ICANN70 | Prep Week – Community Update on Universal Acceptance Readiness
Thursday, March 11, 2021 – 09:00 to 10:00 EST

MOHAMED ELBASHIR: Hello everyone. My name is Mohamed Elbashir and I'm ICANN staff supporting universal acceptance community. I would like to welcome you to the update of the universal acceptance activities that will be presented by the Universal Acceptance Steering Group and the different universal acceptance initiatives.

When submitting a question on the chat, it will be read out loud on the microphone in this session. [Please] provide your name and affiliation if you're representing anyone. Start your sentence with question surrounded by brackets, end with question surrounded by brackets. When submitting a comment that you want us to read out loud on the microphone, once again, please provide your name and affiliation if you have one, then start your sentence with comment surrounded by brackets and end with comment surrounded by brackets. Text outside those [quotes] will be considered part of the chat and not be read out loud on the mic. Any questions or comments provided outside the session time will not be read out loud. Please note that audio might be available in the UN six languages, and there's a link in the chat for ICANN expected standard of behavior.

So we can start the session, and the first speaker will be Dr. Ajay Data, the Universal Acceptance Steering Group chair. Please, Dr. Data.

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AJAY DATA: Good morning, good afternoon, good evening. Thank you very much for joining this community update session of Universal Acceptance Steering Group. As we all know, this is a session which is a very important one for taking these UA initiatives further globally. I'm extremely happy. We are 100+ people joined to attend the session. I think it is more than 120 now, and this is a very important session, as we can see from all over the world, people are joining in to take this initiative further globally. Next slide, please.

What is universal acceptance? [inaudible] domain name system has changed historically. It has become very advanced, it has started accepting very kind of top-level domains. Historically, we started with [top dot three-character top-level domain names] like .com, .net and then slowly, it has started accepting less than three characters and more than three characters. As an example, [inaudible].london.sport.

And obviously, this required a change. And this required a change in our system where people could not only have long domain names but also the domain names—

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: [inaudible].

AJAY DATA: So the key here is [there are going to be] a lot more kind of domain names in different scripts and more than three characters, four characters, and it can go very long and there are many [steps] supported with this domain name system. And obviously, universal

acceptance is all about ensuring that every person has the ability to navigate and communicate on the entire Internet using the domain name and e-mail address of his choice, maybe because of the interest, business, culture, language, and whatever script he's comfortable in. Next slide, please.

Universal Acceptance Steering Group was founded in 2015, so you can imagine that we have almost crossed five years, we are in sixth year, and we are moving with definite objectives. What is an objective which UASG works for? Raise awareness about the UA issues among stakeholders. You all are stakeholders who are attending this call, and there are many more. Help developers make their systems UA ready. Whenever there's an application, a mobile app or a website is getting designed or a document is getting designed, it must be UA ready, and that is the documentation and common standards, technology, tools we provide as a group to the entire stakeholder.

Also engage businesses and governments to ask their developers and suppliers to provide a UA ready solution. Basically, guiding the government to update their procurement policy to buy a UA ready solution which accepts all kind of domain names and e-mail addresses in each script. And obviously, measure the progress. So we continuously measure the progress of UA readiness across the applications, across regions, and see that we are progressing to have the acceptance of all the domain names, e-mail addresses universally.

These are the working groups. This is in front of you on the screen. We have the working groups. We work as a group through various working

groups. This is a very definite step where we want many leaders to work together for Universal Acceptance Steering Group and see that they are able to contribute in the mission globally and impact to bring the next billion people online.

So we have technology working group, e-mail address internationalization working group, measurement working group, communication working group, local initiative working group. Some of our local initiative champions are going to also speak today. Listen to them very carefully. And we have UA ambassadors. This is a very powerful UA ambassadors working group. I would encourage everyone participating there to look at the UA ambassadorship program and see if you would like to take this awareness plan in your region carefully and you can apply and become one of our ambassadors. Next slide, please.

Main categories. So, what is UA? I won't take much time but briefly tell you that domain names which are short but new. Short means [inaudible] three characters or less than three characters but they have new domain names which are not originally top-level domains. This is all our scope of work.

Second is new long top-level domains, which are like .engineering, .photography, .accountant. These are kind of top-level domains which are more than three. We call them long to just have a better clarity about what we are discussing.

