- the ICANN 50 Meeting was a milestone in a number of ways. I'm not going to bore you with all the statistics, the numbers of people, 175 ministers, in 77 countries; 160 At-Large structures there. Incredible the number of people, the quality of the sessions we had. I felt, and I wish to hear from you as well, it was actually quite good. We have some work to match that in Los Angeles.

I think the cohesiveness of the community at that meeting appeared to me to be very good. Our ability to work together and to focus on, let's say, our core business, if I can use that term, was also evident in London. So from my perspective, I'm very pleased that way.

The important thing for me to share with you is that also, we've seen a year, especially up to London, where there has been quite a bit of focus on Internet Governance, as a result of the Board asking me to put some effort on ensuring that the ecosystem of Internet Governance that ICANN fits in, is an ecosystem that is healthy and that favors the Multistakeholder Model, so that we don't continue in the battles we have for years, you know, is ICANN the legitimate place to do its work as the multistakeholder approach of ICANN.

I mean, frankly, we spent quite a bit of time in the last year, you know, starting really with the Buenos Aires Meeting and leading up to London. That focus on Internet Governance after London needs to now, kind of, subside. We need to -- as I said in London, we need to start taking some of the great successes we made, whether it is in NETMundial in Sao Paulo, or in the Panel that present (inaudible) that did -- which produced the report that is now being studied in about 13 universities as a seminal report in how global Internet Governance should work.

We need to take this work and transition our stewardship of that work to a broader group, so that ICANN the organization, ICANN the community, and myself as your President, and the Staff, can focus our efforts and energy on the -- back on the key matters that really are at hand, and these are most critically ensuring that the ICANN operations and GDD, are operating at the level they should, to support you. Secondly, to ensure that the bicycle, or ICANN's accountability and structure is in shape as these wheels are being -- the training wheels are being taken off, and the NTIA Transition is completed.

So this is where the energy is effective, frankly, the end of this coming month we'll be refocused, on my part and the Staff's part, so that we can get back into a year of very focused operational excellence and readiness for the post-NTIA phase.

So, I want to give you an important heads up that is to public information, but just so you know, but it's important at least to have that heads-up. In an effort to transition, as I just told you that stewardship on Internet Governance, later on in August there will be a quasi hand off from ICANN of its stewardship in that space to a broader community and that will be announced in late August. This way we can kind of achieve, in my opinion, a proper refocusing of our energies.

So as we get closer to that, and information on this gets hardened, because it's not just me, or ICANN, there are other -- many, many other people involved as I had mentioned before, we need to hand this to a broader community, a much larger community that deals with technical issues, and non-technical issues, national, regional, global, decision-makers, but definitely multistakeholder. We need to find a home for that. I have talked in my blog and in London about some form of coalition, or an alliance or something of that sort. That's what we are putting together and it looks like it will come together towards the end of August, and it will be announced in Geneva around that time.

So that's that. I also want to ask David to spend a little time talking about the reform of our public comment process. I know that many of us have been involved in looking at that, and in reforming that, so we need to talk about this a little bit, and Theresa also will touch a little bit on what's going on in London. But I'm here and I'd like to also engage with you and makes sure I answer any question. And I thank you again for taking the time for this. Back to you, David.

David Olive: Thank you, Fadi. Jonathan in the Chat asks, either for you or Theresa, to be more specific about the timelines for the next milestone or process comment in the accountability work. To set expectation of the approximate time, rather than immediately that that might come. Should we, maybe, turn to Theresa, I know her time is somewhat limited, and I can do public comment after, to talk to us about the update on NTIA and ICANN accountability?

Fadi Chehadé: Certainly, that's a good idea.

David Olive: Okay. Theresa, may we do that, if you--?

Theresa Swinehart: Sure; I'm more than happy to.

David Olive: Okay.

Theresa Swinehart: Can everybody hear me okay. Okay, I assume that's a yes. The connectivity was rather difficult. So, two things; as Fadi has mentioned, I've had a déjà vu, I'm back in the same hotel I was in two weeks ago, and fortunately I was welcomed, I met with several familiar faces and also new faces for the participation of the Coordination Group for the NTI Stewardship Transition.

I just want to say here, thank you everybody, for all the work and the processes that were undertaken for the selection of your community representation on the Coordination Group. I realize it was an undertaking, and really appreciate all the work that went into that in the short timeframe Considering that we had the announcement on the 14th of March, of ICANN facilitating this process, and the opportunity to be addressing this and then pulling together the process and the identification of everybody, I know that it's been a lot of work to undertake.

We started the meeting today, information on how to get to the Web streaming, and the remote audio and video stream, and the transcription, including a translation into other languages that we provide also for the ICANN meetings. That's all available on the front of our website, and of course the transcriptions will be posted at the end of the day, of each of the days, and made available to everybody.

