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ICANN78 | AGM – Five-Year Planning for UA and Governance of UA Steering Group (UASG)  
Tuesday, October 24, 2023 – 10:30 to 12:30 HAM

SARMAD HUSSAIN:

Hello and welcome to the five-year planning for universal acceptance and governance of UA Steering Group session. My name is Sarmad Hussain and I will help support this session. Please note that this session is being recorded and is governed by the ICANN expected standards of behavior. During the session, questions or comments submitted in the Q&A pod will be read aloud at the time set aside for community feedback section. During the session, questions or comments submitted in chat will only be read aloud if put in the proper form as it will be noted in the chat. If you wish to speak, please raise your hand in the Zoom room and once the session facilitator calls upon your name, kindly unmute your microphone and take the floor. When speaking, be sure to mute all other devices and notifications. This session includes automated real-time transcription. Please note this transcript is not official or authoritative. To view the real-time transcription, click the closed caption button in the Zoom toolbar. To ensure transparency of participation in ICANN's multi-stakeholder model, we ask you that you sign in to Zoom sessions using your full name. With that, I will hand the floor over to Anil Kumar Jain, the Chair of Universal Acceptance Steering Group.

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ANIL KUMAR JAIN:

Thank you, Sarmad. This is Anil Kumar Jain, Chair, UASG for the record. Good morning, good afternoon, good evening to all participants who are on-site at Hamburg and also who are online. Now, this is a special session because UASG, over the years, for the last eight years, was having a yearly plan and we used to operate and progress on yearly basis. This year, with the new leadership, we decided that time has come when the awareness about universal acceptance has already gone into the right ears and eyes. The communities are made aware about the requirement of UA and the importance of UA. And we must change over methodology from awareness to training and for adoption. And to make it possible, there are several stakeholders which are required to be addressed, which are required to be approached, which are required to be pursued. And to make it possible, we decided to make long-term five-year business plan to ensure that the required number of websites, required number of emails, they get addressed, they become part of us, and UASG should be able to make progress as we desire.

That is why we have gone ahead with the five-year long-term strategic plan, the model which is right now under discussion. And we hope that the model will get implemented from FY25 onward. And this is the opportunity when we would like to inform you about what we intend, the framework of five-year strategic plan, and take inputs from you.

Now, every organization needs a review on a regular basis. We are successfully working for the last eight years, and we have made a lot of progress in that. But I think the time has come when we have to revisit the governance, depending on the progress which we have already

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made, depending on the various factors which have now come up in the last eight years, the need of the arts.

So there are three factors on which we are going to talk about the governance. That is the accountability, transparency, and openness. We are also going to review the UASG organization structure under which we work with the help of various working groups and ambassador, UA Ambassador Program, and UA Local Initiative Program. And then we'll keep this session more open for question-answer session so that we take input from you. We need your inputs for both important five-year strategic plan as well as for the governance of UASG.

I have already discussed that we were formed in 2015, and basically the basic aim of UASG to promote the universal acceptance of the domain name and the email addresses, and we are committed. Right now, let me inform you that around 150 IDNs are delegated, which are in non-English speaking IDNs, and around 10 million domains are there which are in non-English speaking domains. So there is a path which is required to be taken to ensure that each and every citizen of this world should become part and parcel of internet. Now the strategic plan can become, strategic plan which are going to be outlined are the key problem statement, the achievements which we have made till date, and the roadmap for the next five years. Next slide, please.

Now these are the problem statement because of which we have gone for the five-year strategic plan. As I said, that lack of universal acceptance, out of total 1,500 TLDs which are delegated, only 150 are IDNs. Out of around 360 million domains which are delegated till now,

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we are just 10 millions. So that is what I think we have to really work on it. We have to increase these numbers because the people who actually want to use non-English websites and emails, right now they get frustrated because once they go to any browser or any search engine, they don't get the response which they are supposed to get.

Second is the reduced accessibility and innovation. Now here again, as I said, that unless we are able to reach to more people, the work is not done. And in addition, when we are increasing universal acceptance and number of IDNs, lot of additional works including the DNS abuse, the security aspect has to be taken care so that IDNs do not face the challenges which Latin faced in the initial phases.

And the third most important is the economic impact. And this is what we are talking that big techs, big organizations or even small organizations, they would like to adopt universal acceptance only and only if they feel that this has economic value, this has business value. And that is what we have to ensure that there is a economic growth and inclusivity when we are going ahead with the implementation of universal acceptance. Next slide, please.

Till date, as I said, that awareness, reasonably we are able to reach to the eyes and ears of the people who matters, that is developers, businesses, policy makers. With the advent of UA Day last year, and we had a first inaugural global UA Day celebration in 2023, I think this has taken a leap forward about the awareness. And not only during the sessions, but I think the journalists and the media has taken note of it, and they have published about universal acceptance, need of universal acceptance, why universal acceptance is required.

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The second achievement till date is the technical improvement. Over the last eight years, the UASG has worked in developing those technical aspect into the existing systems, existing softwares, existing libraries, which facilitate the universal acceptance. During last global UA Day celebration, several organizers have also conducted workshops. And during that workshops, they have actually demonstrated how a universal acceptance can be adopted in any website or any software of the websites, any programming languages, and any API. All these developments are available at our website, UASG.tech. And anybody who want to undertake this work can really take help of all the material which is available on UASG.tech.

The third one which we have achieved till that date is the policy advocacy. So right now, I'm very happy to inform you that the five most important tasks which are in front of ICANN today, or which are in front of even IGF, universal acceptance figures prominently in the top work which these organizations are looking at. Similarly, the engagement with IETF has helped us in taking the technical aspect, acceptance and measurement, in promoting the universal acceptance. We are able to influence the registrars and registries also to accept universal acceptance and to influence universal acceptance to their domainers, to their users.

Yesterday, there was a question and answer session also with the board. On 10th of October, UASG has given the community update also where there was a session by ICANN org, and I'm very happy to inform you that ICANN org on his own initiative and with the community is trying that all their websites, all their emails are universal acceptance

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so that it become a model for other people to accept universal acceptance. Next slide.

Now if we see, one thing I just want to inform you that every year, UASG publish a report that reports very clearly says what is the universal acceptance index which is existing over the years. So the universal acceptance index report for this year is already published and it is available again on UASG.tech. I request all who are there on site or online, if they want, you are requested to kindly go through that report very clearly. And if you see these charts, this shows that over the years the acceptance rate of emails created either with the new, longer, or local languages top level domain in software applications and services has gone up. But they are not as expectations from us. And if you see, the email acceptance has touched around 22% or 23% but not beyond that. Now if you can understand that if we have 7.1 billion internet users in the world, we are not really able to achieve, to reach to those people who we are not able to reach till date. So a lot of work is required to be done. Next slide please.

So now we have two major presentations with us. One is detailing about the five-year plan which we are on the work and we are working within UASG group as well as along with the ICANN organization, and the second portion of the presentation is on the review of the governance procedures and what we are looking and what we are working on it and we need your input. Now for five-year UASG strategic plan, I invite my vice chair, Nitin Walia, to please take us to step by step so that we get the proper feedback from the community. Over to you Nitin.

