ICANN71 | Virtual Policy Forum – GNSO IDN EPDP Community Outreach Session
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NATHALIE PEREGRINE: Hello everybody, welcome to the GNSO IDN EPDP community outreach session. Please note that this session is being recorded and follows the ICANN expected standards of behavior. During this session, questions or comments submitted in chat will only be read out loud if put in the proper form as noted in the chat shortly. The questions and comments will be read out loud during the time set by the session organizers.

If you'd like to ask your question or make your comment verbally, please raise your hand. When called upon, kindly unmute your microphone and take the floor. Please state your name for the record and speak clearly at a reasonable pace. Mute your microphone when you're done speaking. Thank you ever so much. With that, I'll hand the floor over to my colleague, Steve Chan. Thank you, Steve.

STEVE CHAN: Thanks so much, Nathalie, and welcome, everyone joining this session. We'll be talking about the expedited policy development process on internationalized domain names.

So the purpose of today's session is to help you all better understand the EPDP on IDNs that the GNSO Council initiated in late May. So the additional purpose here beyond just understanding this EPDP is also for you all to determine whether or not you think you should at least

follow the work of the group or if you think the topic is actually important enough to you to join as a member or a participant.

There is currently a call for members, participants and observers as well as this EPDP's chair, and those are both open right now. So the EPDP will begin its deliberations likely in the latter half of July.

Just a general description of the session, it's divided into three main parts, with the first two taking up the bulk of the time. So after each section, we'll hold a really brief Q&A with the participants in that particular section, and then a final Q&A at the end of the session.

So the three parts, the first one will focus on history and background related to the various IDN-related efforts as well as why the community believes that this work is so important. The second part will look specifically at this EPDP and in particular its charter, and then lastly, we'll very quickly touch on the structure of the EPDP and how you can get involved.

With that, and thanking in advance all the community members that will be helping me out in the session, I think we can get started. The first part here is, as I noted, about the history and background on the various IDN efforts to help explain why IDNs are so important and why this policy development effort in particular on IDNs is needed.

So I'd like to thank and welcome our panelists. First, we have Pitinan Kooarmornpatana. She joined ICANN Org in 2017 and is part of ICANN's IDN program, so I'm glad to have her. We also have Akshat Joshi. He's an engineer by trade and was instrumental in

framing of linguistic policy for [ten of our] ccTLD domains that were recently launched. He also contributed significantly to the Neo-Brahmi generation panel, which he will hopefully teach us more about during the session. He now runs his own company called ThinkTrans which is working in the linguistic consultancy, policy and developmental areas.

And then lastly but not least, we have Edmon Chung from DotAsia, a gTLD, and then also ISOC Hong Kong and At-Large society in APRALO. He's a longtime participant in pioneering IDN policy and technology, and if you ever worked on anything IDN-related, you'll be familiar with him. So he's been working since the beginning of the development of IDNs in 1999, actually, so several decades ago.

So with that, I actually want to start with a question for Pitinan. So you and I know that IDNs are created to enable users around the world to type a domain name and access the Internet in their native language rather than use a limited set of Latin letters and numbers. We also know that integrating IDNs into the DNS is far from a simple process though, and I was hoping you can talk us through the key events and developments that have made IDNs into reality.

PITINAN KOOARMORNPATANA: Thank you, Steve. Good morning, good afternoon, good evening, everyone. Thank you for the opportunities to be here and share some background on the IDNs.

First, let me use a few slides to answer Steve's question in two parts. First, what is the IDN, which is the key elements of implementing the

IDNs, and then secondly, what is the status and the effort by the communities to address this issue.

So for the first one about the variant, what is variant labels? Variant labels are something that can be considered as the same for [inaudible] community, and we can see some of the few examples on the screen now. Let's take a look at it one by one.

The one on the leftmost, this is the Chinese scripts, so as in pair, so the one at the top in the white box, that is composed of the simplified Chinese script. The one on the solid orange box below is from traditional Chinese scripts. So this simplified Chinese and traditional Chinese are used in everyday life in different countries and territories. So if you are the owner of the labels and you perhaps access to the global market, you might want both variants of the labels to be usable, to serve your users.

This is similar to Arabic case as well for the second pair. On the top is the Arabic language using Arabic script. On the one below is the Urdu language using the Arabic script. Because Arabic script is used in multiple languages across the globe, some variation happens over time. So in this example, the two labels have slightly different version at the last two codepoints. So if you're the owner of these names, perhaps you would want both variant labels to be usable. So these are defined as variants by the Chinese community and Arabic community for the usability purpose.

And then we also have another type of variant, which is on the right here in the blue box. So for the one on the top, it is composed of Latin script.