The meeting is underway; the Coordination Group itself worked on an agenda, and like yesterday, had finalized what was a draft agenda which was then posted on the website as well. And we'll endeavor to provide updates to information as soon as they make it available in order to get that out, and also for David, of course, to make sure that we get the email circulated out to everybody on this.

This morning they spent some time on introducing each other, so they had an opportunity to get to know each other. Statements of interests, which constituency group they were coming from, and some touched a little bit on the selection process, that I got them to be part of this. They are now

working on the Charter, and then we'll later be looking at working methodologies and preparations and timeline for the next meeting. As well as how they are going to be working, do they want sub-working groups, et cetera; so we'll work with David to make sure we get the information out to the group, as it gets updated.

So that process is underway. One thing that has come up which will tie into the next theme, of course are the issues around accountability and the observation that the accountability process is underway as we'll, and looking at how to ensure that the two processes inform each other.

So let me move over to the accountability process, and we had received the deadline for comments, was the 27th of June. We received a tremendous amount of comments, and also thank you, everybody, for the work that went into that. What was quite interesting was that there was -- the focus of the comments was very much around substantive areas, a little bit less around the process, proposed approach, although there was quite a bit around that as well.

In total, there were 49 comments submitted by a wide range from the global community, in the community, and we are now in the process of ensuring that we have a good analysis, have had a good summary of that, and then propose next steps. In light of the meetings; over the course of the next few days, also just trying to ensure that if there's anything that's relevant from the coordination group, that that also helps us inform the next steps in relation to this.

It is my hope that we have something that we can post within, hopefully, about the next 10 days or so, I realize that the better number would be good, but we are still in the process of just trying to summarize everything, and so shortly after the ICANN Meeting, we had a bit of a -- ensuring that we do this, and having the time to do it very well.

So I think those are the updates on the two areas. I'm happy to respond to any questions, or make myself available for any follow-up discussions with anybody as well.

David Olive: Thank you, Theresa. Are there any questions? I know Byron in the Chat said, "Has there been any further group and decision how the accountability and transition may be linked or timed, even tangentially?"

Theresa Swinehart: To answer that, that's actually been something that has come up a little bit in the discussion here with the Coordination Group, they are in the middle of discussing some of that, actually, as I'm on the call. So we'll look at how some of that discussion occurs over the next day, but I would think that, you know, some way to help inform each other and we'll look at what they discuss over the next day or two to make sure that that's captured and reflected.

David Olive: Okay. For someone who may not be in the Adobe Connect, and just online, is there a question for Theresa, on the NTIA Transition and the ICANN Accountability?

Tony Harris: Yeah. This is Tony, Tony Harris, I have a question.

David Olive: Yes, Tony. Please, go ahead.

Tony Harris: Yes, Theresa. Just to make sure I understand this correctly, I'm sitting in for Tony Holmes today. The next thing we can expect to see about the accountability would be, from what I understand, he will be analyzing the comments and then there will be an announcement or a proposal for the next step forward, is that correct.

Theresa Swinehart: Yes. That's correct. We are just in the process of finalizing the summary of those, are preparing that, and then obviously with the discussions over the course of the next two days, just trying to make sure that anything that's relevant to that is also captured in the context of -- I think to Byron's point, the relationship, or identifying any mechanism to ensure that there is -- that the two

processes are informing each other, so if something is identified in the Coordination Group work that we can ensure that that's captured there.

Tony Harris: Thank you.

David Olive: Thank you, Tony. Thank you, Theresa. Are there any other comments or questions on this agenda item for Theresa while we have her? Michele, I see your hand up. Michele, please.

Michele Neylon: Hi, Theresa. Michele. I don't want to be petty about this, and I understand that with the timing and everything, you know, it was quite difficult, it's just, the one comment I would give has been around the communication of this entire process. The remote access details for today's meeting, for example, as far as I know, that was only distributed yesterday, which is literally less than 24 hours before the meeting actually kicked off, which isn't particularly helpful. Thanks.

Theresa Swinehart: Yeah, Michele. Thank you for observing that, and to the point, making sure that the information, it was posted but it was not as visible as I would liked -- as we would have liked to have it. As well as ensuring that the information from the Coordination Group was prepared earlier on, and then made available. So we will certainly endeavor to do much more advance on those kinds of things as we iron out some of the wrinkles, you know, in liaising with the Coordination Group in ensuring that the information gets out. My apologies on that, and we will certainly flag that as something to be liaising with them very closely on.

David Olive: Thank you, Michele. Thank you, Theresa, for that answer. Are there any other comments or questions? Great, thank you so much. With that, if there are no other questions or comments on that agenda topic we'll move to the next topic -- Hold on please -- Jonathan Robinson, and then Elisa Cooper. Jonathan?

Jonathan Robinson: David, Elisa was before me.

David Olive: Sorry. Elisa, you go first, and then Jonathan. Thank you.

Elisa Cooper: Thank you. Theresa, is it still envisioned that there would be a Cross Community Working Group in support of the -- enhancing accountability issues that we've been discussing?