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NITIN WALIA:

Good evening, good afternoon everyone and very good morning everyone who are available in the hall today. Thank you for joining this very important session in terms of the UASG is concerned. Well, as mentioned in the earlier slides, it's been like eight years journey which we have walked together to reach to a stage wherein we are seeing that we have to do something more in terms of adoption of the UASG. Basically, in UASG, as per the current procedure and as per the charter which we have, we make our annual plans and these annual plans are being submitted by our various working groups which are being dedicatedly formed to achieve certain tasks in their areas. For an example, for email address centralization we have an EAI working group. For tech we have a tech working group. For measurement we have a measurement working group that what all work has to be done in terms of the measurement. Same way for the communication, we have a communication working group who take care for the entire communication part which needs to go out from the UASG. These are the chartered working groups of UASG and we still have two more unchartered working groups. One is the ambassador working group where all our ambassadors who promote UASG and represent UASG around all part of the world are the member of that. And then we also have a local initiatives who are also the very important pillars of the UASG who spread the awareness about the UASG in various regions where they have been formed. The beauty of these two working groups is that these working groups are always open. So anybody who wish to join ambassador program or want to open a local chapter can apply at any time and we keep reviewing the applications which keeps on coming out to us. And every year we renew the ambassadors and also renew the local initiative programs.

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With the change of the guard this time, after the eight years, we thought, let's do something different. Because normally what happen is that when you create your annual plan, you have a vision of a year. So we thought that why not we discuss to have a long-term plan of at least five years so that what is visible to us can be made visible to the entire community of the UASG. And we all can work jointly to achieve that mission. And based on that, the annual plans which have been submitted by our respective working groups can also be made that what we want to achieve within that financial year and what is the long term focus for the next five years so that the various works which are happening into these working groups by the members of the working groups and there are certain works which are being contracted to the outside parties can be planned in that fashion. So that if there's a long-term contract which needs to be done, then we have a clear roadmap and this roadmap should have the measurement parameters through which we can review every year that are we moving to the right direction or should we need to review something and change so that we are able to achieve what we are thinking of. Next slide please.

So basically, this five-year plan right now is under discussion. We have laid down standard thoughts which we have around the five-year plan and as per our procedure now, this five-year plan is now being shared with our coordination working group and with their due approval, it is now going to our various respective working groups which are there in UASG to create their own five-year plans and annual plans based on these parameters which are taught by the entire coordination team.

So the biggest thing which we have taught this time was that in last eight years, there are too much of work which has already done in terms

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of awareness. So people know what UASG is, people know what is the problem of UA is and people also know how to solve that. And last year, we also start celebrating the UA Day as one of the biggest achievement for UASG wherein the major work in terms of awareness is already been taken care of.

So we thought that all of our working groups, our ambassadors, our allies should now switch the gear and this gear needs to be switched from awareness and training to adoption. So the objective was that the companies, the service providers, people involved in providing the services, applications, softwares, should now be targeted and convinced and helped in such a fashion so that their applications which are still not UA ready or partially UA ready can be made completely UA ready in the span of next five years for which we have set certain goals and parameters to measure those achievements. So as far as the adoption targets are concerned, right now for the applications and websites, etc., we have thought to, 50% of the support for the EAI should be there. So EAI is basically email address internalization and there are two challenges out there. One is in the older terminologies which we generally use is phase one readiness and phase two readiness. Phase one readiness means that your email system is able to send and receive email from an EAI email address. Phase two readiness is that you are also able to host the email addresses into your application and provide the email addresses to your users. Now here, the objective was that at least 50% of the support for the EAI and 99% of the ASCII emails because in UASG we are dealing with two problems actually. It's not only the IDN domain names. There are also the new GTLDs and ccTLDs which are coming which are longer ones. So we still

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are facing the problem of acceptance in terms of the various applications and their adoptions. And with the new round of gTLDs which is coming in very soon by the ICANN, we are emphasizing that we might have this kind of a challenge if it has not been resolved before that. So accordingly we have kept a target that at least all 99% because one person we always need to keep a buffer. We cannot commit 100% but at least 99% of the ASCII email addresses should be there in all websites and applications.

As far as the email service is concerned, we have kept a target that 50% support for level two or gold level. Basically this last year and UASG has, in fact it's been two years. The UASG EAI working group was working on EAI self-certification guide which was being, the draft release was being shared with the community in Mexico in March, ICANN 76 and in which we have rephrased the terminologies of level one and level two to silver, gold and platinum levels actually. So that's the reason you will find both the terminologies here, what it was earlier and what is now. So the objective is that the email service which are available for providing the services in terms of hosted email or on-premises email, 50% of them should support the level two which means hosting of the email addresses for the customers. And 90% of the support we are expecting to reach within this five-year span for level one which means you should be able to send and receive the email addresses from both IDN and non-IDN long code or short code domain names.

So we have developed a strategic plan incorporating the working group inputs actually. And same would be shared with them. And we are expecting their response before ICANN 79. So in ICANN 79 I think we would be in a position to share with you all the concrete five-year plan

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on which the UASG and its working group will start walking from FY25. Next slide please.

So the current roadmap which I shared with you with the five-year targets, we have distributed it so that we can have our annual measurement of our achievements and shortfalls and see where the focus is needed so that the ultimate aim which we all are seeing together is being achieved. So for the websites, 50% support for EAI, we have distributed, the current baseline is like about 10%. You know, 10% of the email servers are in a position to host the IDN domain names and these new gTLDs. So for FY25 we have thought to increase this baseline from 10% to 15%. In FY26 we want to reach to a target of 25%. In FY27, 30%. FY28 we want to have a leapfrog by 40%. And by FY29 we want to see ourselves that at least 50% of these websites support the EAI. Same way for the long ASCII TLDs, the current baseline is 85% which we have emphasized that by next FY25 we should keep a target of 88% and then to 92 and 95 and 99 in respective years. And here you will see that we are not waiting for five years to complete. In fact, we have taken a target that by next four years which is FY28, we should be in a position to achieve this target of 99%.

As far as the email client and servers are concerned, 50% which is we are thinking to support for the level two which is providing the email addresses to create and send and receive all. With the current baseline is 10%. By FY25 we wanted to do a working around to shortlist that the FY25 plan should have all those systems and applications to be identified where we want to work. And then by FY26 we need to reach 20%, FY27 to 30% and FY28 40 and FY29 we should achieve this 50% of the target. And for email clients for level one and server level, the

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current baseline is 22% which we want to achieve by next year 30% and then 40. And by FY27 it should be 55%. And then we want that we take a speed and from 55 we want to reach to 75 and by FY29 it should be 90%. Next slide please.

SEDA AKBULUT: There's a hand in the room from Satish for the comments.

ANIL KUMAR JAIN: Yeah. There are certain questions which people want to ask. So I suggest that let us halt at this level. Let us receive the questions and answer with respect to what we are talking. Seda, please go ahead.

SATISH BABU: Yeah, so this is Satish for the record. Now this is the five-year strategic plan for UASG as a whole but all the four line items here refer to email. Yes, the first one is EAI, the second one is email, third one is email, fourth one is email. And conspicuously there is no non-ASCII, that is IDN websites in the target. There is IDN websites, sorry, ASCII websites, but the IDN websites are missing. I don't see them in this list at all. So if you go back to the earlier slide, Seda, please. Just one more ahead, please. That's it. Yeah.

So this 50% is basically for the IDN which for the first line if you are seeing the website. I'm referring to the first line because the second line is for the ASCII email address. So EAI, as far as the email address internalization is concerned basically. So EAI, that is referring to—

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SATISH BABU: You can have either one, either EAI or IDN website, not both, that is an overlap.

NITIN WALIA: Okay, okay. So that modification can always be done, yeah. Any other questions?

SEDA AKBULUT: We have one more question in the Q&A pod from Don Hollander.

ANIL KUMAR JAIN: That I've already answered. You can read that.

SEDA AKBULUT: Okay. Just wondering if there is too much emphasis on IDNs, would it be useful to have a suboptimal target of encouraging just support of the new ASCII?

