
ICANN70 | Virtual Community Forum - Joint AFRALO-AfrICANN Meeting
Wednesday, March 24, 2021 – 12:30 to 14:00 EST

MICHELLE DESMYTER: Hello and welcome to the joint AFRALO-AFRICANN meeting. My name is Michelle DeSmyter and I am the remote participation manager for this session today.

Please note that this session is being recorded and follows the ICANN expected standards of behavior. During this session, questions or comments submitted via chat will only be read aloud if put in the proper form as I will note in the chat momentarily. I will read questions and comments aloud during the time set by the chair or moderator of this session.

Interpretation for this session will include French and Spanish. Please click on the interpretation icon in Zoom and select the language you will listen to during the session. If you wish to speak, please raise your hand in the Zoom room, and once the session facilitator calls upon your name, kindly unmute your microphone and please take the floor. Before speaking, ensure you have selected the language you will speak from in the interpretation menu. Please state your name for the record and the language that you will be speaking if speaking a language other than English. When speaking, please be sure to mute all other devices and notifications. Please speak clearly and at a reasonable pace to allow for accurate interpretation. With this, I will now hand the floor over to Seun Ojedeji. Please begin, Seun.

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SEUN OJEDEJI:

Hello everyone, welcome again to AFRALO-AFRICANN session. Welcome to the participants, all my colleagues on the AFRALO leadership. I'd also like to recognize the presence of our guest speakers, members of the Board, the vice chair, León Sanchez, and of course, the president and CEO, Göran. Let me also recognize the presence of the chair of ALAC, Maureen. Thank you very much for joining our session. And this is a very special one. I would not also forget to recognize Pierre, the vice president of GSE Africa. Welcome to everyone.

This is a very special one because it's the 25th AFRALO-AfrICANN meeting, and I'm very happy that this has gone a long way, started a long time ago and I'm happy that we've continued this meeting, and of course, always producing useful outcome from it.

The meeting has been—I think we should all give ourselves a round of applause, those of us who have actually been part of this, have contributed to this one way or the other. Thanks. From the beginning, I joined this—I didn't start this from the beginning, but I joined on the way. So, thanks to all those that initiated this, contributed to it, thanks to all those who have contributed to it up to now, the drafters, staff from various At-Large and of course, At-Large community, various past AFRALO leadership that have all contributed to this meeting. Thanks a lot. And of course, I hope this is just the beginning. We'll celebrate the 50th, the 100th, and we'll keep it on. And of course, we'll continue to improve on it.

So once again, I welcome us all, and without much ado, I would also refer you to reference to the statement. I'll ask staff to put it in the chat.

I see it's already been done. Reference to statements that AFRALO has done in the past 25 meetings. We always try to produce a statement, and of course, in this particular meeting, it wouldn't be different. I will also be looking forward to having a final statement from this meeting.

Without taking much of our time, the agenda is in front of us, and of course, I've already gone through the first agenda item, and of course, if you permit me—I probably should have done this before—to ask if there's any modification to the agenda.

Okay. Seeing no hands up and hearing no voice, we'll continue with the agenda as presented, and I will then move on to welcome the ALAC chair, Maureen Hilyard, to make her opening remark. Maureen, you have the floor.

MAUREEN HILYARD:

Thank you very much, Seun. I'd like to say it's a real pleasure to be invited to attend your session. Sorry, I've been trying to get my video working. It was working before. But it's really an opportunity for me to thank the members of AFRALO community for their contributions that they make. And not only to 25 meetings of the AFRALO community but your contribution to At-Large in general.

I think at this particular point in time, I'd like to mention what's happening at this meeting, and significantly because it's just happened, but AFRALO's contribution, and by way of Hadia and two of three of At-Large policy sessions at this meeting, looking at really important issues for Internet users. And I see that this is the point of 25 meetings that you

actually had of your community, as you said. There's always been a really good output from it. But I think that—and at this particular meeting, what Hadia has done is look at two really important issues for Internet users. What's been really encouraging was the inclusive participation from outside of At-Large, so much so that she not only had Board members like Becky and Avri in the two sessions but also the active participation of our CEO in the chat of the last session, which was really interesting.