The one below is composed of the Cyrillic script. Basically, they look the same to human eyes like us, but for the computer, these are different. So beneath them, they are totally different codepoints. So for this, Latin community, Cyrillic community, also considering this to be variants for the security purpose.

Then let's look at the impact. Next slide, please. So this variant issue actually exists in most of the scripts used in modern language of the world. Of these 28 scripts listed here within the recommended script to be used as identifiers by Unicode, almost all of them have variant issues to be considered, either the usability aspect or the security aspect. So this perhaps answers the first question about variant is key issues for IDNs.

And then moving on to the second part, what is the development of this issue. As you can see on the previous slides, to address this, we need knowledge, expertise from the script users across the globe. There's no way that one organization can manage all of the script knowledge. So ICANN Org cannot do, but ICANN community, perhaps we can do it.

So this work of defining what are the variant mappings that's been done by the script communities. Script communities came together to define the rules, how to use the script properly under the project called root zone label generation rules, or root zone LGR.

The community define how to use the script in three parts. First, what are the codepoints that should be allowed to be used in the labels or in the root zone labels? Secondly, what are the variant mapping needed? And then thirdly, is there any further restriction to form a label needed?

Once the root zone LGR of the script is available, it would be integrated into the single root zone LGR and then that will be used to validate the labels and also calculate the variants.

So far, we have 17 script communities come together and work on this covering 25 scripts, and this is because some of the generation panels cover more than one script, like Neo-Brahmi generation panel cover nine scripts altogether.

The number of community members in this work now reach [289 and] more, and also, this covers 287 plus languages which calculated to cover 5 billion people of the world. So this is a huge effort by the community and also have a great impact.

Each community usually meets perhaps once a week or every two weeks along the course that they are working on this project. Some use a few years, some might use four, five years. So right now, we already reached the 10,000-hour mark of work from the community members.

To date, we have 18 scripts already integrated into the root zone, and we have the rest of others coming along likely in the next fiscal year. So that's the status today of the community work on addressing the variant issue. Let me pause here and pass the mic back to you, Steve. Thank you.

STEVE CHAN: Thanks, Pitinan. That's really helpful background and it's great to understand how much work goes into making sure that IDNs are available to the world, really. So, question, actually, for Akshat. Related

to what Pitinan was just talking about, the RZ LGR, and she also mentioned the Neo-Brahmi generation panel, which I understand you're a member, I was hoping you can talk more about that, because I'm guessing folks aren't too familiar with what goes into a generation panel, how they operate, how the generation rules are developed generation rules, and why they are so important. So I was hoping you could actually give us some insight.

AKSHAT JOSHI: Yeah. Thanks, Steve. Before talking a bit more elaborate about the generation panel structure, I would take a minute to just give a background of where exactly we stand in terms of the entire project.

Way back when I got involved in the IDN variant TLDs program, it began with a set of definitions about what exactly are variants. Everybody who knew that when IDNs were to be rolled out, what exactly needs to be done. Everybody knew that there are some problems with it, but what exactly is the nature of the problem, nobody was really clear about.

So there was a good amount of discussion about what exactly each script has in terms of IDNs and what kind of issues they think that could be potentially there. There were entire stages of this project wherein there was an individual case study phase wherein the six case studies were developed, they all brought to the table only the set of issues that they saw within their script, but to be clear, mandate was not to bring about, talk about any solution at that stage but only bring the issues to the table.

Then there was an integrated issues report which took into consideration all the issues posed by different scripts brought to the table, and then that issues report was to be taken as a baseline to start drafting a procedure which would eventually create something which will be applied on an incoming TLD or a domain to generate particular variant [inaudible].

So then that procedure, like Pitinan was talking about, RZ LGR was drafted, and that ended up proposing a two-tier structure wherein there is one panel of experts who are from different fields, be it Unicode, IETF, somebody from linguistics, and those who are very much familiar with these processes, they came together and formed the integration panel that formed the top panel for them, and then under the integration panel, there were language communities which were supposed to own their own generation panels and they were supposed to work on their own languages and work within the framework of the generation panel concept and draft a set of codepoints.

There are mainly three components to an LGR: a set of codepoints, a set of [whole label] evaluation rules, and variants. So that's what every generation panel's mandate was. There was a clear communication mechanism established between integration panel and generation panel wherein integration panel will take a set of recommendations to integration panel, they would look at it from a holistic point of view in terms of what the procedure is designed to do, and if there is something that is not in alignment of the goals of the entire procedure, they would suggest to generation panel to amend a few things. Generation panel would go back to the drawing Board, make some changes, obviously

keeping in mind the needs of the script, they would again go back to the integration panel, there would be a to-and-fro, and the final particular LGR for that script for which the particular generation panel is working would be finalized.