ANIL KUMAR JAIN: So that's already there. You know, the answer which I've given is that IDN TLDs are not only emphasized, they are being emphasized along with the ASCII TLDs. Right now, the total number of domains which are delegated using IDN are only 10 millions, out of a total of around 360 million domains which are delegated. So already it is skewed. Second, out of total 1,500 TLDs which are delegated, only 150 TLDs are IDN TLDs. And more important is that more than 60% of the world population, they don't converse in English. So it is not an overemphasis of this, but

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there is a need for this to promote IDNs to promote universal acceptance.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Maybe I can help with the answer, Don Hollander's how the concern. If from the technical point of view, if IDN and the EAI are supported, so long ASCII or short ASCII is no problem. They're automatically taken care of. So it is a small set of IDN TLD because IDN TLD is long, is more complex. So long TLD, short TLD is relatively easy. If IDN TLD is compatible, is supported by application, so long TLD or short TLD is no problem.

BARKHA MANRAL: Hello, everyone. So I've got two questions, like very general ones. So my first question is, as you discussed about reduced accessibility, so is UASG playing any role in the zone of accessibility to all? Okay, and my second question is, let's say majority of the times, the proposal for multilingualism is passed and implemented as well, but the glitch is seen on the software implementation part side. So what exactly or how exactly can be done to cover such kind of issues so that no query related to this will be put on? Thank you.

ANIL KUMAR JAIN: thank you very much. So there are two questions which I have understood. One is the role of universal acceptance in increasing the accessibility. So as we have said that more than 50% of the world population do not speak English, it means that they are not able to enter into internet with their own language, right? So they are actually

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not able to utilize the full potential of Internet in case the internet accessibility, for example, browsers, search engines, websites, emails are not available in their local languages. So basically role of UASG is to create an environment in such a way that we increase, improve the accessibility of those who are not connected as on it, okay? As I said initially that there are work which are happening on the increase in the improvement in the software, improvement in the APIs, improvement in the website, and all those things are available on UASG.tech. Now I have fortunately the chair of the tech working group with me. So may I request Satish to please elaborate on this particular part that what UASG has done in that area.

SATISH BABU:

So UASG has not addressed accessibility as a very specific focus point, but the work that we're doing is to close these UA gaps. And as mentioned earlier, when you close the UA gaps, the accessibility will get covered. But if there is a UA specific accessibility issue out there, then we need to be kind of informed of it so that we can start specifically addressing it. Thanks. Let me add something.

NABIL BENAMAR:

So accessibility is a generic term if we can say here, because you can fix the problem of accessibility by allowing or permitting high bandwidth connection or at least text-based connection, any form of connection. But still, if you have only users that can use only one language or one script, they don't find themselves in this internet ecosystem. And we want to go beyond the web. Web is one of the applications of the internet. We want to go beyond and to tackle the DNS with the IDNs and

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also the email and all other applications. So the main goal of UASG is to do the gap analysis for all available applications and software to test if they are UA ready and then move forward. How can we fix the problem? How we can tackle the problem? How we can improve existing approaches? So accessibility definitely is one of the main concerns. Thank you.

BIBEK SILWAL:

My suggestion is regarding the case studies. So there are a few case studies in the UASG website which has been really helpful. But I think in the coming fiscal year plan, there needs to be a more emphasis on case studies in terms of how UA and IDNs are implemented altogether as a success model, either in terms of governmental perspective or a private sector perspective or even as an end user, how an end user get a benefit from a UA because we have to relate this message to end user, why they have to use it in their own language. And yeah, this is where I envision more UA readiness. We are working on it and we have to equally justify to people why they should use this UA or even IDNs. So yeah, I think emphasis should be made on more case studies, more specifically in sector basis. Thank you.

ANIL KUMAR JAIN:

Bibek, thank you very much. You have answered this question yourself, that yes, case studies are available on UASG.tech. And this is our emphasis that good case studies and the case studies which motivate the community, which motivate the technical community, which motivate the users for adoption, which motivate the governments to undertake the universal acceptance work, should be known to

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everybody. If some good work is happening in one area, then definitely we would like to work on it. Now, for this, all of our local initiative, whatever good work they are doing, we are trying to pick up that good work, either in text or in audio/video or in audios, or whatever the format is available on the website. Similarly, UA ambassadors are going to the field, talking to the people, understanding them, and those things are also made available on UASG.tech. On the Global UA Day celebration last year, lot of work was undertaken by various organizers, and we have uploaded all those works also available on this. So we are definitely working in this direction. We have one chair of the local initiative available here today with us, so may I request Sarika to tell about how we are spreading the good work and how we are informing the people about this.

SARIKA GULYANI:

Thank you, Chair. Sarika for the records, Chair for the LI Initiative for India. So thank you, Bibek, for raising this thing, and as part of the local initiative activities and explained by the Chair, we are emphasizing on these things. So the journey, I'll just let you know the journey, how it started with the initiative for our country. So we did have a high focus on the awareness earlier, followed by encouraging the adoption by both the government and the industry, and for that we are facilitating the technical training with the help of the resources available from the UASG Tech Group, the ambassadors, everything. So we collaborate, we work in that model, and we are helping companies for the adoption, for getting UA ready.

So after the awareness phase, we came in with the [inaudible] phase where the case studies are being referred to. In fact, from our country, we have already shared a couple of case studies last year, and many of them are in making this year, which in any case, we would be sharing the details with the UASG Tech, so that that can be uploaded on the website. So you understand the journey from the awareness to adoption is not easy when you have to convince the industry or the government for the same. So we are happy to announce that with the help of our initiatives, Government of India has come up with the first phase of a multilingual internet policy in the country, and the first phase completely focuses on the universal acceptance. So that's one achievement which has happened. For that, we are the main body responsible in government, so NIXI along with NIC and LI, there have been many websites where we've been able, government websites, we have been able to get them, you are compliant, if I would say not fully, we have been able to get stage one ready. So that's something with the process is already started, and it's continuously going on. So those case studies are already happening. From the industry perspective also, since India is a very diverse land with the 22 officially recognized languages, so apart from the central, the federal discussions, the discussions at the state levels are also being going on, and we are hoping the adoption from the states at the various levels, happening soon. So this is something that is being taken. So it's a different approach where we are working, and across regions, we are working with center and the state for the adoption, and the results are coming in. In fact, there is going to be a UA implementation support center, which is going to get established soon in India, which would be helping the government in India to get further UA adoption, so more of case

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studies can come in. So we completely agree with your point, and we do feel that India would be able to give more results in terms of the case studies for the world to look into. Thank you, Chair.

ANIL KUMAR JAIN: Thank you, Sarika.

SATISH BABU: There is a point that Jim has raised. Now Jim is a regular participant in multiple UA working groups. So Jim says that this working plan makes it look as if we are making it happen, but actually we are only a facilitator, because we cannot get this done ourselves. So he says that our strategy should essentially cover how we are going to make this happen, and that seems to be missing according to him. I'm just placing it here because he's not here with us. A second point is regarding UA gaps which are neither EAI related nor website related. There are actually a basket of such issues. Currently there's a discussion going on At-Large on linkification, that linkification for even ASCII domain long ones does not work well in WhatsApp and certain other platforms, because they are dependent on a static list of websites published five, six years back. And the newer ones, they're not able to kind of use because the Android system, I mean, the WhatsApp backend is not permitted. So there are a bunch of such items which are also important for the end user experience that we have to consider, thank you.