And top-level domains in a script where the Latin characters are not there, at least one non-Latin character is there in the domain name, at least they're getting the scripts locally, and these domain names must

be accepted. So there are three categories of top-level domains and domain names we have talked about.

And then obviously, on those domain names, e-mail addresses. So there are examples in front of you. These kinds of e-mail addresses must be accepted where ASCII@ASCII or ASCII@IDN, Unicode@ASCII, Unicode@IDN and Unicode@IDN right to left scripts. The Arabic script obviously, as we all know, moves right to left. These are all [aspects.]

[So these are five principles.] What do we mean by accepted? What is the UA readiness principle? So there are five pillars to that. Listen to me very carefully. Five pillars. Accept, validate, process, store, display.

Allow me to explain a little bit. So let us take an example of a website. A website is asking an e-mail address to be keyed in there. So if the website allows you to key in an e-mail address, it is accepting that e-mail ID.

When you say submit or save button, and it is able to validate it clearly and properly, it means it is validating that e-mail ID. Is it able to do the task, what it's designed to do with that e-mail [registration] process? Is it able to process it carefully? Is it able to store in their databases or wherever they want to store it carefully? And when you want to get it back or wherever they want to show it again, is it displayed back properly? So whatever [keying in] was done, it is accepted, validated, processed, stored and displayed properly.

If an application is able to do that with all these three domain name examples and five or six e-mail examples, that means you are a UA

ready website or application. You're accepting everything. So you can consider yourself a valid candidate for congratulations that you are UA ready application. And if you are, if your application or website accepts and passes these tests, please let us know. I would request Mohamed to share his e-mail ID of UA so that we can do a case study on you and tell you and take an example from your website or application and let others motivate what went through were you to make an application UA ready. This is our normal process to accept and understand and learn from [inaudible]. Next slide, please.

We did a study, and there's a 2020 study. You'll be shocked and surprised. Only 9.7% of e-mail servers are potentially configured to support e-mail addresses in local languages and script. You can imagine. This is such a small percentage. It's a big problem in front of us. If I have a valid e-mail ID, only sub-10% servers accept my e-mail. The rest, everybody will not be able to accept and deal with my new e-mail address properly.

11% of the top 1000 websites support e-mail address in Arabic and Chinese. Again, that's not a very encouraging number. So my e-mail address in Arabic or Chinese will be rejected by 89% or to be sure that almost 90% webservers are not accepting my e-mail IDs. This is obviously a big problem to solve, because I have a valid e-mail ID, and 90% of servers will not accept it. It is not an acceptable scenario in a global Internet world.

98.3% of top 1000 websites globally support e-mail addresses with short top-level domain name, which means a domain name with three

or less than three characters top-level domain are accepted well. But still, you could imagine there are 2% servers still do not accept, so this needs to be solved. We want to see everything 100. Everything is accepted, then you have a UA ready world. That's the dream we all have to achieve. Next slide, please.

So you can see UA around the world. We have ambassadors in Benin, China, Egypt, India, Nigeria, South Africa and Turkey, and we have local initiatives in China and CIS-EE which is commonwealth of independent states in eastern Europe which is [Armenia,] Belarus, Georgia, Lativa, Russian Federation, Serbia, Ukraine and obviously very major focus on India and Thailand.

We have these [inaudible] each region, and local initiative—and we'll take a bit to explain—is a new initiative which we took the last two years because we realized that this UA is a very big subject to be controlled, and deciding what's required in each region sitting at central level, which we have a conscious effort to let the local community decide what is required, and we just support them to ensure that they're a UA ready region, just like India becomes UA ready. So now there's a team in India, Thailand, China, independently trying to make this initiative in roots and create an awareness in that region and ensure that applications and developers and corporate and government know about UA issues and deal with them as the time goes.

So this is a very big, very important initiative with the help of ambassadors, we are able to create a lot of awareness. Next slide, please. So you can see some of the images which UA ambassadors do

for outreach and engagement, local stakeholders and engagement and awareness plans are being done in India and China and everywhere, and our local initiatives and ambassadors joining together form a big force to take this initiative further. We are going to invite many people to join local initiatives in their region.

[If there is not, even] if you're interested in this local initiative, please contact UA secretariat. They will guide you through the process. If you're interested in becoming a UA ambassador, please look at the UASG.tech website. There's a program you can look at and if you're interested, you can apply to it. Next slide, please.