Theresa Swinehart: The comments that we received in the context of the process, are something that should be looked at. There were some mixed sort of approaches to the approach of the -- across Cross Community Working Group, and also the issue around size overall, of the Working Group, that is -- I think as we talked about earlier on one of the other calls, that it's actually able to function as a working group. So that's actually part of the comments that are still being looked at to make sure that the feedback that's been captured is right.

Elisa Cooper: Okay. Thank you.

David Olive: Thank you. Elisa, thank you. Jonathan, you're next.

Jonathan Robinson: Thanks, David. I suppose two comments, one I've just been inspired by the previous question, really, and just to make it clear. In my opinion, and I hope others as well, the necessity or usefulness or requirement for a Cross Community Working Group is up to the community, that's how -- that's a decision we need to take, and I suspect part of the reason -- part of the basis on which we'll make that decision is what comes out of the work to process the accountability track right now.

So that's not to suggest that -- I mean, I happen to believe that the work we are going to do in the Cross Community Working Group on the transition, on the stewardship transition, is entirely complementary to, and will be very effective work together with that of the Coordination Group, and there may well be something similar to be done with accountability, but I think that's hard to

say, certainly from a personal perspective, and I suspect from others in the community, and so (inaudible) we see the next steps on the accountability side, and of course how that links into the work on the Coordination Group.

So that's just an immediate reaction to that. And then prior to that, the point I was going to make was to actually thank Fadi for his recognition or the direction folks on Operational Excellence. As you know Keith isn't on the call, and he asked me to, essentially, be focused on my registry's perspective on this. And in sort of diplomatic terms, we have, as everyone is aware, a sort of full and frank discussion with the GDD Group, it was very positive in London. We came away with some clear directions as to how things can improve but, you know, having Fadi and all his team focused on Operational Excellence as a priority is very welcome news, and I appreciate this.

So thanks, Fadi, and thanks David, and Theresa.

Fadi Chehadé: Thank you, David. I would like to just ask a question myself to Jonathan and the community; if I could, David?

David Olive: Please, go ahead; Fadi, please.

Fadi Chehadé: So, not just me, but many people were confused by the proposal for the Cross Community Group. Can someone explain to me exactly -- of course I agree with you Jonathan, that this is 100% your decision as a community, and by all mean, you know, we should have more cross community groups, you know that I'm a big fan of these, even for IG, if you recall we tried to do one after Buenos Aires that I favored, and I supported, so I'm a fan.

Having said, I just want to hear you explain to me, and Elisa, I think, and team did something during the Public Forum, exactly what this particular cross community group will do, as compared to the cross community group that Theresa is forming. And be candid with us that I understand exactly, what is the intent? And what will it do as compared to what we are doing?

Jonathan Robinson: Okay, Fadi. I think I can help there, and my Co-Chair on the Cross Community Working Group, Byron Holland, is also on this call, so I'm sure Byron might add to this. I think there's a couple of issues, Fadi. First of all there's one at a perception level, it's who is actually doing the work? Is this a community-led initiative, or is this a staff-led initiative? And as you know this is a sensitive axis around which some of our work pivot.

To the extent that ICANN is the convener and facilitator of this process, and to the extent that I can speak on behalf of others, I would say we are very respectful and appreciative of that. Nevertheless in this sort of bottom-up model that so many of us have bought into, it is up to us to take an initiative and to undertake the relevant work as and when it's required. And so we felt it was incumbent on us to take that initiative and set up the effort to do the work that was required.

I guess what's become clear, as well, all further point since that -- as time has evolved -- is that transition, as you've frequently alluded to and referred to, Fadi, is much more than just in ICANN, it goes beyond ICANN, but within the ICANN community and within key affected groups within the community we have an obligation to undertake the relevant areas of work ourselves. So the Coordination Group stretches out beyond the normal ICANN groups, if you like, and integrates others in the process.

But to the extent that work needs to be done to feed into that Coordination Group, as far as I understand it, those involved in the ICANN groups, as well as outside of ICANN, feel that it's appropriate that much of the detailed work gets done in that Group, and then fed into the Coordination Group on an iterative basis, so that the Coordination Group act as a coordinator and a group that knits together the different streams of work.

I don't know if that's clear enough, or if you would like more detail, or if Byron would like to add to that, but that, I hope is a start at explaining how these two might work together and why it's necessary to have the two efforts.

Fadi Chehadé: So if I could, and I want to hear Byron as well. But let me explain that I'm even more confused now. The Coordination Group that is happening in London today is a Coordination Group that includes multiple communities, not just ICANN, as requested by NTIA. So you are correct, that in that particular effort, to design that NTIA Transition, other communities, for example, the IETF or the IAB, have also formed within their community, groups so that they can feed into that Coordination Group. That is correct. The accountability track does not have that formed. We do not have other communities involved in the accountability track. The accountability track is designed to be an ICANN community effort, to basically figure out how we are going to enhance our accountabilities.