ANIL KUMAR JAIN: Thank you Satish. First of all, thank you very much to Jim for raising these issues. And definitely, right now what we are coming to the

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community today is that the framework of five-year plan, and it is not all nitty gritty of the five-year plan which have been finalized. So definitely the UASG is going to act as a facilitator. And actions to fill up those gaps which are available are definitely under consideration. And we will come up, first of all, to people like Jim to take his input during the process of finalization of the five-year plan. And then we'll come to the community again. Thank you very much. And for the second question, I would request Nitin to answer on the websites which are long, which are pending static websites.

NITIN WALIA:

So, just go to the slide. So linkification is a challenge which we all know that, even for the non-ASCII domain names, this issue is still pending. And we're just coming with the new gTLDs. And with specific few gTLDs in fact, which is under process and getting resolved by the community actually. Because this problem has been notified well at all platforms. Also I want to add on the Jim and Satish, on your point that the proposal which we are bringing right now as a five-year plan is a draft plan. And when I started I just said that this is a draft plan which has been discussed currently in our coordination working group, not even shared with our working groups. And finally our working groups will come up with their own specific plans for the five years. And then we will come up with a final plan for the community in ICANN 79. And in fact, if you see my next slide, the next slide specifically talks about that, that now we want to gather the insights, feedback and solutions from the community. And also the link of this document has also been published on the [usd.tech](#) website and is open for all kind of feedback and solutions. So it is not anything which is concrete. We are just walking

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the path. And we are deciding that are these targets reasonable, first of all. So these are our thoughts basically. Reasonability because we are just a facilitator, as you said, ultimately the things have to be executed by the help of the community, by the help of the ICANN. And in my next further slides, I will be talking about what all help we are looking forward at every level.

So the current objective is, are these targets reasonable? For which we have opened up the document for the solutions with the community, with the working groups and everyone who are there in UASG and with outside UASG. And what are some actions which UASG needs to take to meet these goals? So even if anything needs to be added, any improvement is needed, or any other action which needs to be added into this document, we have made this document open now. So it's not something which is finalized or concrete. It's still in the phase of discussion. Next slide.

NABIL BENAMAR:

I would like just to add that, to emphasize that the problem or the issue of linkification is not only related to IDN domains or ASCII domains or long IDN and ASCII domains, but it's also related to new TLDs. I think we have received, ICANN has received officially a concern about this request to fix a problem of this. I would like to ask Sarmad to give us more inputs about the concern about [inaudible] maybe.

SARMAD HUSSAIN:

So I think this is referring back to what Don also commented and I think Anil's also responded to it, that the UA problem is of course, more

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generally it includes short and long ASCII TLDs as well as the IDN top level domains as well as IDN domains. So when we are obviously trying to address it and I think as is also shown in the previous slide, there are targets which are also put in for ASCII TLDs in addition to the IDN TLDs. So that's of course something which needs to be addressed together. I guess I'm not sure whether there's a specific question to answer beyond that, but I think we do need to address all these issues.

NITIN WALIA: Exactly, so it shows that we have a bunch of work in the UASG and all efforts are welcome.

ANIL KUMAR JAIN: Thank you Nabil, thank you Sarmad.

SEDA AKBULUT: We have some comments and questions.

ANIL KUMAR JAIN: Right, that is what I'm asking. So there are two comments on the chat. One is from Harish Chowdhary. My suggestion is to publish the research work on the impact of UASG and proposed solution and to invite research papers by the academia. So here there are two questions. First is, whatever research work are available, we should publish them. Harish, let me confirm back to you that whatever research work which are public in nature, we will gather them and we'll make it in the public domain for the benefit of everybody. The second question which I've said, invite research paper by the academia. Are you referring this

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invitation by the UASG and generate more research on UASG? This I'm not clear. So please clear, this is at present, this is not in the radar of UASG and in case it is required, definitely we will do. Your second question we'll answer once we'll cover up the governance portion of the presentation. So please wait for this. Then we have another question from Raitme, to achieve the objectives, I consider it is necessary that local initiatives are reinforced with training that can be carried out in regional languages and that are focused on technical communities of this region. Thank you very much for this concern raised by you, the question raised by you.

So one is UASG has a plan which is already in the agenda that local initiative and UA ambassadors are trained as per the requirement and we continuously train them. Second, as I started initially and Nitin also reinforced this, that this time over focus and over suggestion to local initiative and to UA ambassadors are to shift from the awareness to training and for adoption and to make them fully equipped for providing training and adoption, yes we are ready and we are going focus by focus, as I said that they are the soldiers on field to carry the message of UASG to the entire community. So thank you very much for your comment. And other comments which Harish has said, I request you to kindly wait till the governance is being discussed, yeah.

SEDA AKBULUT:

In the interest of time we are giving priority on the comments and questions that are put in proper form in the chat, so we have some queue in the Zoom room and in the room here and some comments and questions. Just want to highlight.

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ANIL KUMAR JAIN: So for five-year strategic plan in case you have any queries, yes, Jiankang.

JIANKANG YAO: Thank you. So I think in Japan 2019 we have the transition from the older UASG leadership to new leadership. Now from 19 to current we already another maybe two leadership, so my question is measurement of UASG. So from the work, how to measurement, so current measurement maybe one measurement is how activity UASG do or how much money devoted for this activities, but the more important thing is how many software update kind of to support UA and how many service provider support UA, how many users, how many more users know about UA, so this is important, but the current may say how much activity, but some activity, some money maybe just no real effect, so I like to in future have real activity effect because between 2015 and 2019, there's I think a big achievement, so some open source support UA, EAI, IDN and some big service provider, for example Microsoft, Gmail, also many service providers support EAI and IDN or the UA, but from 2019 current we cannot see big achievements, so we cannot list after 2019 there's a new progress. We can see the progress of documents, yes this is true, but the documents are very important, the more important is the software application or open source library. So because before I think is in 2018 UASG has a project of measurement of UA, one is the deployment of EAI, at that time around 20 million domain names, email servers support EAI, so many contributions from Microsoft and Google, but currently our [CNIC,] I think is just last month,

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we do some measurement of EAI, so currently we have 3.4 billion domain names, we checked every domain name one by one and the test is there were support email service, if they support email service, it is where they support EAI, so I think before 2018 there's around 20 million domain names running EAI server, so currently today we still around 20 million domain names running EAI, so it's no big difference, maybe a little different, but no big difference, so for the future plan I like to say how many email service providers or how many domain names support EAI, IDN or UA, so how many software, how many service providers support it, so that is more important, so if more companies or internal infrastructure are EAI ready or UA ready, that is good, so I like to measure from this, true effect of UA, but not just how much money devoted, how many activity devoted, so that is important, but more important is we make the world UA ready, thank you.

ANIL KUMAR JAIN:

One is comparison of the UA work which is done between 2015 to 2019 and then from 2019 to 2023. Of course the work is, as I said that UA readiness index is being published every year, the details are available on uasg.tech. There is a substantial progress between 2019 and 23 also, there is no doubt in that. But when we are talking about five-year plan this year, because now there is a need that we have to do a leap forward, not only moving in a small pace, but a leap forward in this, and the suggestion which we have given is to go into details of how much budget is required for this, how many people will get impacted, how many emails get impacted, how many software we are going to complete this. I request Nitin to give a small answer, but we should note down all these things when we are preparing our plans.