So I think that this is a real achievement for us, and I'm so grateful that Hadia had the foresight to invite these important participants into our conversations with At-Large to show our community that ICANN Org and the ICANN Board are interested in the work that we're doing and that Internet end users are important to ICANN. and I think that that is really important.

But just in conclusion, I'd like to thank AFRALO members who contribute to the everyday work in At-Large, particularly at the conclusion of the development of our individual members policy which has ended more than four years of work on the At-Large review.

During that time, I'm sure you'll agree there's been a lot of self-reflection, and I believe that At-Large has improved a lot of processes over that time, and RALO communities have contributed to that growth. So, thank you all and I wish you a great meeting for the rest of your session. Thank you, and take care.

SEUN OJEDEJI:

Thank you very much, Maureen. Maureen has always been a supporter of AFRALO and we thank you and wish you all the best in your role as ALAC chair. AFRALO continues to give you support to the work of ALAC.

Now we move on to the third item. Is there any reaction to Maureen? Okay. We'll move on to the third item where we'd actually be hearing from our guest speakers. We have Göran, president and CEO of ICANN, and he will be speaking to us today. We're happy to have you here. Göran, you have the floor.

GÖRAN MARBY:

Thank you, Seun. Thank you very much for inviting me. It's become a little bit of a tradition, this thing we do, that I have the honor of being invited to this meeting. And I'm really happy about it.

I got a little bit of a tip that I should speak slowly, so I will start slowly and then increase the speed. First of all, I have to congratulate you for the 25th meeting. You have done more meetings than me. So it's a real achievement and it shows how important it is.

I usually share with you—I'm going to end this thing, by the way, by telling you what is a secret, which we just decided to announce today which has relationship to what you do in Africa. But I'm going to leave you so you would listen to what I have to say before that. But I'll also tell you it is still actually officially a secret, so shouldn't talk that much about it.

But Africa has always had a special relationship with ICANN because my first ICANN meeting was in Marrakech in March 2016, and even if it feels

like a long time ago, it wasn't. It's four years plus a COVID year. And also coming back to Marrakech to do another one was important and also, we had a meeting in South Africa. These were, [for my sake,] some of the best meetings we ever had.

One of the things with having had 25 meetings since 2010 is that it reaffirms the real credibility for this group and really to bring this together, I often say that you should never forget that Internet is both global and local at the same time. Yes, we often talk about this big interoperable network that we're all around, but it's also very local. And I think that ICANN as an institution has to be able to recognize that, and we try to do that through the IDNs, through the universal acceptance.

I came off the discussion from At-Large today about the next round where it is fairly obvious that the next round will be—I don't want to use the word "targeted" because it sounds commercial, but it's really to give the ability for maybe non-English-speaking people to have an identifier on this thing we call the internet so people can go online using their own keyboards, their own narrative to utilize this thing on the Internet, because if you look at it, a lot of the traffic is very local.

I want to express my admiration for AFRALO for using this important platform to bring people together from across all ICANN constituencies and have those fruitful conversations around topics that shape the future in your region.

I read the statement, and I'd like to give you a compliment for what you've done and the suggestions you presented. And it's interesting, and I don't know if it was by design, but many of the things you're

talking about are fully aligned with the ICANN strategic plan for 2021-25. It's a reconfirmation of the importance of this plan.

And as you know, one of the most important things for us is to preserve this multi-stakeholder model of ICANN where you have an important part, and the strategic plan was done through a multi-stakeholder model.

I'm not going to talk longer. I'm now going to tell you what we have started to do. The Internet penetration in Africa has increased a lot over the last ten years. There are still regions that have less and there are regions where it goes faster. It's not like in many other regions around the world where it's continuous adoption of Internet or accessibility for Internet, it seems to be more jumping, with new technologies like mobile wireless, more fiber, we can now see a big change. And that actually changes the traffic and how traffic [inaudible].

ICANN, as you know, is not only the policy part. We also have the technical part which starts with IANA and also around root servers. And one of the things we've done—the last one was in Singapore—is to build datacenters for increased speed of resolutions to give the Internet user a fast approach to get things resolved technically.

And I will now announce—unofficially, because it's a long way to make this happen—that we have decided to start the work of building two of them in Africa, because we think that Africa is now in such a shape that it's needed. It's a big region, it's a lot of Internet users, and the Internet usage goes up. So maybe you can see that as an in advance birthday present for your 25 meetings that you've done.