So we were part of Neo-Brahmi generation panel wherein we were working on nine scripts altogether, which again, typically, other generation panels were one script, one panel, but since we were talking about a family of scripts which had clear one kind of lineage, so we took under our wings nine scripts, and it was a fascinating journey, frankly speaking, to be talking to this whole different kind of script people with one kind of history and then all coming together to discuss.

So there has been a considerable amount of work, there was a good amount of to-and-fro between integration panel and the Neo-Brahmi generation panel, and we finally ended up deciding what exactly needs to be done in terms of NBGP.

So briefly touching upon what are the core elements of LGR, what is a codepoint repertoire? That is a particular set of characters that are allowed to be operated under that particular script. Whole label evaluation rules, it's a kind of control mechanism in terms of what characters can follow what are particular rules that can be applied in order for those labels to form properly and not allow any irregularities into this? And when I say in terms of irregularities, I don't mean linguistically or semantically, but mainly from the way Unicode backend encoding mechanism has decided that a particular script be rendered.

So from that point of view, the rules were to be done. And then there are variants which are taking into consideration the kind of similarities and confusability's it can bring to the minds of the users who might, if they're posed with those problems, their trust in the entire DNS system might go down.

So those were the main points of the generation panel and the LGR. Back to you, Steve.

STEVE CHAN: Thanks, Akshat. That really provides context for me in how much work goes into every one of these generation panels, and that was just one of many, so that's really important to help us understand just what is involved in all this. So, thanks for that.

My next question is actually for Edmon. So both Pitinan and Akshat talked about variants. Pitinan provided examples, but I think it could still be a little bit abstract, and I'm hoping you can maybe provide a little more context about what they mean and help us understand what the implications are for the future. Thanks.

EDMNON CHUNG: Sure. Thanks, Steve, and thanks for having me here. Always excited to talk about IDNs, and it's been a long journey, as you mentioned. We're, I think, getting to a critical part of making IDN really work.

Building on what Pitinan and Akshat have actually said, the way we think about IDN variants is really based on linguistic needs of certain

scripts and languages around the world. I'm going to use rly the worst way to describe it but the easiest way to explain it.

The reality is that for people who understand the English language, the easiest way to really think about and grasp this idea is like capital letters and small letters. In the domain name system, when you type in the domain name or you display the domain, you can use capital letters and small letters, but for different languages, there are certain features of the languages that are almost like that—that's why I say it's the worst way to describe it, because every language is quite different, and this is just the wrongest way to describe it. But for an English speaker, the easiest way to understand it is such that.

In the DNS, we map together the capital letters and small letters so that when you register a domain or you type in the domain, it just works. Even if you have a mixed capital letters and small letters. But for different languages, they have certain features that are almost like that, and technically, it would not be so easy to map together like the English language.

And therefore, very early on, actually back in the early days when the IETF, the Internet Engineering Task Force was talking about standards for IDN, it actually tried to map together some of the variants but decided that it was not the technology, not the technology protocol that should do the job but rather, the policy aspect, which, that's the reason why we're here and that's why the LGR that Pitinan and the RZ LGR that Akshat has mentioned is developed here in the ICANN community.

The Internet Architecture Board—the IAB—actually has a statement that says this is an issue that needs to be dealt with with policy, because one interesting thing is that languages evolve, languages actually change over time, and therefore the protocol is stable and is technical whereas the policy can slowly change over time. Therefore, that's what we have for the IDN variants program.

So I hope this gives you a way of understanding it. If you don't understand all the different languages, if you understand the English language and the capital and small letters, it gives you a sense of what the IDN variants is about. So it is about that, and it's not about different ways of spelling, like the British way of spelling colour and the American way of spelling color. It's not like that, and it's not trying to map together like the O or the zero. It doesn't solve all the issues of similarity, but it solves issues of linguistic issues that are similar—or I'm trying to draw an analogy to capital and small letters. Hopefully this gives you a sense of what the IDN variant issue is about.

STEVE CHAN: Thanks, Edmon. I found that to be a really simple and descriptive example, so I really appreciate that. Spoken from the point of view of someone with two decades of experience.

So with that in mind, I think the trend that I'm seeing here is that, or the theme really is that there's a substantial amount of work that goes into every element and every step of the IDN program along the way. So I'm just curious what you see in the future of IDN adoption. Do you see there being great demand or growing demand, and do you think all of that is

going to make all the efforts in the past as well as into the future worthwhile? So this is a question to all three of you, and you don't all have to answer, but it's open to all three of you. Thanks. Any volunteers?

EDMNON CHUNG: Happy to jump in first. I guess it's a very difficult question. Right now, if you ask registrars and if you look at the registration rate, we're not showing like an overwhelming demand, but the way that I see it is that we have a very strong latent demand. The demand and supply concept of kind of the market depends or assumes a kind of efficient market. And right now for IDNs, we have a market failure because of these issues like variants, like universal acceptance that are not completely rolled out.