NABIL BENAMAR:

Thank you. So I think every year, if you will see the uasg.tech website, the FY plans which are being published, they carry the complete details about what amount is invested into which activity, and also there's an annual report which is being shared in terms of what new and what all achievements which have been done by UASG in comparison to the past last year. As far as the new applications and softwares and open source things are concerned, luckily ICANN also give us an additional resource, [inaudible] sitting on the back, whereas he should be in the front, actually, but he's the main pillar who is taking care for all those technical things, in terms of open source libraries, bug fixings, he's touching base a lot of OEMs and service providers and software application manufacturers, and reporting them the bugs which are there in their application, and also providing them the solution how to resolve it. And in fact, in a short span of time, he have done a lot of achievements which have already been published in terms of libraries and in terms of open source application information on the website. So I think if you will revisit the website which you might have not visited for a long time, you would have found that a lot of things are already being updated there. Although we had some suggestions from the community in terms of redesigning the website which is already there with the communication working group, and they have already decided and preparing the new layout so that the majority of the information which is there available on the website can become more easily accessible and reusable by the community.

So with this, I think in the interest of time, I think what we can do, we can just finish off the information which we would like to share with you

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all first, and then whatever the time we will have, we will definitely try to address all your question answers. And then anyway, we all are here around, so even if the time do not permit, we will be holding back in the room. So we would be definitely addressing each and every query and concern you have within this time frame or even during the ICANN.

So for this five-year plan, to promote adoption, the UASG has put up a focus on the stakeholders actually, which will be majorly involved in terms of the government, because as the government is concerned, government is always on the demand side, and people follow. So ultimately, we are touching base to the various countries and governments for updating their procurement policies. So like Sarika shared, there's already a phase one report which has been published by the government of India in which they are bringing up the policy. And also yesterday in the ICANN Q&A, ICANN team has shared that even ICANN has adopted this thing, that all their new procurements would have UA readiness requirement. So same thing would be here, that we would be engaging with GAC and various governments. And in fact, we are also forming a small subgroup within our UASG who will be addressing these queries and concerns with the respective governments and GAC representatives and allies to ensure that the adoption policies are being created within the government framework.

Also, for this five-year plan success, as you have mentioned about Google and Microsoft, the thing won't stop only on Google and Microsoft. We have more many big tech companies, and even Google and Microsoft are just phase one ready, and we want them to become phase two ready also. So the day they become phase two ready, a lot of the problem in terms of EAI would be resolved because these two

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organizations are already serving large segment of consumers. So the availability of the services and the reach of the services will definitely increase when these big tech companies and open source companies, specifically, who are providing the solutions start supporting UA in their tools. So that is also one area where we are focusing. And for this, in fact, for this particular outreach, we have also requested ICANN and ICANN board members to support UASG as UASG ambassadors, in fact, so that when they talk to these big tech companies, they discuss about the problem of UA and seek the support from these big tech companies to become UA ready within some specific time frames. Also, we are reaching to the DNS industry and the service providers, which include registry, registrars, ISPs, hosting companies, so that the roadmap and the mission which we are planning can be achieved by the collective efforts of everyone within the set time frame.

As far as the UASG, we will continue to exist with the other stakeholders. So technology enablers, technology developers, email tools, service provider, government, academia, TLD registries and registrars. So the objective is that awareness is done. Now, for the adoption, the most important thing is that all these strong pillars come together with us and start moving towards enabling the people for the adoption. Next slide, please.

So the timelines for the five-year is that, December by 2023, for this specific plan, we are thinking, we have circulated this document with our working groups, and we will define a timeline that by December we get their input and solutions. By January 2024, the draft plan with annual milestones would be shared within the coordination working group. And within the same month itself, we are thinking to get it

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reviewed by our coordination working group and by February 24, we should be in a position to share it with the community for their feedback and inputs. And within this given timeline, we are thinking to finalize by February 24 end. And in March 2024, in ICANN 79, we are pretty hopeful that we would be coming up with the final plan, a plan which will have all inputs and solutions of everybody sitting in this particular room and joining remotely, and also other community members who would be putting their inputs and solutions on this particular draft, which would be shared now. As we have already shared earlier that, we will be just the facilitators actually, it is the entire community effort which needs to be done. So this plan which is coming in ICANN 79 will be the plan for all of us. So I request everybody to visit the draft document and whatever the thought, whatever the things you think that are important for adoption of UA, whatever the solutions you have, whatever the changes you want, put it on the document. Because eventually whatever we discuss, whatever we talk, the most, we are writing that, that is not that we will not be taking care of your inputs and solutions. But definitely the most important thing is, if you put it in your own language, so that there's zero scope of any kind of a confusion, and we will ensure that every single comment which is being given in the interest of UA adoption, would definitely be taken care of. And become the part of this UA plan. Next slide please.

So as I shared, so it is the request for the community to provide the inputs. So our stakeholders, which we are focusing, which is government, big tech companies, DNS industry, service providers, registry, registrars, ISP, hosting companies, are good enough? Or do we need to reach more? And how we should engage with, convince each of

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the stakeholders? So if you have any input and solution, please feel free to give that. Or any other comment on the plan, target and timeline, put it on the document so that we can take care about that. Next slide please.

So that's it, as far as the five-year plan is concerned.

ANIL KUMAR JAIN:

So thank you very much, Nitin, for this. And I request all participants to please reserve your queries on five-year planning. And we'll have sufficient time to listen to each and every query and answer all these queries. We'll try to answer all the queries, whatever is possible in this session itself. Now the next phase of presentation is on the review of the various governing issue points which UASG is having right now and working for the last eight years. And the points which we are touching during the review process and the areas which we are likely to touch upon it. For this I invite my vice chair, Nabil, to please take us to these discussions on governance. Over to you, Nabil.

NABIL BENAMAR:

Thank you, Anil. So this is Nabil Benamar from Morocco for the record. I will talk about the governance of UASG without repeating what we have said before. Next slide, please. So maturing the UASG governance is definitely one of the big topics that we are tackling right now in the UASG. So the main objective is to attract more members to the UASG so that we have more people working on UASG-related topics, more ambassadors, more local initiatives, more experts in the field. We need to increase the active participation of UASG members on the discuss list

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and also on the working group, different working group list that we have.

So UASG definitely needs to develop a transparent, accountable, and open process for its members so that everyone is happy with the process, everyone would like to join, everyone find himself in the initiative and in the UASG family. So as discussed, we want to use the statement of interest as one of the mechanisms and also explore more possible mechanisms if needs be. So this is something that is, the work is in progress on implementing it's why, but also assessing other mechanisms for potential use.

Mutual consensus was formed in UASG coordination working group to test this SOI implementation, initially for all leadership positions to work and to see how it can be implemented for all members. The process of introducing the SOI in general for UA discussed which contains all members in the UASG is in progress. Finally, yes, one person, one leadership position is being discussed also within the coordination working group. This is the group that contains all leadership members and all, so the admin team and all the working group chairs, local initiative chairs and local initiative represent and ambassadors. Next slide please

SATISH BABU:

So I am hearing this messaging that there is a consensus within the coordination group that we only do this SOI for the leadership. I don't see that. As far as I see, the mailing list had a consensus that we should have SOI for everybody. Now let me repeat this. SOI is a mechanism evolved by ICANN over a period of time to ensure all this transparency,

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accountability and so on. Every GNSO meeting starts with the question, did anybody's SOI change? I don't know why it took us so long to bring this into our structure. It's already very late. So I would strongly push for SOI for everybody on the list. Thank you.

ANIL KUMAR JAIN:

Thank you Satish. First of all, it is not that we are implementing, in case you read all the three lines which are written in the presentation, we are very clearly saying that we are going in a process in step by step. Initially to implement SOI in the leadership position, that leadership position is the people in the UASG as well as the leadership in the working groups. And the process of introducing SOI in general for UA Discuss Group is in progress. Now Satish, here I just want to inform you, yes I agree with you that there is a need for SOI and that is why this particular point is being discussed. And—

SATISH BABU:

The number two bullet says a mutual consensus was formed in the UA coordination working group. I'm responding to that. There's no such consensus that I'm aware of in the list.