As I was telling about UA ambassador program, there are some names in front of you which are UA ambassadors. We appointed six new UA ambassadors in 2020 in spite of COVID lockdown. We went through applications and looked at the appointment and ensured the enablement of them. This happened very well and everybody is working very actively into their own regions. And we had UA ambassadors already before 2020 in India, Egypt, China, and there are many people who are now waiting to join as I'm getting these messages and we are going to have a lot more ambassadors in the time to come. Next slide, please.

Projects and publications. This is where our money and time goes a lot, because we want to create lots of knowledge, lots of documents, lots of our output based on the research so that you need not worry about doing the research, investing money in it. We are serving it on a platter for the developers, for the CIOs, CTOs, universities, and four our

ambassadors and local initiatives so that they can use these documents and reports and assets created by UASG to take it further and spread them and make use of these documents to create proper, solid UA awareness in your region. If you're a developer, you can know about what is UA and build a UA ready application for your customer. And this is where the opportunity lies even for [inaudible] and creating a leadership in your region. We have completed [very large] projects, evaluation of EAI support for e-mail service provider, software and services. That report is ready on the website, you can look at it. UA Compliance of programming language libraries and frameworks is a very important report. Please look at the UASG.tech website. That will be an interesting report to look at. Next slide, please.

The ongoing projects. You can see a list of it, and also look at—always monitor the UA discuss list. We always announce the project on the UA discuss list and also on the website. And if you're interested in participating in those web projects and interested to work together, and obviously through ICANN, they are the professional services we hire, so if we are proficient and do this, please [inaudible] opportunities and contribute in the best possible manner for millions of people who will be using those reports. You can see those ongoing projects for open source, or we are doing that inventory of EAI tools, applications and services and content management, as a pilot for Wordpress, we are doing it, and there are new in the pipeline which are being discussed and soon, they will go live. If you are interested, please participate. There are many projects which are open which you can participate in the UA discuss list. Next slide, please.

There are events, Q4 2020 to today, you can see we did a webinar in AAU 21st January, African Association of Universities, configfuring of e-e-mail address internationalization, APTLD community in January 21, 10th THNG in December 2020, and so on and so forth. I won't repeat them, but you can see they are very important things. But I must mention an IGF participation, intervention by [inaudible]. [Thank you, IGF, for providing this opportunity.] Next slide, please.

This is a very important thing which is coming up. I would encourage everyone. If you are looking at how to look at that gap and how to look at that remediating process, what are the issues which would come, in EAI, in your website, please look at this workshop which is coming up on 25th of March at the same time what we have attended today, and you'll be able to gain a lot out of the session. Next slide, please.

Thank you very much for giving me this opportunity and listening to me patiently. Thank you very much.

MOHAMED ELBASHIR: Thank you very much, Dr. Data. The next presenter is Mr. Rui Zhong from China, universal acceptance. local initiative. [inaudible]

SARMAD HUSSAIN: Before you start, Mohamed, may I read a comment from the chat?

MOHAMED ELBASHIR: Sure. please go ahead.

SARMAD HUSSAIN: So this comment is from Avri Doria. The comment is, is there a definition of acceptable levels of global UA readiness short of 100%? Dr. Data, if you'd like to make a comment on that. Thank you.

AJAY DATA: So yes, there is a report available for universal acceptance readiness, and [inaudible] but this report will obviously give you a general guideline and an overview because these actionable items may be very significantly different based on the application and the use where it is trying to be applied for.

Let me give you an example. If we are trying to change a website, a simple website where you just [connect the] contact information, you may just need to change a simple e-mail validation form and store it in a database, and that should suffice the purpose. But if you are looking for an ecommerce website where there is an e-mail address to be sent, an invoice to be sent, and they're looking at the [inaudible] thing, then you may be looking at more deeper the change request and whatever is required to be changed, all the components, and that may not be covered in any document in the UASG website. But if somebody is looking especially for a specific change or a specific application just like we are working for WordPress, we will be happy to look at—if it is accepted widely, we'll be very happy to create a report and make it available to everyone so that they can have [inaudible] kind of stuff and implement it in their website.