So the way that I actually think it's more useful to think about it is that, yes, people around the world want to use their own native language in navigating the Internet and using their identity online, but these technologies and policies need to be in place so that people can use it. And the better way that I kind of want to think about it is this is more like a movement. When you're in a social movement, you always start with a niche that raises the awareness and pushes a thing forward before it becomes a mainstream idea.

The other way to think about it is today, you look at Canada and the news coming out from really killing off the Native Americans or the indigenous cultures. It's more like a world view, do you believe in a world view that protects and supports a multicultural and multilingual

Internet, or do you believe in a homogenous Internet with just English alphanumeric domain names and e-mail addresses?

That, I think, is a bigger question and more important than just thinking about the demand. I do believe that demand will come, but we need to put these policies and these technologies in place first.

STEVE CHAN: Thanks so much, Edmon. That's really helpful. In the interest of time, I'm going to actually move on to the last question. I think it's actually a good transition anyway, because what I heard is that we need to set up the infrastructure and framework for IDNs and variants to be able to make them available to the world.

So I'm just wondering, why is there further policy development needed and why is it needed at this point? So like I said, I think it's a good transition to this. I wonder if one of the three of you would like to take that question.

PITINAN KOOARMORNPATANA: Perhaps I can chime in.

STEVE CHAN: Thanks, Pitinan. Go for it.

PITINAN KOOARMORNPATANA: All right. Well, sharing from the [inaudible], I can share from the Board resolution in 2010 which stated that no variant of the gTLD will be

delegated through the new gTLD program until an appropriate variant management solutions are developed.

This resolution led to the work from the community that developed the integrated issue report as Akshat mentioned earlier, and from that report, two gaps were identified. First, the variant definition is still missing. The second is the variant management.

So the first one was already addressed or being addressed by the root zone LGR project, and the second one, the policy, so the definition in place and how to use those definitions, those variants moving forward. I guess that's why we have the session and why we are all here today for the EPDP session.

STEVE CHAN: Thanks so much. So all about continuing the decadelong work of actually setting up that framework. That's really helpful. Thanks, Pitinan. Just real quickly—and I know we're running short on time here—I just want to see if there's any questions from the audience. But with that in mind, I will note that we're going to do a final Q&A at the end. So if there's any immediate questions about the background and history and why IDNs are so important, please go ahead and raise your hand and we'll take your question, or probably just a question or two if there's any. Pause here for a moment.

Not seeing any hands pop up, so thanks, panelists. It's great to have you here. Please don't go anywhere. Like I mentioned in the beginning, we'll do a full panel with everyone at the end just to see if there's any final

questions at the end. So, thanks again, but as noted, don't go anywhere.

All right, so we're moving on to the second section and so I really am appreciative of all the contributions there. So this next section, we're going to move away from talking about IDNs generally and instead look more specifically at the expedited policy development process on IDNs, including its charter. For this portion, I'm joined by Philippe Fouquart. He's joining us as the chair of the GNSO Council. And then we also have Dennis Tan who was the chair of the IDN EPDP charter drafting team. So thanks for being here.

I'm first going to start with a question to Philippe. So from the previous panel, we heard their views regarding the importance of the IDN topic to the GNSO. Before we dive into the details of the charter, I'm wondering if you could tell us a little bit about why the GNSO Council determined that an EPDP in particular is the desired approach rather than a regular PDP. Does this mean that there's an urgency to get the work done so that it needs to be expedited? So I was hoping you could talk a little bit about that. Thanks, Philippe.

PHILIPPE FOUQUART: Thanks, Steve. Hi everyone. I think this initiation, it's fair to say that it came as no surprise to Council. There's been a number of signs that would—and contrary to others maybe, for this one there's been a number of signs that a PDP at least would be necessary. There was a recommendation from the scoping team, but that was only the result of a convergence of a number of things, not only the Board's resolution

but also policy issues that have been identified in SubPro for example, there was a paper from staff which was issued on this as well, and technical study group, which was along the same lines, all of which identified the need for policy work on IDN. So there's extensive material available that would support the launch of a PDP.

That being said, we have a due process to launch that, and to your question on the timeline, the structure, we had that discussion within Council but also within the scoping team as to what sort of model would be applying, and given the dependencies, I think, was a major factor in determining that an EPDP was the right way forward, along with a need of a tight scope, a clearly identified list of missions for the work to take on.

That being said—but I think that's going to be one of the other questions—there's the question of the timeline which probably need further thoughts. But just as background on the rationale for an EPDP and policy work in general, that's what I can offer. Thanks, Steve.