So if that's clear then, then the point you made, Jonathan, that we will create two ICANN cross community groups, one organized by Staff, and one organized by the community, that is the starting point that worries me, because it sends a message that has two bad implications. The first is that the staff is rogue and on its own, it's developing a process and therefore we need to go do our own. We need to fix that as leaders, all of us here on this call, if that's the issue. The message of that is very strange to me.

And the second issue that is it -- if we assume that we end up doing both, I think that the outcome of that means complete lockdown as to, we have two accountability tracks going on and producing data by the same community by probably the same members. I don't know how we are going to deal with that. I think the approach we should take, is now that we've received comments, as we, as leaders of the community that are seeing to improve its accountability to the world, especially with the lenses of the planet, focused on our accountability -- for God's sake, the French Senate is now issuing a big report on how ICANN should be accountable and reform.

The world is watching us. We are in a year where the world is watching us. I think it is incumbent upon us to figure out why our community is asking the staff to set up an accountability track, and in parallel, is starting its own. So this is a schism that worries me. So, unless I'm misunderstanding something, please walk me again, why we need two ICANN community accountability efforts? Or, why can't we just work together and figure out how to make this an effort that we can be proud of, and the world will look at it and say, this is a mature committee, that is, indeed, ready to be free of the NTIA.

Jonathan Robinson: Fadi, let me not fog (ph) this, but I'll respond very briefly. I am not, certainly, nor am I aware of a current proposal for a Cross Community Working Group on accountability. That said, but it's worth flagging, was that it is always possible that the community, in its bottom-up way, may initiate a piece of work. And so I think one of the issues is one of perception, it's understanding the fact that that is how many within the community have operated in the past, and continue to believe that it's appropriate to operate -- to initiate things from within the community as opposed to by staff.

But you know, I don't want to get into a sort of head-butting with you over this. I was just flagging that it was a possibility. As far as the other track is concerned, the Stewardship Transition, you didn't say that you weren't clear there, and I know Byron has got his hand up, so I do feel I should defer to him to make additional comment on that as well.

David Olive: Thank you, Jonathan. Byron, and then Elisa.

Byron Holland: To the transition component rather than the accountability stream, in terms of why the Cross Community Working Group was set up there, yeah, I just want to make sure that we are clear. The idea is that that Cross Community Working Group which has been spearheaded by the ccNSO and GNSO, but open to others, was created to try to enable those communities in particular, and others

that wanted to participate, to generate substantive content that could then be fed into the coordinating committee. And the understanding, I think, generally and certainly within the GNSO and ccNSO, is that the Coordination Committee will effectively be stitching and knitting together many different inputs to create a holistic solution for how we are going to move forward in the post-transition phase.

The idea of the CCWG on transition was meant absolutely to be complimentary and helpful to the Coordination Committee, but if anything, provide a little more focus from directly affected parties around the naming side of this issue. So if we look at the IETF, if we look folks in the protocol and parameter space, they are doing their own form of this in being -- in creating content that would be fed into the Coordination Committee, as are the numbering folks. And to some degree, the CCWG will also be helping to do that in and around the naming space, with the benefit of other inputs from the likes of SSAC and our colleagues in ALAC.

So that's how it came to be and what the intent is, as far as the -- parallel the CCWG on the accountability side, I'm certainly not aware of anything like that. I don't think there's anything being contemplated in communities that I've heard from around that. So I don't think at this point there's any confusion on that issue to date. In fact, most of us are waiting to get greater clarity on what ICANN is intending there, or makes it clear is going to be the process, before there's any real substantive discussion on, okay, what's the response to that's going to be. Thank you.

David Olive: Thank you, Byron. Elisa, you're next, please.

Elisa Cooper: Yes. I just wanted to provide a clarifying comment about this Accountability Working Group, that is, I'm fairly certain that when the call for comments on accountability were sent, there was some mention of a working group, and so we actually had that call when Theresa discussed who might be on that, and how -- you know, then we decided, well it's for the community to decide. So that's where the genesis of that is coming from.

Fadi Chehadé: Okay. Elisa. I'm sorry, this is Fadi. I need you to clarify. I was very clear, frankly, when Byron and Jonathan finished, but now I'm -- I just want clarity on what you meant. And the reason, frankly, Byron and Jonathan, that I was confused, is when Elisa, Keith and others spoke at the Public Forum with great force about the need for a cross community group they were, I think, speaking very clearly that it's about accountability, not the transition coordination group. So this is why I was being clear that I think if we should create multiple groups within our community looking at accountability, we are going to be unnecessarily confusing a lot of people and not looking aligned as a community.

So I was clear after Byron and Jonathan finished, that they mean that this Cross Community Working Group that they -- the ccNSO and GNSO are leading, is there to provide very concentrated input into the coordinating groups, that wants to be in London, within the scope of that coordinating group, to assist them in making their activities successful, and I'm extremely support of that. And thank you for taking the leadership Byron and Jonathan to make that happen, other communities are doing the same and we should as well.