I just saw Sarmad has also pasted a link on the chat, so if somebody is interested to download this document, please download this document. This is a very important document where you can see the readiness report of UASG.

MOHAMED ELBASHIR: Thank you very much.

SARMAD HUSSAIN: [inaudible] question. Let me read that out. This is from Jonathan Zuck. The question is, is there data at this point about which of these efforts are working the best, what are the primary barriers, knowledge or willingness?

AJAY DATA: Hello Jonathan. Thank you for joining in. Great question. As we know that this is—we keep creating the report [inaudible] as I shared in my presentation, 9.7% of e-mail servers accepting the EAI addresses and so on and so forth.

The main problem is twofold, and you have written both the words, the knowledge and the willingness. I can't pick one, because there are both. And obviously, these are not great numbers. There is a reason we all have to work together. Without your support and everybody's support, these numbers are not solvable and we will keep talking about these problems. The problem is about the knowledge and willingness both. And I would add one more thing. A little bit of technical, commercial

implementation requirement, because when you try to implement and change your software, of course, everybody look at the return on investment. But I would say we are at a point where this is opening up a new kind of Internet where people are going to surf and [inaudible] into their own native script. The time is not ready for it. We need to be just ready. I would just say that . We all need to be ready so that our applications are ready to serve billions of people online, coming online, and they're going to use Internet in their native scripts. And that's the kind of mission we are on, and this is the opportunity in front of all of us. Thank you.

MOHAMED ELBASHIR: Thank you very much, Dr. Data. I'd like to give the floor to the next presenter, Mr. Rui, please.

RUI ZHONG: Hello everyone. This is Rui Zhong speaking, I'm from the Internet Society of China and [inaudible] representing the China UA initiative. I'm very glad to have this opportunity to show what we have done for the last couple of months.

The China UA initiative was set up in January last year with a focus to promote the UA readiness in the Internet and e-mail service provider and any users. So we see this from the perspective as the supply and demand side. So we found it very important to deal with the relationship between the supply and the demand side on UA.

That means on one hand, we should facilitate Internet service providers and software developers to enable UA readiness application environment, and on the other hand, we should also promote public awareness to tell the user she or he could easily enjoy the Internet services such as domain name, e-mail, browser URL by using their familiar language.

So for the first half of last year, we outreached to the supply side, including Baidu, Sogou, [inaudible], Tencent, NetEase, these Internet companies to promote the UA readiness on search engine, browser, EAI such as these Internet services.

And for the user side, we set up the official account on WeChat to post the news and the knowledge of universal acceptance and share related information to our member community and the public. Also, we post some news and shared information through our website and our social media and we also participated in some community events and conferences to introduce the UASG, to introduce our China local initiative. Next slide, please.

And also to better launch the education, we invited the UA ambassador, Mr. Walter Wu to speak on the online training program to introduce the basic knowledge and the significance of being UA. As [inaudible] coming from enterprise, Walter Wu also introduced the marketing function of the Chinese IDN, and many of the audience found it very useful and practical, especially for the use of brand protection and marketing. Next slide, please.

To further implement work, we organized some [closed workshop panel] to discuss with the governments and the registries, registrars and some Internet companies to work out a working plan. Some of the work is already ongoing [inaudible]. Firstly, we will continue to promote UA support for more Internet application. For example, the AI speech recognition. And we will get more support from the e-mail service providers, such as Sina and Sohu and we are also planning to conduct [industry self-discipline] to resist the domain name abuse.

We also continue to strengthen outreach, engagement and the improved public awareness of UA by setting up an official website for China's UA local initiative to tell them what we do and what's UA. And we also planned some competition program on Chinese IDN and the training program. We also plan to enlarge the outreach to government from the [inaudible] scope to a broader range such as we will communicate with the government on agriculture department, farming department.

And we are now preparing the drafting of evaluation report on Chinese IDN. Next slide, please. To support the writing of this report, we will conduct four quarterly UA tests measuring what UA test reports have [been] published by UASG, and we will also show the interest to participating to the work of the UASG [website] tests and are waiting for further feedback.

Okay, that's all for Chinese UA local initiative [inaudible]. Thank you for listening.

MOHAMED ELBASHIR: Thank you very much, [inaudible]. The next speaker is Maria. I hand it over to you, Maria.