ANIL KUMAR JAIN:

In fact, whatever is written here is as per the minutes of the UASG coordination working group. But I note down your point here and we will discuss this particular point in the next coordination working group also. Thank you. We can proceed further.

NABIL BENAMAR:

Thank you Satish for your comment. Yes, I totally agree with you. But if you can see that this has been also implemented already for all leadership position. So SOI is already there. And work is in progress to extend this to all members of the UASG. Thank you. Next slide please.

AMRITA CHOUDHURY:

Please pardon my ignorance. As in this statement of interest, are we talking of the existing leaders, mentioning the statement of interest or people for example, who go in to an election, giving a statement of interest? And I will just elaborate on it because in different SOACs, anyone who joins a particular mailing list per se or even an SO or AC has to give a statement of interest. And if for example, someone is contesting an election, etc., they have to update it. So I think that's where Satish was coming from. And if that's a standard practice in ICANN. Perhaps it could be looked at, but I may be wrong and Sarmad and others could correct me out there.

ANIL KUMAR JAIN:

Yeah, Amrita, thank you very much for raising this question. First of all, when we are talking about implementing SOI for all leadership position, it means existing leadership position and future leadership position both. I hope I made it clear.

Okay, so when it will get implemented, definitely the SOI from the existing leadership position will also be taken and will be put upon this. And you are right, in other SOs or ACs, whatever process has been followed that is what has motivated the UASG in discussing all these particular points. Thank you.

NABIL BENAMAR:

Thank you, Amrita, for raising this. Yes, this opens the debate, but being sure that work is in progress to extend this to all memberships, so whether they are new or old, they need to express the statements of interest. Next slide, please.

So yeah, for continuing on material in the UASG governance, we have discussed the UASG working group chairs and vice chair selections. And for these positions, so selected through existing process based on self-nomination and a rough consensus by working group and finalized by the UASG leadership team. This must be a member, so for this position, the candidate must be a member of at least six months with preference given to those attending more working group meetings during this time. So this is to be able to have enough knowledge on what is going on in a working group, in a given working group, that the candidate has provided enough input during the meetings, so that we know that the candidate is aware of the working group target, challenges, issues, ongoing works, and the remaining challenges definitely. Can't continue if they don't attend three consecutive meetings without apology. So this should be like unexcused absence in university and schools. So we need commitments to the work being done in the working group. A chair cannot be absent, no call for nomination during the year, and working group meeting can't be held without any chairs. So if the chair for any reason is absent, so the vice chair should be there, or the meeting will be postponed. So this is something that we have added, and we are seeking input from the community because we need commitment to the work being done in different working groups.

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As for the UASG chair and vice chair selection, at least one year experience in any UASG working group. So this is more than six months, this is one year. Attended at least five meetings in past six months of that working group. So we cannot collect meetings from here and there, but we will count for a given working group if we have at least five meetings. At least with this, we know that the candidate is aware of what is going on, what is still in the table to tackle. Next slide, please.

So yeah, so that's time for requesting your comment, your input. We would like to gather insight, feedback from you, suggestion how we can improve this, how can UASG improve its governance and attract more members. You know that the noble cause of modifying and updating the governance is to attract more members and to perform a better governance model that respects the multi-stakeholder model of internet governance in ICANN and other stakeholders. What are your thoughts on the proposed change that we have regarding UASG working group chairs and vice chairs and the leaders elections? I think we can stop here.

ANIL KUMAR JAIN:

Thank you, Nabil, thank you very much. Now I want to add a few more slides before, Raymond, I take your point. We have also taken a decision to expand the process of getting the local initiative and also to expand the UA ambassador. So last year, we had 10 UA ambassadors with UASG group. This year, this UA ambassador has been expanded to 15. And I am again appealing to all who are attending today or who want to become UA chair, UA ambassador, there is no time limit. They can apply for this, they can become workers in taking the UASG message to the

future. As far as the local initiative is also concerned, we are trying to cover up all those regions which are left out. And we want to strengthen those areas which are already there and doing good job. Now to make it possible with the limited budget which we have, what we have done is that we are requesting the local initiative, that there is a certain pool of money which UASG is providing to local initiative to go ahead with them. But at the same time, we are requesting the local initiative in case it is possible. Again, this is not compulsion, in case it is possible to fund some of the portion of the local initiative work from the sponsorship, from the funds which can be generated internally also.

Similarly, for the UA ambassador group, we have several regions, several countries where there are multiple UA ambassadors. Now there are certain countries which are only single UA ambassador. So we have defined the money which can be given to them. And the money, which I think there was a question from Harish also in the chat, that whatever the commitment is there to UA ambassador, that commitment UASG should fulfill. 100% we will fulfill. And the process which is being followed in the past about reimbursing the expenditure of UA ambassador and local initiative will remain same. So there is no change in that. So I just want to clarify again that the present UASG leadership would like to expand the UA ambassador as well as local initiative work. In fact, today as Nitin has initially said that both of them are uncharted group which are working under UASG. And in fact, we are also discussing to make them as formal working groups with a formal charter also. So we are totally committed to these field people on this. With these clarification, there is a hand from Raymond and then Satish. So floor is open for you, Raymond. Please go ahead.

RAYMOND MAMATTAH: Hello, Raymond here. I'm the vice chair for the comms working group. So I support the new additions to be added to how one qualifies to become a leader. However, I think one thing is missing, which should be you cannot be a working group leader at the same time an admin group member. So I think that should be added to the requirement. If we should take this to At-Large, we have the RALO leadership. You cannot be a RALO leader at the same time an ALAC member. When you are a RALO leader and you are elected to the ALAC, you relinquish your role in the RALO leadership. So this should also be added to our statement on how to become a member of the leadership team.

ANIL KUMAR JAIN: Raymond, thank you very much. Thank you very much for this question. May I request Seda to please come to the first slide of governance? Yeah. And Raymond, please read the last line on this objectives with which the review of the governance area is being worked out. The last says one person, one leadership position is being discussed. So your point is well taken. And we are working in this area. And it appears that there is a consensus which is building up in this particular area. Thank you, Raymond, for taking out this issue. Thank you. Next is Satish Babu. Over to you, Satish.

SATISH BABU: Thanks. So first of all, I think it's a positive thing that we are discussing these things and we are putting certain conditions on how leadership positions can be kind of adopted and so on, which is good. Secondly, I

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think this requires wider circulation on the list so that not just people who are here today can participate. Thirdly, I in principle agree with what Raymond has proposed that we should have a distribution of leadership positions. And is there a timeline for this? When are we going to adopt this? Do you have something in mind? Thanks.

ANIL KUMAR JAIN:

So this is what I discussed with Sarmad also in the morning about the timelines when we are going to complete this review of the governance process. And it is understood that review of the governance process is there in all GNSOs, ccNSOs, ALAC, and everywhere on regular basis. So there is a process which is required to be followed in this. And as you have rightly said, Satish, that whatever we are discussing, we have to take approval from the community before getting it implemented. So we will, my answer right now is no definitive date, but as early as possible. And that as early as possible, we will try to complete this governance review well before ICANN 79, but we will try to complete this maybe as early as possible, maybe within this calendar year or maybe early next year. Thank you. I am not able to see any further hand in this. And let me go into the chat. Any question in the chat, Seda?

SEDA AKBULUT:

Not on this topic at this moment.