STEVE CHAN: Thanks so much, Philippe. It's a great reminder that EPDPs do not have to be only about registration data services. So it's a great reminder that it's actually a mechanism for the GNSO to use where the situation is right. And with all of the background material on this topic in previous work, the Council determined it's the right approach.

My next question is to Dennis, and hoping you can talk about the EPDP specifically. As noted, you chaired the charter drafting team for the

EPDP on IDNs, and of course, you're deeply familiar with the chartering details, so I'm hoping you can provide us with an overview how the charter questions were developed, a high-level overview of the scope and topics that this EPDP is expected to cover, and just generally, tell us more about the charter and the work, once it gets started, what it's going to focus on. Thanks, Dennis.

DENNIS TAN TANAKA: Thank you, Steve, and thank you for having me here. I believe we have a few slides here just to help the audience follow my voiceover presentation here.

Let's start with the body of work. As other speakers have noted, this issue has been studied many years and produce different outcomes in which we can elevate all these various outcomes, these four pieces of work.

Starting from the latest, top to bottom, the SubPro PDP. SubPro deliberated on many issues, one of which was IDNs on the next round in how IDNs at the top level and subsequent at the second level, how they would need to be managed. But also, we had a staff paper that dealt with some recommendations on how to set up a management framework for variants at the top level and how different aspects of the lifecycle, how to manage second level as well, will need to be performed, posing those questions for further discussions.

We also had the root zone label generation ruleset Technical Study Group that looked at the specific issue on how to use the root zone label

generation rulesets. As you have heard from previous speakers before me, the root zone LGR is a collection of the rules that will allow a string to be validated to be used at the root zone level and also to calculate its variant labels.

And to complete the body of work that the charter drafting team looked at was different papers including SAC reports and also the IDN implementation guidance at the second level.

So that leads us to talking about the scope of the work. You heard that there was a provision by the Board to not delegate TLD variants until two aspects were going to be dealt with. But I'm going to touch that a little bit later after I explain how the charter drafting team set up its work.

So from left to right, starting from the left box, I mentioned that one piece of work that we looked at was the SubPro recommendations, so this is now a policy recommendations are going to be or in the past to be adopted, so we're talking about consensus policy, so the SubPro looked at the IDN issues, the questions about how to deal with variant TLDs at the top level, introducing the concept of same entity principle at the top level as well as the second level in the context of future TLDs. So that's a very important distinction that the drafting team had to manage.

So the question for the next IDN EPDP will be whether the SubPro recommendations are applicable to the future TLDs, how to extend applicability to exist in TLDs that might want to—those who are eligible

to apply for a variant label, how they would do that and how they would manage those variant labels.

Moving on to the middle box where SubPro PDP did not have any recommendations based on the staff paper or the TSG paper, the IDN EPDP will discuss the subject or topic at hand for both existing and new gTLDs.

And lastly, the right box, because of what you've heard, there is an implicit dependency—or rather explicit dependency between SubPro and the IDN EPDP, and all of us want consistent, predictable solutions for all gTLDs, not just [inaudible] this differentiation between new gTLDs and all TLDs or legacy TLDs, we want a solution that is applicable to all gTLD, then these efforts, the next SubPro PDP IRT, we expect coordination between the IDN EPDP and the SubPro PDP IRT.

So that's basically how we set up the framework. It was efficient for us to then look at the topics and decide what are the reasonable, appropriate policy questions that we want the next working group to deliberate on.

So moving on to the next slide about the scope, I mentioned before—I put a pause there—that there was a provision by the Board that no variant TLD was going to be delegated or allocated into the root, so until two questions have been answered. One was designation of a variant label, and second, the management.

So those two items combined are what the next EPDP will look at as one of the issues. So issue one is the definition of all gTLDs, meaning what's

considered a valid label for the root zone LGR, and also how to calculate their variants. Just quickly, before, it was up to the applicant to suggest or calculate the variant labels. Moving forward, if this policy deliberation ends or recommends a sole authoritative source to calculate variant labels, this is going to be the one thing.

The second item that the IDN EPDP will look at is the evolution of the ICANN IDN implementation guidelines for the second level. Those who are familiar with the IDN implementation guidelines, those deal with the second-level implementation of IDNs. gTLDs are required by contract to follow those guidelines. It's a recommendation that is optional for ccTLDs.

But as they are contract obligations, the next working group will look at how not the substance of the guidelines itself but the procedure to update the guidelines over time, how does that need to be done in the future?