Now what Elisa just said, it's back to accountability. So, Elisa, can you please be clear. Is the intent here as well, just so I am clear, for the community to also build a second Cross Community Working Group that is going to feed into the accountability track that is an ICANN accountability community track as well?

Elisa Cooper: So I just think there's a lot of confusion, to be honest, I don't know the answer. I mean, I think when we spoke with Theresa sometime ago, that's the point at which we were talking about the fact that we would have this Cross Community Working Group, but what I just heard from Theresa was that Staff is still -- were doing all of the comments, and there were -- there have been many comments that, perhaps, a Cross Community Working Group might not be the right approach, and so that's my understanding right now.

Fadi Chehadé: Okay.

Theresa Swinehart: Hold on --This is Theresa, as I wasn't sure if I was on mute. As I said, in the original proposal, there has been the suggestion for a working group approach. The feedback that's coming through some of the comments, and the various aspects or what we are trying to assess is, given that feedback, if that approach is something that had agreement or not. In the feedback, it's been suggested that community members look at how to select experts to identify, to put on, but yet a lot of those discussions haven't identified experts, and the feedback was also around, is that the right approach.

Of course that was one of the questions and dialogues in the community and the discussion of course are very much, also at the ICANN 50 Meeting. So taking the feedback that's come in through the different dialogues, not just through the comment process, but also through the discussions of course, at the ICANN Meeting in London, just trying to assess those to identify across that actually would work for everybody.

So I hope that answers the question, but we are really trying to listen to the community and the feedback that came in, both through the comments online and through, of course, the feedback and discussions that occurred at the ICANN Meeting in London.

Fadi Chehadé: Elisa, if I could ask you, since you've channeled some of this important input, may I ask that we, as leaders of the community, work closely together to ensure that first, no one in the community is surprised by whatever next step staff comes back with. We need to be aligned. This is extremely important, this process, and I think we got to a great place with the Coordination Group, and the leadership that our community is also displaying here and how are going to support the Coordination Group on the transition is now, you know, frankly, in a good spot, and everybody is pleased.

Let's make sure that on the accountability track we work closely together to make sure that whatever Staff comes back with, actually reflect exactly what the community wants and needs. This is very critical. So you have my commitment, Elisa, and all of the leaders on the call, that we will not surprise you. We will not -- we need to work together to make sure that what comes out, represent a good process, and a good (inaudible) that makes us, frankly, all appear as leaders to the world in understanding the importance of this track, and being aligned in how this track will work. Because if it doesn't, if it doesn't, if we don't appear to be aligned and working well on improving our accountability and our structure, moving forward, I think the price we will pay for that will be significant.

The world is not going to give us a break on this one. So I urge us to, and you have my commitment that we will not do anything without conferring at least with the leaders on this call, and making sure that we are aligned as we move forward in the next few weeks.

Elisa Cooper: Thank you, I mean, that's very helpful. Certainly I can personally commit to waiting to hear back from staff what the conclusions are, and what the analysis is. I think I just have a lot of confusion about what the next step was, whether the onus was on us, to go ahead and move forward with, you know, driving this. Or whether we were waiting for comments or -- but this is helpful information and I can take this back to the Business Constituency. Thank you, Fadi.

Fadi Chehadé: Thank you, Elisa. And again, the onus should be on all of us together. You know, I don't want you to think we will come up with something and then everyone will be screaming, how did this come about? We listened to all the comments we got, but I think I'm going to, with your permission, Theresa. I know you and I didn't discuss this, but we are going to insert a small step here. After we finish all the comment analysis, and we come up with a proposal, I would like to have a call, with those that are interested, and just go over it with them before we publish it.

Make sure that this -- they understand how we came up to that, and we hear their input, so that we come out, totally synchronized and aligned in the front of the whole world when we announce this.

Theresa Swinehart: Absolutely! I completely agree, Fadi. Absolutely!

David Olive: Okay, and last comment, Jonathan Robinson. On this topic, Jonathan?

Jonathan Robinson: Thank you, David. Fadi, I think you are hitting the nail on the head here, and it's clearly, the implicit issue is one of trust and alignment, and if we can work at achieving that, I think we can get somewhere. So, I think the alternative, the risk is that the proposal comes out on accountability, and doesn't appear to align with, or somehow meet the broader community's requirements. Or even elements of the community such that there is a call for a -- and then many people talk about community and staff as two different groups, and so it's quite confusing if we mention community and staff, community meaning the same or different.

But, there is certainly, as you know, an element of perception which sees staff as very different to the community. So to the extent that we can work together prior to a proposal perceived to be from staff solidifying, I think we will achieve what you are trying to do. And so, you know, I think you do hit the nail on the head, and we can do our best to work with you that it has, you know, whatever the proposal is, there's broad acceptance, and it's consistent with what might have been initiated had it come, you know, in a sort of bottom-up community-led way. And that's the really the key to try and achieve, and it seems to me that you recognize that. Thanks.