But I'll tell you it's not going to happen soon. This is something that also has to go through the Board finally because there's investment to it, but the work has started, we've started analyzing traffic, regions, different places to go to.

So I just would share that with you as an unofficial surprise. I also know that some of my team, I didn't have time to inform them, are now a little bit surprised, but we decided to do that. So, thank you very much for inviting me, and I'm looking forward to hear the outcome of your discussions. Thank you.

SEUN OJEDEJI:

Thank you very much, Göran, and of course, thanks for this piece of information. And of course, we look forward to continue working with you and your team, and of course, we hope that this pandemic will be over soon and we get to see you again physically. One of the things that we said when we met as At-Large RALO leaders was the point of how do we still make sure that the multi-stakeholder table remains balanced within ICANN post-pandemic, and I'm very happy that you also are very concerned about that, and of course, always looking for how to ensure that when the face-to-face finally happens, that regions will remain represented to the extent possible. Thanks a lot for your interventions, and of course, I will then stop here and see if there are any quick reactions to Göran.

All right. Thanks, Göran, and we hope that you'll still remain on the call for a few minutes. Of course, we understand your schedule is tight. If

you can't stay beyond that, we thank you once again for joining. I will move on to León Sanchez. Welcome, León. You have the floor.

LEÓN SANCHEZ:

Thank you very much, Seun. As usual, it is an honor to be here with the AFRALO community in this 25th AFRALO-AfrICANN joint meeting. It is an impressive milestone, and it is most impressive that I see that the AFRALO chair is getting younger as we speak. So kudos to you, Seun, for looking younger, and you need to give me some tips on that.

And, well, being serious, I really wanted to commend the AFRALO region, because as I usually say when I have the pleasure of coming to your meetings, the statements that you craft and the value that these statements have is really important to the ICANN ecosystem. And I can assure you that from a Board perspective, this kind of input is very useful for us to continue going forward in the work that we do.

I can signal to some of the important points that I see in the statement. I think it is really important that you have highlighted some trends that you see emerging in the African community, such as increasing interest in the nationalization of the Internet, which would imply, as I understand it, fragmenting the Internet, the rising privacy concerns [inaudible] with national and regional data privacy laws which have, in the case of GDPR, demonstrated that has a very important impact in what we do and how we do the things we have in our mission. And of course, the increasing concerns about security of the Internet and big tech companies, upcoming policies. But most important that you identified that there is a huge lack of knowledge in terms of how the

Internet works, how different policies may affect the domain name system. And of course, you propose to continue educating the community and raising awareness and creating an understanding of the multi-stakeholder policy development processes and how the multi-stakeholder model should work in regard to building and shaping policies and norms that could affect or impact the Internet and the domain name system.

So I really comment you for putting these subjects and topics in your statement. This goes along with the trends exercise that we do in the Board and in the community to identify emerging subjects that could affect what we do in ICANN and our mission. And of course, it goes along with adapting, if possible, or if needed, the living document that we have as strategic plan.

As you might remember, we have five strategic objectives, and this statement goes right into what I believe could be the geopolitical challenges that ICANN could face. So these trends, again, I believe are very important and will help guide the Board's work and also, it is a good pointer for the rest of the community as to the topics that they need to be aware of. And the aim is that we all need to work together to try to advance ICANN's mission.

So again, Seun, thank you for having me here, thank you for always inviting me to your sessions. I see great value in them and I expect to continue to be able to attend and to contribute to the sessions. I will stay for the remainder of the session, I will be here for all the sessions,

and congratulations on this 25th joint AFRALO-AfrICANN meeting, Seun. It's an impressive milestone. Thank you very much again.

SEUN OJEDEJI:

Thanks a lot, León, and of course, we're always happy to see you in our meetings, our monthly meetings, and of course, at the AFRALO-AfrICANN meetings. Thanks, and of course, we wish you all the best as you continue to serve within the ICANN Board.

Is there any quick reaction to León? Okay, seeing no hands up, of course, we still may react much later. Good that León will still be with us. We have two members of the Board who are actually from our region and we've always had the pleasure of having them in our meetings. Of course, it's also my pleasure to welcome them again to this session, and I look forward to continued work with them, and it will be good to hear from them. Mandla, if you can hear us, you have the floor.