And as a carveout—because I mentioned in the body of work that the drafting team managed, was the IDN implementation guidelines. So there's the IDN implementation guidelines version four which was drafted back in 2018 which still in a standby because of the different efforts on IDNs. We have the IDN implementation guidelines version four going on, we also have the staff paper that came out concurrently, and now we have the IDN EPDP. All of them, there's some overlap, and so the GNSO [looks at—it's appropriate] in order to manage all these different competing, for lack of a better word, competing efforts, that there is a solution that is consistent across the board. So there's going

to be some coordination there in order to how to deal w the IDN implementation guidelines version four. Next slide, please.

And so not going to go into detail on what the charter talks about, b but you can see here broadly what are the topics. There are 48 specific questions across the different topics from the consistent definition of a top-level label and variant labels using the root zone label generation ruleset, introducing the same entity, and just quickly, the same entity deals with the question of how you introduce variant labels that are supposed to be the same, how do you introduce them safely into the root zone, taking into account security and stability of the root zone, how you can safely manage these labels that are supposed to be the same, so the same entity concept in which the registry operators need to manage both labels.

And this is not a novel concept, because IDNs at the second level have been around for many years, and the same entities apply to some extent in that regard. And that also includes other topics, again, so going from definition of variant labels and variant labels at the top level, what constitutes a same entity at the top level, what constitutes a same entity at the second level, and if you think about that, does introduction of these new principles have some cascading effects into other procedures and policies that exist today in ICANN as a whole?

For example, the lifecycle of a domain name. So if there is the same entity principle, how do you manage different variant labels that need to be transferred from one registrant or registrar to another? So those

are the policy discussions that will take place. And I don't know, Steve, how I am on time, so I will defer back to you for now.

STEVE CHAN: Thanks, Dennis. Just some quick commentary from me, if you'll allow me. So I was thinking that you showing that framework is actually really important to help illustrate, and I think reinforce why an EPDP makes sense, at least from the Council's perspective. All that existing work, especially how SubPro set up the basis set up for further work—and IDNs EPDP is going to compliment that existing work. I think that helps drive home why the EPDP in this case seems to make sense.

And then the other part I just want to comment real quickly on is the importance that the Council has realized needs to be placed on chartering. So as Dennis obviously knows as the chair of the charter drafting team, it took some time to actually work through the process and draft this charter, but it's time well spent to make sure that the charter is really well scoped and understood, and the questions make a lot of sense so that when the work actually starts, they have a good basis for completing the work in a timely and effective manner. So just want to call out those two things from your comments.

You did talk about the same entity concept quite a few times, and you also talked about how that implicates the questions that the EPDP is going to talk about. I know you already sort of talked about what that means, I'm just curious if you want to add anything to that. If you do, great, if you don't, that's also fine. I just want to throw that back to you

and see if you wanted to talk about the same entity principle or any of the other clusters and groupings of charter questions. Thanks.

DENNIS TAN TANAKA: Happy to, Steve. So again, the staff paper recommended that when variant TLDs are introduced into the root zone and the recommendation is that these labels at the top level need to be allocated or delegated to the same entity, the SubPro PDP deliberated that the same entity should be or must be the registry operators in the gTLD world. And the reason, again, is because of security and stability. Because the TLD operator provides second-level registrations in those labels, the intention is that they are the same label and therefore if a TLD operator from an end user perspective wants to provide certain expectations of predictability as to the behavior of these domain names are going to be on top of or under those top-level domain names. It's easy to manage if they belong or if they are managed by the same registry or backend to extend who is actually responsible for the technical management of those labels.

So same entity, same registry operator for top-level domain names, and by extension of the second-level domain name, the same entity would be, the recommendation is that the same registrant. Now, it's not clear at the top level who the registry operator is. It's not so much clear who the registrant is at the second level. What does registrant mean, and what are the means in order to actually implement the registrant? So there are different options that the IDN EPDP will look at. Is it going to

be managed by the registrant object ID? Is it going to be managed by a set of registrant data or a subset of it?

So all those options are going to be on the table, and the IDN EPDP will have the work to really discuss those options and look at the pros and cons of each one of them so that the solution that the working group arrives to is one that is sufficient, it's implementable, and really addresses the concerns of the community. I hope that answers a little bit, explains a little bit the same entity principle without going too much into the details.

The other one is, again, the lifecycle management of domain names. When TLDs for example need to change backend service providers, it's easier and more manageable and predictable to move all the set from one operator to another than allowing different variant labels be managed by different entities. That would be very hard to manage over time, same with variant labels at the second level. If the registrant decides to move the set of variant labels they have from one registrar, how do they move to the other one? For a registrant and end user standpoint, it's easier to move those from registrar to registrar than allowing piecemeal domain names be moved across to different entities. But again, those are going to be items that the next IDN EPDP will need to look at and recommend what's the viable and feasible solution.