MARIA KOLESNIKOVA: Okay. Next slide, please. so I'm Maria Kolesnikova. I'm representing the commonwealth and eastern Europe countries local initiative. our initiative was approved in December 2019, and it consists mostly of representatives and local experts of seven countries: Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Lativa, Russia, Serbia and Ukraine, and many of our members from ccTLD registries. So we are focused on of course IDN promotion issues and how do they [grow] on their local markets, of course, but this is just a part of universal acceptance- and that's why our initiative is also focused on these four directions that you see on the screen. It's technical collaboration and support for local technicians, general outreach and public sector engagement, and of course, we are looking at how we can make our own software environment universal acceptance ready.

And just to point that since the last year, we also have like a part of our regional initiative Russian working group on universal acceptance, which is our work exactly, which is focused on exactly local issues in the Russian federation. So it has its own agenda but works as part of our local initiative. Next slide, please.

So here are some recent activities. You can read what we have done. I just want to mention that there are lots of things that were done last year, and especially in recent months, but there was some political and [military] let's say issues and aspects in some of our members'

countries. So unfortunately, not … There could be more activities. But still, we are quite satisfied with what is going on, and you see that there were technical workshops and trainings. For example, one was yesterday for Python developers. It was provided in Russia. We also have some testing environment for example where you can get Cyrillic e-mail addresses for your testing purposes, of course, and ongoing project, [inaudible] which is concentrated documentation on universal acceptance and useful tools. For example, we are trying also to follow and to have the list of UA-ready software there just if developers or system administrators want to check it and a bug tracker as well.

And also, regarding the general outreach, there were many events. I just put some of them and want to mention there were great discussions on universal acceptance on the last year global IGF, and there were two session devoted to it, and members of our initiative took part in it. And also, there was regional events with registry and registrar communities and with telecom operators and also there were some meetings devoted to Internet governance problem which is now usually connected with universal acceptance as well in the terms of inclusion of the Internet.

And there were some, of course, local events. For example, in Russia, there were provided special [inaudible] for IDN and universal acceptance project, and in Serbia, there was quite good event devoted to the Cyrillic script in the digital world. The Serbian registry provided the special script for local audiences. Next slide, please.

We of course try to work with public sector, with local governments and provide consulting of them on demand or when we have such [inaudible]. And an example, there was special evaluation of socially significant resources in Russia. This is a special project of the government that were started last year, and we checked if these resources are UA ready.

And also, of course, we work on our UA readiness, so here are some examples. For example, now ongoing project is development of RFC devoted to EAI support in EPP protocol, which is maybe interesting for registries. Next slide, please.

Okay, and here are our future activities which are planned. So we of course want to continue on the technical collaboration with technicians and there are planned some events for them, and new certification program of ongoing project [inaudible], series of articles, etc. So we want to raise awareness for this audience better. And as global outreach, we think that end users need to know about universal acceptance issues maybe in terms of, of course, IDNs and e-mail addresses, because in our countries in total, there are quite a number of IDN domain names and lack of EAI support is quite a big barrier to their further growth.

Also, we want to work with end users and talk to them on what is going on, how IDNs are supported and what they can do [with EAI] at the moment. So this is quite a big issue and focus for us. And also, on the previous slide, I mentioned that there was the IDN survey amongst the ccTLD registries, and we checked last year with our partners what is

their current level of support, and we want to continue this evaluation this year. For example, today, in the morning I have a session with the ccNSO community on universal acceptance as well, and there was quite great feedback provided that they are interested and want to make their systems UA ready, they work on this. And we hope that for registries, this will be a quite good and interesting topic and we can gather more participants from there.

And also—no, I think that's enough. Thank you.

MOHAMED ELBASHIR: Thank you very much, Maria. The next presenter is Sarika from India's universal acceptance local initiative. Please go ahead.

SARIKA GULYANI: Thank you, Mohamed and hello everybody. This is Sarika, I'm director and head of ICT from the chambers which are known as Federation of Indicant Chambers of Commerce and Industry. That's the chamber which has taken up the lead and has collaborated with UASG leadership and running the local initiative chapter for the UA. This is just a brief scenario just to let the audience understand the potential [India is a geographic area, and I will just have to pick up] a few numbers.

I would just say that we are a country which has 22 official languages, more than 1500 dialects, a country which has 29 states and seven union territories. So that's the diversity we can look into. It's a country which comprises [a state which itself covers a continent, you can say.]