MANDLA MSIMANG :

Thanks, Seun. Thank you for the opportunity, once again, to address you and to participate in this joint session. As you said, this is really quite an important one, being the 25th meeting. So congratulations, and [inaudible] to be here.

I think what I like best about these sessions is the opportunity to engage and hear the views of the community on some of these key issues, and the topic for today is particularly interesting for me, because last year as a new Board member coming in from a regulatory and policy and

kind of government background, understanding the multi-stakeholder model was a significant part of the learning curve for me.

And the reality globally and from what I've personally experienced working on the continent is that as the Internet grows—and as you've said in the statement, as its impact becomes more prolific, governments become more and more interested in influencing it and influencing its development, and the draft statement gives examples of how this is unfolding.

Unfortunately, this often happens without governments having a clear understanding of how the Internet was developed, how it's governed, and honestly, how it actually works. So unlike other ICTs like mobile and [fixed,] it's really important how the Internet works. So the value chain is critical to this regulation.

So for this reason, I think that the role of ICANN in educating governments and regulators is really important, as you stated, and I think what's interesting to me is, yes, there's lots of channels for governments to get involved, but a lot of the time, the people who are involved in ICANN are already bought into the multi-stakeholder model and many government decision makers and ministries don't even realize that they don't know what ICANN does and what its role is. So they don't even acknowledge the model and how ICANN should fit into the work that they're doing. I think that's a real threat and challenge to ICANN's impact. So that's why I'm happy today with the topic that's been selected, and as a Board, we're truly [aligned] to the challenges that you've highlighted, and I'm working on the multi-stakeholder

model evolution project with Maarten and Matthew as shepherds of that. That's one of the things that I've chosen to focus on. So I'm happy to be here today to listen to the proposals from the community and to see how the statements develop, and very interested in finding out how the community views how you make the multi-stakeholder model that's driven by consensus and a bottom-up approach something that works for governments that are not thinking in that kind of way. And a lot of the suggestions that you've made in the statement are interesting to me in that regard. So thank you again for inviting me, looking forward to the discussion, and yeah, thanks a lot.

SEUN OJEDEJI:

Thanks very much, Mandla. Thanks for your speech. And of course, we will see what we'll finally come out with in terms of the statement. Of course, we have a statement as you've seen, and the contributions in this session would also determine what becomes the final statement.

I would call on Ihab if he's on the call. You have the floor, Ihab.

IHAB OSMAN:

Hi Seun. Thank you again for inviting me to the AFRALO meeting during ICANN 70, and congratulations on the 25th anniversary. It's an important milestone. And congratulations and thank you for the draft statement. I think it covers a number of important issues. I would like to focus on a couple specifically listed or kind of in the peripheries of what's listed on the draft statement.

And it is the multi-stakeholder model. Clearly, ICANN and ICANN community showed it works. For it to continue to work, newer regions engaging in this model, like our region, Africa, need to evolve and need to increase the level of participation. So one thing I will continue to try to do during my term on the Board is to push the ICANN Organization to give more mindshare to the Africa region and resources to increase and to evolve and to improve the participation levels so the multi-stakeholder model works for the Africa region like it worked in other regions of the world.

I'm someone who actually worked in deploying broadband and Internet networks on the African continent, that brought the Internet to tens of millions of Africans in west and east Africa, and in central Africa. One of the issues that I am worried about is the lack of focus from a lot of African governments on the data privacy issues. As we see more regulations coming up in the EU, in the US and other parts of Asia, and with the increased level of DNS abuse, I'm afraid then African consumers and Internet users will become increasingly targets for DNS abuse and DNS scams, especially with the increased level of online payments and the ability to conduct financial transactions for Africans. So this is an area I'd love to see more focus from all of us in the African region to really engage with governments, to focus on data privacy issues that will impact our people and help protect us from DNS abuse issues.

This is an area that I think probably doesn't get enough focus because historically, there hasn't been the same amount of financial transactions on the African continent, but that is increasingly changing,

so this is an area I think deserves more focus from all of us. You are doing amazing work. We all need to support you so you're able to engage even more, and I absolutely look forward to engaging with you in a physical live meeting. Virtual and Internet has worked, but it's really time, hopefully soon, for us to be able to meet physically and to be able to share a coffee and really discuss what's important for our region.