STEVE CHAN: Thanks, Dennis. I'm looking at the clock and trying to be cognizant of time. I have a couple more questions I want to cover with both you and

Philippe, so hopefully we can try to keep it pretty brief because we also want to make sure we tell people how to get involved. So thanks, that's really important to understand, all the questions that the EPDP is going to have to grapple with once they get started. But also, I was hoping maybe we can talk a little bit about something you mentioned, that there's other policies and procedures that are going to be implicated and have to be considered in the EPDP's deliberations. So, sorry to rush you, but real quickly, if you can both maybe say a word or two about that, that would be very helpful. Thanks.

PHILIPPE FOUQUART: Dennis, I don't know if you want to have me first, but just to this point and before Dennis does on the broader scope, I just want to stress one particular dependency that Dennis alluded to, and that's the IDN implementation guidelines v4. It's a discussion we had at Council under our remit as a dependency and something that should not be a moving part as this EPDP would move along, and it's something on which Council would probably weigh in in the very near future in terms of making sure that as Dennis alluded to, that is somewhat frozen, the terms of which would need to be fleshed out. So that's an important point. That's something that was raised at Council as we considered the EPDP, and for the benefit of the working group, that's something that Council will probably weigh in very shortly. Thanks, Steve.

STEVE CHAN: Thanks, Philippe. Dennis, did you want to add anything, or do you think we need to move on since we have nine minutes left?

DENNIS TAN TANAKA: Just quickly, since this session is sort of a call to action or marketing to the next IDN PDP and get volunteers. There's going to be a number of policy procedures that exist today that will—or may—touch on the same entity principle. So I mentioned a few, the transfer policy for example, when you transfer domain names, do we need to think about same entity, same with the emergency backend registry operator procedure? I think that's one at the top level.

And TMCH, UDRP, when we talk about in terms of explicit and implicit transfer of a domain name, how does the same entity principle impact those type of processes at the registry or the registrar level? So there is a number of items that this new [inaudible] principle and the way to manage IDNs will introduce impacting other—potentially impacting others. I don't want to be 100% deterministic that there is going to be any impact, but there needs to be a review of the processes and determine whether there's going to be an implication or change or something that needs to be dealt with there.

STEVE CHAN: Thanks, Dennis. I always like to seize on themes. The theme here seems like implications. If we need to understand what is going to be the knock-on effects from any IDN policy. So thanks for that.

The last thing I want to touch on real quickly here, Philippe, if you could touch real quickly on any timeline concerns you might have or

comments you have about the timeline for the EPDP from the Council perspective.

PHILIPPE FOUQUART: Thanks, Steve. Yes, indeed, that's a discussion we had within Council, especially within the remit of PDP 3.0 and the need to be robust in terms of defining the timeline, sticking to it and coming back to Council if that were not adhered to for a change, and making Council aware.

So the first deliverable of the team would be the workplan, and in that context, Council decided not to be specific in terms of timeline but go back to the team once formed and ask them to come back to Council with a workplan and a timeline since it will also depend on the workforce that's available, hence this call to willing people. And that being said, I should probably say what about the model? We will have a representative and open model whereby outside the GNSO, there will be three members each and also three members each to each constituent group within the GNSO. So that's potentially quite a large group, but we know that resources are scarce.

So yes, the team will be tasked with identifying the timeline themselves along with the chairs and take responsibility on this. That's the spirit of PDP 3.0. Thank you, Steve.

STEVE CHAN: Thanks, Philippe. There's a question in chat. I think Edmon helped take care of that. But keep those questions in mind. We're going to hopefully have a minute or two of Q&A at the end, which is certainly not enough

for this topic, but Philippe provided the perfect segue to the next part and last part of the session which is to touch on the structure of the EPDP and the membership structure of it. So if we can move to the slides really briefly, that would be great.

So Philippe already mentioned it. This group is a representative plus open model. And I also mentioned briefly at the beginning, there's a call for members and participants [inaudible] and also the chair, and I noted that at the beginning of the session. But I think it's helpful to know what all these roles mean, and so how you might want to participate in this work if you're interested in the topic.

So the members of this group will be appointed by their respective SO, AC, SG or C which are all able to identify up to three members, as Philippe noted. So, what does being a member mean? It means you should be active during the deliberations of the group, of course, but it also means that if there's a need to provide a representative view from your appointing group, it'll come from the members, and then the members will also be the ones that take part in the consensus call process on any recommendations from the group.

There's a set of membership requirements where you're expected to have—amongst many things—expertise in IDNs, the PDP process, and/or ICANN policies and procedures. So the expectation isn't that every member meets every single requirement. Collectively as a whole, we want the EPDP to have a body of experience that it can rely upon to actually deliberate on all the parts that are in the charter.