And if we talk about the numbers, we have right now around 700 or so Internet subscribers, I would say, and the next 500 Internet subscribers are expected to be the Indic Internet subscribers. So that's the potential we're talking about. 75% of the new Indian subscribers would be the Indic Internet.

And when we talk about—lots of programs which are run by the government of India, starting with the digital India and others, where the empowerment of the country digitally has been taken care of. Now [inaudible] government there has been a focus on overcoming the language barrier, which is one of the main areas where we want the remotest corner of the country to be covered of and be able to communicate in their own language.

And when we say that, that's the reason I say it, [inaudible] potential even for [inaudible] we are talking about. UA is one of the major [pillars] for getting the truly multilingual Internet. We all understand that. So we are talking about huge potential. I'll not read out everything, so next slide, please.

Very brief on this, I just told you that [I'm] from FICCI. It's a [inaudible] body which is more than 93 years old, and that's a body which works across sectors with industry and the government and different other stakeholders, [inaudible] technicians and everybody. And as part of that, we started FICCI-ILIA basically [inaudible] and then we collaborated with the ICANN and of course the UASG secretariat, and we have the meeting [inaudible] UA initiative local chapter for India, and we are very happy that we've been having the different

stakeholders starting from the academia, publishers, LSPs, international [providers,] government departments and many others.

And our main area, the focus pillars that we have been as a chapter focusing on includes the community outreach, promotion, technical awareness, and we talk about making the industry technically [sound on UA] and basically handholding them so that we can have [inaudible]. There's a lot of opportunity across all businesses, including government, where this thing can be done. Next slide, please.

This is a couple of initiatives which we've highlighted which have been done in the last few months. The chapter started in April 2020, at the same time more or less when the pandemic was [moving on high scale,] but we did achieve many of the objectives in the last few months. Of course, apart from various community-driven meetings, we did have a working group meeting on 5th of January this year.

The reason of this group meeting, basically, we tried to get as many members as possible so that they can contribute in this whole process [and get other peers] who can participate in the whole journey along with us and [we] define the agenda with the support of them so that we can [inaudible] those initiatives.

MOHAMED ELBASHIR: Sarika, my apologies to interrupt you. Can you slow down so that the interpreters will be able to follow up with you?

SARIKA GULYANI: Sure, Mohamed. I was just doing some [justice to the time.] So I will be slow. Sorry. Okay. On the technical workshop, we did have a technical workshop on EAI, e-mail address internationalization. We did have earlier on the [general awareness] on the UA and others, and [inaudible] doing it on Java. And this was well attended by the industry members [and in fact,] we had a good response. We will be [inaudible] [sessions furthermore] in coming months on the technical side.

When we talk about awareness webinars, apart from the UA standalone session which we did where we talked about the general awareness, we did have a big collaboration with the ministry of electronics and IT government of India, and we did organize a webinar during their flagship event called Bhashantara which is the online symposium of our country. We have more than 350 live participants joining in this particular session. We had discussion around IDNs and we had good representation from the government department and the government representatives apart from the industry. So that was a really good collaboration and we had a very good response from the government and we would be taking more sessions in the coming months [inaudible]. Next slide.

So we did lots of social media promotion which we have been doing it, apart from the tweets which get released for the various activities which we do the various [inaudible] which as secretariat, we keep working on it with the community. Also for the promotion, we have linked our UA page which we created as a microsite within FICCI-ILIA which has been created with the UASG.tech and also, there is a tab available where you can register and become part of the community and also post any

queries. We also upload it with all the resources and the materials which we created with our community and also anything which comes out from UASG.tech which needs to be circulated with the communities. So that's a very important website. We request members to kindly be part of it and just keep on visiting on a regular basis.

We also did various other communication mediums, including the local initiative e-mail group. Everybody can exchange their views. Of course, [their announcements and any other] activities can be [inaudible].

Another important thing I would like to highlight here. We talked about the UA tech sessions on the previous slide that is basically focusing on— we had specific sessions with startups and academia so that we can get them aligned on the UA thing while [they start up with their entrepreneur] journey. So that was another thing which we started up [this year] and we have two sessions, one with academia and one with [startups] [inaudible].