Thank you again for inviting me. I look forward to continue the engagement and to discuss the important issues facing the region and the continent with you and contribute wherever I can. Thank you.

SEUN OJEDEJI:

Thank you very much, Ihab, and León was saying people were looking younger. It looks like Ihab is looking younger as well, but the gray hair is giving him up.

IHAB OSMAN:

I'm an old man.

SEUN OJEDEJI:

All right. Thanks, Ihab, for the intervention, and of course, we also look forward to when we'll get to meet again physically. And of course, thanks to the Internet, we are still able to meet and have this particular session continuing.

I would also quickly flag that I see that some of the guest speakers are still on the call, so please, we'll take the last message from Pierre, and

please, you can then ask if you have any questions for all the guest speakers. Pierre Dandjinou, you have the floor.

PIERRE DANDJINOU: Hello. Thank you very much, Seun, and a very good morning, good afternoon to everyone. I'm Pierre Dandjinou, vice president in charge of Africa and of course, always a pleasure being here. Also, I'm happy to certainly say that probably, I have been attending most of the calls, and I think I must have participated through the 25 calls.

[inaudible].

SEUN OJEDEJI: Staff, I'm not sure, is it from my side?

MICHELLE DESMYTER: No, it is his line. Pierre, your line is breaking up. If you're speaking, we're not able to hear you. Okay, I believe his line has dropped off.

SEUN OJEDEJI: Thank you very much. Of course, please, let's try to reach Pierre, perhaps dial out. And this completes the first part of the session, which is to hear from our guest speakers, and of course, the ALAC chair. Is there any question or comments, reaction to speakers, in no particular order? The floor is open once again.

Seeing no hands up and hearing no voice, I'd like to once again thank our speakers for making the time to attend this session, and of course,

we hope that you'll be able to stay with us to the end, but if you can't, thank you once again. We'll then move on to item four where we will be having a summary of AFRALO webinars.

Earlier this year, we launched a webinar series which has actually been coordinated by Bram Fudzulani and Tijani Ben Jemaa. We have Bram on the call who's going to give a brief summary of that effort, and of course, what is it they have in stock for us going forward. Bram, you have the floor.

BRAM FUDZULANI:

Thank you, Seun. [inaudible] the chair, congratulations to the 25th meeting. Indeed, I'm supposed to give an update on the AFRALO webinar. And just to point that these webinars came into place through the leadership of AFRALO that thought it wise, due to the circumstances that we have, we're no longer traveling to in-person meetings, which was very contributing to the outreach and capacity building activities within the AFRALO, that we must engage with the community using online activities to continue building capacity but also to put forward the outreach and engagement strategy for the AFRALO.

And therefore, a taskforce was put forward, as Seun mentioned, myself and Tijani, to coordinate this particular effort. We did have the first webinar on the 24th of February where we were specifically looking at the topic of ICANN multi-stakeholder model and the increase in national legislation and regulations. The speakers for this first webinar were Olivier but also Tijani was one of our speakers, and the moderator was Hadia.

We will be soon announcing the dates for the April webinar because we had said we'll have the webinars in the month of February, and then we jump this month because of the ICANN meeting, and then we'll announce another date for the April webinar.

We also had put out a survey to ask the community on the topics that they would like to be discussed within these webinars, and there was a good participation. We have gathered quite a number of topics that were put forward by the community, and I think our next webinar is going to focus base on the topics that were submitted by the community.

I would like to take this opportunity to invite those of you who missed out on this first webinar to join us in the next webinar series once the dates have been put forward. Thank you so much, chair.

SEUN OJEDEJI:

Thanks, Bram, for that quick update and summary. And of course, we look forward to subsequent series. Thanks to those that were part of the organization of the first webinar series. And of course, to Hadia, who the chair of ALAC also recognized in her speech. Thanks as well.

we'll move on now to the next agenda item, which is actually introduction of our topic, and that is also going to be done by Hadia. Hadia, you have the floor.

HADIA ELMINIAWI:

Thank you, chair. Through this statement, the African community is trying to address potential challenges to the ICANN multi-stakeholder model. The current national legislation and regional regulations were initially built for the industrial era. Now nations worldwide are realizing the need for new regulations that could govern the digital sphere. So governments are trying to regain the governance sphere currently dominated by big tech companies. And while these regulations target the big tech companies and rising concerns in relation to security and privacy, ICANN's governance model could also be impacted.