David Olive: Thank you very much, Jonathan. If there are any other comments or questions on this topic, we should move to the next two.

Bill Drake: David? This is Bill Drake.

David Olive: Yes. Yes, Bill, please.

Bill Drake: Hi. Hold on --let's turn off--

David Olive: We can hear you.

Bill Drake: Okay. So I was just wondering, Fadi. I haven't had a chance to talk to you since London, and I was wondering if you have a specific reaction to the statement that was made on behalf of all the different parts of the GNSO in the Public Forum. Steve provided some feedback, on one of the List Serve discussions, but I haven't heard you engage on the specific ideas that people were putting forward, and whether -- how you saw those fitting into the process, and maybe that's just because it's summer and I missed something. So, if you could maybe just clue me in on what your thinking is about the suggestions that were made, that would be really interesting to me.

Fadi Chehadé: Thank you, Bill. Let me just make sure. You mean the suggestion that I just discussed in the last 10 minutes about forming a Cross Community Working Group on accountability?

Bill Drake: No. No. The statement that was made by the GNSO leaders was about more informing the Cross Community Working Group, which was about establishing mechanisms for accountability, and so on.

Fadi Chehadé: Well, I didn't get any more detailed on what that is, frankly, since the comments at the Public Forum. Could you either now, or could we get--

Bill Drake: I don't have the text right in front of me. Does anybody else have that in front of them? I'm not on the computer right now.

Unidentified Participant: I do not.

Theresa Swinehart: Bill this is -- I think Steve had responded, and provided a response back.

Bill Drake: Yes. I thought--

Theresa Swinehart: That they heard that the (crosstalk)--

Bill Drake: I know that Steve did, but I was saying, I hadn't heard Fadi addressed the suggestions that were made.

Fadi Chehadé: No. I have to look at these more closely, Bill, to be frank; before I can say something. So I will do that, and I will seek to publish something, or send you something at least -- unless others are interested -- as to my views on that, that I need to look into more closely.

Theresa, did you want to say something on that? Or, you'd rather you and I chat about this, because I haven't focused on this since.

Theresa Swinehart: No. Neither had I, and I think that the -- there had been input into the topic around accountability and it's also something that's relevant to, you know, the overall accountability work that we are doing, but it's a specific kind of proposal. There have been similar specific kinds of proposals and topics being raised and also in the comments that were received, through the public comment process. In looking at all of those kinds of specific inputs and ideas, and suggestions; this is something that we haven't had a chance to look through entirely either.

Fadi Chehadé: And Bill, just quickly. I mean, I don't want to be evasive, because I didn't look at it closely, that's all it is, but I will tell you that if these are proposals on specific ways we can improve our accountability, then my answer, I can tell you right now will be, let's get the process going, and feed these into the process. I will not -- it's not my role to -- say I am for that accountability mechanism, or I'm not for that one. And my role (inaudible)--

Bill Drake: The particular point, I guess, that was emphasized as the notion of an external or independent accountability structure.

Fadi Chehadé: I think what we need to do is to create a process. Create a team of people that can then start consuming all these ideas. It has to be a bottom-up, completely across community groups; that can comment on this. It is not my job to comment on this, as your President. My job is to enable the process, in a way that you are satisfied and frankly to deal with, in fact, the concerns like Elisa and others have brought up, to make sure that this is truly bottom-up and a community process. That's my focus.

Now, do I have an opinion? Yes. But it doesn't matter to be honest, what matters is what the community wants to do to make ICANN the shining light on the hill. That's what's important. And I assure you of that. So I will look at them nonetheless, and absorb them, and understand them, because it's -- I'm also a member of the community, but I can assure you also that I will not be commenting on any specific proposals because it's not my role to do that, it's the community's role.

David Olive: Okay. Thank you, Fadi, and Bill, and Theresa. If we can, in the interest of time, move to the next two topics; the next one is really an update that I would like to provide on the public comment improvements, and then finally, some further discussion on the SO/AC/SGWorkshop, and timing, and the like for that. Is that agreeable to everyone? I'll move forward on that.

In terms of the public comment improvements, on the 29th of May, in our conversations, we talked about this and the need to move forward with those improvements. We were, of course, talking in light of the ATRT2 recommendations, as well as feedback from you on this call, and I asked the Staff to start looking at how best to do that, and you saw some of my preliminary ideas in the blog

I posted just before the ICANN Meeting, because we wanted to use the ICANN London Meeting also as a way to gather more reactions to the -- some of the next steps we are proposing. In that regard, Rob Hoggarth and Carol Reyes and myself, did talk to many people in London. So we received comments from people, and others verbally, on the direction for these improvements, and we are listening to those changes. We are encouraged that most of it is positive, but the general message was, be careful on this, and don't be too wedded to any targets, to make sure that it's properly planned.