ANIL KUMAR JAIN:

Okay, I think there are certain comments on this. Let me read out, Satish Babu, I think SOI is just a proposal to identify each of the member of the list. If there is an alternative way, yes, we are working, as it has been said

by Nabil very clearly, SOI is one methodology. The UASG leadership is also working on alternate possible methodologies to ensure the objective of identifying a particular person properly is met. Thank you. Then there is a comment from Mark. I am a UA ambassador, I live in South Africa, so IDN is not so much an issue. I formally teach DNS, DNSSEC through, for the last 15 years, I also own an ISP. As a registrar, my system allow for IDN names as well as long names. I also manage edu.za, which allow for Latin one, ISO 8859-1 characters, that is cafe.edu.za, which works fine for South Africa. I see myself more as an example and teacher than leader. Thank you very much, Mark, for informing these aspects and they motivate the entire UASG community. Thank you very much. And I think there is a comment from Ram Mohan and let me read out, of course, it is addressed to Satish, but I think it is addressed to all of us. So I am puzzled as why UASG is not saying, just saying yes, we will require SOI from everyone. Yes, we are requiring everyone, Satish, Ram, please go ahead with the second point on the first slide of the governance. We are in a process of implementing or discussing and finalizing the SOI in the UA Discuss Group, which is the group of all the members of UASG. I think, and Raymond also supports saying that probably we may start SOI with the leadership and push it to everyone later. I agree with you, that is the step which we are trying to work on it.

Amrita says creating an SOI is not difficult. Yes, it is not difficult, but there are several methodologies through which the SOI has to be done. And this is a discussion process which is going on and we hope that we should be able to finalize these review of the governance with the help

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of all of you. Any further questions from anybody in the room? Please raise your hand. Yeah, Amrita, please go ahead.

AMRITA CHOUDHURY: So this is an old question, and this leads to when you're talking about election structures. I completely agree, people who have worked should be there, like what Harish was saying, it should not be some random, you know.

ANIL KUMAR JAIN: Who should be active.

AMRITA CHOUDHURY: Yes, who have contributed.

ANIL KUMAR JAIN: People should be active, they should demonstrate that they can take the leadership position.

AMRITA CHOUDHURY: Yes, absolutely. But another question is, like for example, this is something which I faced and a few people faced in the last election. When we wanted to vote, first of all, we never got the voting link, we did not get to vote. And when we tried to find out, and it is just not me, few more, we were said we are not there in one of the mailing lists.

ANIL KUMAR JAIN: I was also not there.

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AMRITA CHOUDHURY: Yeah, so, and that's what I'm raising, as in this is a process issue. If something was decided that only these people who are in this mailing list can vote, and they can vote, then this should have been broadcast earlier across all the mailing lists saying, look, if you have to vote, your responsibility is go to the mailing list. So many people who have been, as in I'm not active, but I definitely follow what's happening, but we never got a chance to vote. So I hope the leadership will take into consideration cleaning up the process.

ANIL KUMAR JAIN: Thank you, Amrita. First of all, let me, I disagree with you, that informing people about UA Discuss Group, they can only vote, is the cleaning process. This is the process which is already well defined in the UASG governance procedure as on date also. And as I said when you were talking, I also was not able to even vote, right, myself. So I agree with you that this is known for all the people who are attached with UASG, because most of the members are in UA Discuss Group. Now there are certain members who join directly the working groups, but not UA Discuss Group, and we have taken a note of it, and we'll ensure that those things are very clearly written and when. And if you please go through the announcement of the election process, which was announced by the ICANN org organization, this is very clearly written in that announcement that who can vote. Anyway, but I think this is a good input which you have given, and we should be able to ensure that everybody who is there in any of the working group or any of the mailing list, either they will be asked to become the UA Discuss Group member,

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or we may look into the governance issue and then they can also become a valid voter for the next election. Thank you very much. Thank you, Amrita, for this question. Anything else you want to add, sir?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

Yeah, I would like just to add that I was in the same situation as Anil. So I was not able to vote for myself or for anyone that I would like to see in the leadership position. So I asked ICANN, so Seda and Sarmad, so they told me that you need to be a member of the Discuss list before the announcement of the elections, so that's the rule. So we didn't know, maybe, so part of us didn't know before that this is the requirement. But it's a good comment from you, really good comment, because we need to mention this and should be available for everyone to know before any election. Thank you.

ANIL KUMAR JAIN:

Okay, thank you. Before we close, there is another comment, or I think you can say the last comment, from Ram Mohan. And Ram is very active and he is the first chair of UASG and we respect his comments and his observations. I see no rationale for phased approach for some other alternative mechanism when a perfectly good one exists and works. Ram, we have noted down this and whatever decisions we are taking are in consensus with the consensus of all the relevant people, stakeholders in the UASG leadership position initially and with the UASG community also. So we take your input very seriously and we'll ensure that the right consensus decision is implemented in the revised governance. So with this, I'm not able to see any further hands or I'm not able to see any further comments on the chat.

NABIL BENAMAR:

We want to continue on the review in UASG organization structure. So in the optic of creating new working groups, so ad hoc government engagement working group to be part of the coordination working group till March 24, and then it will be decided how to open up for community, depending on the work that we have, on the workload we have, and how we can manage it. UA Day working group to be part of communication working group too, and will be open to community. For the time being, no need for working groups for ambassadors and local initiatives, but this doesn't mean that we don't need ambassadors or LI, but we don't, from the charter, we don't have a dedicated working group for the moment. But this might be changed in the future.

Look into setting up a working group for work with academia as that work develops under measurement working group. So this is something that we are comprehensively working on in the measurement working group, and when we see that the workload is too high, we might think about creating a new dedicated working group tackling this academia issue and work.

Coordination working group to continue to be closed group with current membership, including the working group chairs, the local initiative chairs, the liaisons of SO and ACs. Next slide, please. Yeah, Satish?

SATISH BABU:

Can you go back to the previous slide? So the first point, I'm very positive about the government engagement group. It's something that

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we have to do. I'm strongly opposed to the second point. The reason being, the four chartered working groups have had their charters created about four years back. There was no UA Day at that point. All of them have their own specific things to do. Now, already we have heard the discussion that one leader should have only one position. Currently, the comms chair is also the UASG chair, and this proposal would bring the UA Day into that comms group. Now, there's no reason why UA Day should not have its own group, working group. Like last year, it was directly controlled by the UASG leadership with the coordination group. This is a kind of a defective kind of a structuring. UA Day requires its own standalone group to guide it. It is not a part of comms. It is not a part of the agenda of the comms group. Actually, if you do that, it's a distortion. I see no reason why the UA Day should not be independent, having its own working group with community participation. Thank you.

ANIL KUMAR JAIN:

Thank you very much for this. And I fully agree with you that UA Day required a separate working group. But may I request Sarmad to please reply on this particular point.

SARMAD HUSSAIN:

So, I think one of the challenges is that if we start keep making more and more working groups, that requires more and more staff support. So, I think one of the things we want, we would also like UASG to look at is, as you create more working groups, also look at the work of the existing working groups and the existing structure, and see if you can prioritize how the different working groups are working, and see whether that additional staff support, how critical that staff support is,

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and if some of that can be, in some ways, addressed through restructuring or reprioritizing some of the work within, and in some ways, maybe revisiting some of the working groups within the UASG structure. Of course, if there is no other way, we can go and see how to increase staff support. But there are implications on, we've been discussing more working groups for Ambassador, for Local Initiative, for UA Day. All that actually has implications on us providing staff support as well. So, I think both those discussions probably should happen in tandem to see what is a good, optimal solution. Thank you.