So in this segment, we try to explore potential impact on ICANN's multi-stakeholder model and possible efforts to mitigate those threats. So I'll stop here and leave it to my colleagues to present the statement. Thank you.

SEUN OJEDEJI:

Thank you, Hadia, for the introduction. I think this is now for item six, Abdeldjalil, Sarah, who wants to go first?

ABDELDJALIL BACHAR BONG:

[inaudible] The declaration, [inaudible] the multi-stakeholder [inaudible] of ICANN and the increased national legislation and regulation for many years. ICANN has developed policies in relation to the domain name and numbering resources to benefit the community. According to a model. The community of ICANN did not have a contract for the efficiency of the model. Therefore, ICANN adopted a process to evolve the MSM. The issues identified in the workplan to evolve the MSM

model focus on challenges coming from the ICANN community and address how the ICANN community improve its performance. And this is the way the community could improve its performance.

In this statement, the African community is attempting to address the challenges that face the consensus-based bottom-up model from the outside world rather than from within. We tried to highlight the challenges and the possible approaches to mitigate those challenges. Among the [challenges] that the African community could eventually have an impact on the policy development based on consensus and the multi-party model of ICANN.

We find a growing interest of nationalization of Internet, a growing concern with respect to the confidentiality where the regional and national laws link to the confidentiality of the data. To the new policies regarding the technology companies, most of the trends come from the lack of knowledge linked to the Internet and its function. Some tendencies come also from the unknown.

We estimate that these trends could be applied by the replacement of the PDP by policies which would be dictated in an arbitrary manner. The process of the ICANN grow to ensure the voices of all stakeholders are heard, capturing perspective from all supporting organization and advisory committee.

The stakeholder collaboration ensures that governments' and businesses' views are taken into consideration and guarantee that those views are well balanced against the public interest.

To that end, ICANN will need to be agile and innovative accommodating unavoidable changes while preserving the value of MSM. As for At-Large, educating the community, raising the awareness and encouraging the participation ensures internet end users have a stake in the game. Therefore, the AFRALO recommends the following. Increasing the efforts in building the capacity of the governments in Africa to understand how the Internet works and the importance of embracing the Internet's model of development.

Creating a repository of the changes in regulation across various regions and their impact on the multi-stakeholder model policy development process, raising awareness and creating an understanding of the multi-stakeholder policy development process and including success stories and examples that show how the multi-stakeholder model has worked well through the years. Support studies that aim to measure the impact of new regulation on the DNS market, collaborate with global organization like the ITU to emphasize the importance of the multi-stakeholder model in coordinating the Internet's unique identifiers.

INTERPRETER: The interpreter apologizes but we cannot hear the participant.

MICHELLE DESMYTER: Pardon me, Abdeldjalil. The interpreters are not able to hear you to interpret. Can you please move closer to your mic?

CHRISTINA RODRIGUEZ: No, he needs to slow down.

MICHELLE DESMYTER: And slow down, please.

CHRISTINA RODRIGUEZ: Yes, the reading needs to be at a more reasonable pace, please. Thank you.

MICHELLE DESMYTER: Abdeldjalil, we're not able to hear you. Your line is muted.

ABDELDJALIL BACHAR BONG: Do I have to start over?

AZIZ HILALI: Do not start from the beginning. Just start where you stopped and speak slower.

ABDELDJALIL BACHAR BONG: Therefore, ICANN should be more flexible and innovative and adapt to the changes and preserve the use of the multi-stakeholder model. When it comes to At-Large, including the community in better ways and encourage the participation, this allows the Internet users to bring their interest and therefore the AFRALO recommends the following: increase the initiatives.

INTERPRETER: The interpreter apologizes.

ABDELDJALIL BACHAR BONG: And help the African government to understand the function of the Internet and the importance to adopt the different model.

INTERPRETER: Again, the interpreter apologizes.

ABDELDJALIL BACHAR BONG: We need to elaborate and understand the PDP [model] and we need to include the successes recorded and the success of the multi-stakeholder model along the different years. We'll have to think about new rules on the DNS market. The new regulation on the DNS market. Collaborate with global organization like the ITU to emphasize the importance of the multi-stakeholder model in coordinating the Internet's unique identifiers. We need to support the importance of the multi-stakeholder model for the Internet ecosystem. We need to encourage the different domains to adopt the [latest] standard and recommended technologies. Thank you very much for your attention.