And so we will pursue on an evolutionary path, we hope to implement certain changes, it has to make sure that they are working properly, and then adjust if they are not. So we are still in the development phase now, but we are inclined to take a look at this, and hopefully have something to you by end August, early September. But what we are doing as I mentioned, in the blog, would be to suspend the reply comment experiment for now.

The metrics that we had in doing our study as well as hearing from the ATRT2 just do not accommodate that mechanism, and so we want to hold off on that, and explore new ways.

The second one of course, we would seek to lengthen the default time to 40 days to respond, so that the communities can have time to gather the comments, to look at the comments and gather the different information and viewpoints and produced the substantive inputs that we all desire.

Obviously, we'll monitor that, if longer periods do have to be balanced with some of the deadlines or timeframes in the policy development processes that we have, and of course we want to make sure that our decision-making is expeditious as possible, but not at the expense of appropriate and knowledgeable public comment and input.

Also, we are reconsidering the proposed targeted release date. We thought we could do something for a plan in a predictable way, the 1st or the 15th of each month, and we are going to doing a little more of that study. We found that some of the existing contractual provisions for the registrars do not work very well in their areas. So we'll be looking at that, and also we are concerned that if we do comments on first and the 15th of the month, a lot of the deadlines, the due dates would come as well, on the same period. And so we are trying to figure that out, and be flexible on that, but still having some sort of plan or predictability, and notice, too, for you the community leaders, on what's coming up for public comments.

And so, to that extent, you know, we are going to be proactive on this, working with you and trying to make sure that we have the right changes, some of those changes will require some minor website development issues to make sure that we can do this, and we hope to implement much of this in the last August, early September timeframe. Prior to that, of course, will be planned educational and information exchanges; we hope to do at least two webinars, to communicate what changes we are going to be proposing, and how best to work with them, and understand them. And so to that extent, I wanted to share an update on this call, and not taking too much time, and of course continue to welcome your comments, and inputs.

I'll stop there to see if there are any further questions, but that was the aftermath of what we talked about in May, and we are moving forward to do that along the lines indicated.

Kristina Rosette?

Kristina Rosette: Thank you, David. The feedback I'm getting from the IPC is that we actually tell them the criteria to be shared is valuable, in terms of -- and one that we actually use for its intended purpose, on a couple of occasions, to either clarify, what appeared to be a misunderstanding made in comments by others, in reaction to our comments, or to further elaborate on a point that was raised in the initial comments. So I guess that the question that I have is, how set in stone is the current determination that the reply period is going to be eliminated?

David Olive: It's not set in stone at all, Kristina. Thank you. Again, we are trying to experiment and see we may take on a few of them, but at the moment it's really, let's see what works best.

Kristina Rosette: Okay.

David Olive: Because the data that we had received in the current comments, and we analyzed it, I think, over a year-and-a-half of comments, that the reply comment was really used for extra time rather than in the fashion of further clarification. We would hope to address that issue of more of an interchange with something more interactive in terms of a tool for -- on the website, if you will, and we are still exploring with that, but the quick answer is, not that it's done, we are trying to figure out the happy medium.

Kristina Rosette: Okay. Excellent; because I think the views that I was getting from IPC members was that it's problem is that the initial comment period is too short, and the fix for that would seem to be to lengthen it as opposed to eliminate the reply period, and obviously I realize that you've got to find a balance that ensures that the real criteria is actually used for this purpose without making the entire commentary start to finish is too long, but I would hope that we can do that without eliminating the reply period entirely.

David Olive: And the other point is, we are -- we understand that the one size does not fit all, and for some, the need for inputs by the community, a reply comment mechanism might work very well, and so that's where we are trying to be as flexible and have options as long as it's clear to the community when the announcement is made. We are using option A, option B or option C, so to say, that that's the important part to try to be flexible and see what we might be able to do to engender greater comments and the quality of comments, that's our primary aim.

And Michele?

Michele Neylon: Thanks, David. Yeah, just a couple of comments on comments, I quite like the layout on the new site where you can see fairly easily what stage a comment period is, and also the ability to follow updates on a specific comment period, is also helpful. Or, currently that doesn't seem to tie back properly to the actual comment period lens, but I suspect that's more of a technical glitch than anything else.

With respect to the reply periods thing as well, I think there has been quite a bit of confusion around that, and quite a few of us have probably ended up using that more as a way of getting a comment in rather than replying to any previously-submitted things.

No, Fadi. I did not say I liked the website, I said I liked a function of the website. Let's not get carried away.

I think that any kind of revision around how comments are handled and, you know, allowing flexibility, I think is a good idea. I mean, the problem for a lot of us is, at times it seems like there's quite a few substantive topics that we need to provide comments and feedback on, so trying to catch our people to do that, can be quite difficult. Thanks.

David Olive: And do we know that Michele and that's what we were trying to do an addition to updating the technology platform for that public comment. We are working with Chris Gift and his team, to be able to provide some of those newer features and improve that element as well.