So in terms of participants, this group is a little bit unique if you've seen how the other EPDP works, and then also the recently launched transfer policy. This one's a little bit unique in that the participants are allowed to participate for the most part on an equal footing as the members, and the difference there is that as I mentioned, the members are able to provide the view of their appointing organization and take part in the consensus call. Those are the two things that participants are not a part of, so they are there on their own accord or not representing the view of their organization and they will not be taking part in the consensus call. But other than that, they are able to participate in the mailing list, in deliberations in calls, and more or less contribute their experiences to the effort.

The last part on here in terms of participation is observers, and this is a much more passive way for you to follow the work. It's just mailing list access and read only, and you can't take part in meetings. And very quickly, at the bottom you can see a list of various liaisons. These are to help to coordinate the work between the EPDP and then also the council, the ccNSO as well as ICANN Org.

And I'm sorry I'm rushing through this part. This is a really important part of this session, is to make sure that you actually all understand the membership structure and where you might fit. What the drafting team recognized is that this topic is of broad interest, and so putting the EPDP behind a representative structure where there's not an ability to find or to allow additional participation didn't seem to make sense to the drafting team, and that's why this group is set up as a representative plus open model.

Next slide, please. I'll just touch on this for a moment. So I already mentioned this, these are the groups that are able to identify up to three members, and then I also very briefly mentioned the membership criteria. If you want to see the full criteria, please check out the charter and then also, if you're interested in being a member, work with your respective SG, C, SO, AC.

Last slide, please. Again, quickly, there's a single chair to be identified for chairing this group. There's actually an open expressions of interest process open right now. So if you're interested, please put your name forward. And there's also the opportunity for a vice chair. And so for the chairing of any working group, like any group, the chair is expected to be serving a neutral role and have expertise in the topic, Ideally. In this particular group, the chair will not count against the member allocation.

With that, I'm sorry, again, I know I rushed through this but the session is not long enough for this important of topic, I guess. So just in closing, the EOI for the chair, the deadline is Friday the 25th. Community groups, there's a request to all of them to identify their members.

And I guess, just to be clear, these groups, you can identify your members or not. You're not required to actually identify members. It's helpful, of course, if you do. But in addition to the members, you're also able to identify as many participants as you want, and that really goes to the representative plus the open structure of this group.

And so there's actually an announcement about participating, and I'm sorry, I used up all the Q&A time, but I did want to just briefly get us, all

the presenters into the immersive view real quickly and at least take this opportunity to thank everyone for taking part in the session, the panelists and also the audience, of course.

So I see that we have a few extra minutes. Thank you for joining me in this virtual room here. I want to make sure that we have a little bit of time—so thank you, Nathalie, for pointing out we have a few minutes—if there's any questions.

I see a question from Justine. “Is there a closing date to the call to participate or observe in the EPDP on IDNs? The announcement did not specify.” I can provide a preliminary answer and then see if any of the panel wants to also respond.

So technically, no, but I think for any effort, you want to have people involved from the beginning, of course, and that helps you with understanding and setting up your bases for the subject at hand. But if you do join after the group actually starts, the responsibility is yours as someone who arrived late to the process to get up to speed and make sure that you're not bringing up issues and topics in deliberations that the group has already had. So hopefully, that helps answer your question, Justine, and if anyone else wants to add anything, that would be great.

So questions in chat and then also raising your hand are all great. A question from Ricardo Nanni, “How can individual users participate? I'm a NextGen who has recently joined EURALO’s individual users. Can I only be observer?” I've been talking a lot, does anyone else want to answer this question?

EDMNON CHUNG: I guess the short answer is no, you don't have to just be an observer. I think you can go through ALAC as a member and try to be one of the three, but also, the other participants as well. Of course, you can choose to be observer. I hope I answered it correctly. Steve, correct me if I'm wrong.

STEVE CHAN: That was a perfect response, I think. Ricardo, I see thumbs up. I see you on video, I'm not sure if you had a follow-up.

RICARDO NANNI: Yes, no, it was clear. Thank you.

STEVE CHAN: Perfect. Thank you very much. While we're seeing if there's any additional questions, I just want to make it clear, of course, that everyone on this panel is available for additional questions. So if you have any questions about what's in the charter, about how to participate, about anything that we discussed during the session, including the background, we're all available to help you understand the topic and then also how you can get involved.

Taking a pause again to see if there are any more questions. Not seeing any, I think that was a long enough pause. So I think since we're already over time, it's probably a good place to close here. Thanks again for all the support of my panelists here. I see a follow-up question from

Justine. Maybe I'll take that offline afterwards. But again, thanks to the panel and then everyone in the audience for participating, and this is just the start of the EPDP but hopefully provides sort of a conclusion, at least for the moment, for the EPDP journey to make sure that it becomes reality.

So I think with that, we can close the session. Thanks all.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]