

## ICANN Open Forum

The objective of this session was to provide an update on ICANN's progress since the last IGF meeting in Istanbul, highlight key projects and initiatives underway, and engage in an open dialogue with participations on any ICANN related issues. Rinalia Abdul Rahim, ICANN Board Director, moderated the session.

Steve Crocker, Chairman of the ICANN Board, began by praising the WSIS+10 review draft UN resolution for calling for an extension of the IGF for another 10 years, and for recognizing the need for all stakeholders to engage in the process. He reiterated ICANN's strong support of the IGF as a platform for stimulating constructive dialogue on Internet issues in an open and multistakeholder fashion. He also noted ICANN's increased support to the global as well as regional and national IGFs, and its active participation in these forums. Steve then talked about the IANA stewardship transition and the ICANN accountability process and noted with actual figures the amount of work that had been done. An estimated 860 events around the world were organized on this topic between March 2014 and October 2015. Of these events, roughly 520 were joined through global webinars or calls, while an additional 345 were attended in person, spanning over 87 countries around the world. Roughly 300 people have been involved with the working groups, and there have been 25,000 or so email exchanges just on the accountability mailing list. The working groups – the IANA coordination group (ICG) and the Cross Community Working Group (CCWG) on accountability, have both reached significant results. The ICG has finalized its IANA stewardship proposal dependent upon the outstanding dependencies on the naming working group and CCWG. The CCWG has also made real progress on many of their outstanding recommendations, notably deciding to focus on developing the sole designator as the legal enforcement mechanism for their new community powers. The CCWG aims to submit its final proposal to the ICANN Board by mid January 2016.

Fadi Chehadé, ICANN President and CEO, explained that globalization at ICANN worked on four levels. First level is the operational level that includes:

- Opening of headquarters in Istanbul and Singapore and splitting the main operational functions across the three headquarters in Los Angeles, Istanbul and Singapore.
- The 24/5 ICANN phone support service offered in all UN languages plus Portuguese and Turkish.
- Partnerships with stakeholders around the world; two recent examples include the localization of ICANN materials in South Korea, and the DNS Entrepreneurship Center in Egypt.

The next level of globalization is geopolitical whereby ICANN would be accepted as an organization serving the global community. Over the past two years countries such as Brazil, China and India have publicly expressed support of the multistakeholder model, and of ICANN as the coordinator of the unique identifiers. In addition, ICANN has signed tens of MOUs in the last four years recognizing its role as the coordinator of those functions.

The third level of globalization is to make sure that ICANN is independent. The community has been working hard to complete the transition and to give ICANN

the global independence so that the whole world can see ICANN serving everyone without the particular influence of any one group or one party or one government or anyone, but serving the public interest.

The fourth element to globalization is the DNA of ICANN as an organization and as a community. It is easy to build offices around the world and hire people around the world. The difficult part is to make ICANN – staff, Board and community – change its DNA and understand its global role in serving billions of people around the world. This is a non-stop mission and ICANN is committed to it.

Rodrigo de la Parra, ICANN Vice President, Stakeholder Engagement for Latin America and the Caribbean, talked to ICANN's engagement efforts in Latin America and the Caribbean region, the engagement center of Montevideo that is shared with other Internet organizations, as well as staff members based in different countries in the region. Rodrigo touched upon ICANN regional strategies in Africa and the Middle East and talked in more detail to the ICANN LAC strategy. He highlighted key projects that are being implemented as part of this strategy in areas such as capacity building, strengthening participation in ICANN, domain name industry development, and communications.

Q&A session was quite interactive and discussion revolved around a range of different issues including priorities for ICANN in the coming three years; strengthening institutional trust within ICANN; the different review processes and how to manage timelines of such processes as community participation continues to increase; fellowship and NextGen programs. Upcoming news that was shared by Fadi during the Q&A session included opening of an engagement center in Africa, and launching an internship program where fellows can come into ICANN offices and work from there.