SEUN OJEDEJI: Thank you very much, Abdeldjalil, for reading out the statement. And there we have it, the draft statement is in front of us, and I would call on the other members of the drafting team, Sarah, Barrack, and the rest of the drafting team members, Hadia, Tijani. Okay, I think Tijani was a contributor. Please, you may add to what has been said before I open

the floor for item seven. Sarah, Barrack, any addition, comment or statement? Chokri, you have the floor.

CHOKRI BEN ROMDHANE: Thank you, Seun, for this opportunity to [inaudible]. In order to [inaudible] very hot topic that all the Internet community are facing precisely [inaudible] emergency and [inaudible] to regulate all the aspect of Internet. I think that in our statement, we have tried to focus on the ICANN multi-stakeholder model and which role that ICANN should play with others in the Internet ecosystem in order to face this trend of regulation, [inaudible] this trend of issue which we have to focus, try to find a solution, is to what would be the role that ICANN shall play in this ecosystem in relation to the regulations that are emerging in our world, specifically in our African region, where we have a lot of fragmentation of regulation, role and there is no [federation] of regulation or any aspect that could avoid us this fragmentation of regulation.

So in a region like Africa, I think that ICANN should give, [inaudible] that ICANN should play in order to avoid this fragmentation of Internet regulation, which otherwise, we will face serious impact on several aspects [inaudible] DNSes [inaudible] Internet. So I would like to stress on the role—how we are going to apply the multi-stakeholder model proposed by ICANN in some region similar to our region where there is a lot of fragmentation of regulation and no federation of regulation similar to what we have in Europe or in America or others? Thank you, Seun.

SEUN OJEDEJI: Thank you, Chokri, for the additional comment. I would then ask—that is the draft, and the URL to the draft, English and French version I see has been shared in the chat. It's a practice that when we have these sessions, we have to read out the statement for the transcript record. So it's what we always have to do, so apologies for taking so much time in reading that, and thanks to Abdeldjalil for taking the time to read it as well.

And this is where I would then ask Abdeldjalil to coordinate for item seven. Abdeldjalil and Aziz, you have the floor on this one.

ABDELDJALIL BACHAR BONG: Yes, we have to avoid the Internet to become fragmented, and this is what we noted. So we have that in our declaration. This is an important point. Thank you very much. Who wants to take the floor? [Michel,] you want to take the floor?

SEUN OJEDEJI: It's not possible, there's no comment. Is there? Does it mean that our statement is so perfect that there's no addition or subtraction? We always save time for this comment period, and it will be good—we always try to move fast and move within the time so that we have enough time to discuss the draft document. So it will be good to hear from us on the floor if there's any contribution. I think this particular one is quite unique because we were able to do series of comments—the drafting team was able to publish the draft early enough, and of

course, it went through two rounds if I recall correctly, so maybe that is why we're not seeing much comment, but it will be good to see reaction to the statement. Thank you.

Staff, do we have anything in the chat?

MICHELLE DESMYTER: We do have a question from Olévié in the chat. It is in French.

SEUN OJEDEJI: Abdeldjalil, over to you.

ABDELDJALIL BACHAR BONG: Thank you very much, Olivier. So we were talking about the fragmentation of the Internet. So I think we can give the floor to Olévié so that Olévié, maybe you can tell us more about what you mean.

CHOKRI BEN ROMDHANE: [inaudible] in the chat. So it's clear that the nonfederation of regulation in a region like Africa would contribute somehow in the fragmentation of the DNS market for example or the use of—it will hugely impact the use of Internet from a country to another. So it's clear that the multiple [inaudible] and regulation aspect based on some issue or some sovereignty or [pretext] will hugely impact the use of Internet in a diversified region like Africa. I hope that I answered your question, Olévié.

MICHELLE DESMYTER: One moment. He's on the phone line. Please go ahead, Olévié.