David Olive: Thank you very much. Any other comments on the public comment update. I see we are a few minutes over the hour and I would just like to move to the final topic, which is our SO, AC and SG workshop, and if I may, and I'll quickly move to that.

You know, on our last call we talked about an idea that has some sort of session where we can all explore topics such as the community workload and prioritization, the mechanisms or

representation within the GNSO and across SOs and ACs, and common and current understanding of the community's bottom-up processes. In essence, issues that are not new to our work and the SO, AC and SG work, but need to have a focus and a greater -- a lengthier conversation.

Happily, I thank all of you who are commenting and saying there was a general agreement in this type of strategic workshop, the challenge of course is then to define the appropriate time and place for that discussion, in our earlier September timeframe it's just not available as we were trying to coordinate busy schedules of all of you.

So I wanted to talk about -- I left the conversation with you on the list, was to -- and maybe propose an alternative at the moment, so that we can continue these discussions, and break it up into parts, and part of that is to continue it on our next -- what the call with community leaders, which will be in later September. Then further follow up with maybe a longer meeting in October, before the ICANN Meeting.

We used to have a two-hour roundtable on that Friday for -- and a preview as to what was happening at the ICANN meeting, but we can lengthen that to a longer period and follow that, by a dinner to have that conversation and maybe more focused, and in the meantime, with some surveys, or with some background material, to help us better understand your concerns and comments, and focus the discussion on that in Los Angeles, could be a way forward, and then there we can decided what other next steps your next meeting might be done.

And so I wanted to flag this issue at the moment with you today. I'll follow it up with a communication to all of you again, after this meeting, to hear how that will work. I know there were some proposals to do a Doodle Poll for availability between the October -- end of October, and January timeframe, and we are happy to hear of that as well.

Again there are a lot of other meetings that we don't want to add other meetings to your busy schedule, what we are trying to do -- maybe consolidate them at a time that we are all at the ICANN meeting, at least in the beginning.

So I will stop there, and see if there are any other comments or questions, and I will continue the discussion on our list, going forward.

Fadi Chehadé: David, I think most of the community leaders, so long as we can do this at a time in L.A. where they could also attend the George Clooney Wedding, they will be fine. So if we can combine these two, I think would be perfect. I heard it's in the fall anyway, so.

David Olive: That’s right. I always call it the classic calendar. But that’s okay, I will try my best. Fadi, would you want to have some last remarks before we close?

Fadi Chehadé: Just to say, I'm coming up here at the end of the -- kind of second year of my involvement at ICANN, I must tell you that I have -- I am scared -- when I think back of all the things I was trying to do two years ago given what I know today, and I thank you for being immensely patient, and understanding that I was new to the community. On some days I feel I will always be new to the community, and on some days, I feel that I have -- may come (inaudible) and understanding how to serve you, and to do it well.

I think all of you know that I have an entrepreneurial style that can be sometimes exhausting, sometimes helpful, but I'm -- I hope you know that I'm looking forward to the next year of my work here with great passion and with great interest. And with a great deal more learning about what I need to do to serve you better and to build things with you, and not just for you.

So I will do my own personal assessment of how I can do better, and I'm committed to that. So I leave you at least with the thought of asking you to personally, take a moment, if you can, when you can, to write me a personal note, letting me know on a very direct, personal, basis, assuming

you were reviewing me as someone working for you. What I can do better for you, or what I can do better for ICANN and its community? And I'll take that to heart, as I'm assessing during the summer weeks, you know, how I can do better in the period ahead.

And I mean that, so please, if you have a moment, do so and I'll take it to heart, but you have my continued commitment. I feel energized by the community, not tired by it. I remember meeting one of my predecessors, and I remarked how exhausted he sounded, and how -- and he just looked like he had run up a hill and wanted to get off the hill. And I promised myself that at any point during the time I'm service the ICANN community, if I feel this way, I should say it, and let somebody else lead.

I want to assure you that I don't feel this way. I actually feel this has been tremendous, and I'm very energized and very happy with the learnings I'm making about how to work in this community. But please do write me a note if you have the time, when you are lying on the beach this summer, wherever you are, on how I can serve you better.

And thank you, again, for taking the time. I'm really looking forward to a nice day with you; hopefully we can get our schedules to work together, so that we can learn how we can improve for you and together, the work for this community. Thank you, David.

David Olive: Thank you, Fadi. And thank you all for the time, and I know we are running a little over, but I want to thank the SO, AC and SG Leaders for their time again. The recording and the transcript will be posted soon. I will send a note around to remind, and point to people where they can download it, and it will be attached as well.

And with that, our next conference call I think is the end of September; I'll be sending that precise date around to you, around the same time, at 13:00 UTC.

With that, I want to thank Fadi, Theresa, and others on the call for their contributions and interactions. And wish everyone a good evening, good afternoon or good morning, where you may be. Thank you so much.

Fadi Chehadé: Thank you.

Theresa Swinehart: Thank you.

Unidentified Participant: Thank you.

Unidentified Participant: Bye, bye.