This is just a glimpse of the various activities we did. Here I would also like to acknowledge the support of all the community members and also the UASG ambassadors. The UA ambassadors have been really very supportive. All the three ambassadors from the India side, [inaudible] we have been able to do various activities jointly with them at various levels, and I would like to acknowledge that [inaudible] along with the whole community which is showing a really great interest [inaudible] diversity [inaudible]. Next slide, please.

CHRISTINA RODRIGUEZ:	Excuse me. Terribly sorry to bother you. The interpreters are having a really hard time trying to follow you because you're speaking super fast. If you could please slow down your pace, it will be much appreciated. Thank you.
SARIKA GULYANI:	Thank you, Christina. This is the list of planned activities which we have planned for March 2021 and also the months later on during this year. As I mentioned, we would be having a technical workshop on Java basics, and then of course, we will go ahead with our journey of knowledge management and [inaudible] UA awareness and benefits, so various articles from the community members, social media promotions, that thing will continue. We'll continue with our process of working group meetings which we started earlier and that we continue in coming months as well.

A couple of other activities which we plan to take it up in the coming months. Apart from the central government, we would be going to the regional, so we would be focusing on various—like I mentioned, we have 29 states, so we would be focusing on a few states in the southern region and few on the western side of our country. We would be going deep with the government engagement at various both central and the state level.

We have planned special roundtables on UA implementation with startups. We would be aligning our agenda with the government's new announcement on national language translation mission and we would continue our awareness program on the general awareness of UA as

well as for the web developers discussing benefits of UA compliance and providing them technical support with the guidance of UASG leadership. Next slide, please.

Here, I would just like to draw an attention to an important announcement which has been made in our country, which is the national language translation mission announced by the government of India in its union budget in 1st February. So that's a wonderful step which has been taken by the government to reduce the digital divide in the nation. And it's a step to create knowledge texts accessible in all Indian languages. So that gives a huge opportunity for our local initiative also to align its agenda with the government. In fact, we are part of the discussions that the government is having at the start level of this mission, and we would be working further deeply with the government on this mission along with the UA initiative.

Apart from here, I would just like to highlight one point, that one of the learnings which we got and things which we understood from our experiences, there's a big need to have a high promotion and awareness on the UA because of the deep involvement of the people across regions. So as a chapter, we'll continue working with our community [inaudible]. Thank you, and I apologize for my fast speed. I hope I'm able to convey the message. Thank you all.

MOHAMED ELBASHIR: Thank you very much, Sarika, and yes, you were able to convey the message clearly. The next speaker is from Thailand UA initiative,

Photchanan. And please, if you can speak clearly and slowly for the sake of interpretation. Thank you.

PHOTCHANAN RATANAJAIPAN: Thank you. Hi everyone. I'm Photchanan from THNIC, I'm a coordinator of Thailand local UA initiative. Next slide, please. In Thailand, we open for registering international domain name in Thai script ten years ago, and this year is a celebration of ten years for us. We except to increase Internet access, help users who cannot use English to communicate in local language when use Internet service easier. So we also aim for promote Thai culture in the Internet also.

However, even we have a number of registration, we still have limited use on that domain, partly because of problem from the UA itself. In September last year, with support from ICANN, we launch the UA local initiative to drive the effort in creating awareness of UA and focusing on EAI or e-mail address internationalization readiness and acceptance.

We are a multi-stakeholder group initiative led by a steering committee that includes a representative from .th domain registry, registrars, and many organizations.

The main activity that we plan are we're going to develop training materials in local language, organize webinars, training and hackathons, maintaining and enhancing existing online local resource that we have done for many years and we keep improving that, and we will communicate to stakeholders and outreach focusing on fixing popular website that are not EAI ready. Next slide, please.

In this slide, we'll show highlight of some activities that we have done recently. One is the EAI hackathon is a part of Thailand networking group, [inaudible] that we organized yearly for ten years already. This event is organized in December last year. The problem that the team had [seen] were related to creating and promoting websites or social enterprise that is a bigger picture of the problems. But for the technical part of the problem, they have to start from setting up the servers, DNS servers and e-mail server that supports EAI, so there is a technical event that we have done.

We also show some pictures of outreach here. Recently, we just visited national institute of education, testing service and department of cultural promotion to find opportunity to use and let them use and promote IDN and EAI and also raise awareness of UA today.