OLÉVIÉ KOUAMI: Okay. My question was I heard that Abdeldjalil was talking about the fragmentation of the Internet, and I was surprised that after the explanation of Chokri, I understand there is a link between the fragmentation of the legislation and the fragmentation of the DNS particularly. But I want to remind that we have the Malabo which is unique to the [data protection] addressed in this law. So, how can we promote among our countries [inaudible] contribution of government? That's a question I want to ask. Thank you.

CHOKRI BEN ROMDHANE: Seun, if I could.

SEUN OJEDEJI: Actually, Abdeldjalil is the one, but I see Hadia's hand is up. Let's take that and maybe we can then respond to—perhaps Hadia wanted to respond to some of the comments. You have the floor.

HADIA ELMINIAWI: Thank you, Seun. I think the comments were already responded to. As Chokri said, sometimes some legislation or regulations might make it difficult to have one policy that governs for example all gTLDs worldwide. I just wanted to refer to the discussion we had yesterday, and during this session, reimagining ICANN's role, we basically more or less talked about the same matter or subject, and some of the thoughts

that were brought up were in relation to having an early warning system, and I was wondering—but there were no thoughts how this system could work or function. So that’s something I just wanted to mention.

Also, there was a mention that we need to address all issues collectively, collaboration between all stakeholders. And I think we have reflected this in the statement. And for sure, the At-Large Structures here have a huge role if we talk about educating the community, raising awareness. The At-Large Structures do have a lot of work to do in this area. Thank you.

SEUN OJEDEJI: Do we still have Abdeldjalil on the call?

MICHELLE DESMYTER: Yes, he is.

ABDELDJALIL BACHAR BONG: Thank you very much, Hadia, for giving us those explanations. Just like Chokri recommended, I think we can add another point, collaboration with all the stakeholders to prevent the fragmentation of the Internet in general and DNS in particular. I am thinking about the recommendations of Olévié and of Chokri. Thank you very much.

SEUN OJEDEJI: I think Chokri wanted to make some intervention earlier. Chokri, you have the floor if it's a new hand.

CHOKRI BEN ROMDHANE: Yes, it 's a new hand, Seun. I would like to answer Olévié's question about the Malabo Convention. What we have tried to reach in our statement or recommendation is what will be the role that ICANN will play in front of such international convention like Malabo Convention or the ITU standard initiative or the GDPR deployed by European Commission.

So the main issue here that we are trying to focus on is what will be the role that ICANN will play with all this global Internet organization. So this is the issue that we have to reflect on and to discuss on in our community, which will be the role that ICANN will play in this ecosystem to confront this multitude of conventions that emerge? Thank you.

SEUN OJEDEJI: Thanks for the response to Olévié on that, Chokri. Seeing no hands up and hearing no voice, okay, is there any other reaction, any other comment? Abdeldjalil, you want to give any housekeeping, to-dos in terms of the statement?

ABDELDJALIL BACHAR BONG: Thank you very much, Seun. Olévié just talked the Malabo convention on cybersecurity in order to keep the cyber system of Africa—I think this is a very good point. Thank you. This is a comment which made Olévié

when it comes to this Malabo convention. Aside from that, I do not have any other remarks.

SEUN OJEDEJI:

Thank you, Abdeldjalil, and thanks to all those who have added to the comment, who have contributed to the statement once again, and I think this is where [we'll inform us] that this statement, even though there's been no major suggestion for changes, I think the next steps will be for us to share again with the community. I think we normally give it one or two weeks. Secretariat will share, and then if there is any comment from those who were unable to make this call, we will incorporate it. Otherwise, we would proceed to finalize and then share with the respective part of the ICANN community.

So that is the next steps in terms of what needs to be done, in terms of the statement, and this then brings us to our next and final item on the agenda, which is to thank you all for joining this session. It's one of the sessions where we've had a few minutes left at the end, so it means that we're giving you a few minutes back hopefully for a virtual coffee before the next ICANN 70 session, and I'd like to thank the interpreters, all the technical staff who were part of this call. Thanks to all our guest speakers and Board members from the region, thanks to León, our vice chair of ICANN for staying on this call, and of course, thanks to my colleagues and all the drafting teams as well. We would continue to engage on the mailing list and of course, there are still ICANN sessions that we would also be participating in.

From me and from the AFRALO leadership, it's bye for now. Thanks.

MICHELLE DESMYTER: Thank you so much, Seun, and thank you, everyone. Meeting is adjourned.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]