We also evaluated EAI readiness for popular Thai websites, and we are in the period of contacting them, persuading them for considering fixing their websites to be UA ready. Next slide, please.

We are developing a series of videoclips to teach how to develop e-mail servers that support EAI, and next week, we're going to have an online workshop for system administrator on the topic of setting up e-mail server with EAI support.

It's the first event which is online event that we have, and it will be followed by workshops for programmers, developers and other webinars for general outreach. Next slide, please.

Allowing Thai people to use EAI e-mail service or let them have experience of using that, THNIC provides an e-mail server for free. They can have EAI mailbox so user can name the account or mailbox both in Thai and English and using this e-mail box, the service can be used both from mail application that support EAI, such as mail application or [inaudible] or Outlook as well as can be used from web browser.

We plan to use this e-mail as some kind of identity verification, so the user of the e-mail address can use that account as identity to log into other service such as vclass.net—it's a videoconference that the group [inaudible] also provide a service and also some kind of learning online platform in local language that we call ThaiMooc. And if anyone interested to test whether you can send e-mail to some other e-mail service provider in Thai language or any other language, you can use the e-mail account that appears on the slide to test the setting and mail account will reply back to you so you can know that sending e-mail is going back to you correctly or not. Next slide, please.

So to summarize that, our activities can divide into three groups of technical collaboration, such as we [moderate] the APAC EAI implementation group or mailing list and also some kind of technical training material, online training, hackathon that is a part of the technical collaboration.

And for the general outreach, it's kind of general webinars that anyone could listen in all of this topics, and also the learning resource they can reference anytime they want. And for the public sector and

engagement, also do some kind of outreach to them as explained before.

So at the end, I would like to summarize that we keep going with our activity in hope that we could place both knowledge and willingness for Thai community, as some participant mentioned. Thank you.

MOHAMED ELBASHIR: Thank you very much, Photchanan. Appreciated. We have two remaining slides, and then we can open the question and answer session or part. Roy, can you please present Marvin Woo's slides? Because he wasn't able to be with us for last-minute circumstances.

RUI ZHONG: Okay. Hello again. I will be representing UA ambassador Marvin Woo as he is right now on a plane. Let me say sorry to you all for he's unable to attend and present.

As we all know, one of the important tasks for the UA ambassador is to promote UA awareness and to educate the public. Mr. Woo here accepted the interviews by the news. For example, he accepted interview by the Guangzhou news program. Guangzhou city has a population of more than 15 million, so this news program will reach a very large population. So it's a very good channel to promote the UA in the TV program.

And Mr. Woo also served the visiting professor in the Guangzhou University. So he also organized some training programs in

the university for the students, especially for the major of computer science and [inaudible] design major. So it's a very good opportunity to educate the young generation to promote the UA awareness. Next slide, please.

Mr. Woo also tried to participate into many social event and conference to promote the UA. For example, last year, he participated in the second China Internet Infrastructure Resources Conference. This is as very important community event in China. This conference is organized by CNNIC and the computer and Network Information Center of Chinese Academy of Science.

This is a big conference. Many of the government sector and registry/registrar and Internet company were present and attended this big conference. This picture is a subforum. This topic of this forum is new perspective, new opportunity to look for and to look at the Chinese domain name [development] in last 20 years and to look forward in the future.

You can see in the picture, the second person from the left side is Mr. Woo, and also, you can see another Chinese UA ambassador, Mr. [inaudible]. He is sitting in the middle. So these two UA ambassadors have a high-level dialog on the forum to introduce the Chinese local initiative, [about what we've done,] how we have progressed and to interact with the audience.

And then Mr. Woo also has been participating in other social activity to show the reality and information of the EAI and the UA and to promote education for public. That's all from Mr. Woo [to share.] Thank you.

MOHAMED ELBASHIR: Thank you very much, Mr. Rui. Unfortunately, because we are running out of time for the question and answer part, I would like to ask you, if you have any questions or comments, you can send it to the e-mail that I just posted on the chat. We'd be very g lad to respond back, provide any clarification or respond to any inquiries that you have.

So, thank you very much for your participation, and we appreciate also and thank the speakers for this informative session. Thank you very much, everyone.

AJAY DATA: Thank you, everyone, for joining in.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]

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