SATISH BABU:

Jumping in for a follow-up. So, this staffing issue came up last year also. So, what we are proposing as a UA Day working group is not a permanent apparatus like the others. It's an ad hoc group which comes into existence maybe a few months before the UA Day, and then gets dismantled after it's over. So, we don't want permanent commitment of staff into that. But it should have its own kind of clearly defined, you know, identity and the way the operations happen. Thank you.

ANIL KUMAR JAIN:

So, let me answer this. Thank you very much, Satish, for this. And I differ with you that UA Day is a temporary one. UA Day is not temporary one, sir. With the help of all of you and with the help of the community, now we have established a celebration of UA Day. And to me, I think it is important, and we should continue to celebrate the UA Day. So, a special focus is required on the UA Day preparations, planning, and execution. And I fully agree with you on this particular point. And I am requesting ICANN org to help us to have a focus on UA Day, but they

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have their own compulsions. And I think the message is already given to ICANN org. Let us hope that we should get a resolution to this. Thank you. May I request Nabil to continue, please?

NABIL BENAMAR:

Thank you, Anil. Thank you, Satish, for the comment. What you have said can also be applied to academia, for example, not only the UA Day, but as you might see that, for example, for the staff that is working with us, Seda is fully working with all the working groups and managing all the mailing lists and the meetings and so on. So, definitely with the limitation of budget for the time being, as I said, we will keep it this way. But if the workload is increased a lot in the future, we might define something else and create working groups upon the acceptance of ICANN. So, next slide, please.

So, for local initiatives, the aim is to engage local stakeholders. And we have said that for local initiatives, they are representatives of what we are doing in the UASG to create local work targeting a given community with the focus on UA deployments while also conducting national regional awareness and the training effort. So, awareness training, this is something that we have talked about earlier, but we are focusing more on the adoption and deployment of universal acceptance. So, LIs already exist in APAC and Eastern Europe. UA project part of coalition of digital Africa with Association of African Universities. So, what next? So, we need to focus on onboarding one each from LAC and Europe regions for geodiversity. We don't have much from this region. Each LI budget for 24 budget will be [inaudible] and advised to manage additional local sponsorship to attract more budget. So, LI activities to focus exclusively

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on technical training and UA adoption because we are done with awareness for the time being. Apply for UA Day events separately and compete for UA adoption events. And as we have said before, no funding for the time being for awareness events, especially if someone has already done an awareness event during last year UA Day. So, they can do another one, but there will be no funding. So, we are pushing and encouraging for something else like training and adoption mainly. Next slide, please.

For the ambassadors, they are appointed for one year and they can be reappointed as per the charter. They consist of well-respected and articulate industry leaders. They are experts in the field. They can do training, they can conduct training, workshop training, who will raise the issues of UA and international email addresses within their respective spheres with focus on UA adoption.

What are the updates? So, we focus on technical training and adoption and so require technical background. How we can select ambassadors will be related to the background of the applicants. Support for financial year 24 will be three [inaudible] USD per year and per country to allow for more ambassadors distributed geographically and with gender diversity. As we have seen in the previous slide, we are seeking other ambassadors from different other regions. And we want to respect the gender diversity in this case. Five new technical UA adoption focused UA ambassadors have already joined the program from Bolivia, from India, from Nigeria, St. Vincent and Grenadines and also from Zambia in this August 23. So, this can add additional UA ambassadors if they can volunteer without funding support. So, we have limited budget. We have many ambassador for the time being. We know that

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it's never enough to have ambassadors but if there are some volunteers that would like to become UA ambassadors, they can be selected but there will be no funding for them. Next slide please. Yes, we would like to hear from you, your feedback on this, on all we have said about ambassadors and local initiatives or comments are welcome. Thank you.

ANIL KUMAR JAIN:

Okay, Nabil, thank you very much for this. And now, next slide please. UASG operating procedures. Now, this slide I just want to take up that UASG leadership team confirmed that the list of processes to be documented in UASG operating procedures. So, more than 20 processes are identified and we said initially that yes, we are looking at streamlining all the existing procedures and those processes can increase also and can decrease also. The process is listed here. Initial draft documented by the staff, reviewed by the UA leadership, that is basically the UA admin group, shared with the coordination working group for the inputs and their acceptance. Then finally shared with the community. Finally, once we receive input from coordination working group from the community, again it comes to the leadership team to finalize and then published by the staff after scrutinizing at the ICANN org level also. Next slide.

So, anything next to this, Seda? Fine, so thank you. Now, finally, this is an important slide which I always, is the slide which I like the most. As we said initially when we started the discussion that the main objective is to attract more members and whatever number of members we have to make them more active. So, again I request all the people who are

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online, who are on site to please commit some time for promoting UASG in your region, in your country, at the international level and please join us in UA Discuss group at [UASG.tech/subscribe](https://UASG.tech/subscribe). And wherever in case you want to join any working group, you are most welcome to join any working group by subscribing to them and whatever information updates which we generate, whether they are reports, whether they are inputs, whether they are some feedback which is required, please join us on X, LinkedIn and Facebook also. With this, let us see in case there are further comments. Yeah, Satish, please go ahead.

SATISH BABU:

Thanks, Satish, for the record. Two small points, minor points. First is that we need the branding of UASG. There was a sticker, only Seda has it now. No one else has it. I think we should produce some of the stickers so that we put it on the laptops, let people be curious as to what this is. Second point is regarding, there's a proposal that is in the UA Tech Working Group, whether we can have a UA Champion of the Year Award presented on the UA Day to people who are contributing to closing the UA gaps in the industry or wherever. I'm just kind of placing it here, thank you.

ANIL KUMAR JAIN:

Thank you very much for these suggestions, Satish. And definitely one suggestion, first suggestion will be taken care by the Seda. And we all should brand ourselves as UASG Ambassador. And the second one, of course, what you have said, we will discuss, and I think it's a very good suggestion to award those who are performing well and they should be publicly recognized. Sarmad.

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SARMAD HUSSAIN: Just a quick comment, we have some stickers here. Please take one before you leave and put it on your laptop.

RAYMOND MAMATTAH: Sorry to bring you back to a topic that was already engaged. That is on the UA Day. I think we need to set good record and precedence based on what was done already. So in the 2023 celebration, when we're doing the review of the celebration, we agreed that we're going to have its own ad hoc team with its own chair. That's what we agreed on when we're doing the review. But here's the case, we are saying that we are rather putting it as part of the comms working group. I think we are going zigzag with this discussion. Let's take a concrete decision based on the precedence. What was done was we had an ad hoc team that managed it and managed it very beautifully. Let's repeat this so that we know that this is the way forward. But I'm not saying it should be a permanent working group. It should be an ad hoc just as how the first one was. So let's really reconsider this and take a firm decision going forward so that this issue wouldn't come up for discussion anymore. Thank you.

ANIL KUMAR JAIN: Raymond, one thing. When we are sitting as a community, then it is good to take inputs from the community. But we are not saying that we are going back or we are going forth on this. Whatever good work communication working group is doing today for preparation for the UA Day, based on the success which we already achieved, we'll continue to

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do that unless and until there is any further changes in this. So thank you very much, Sarmad, for giving the speakers and immediately responding to the request of Satish on this.

SEDA AKBULUT:

From Harish, one should work on the ground as UA ambassador before applying to the leadership position. And one question again from Harish, what are the plans to strengthen the existing UA ambassador support system? And please also prepare an online portal to apply for the UA ambassador support.

ANIL KUMAR JAIN:

I think these suggestions are good. Harish, thank you very much for this. Number one is that the budget is very clear. That as I said, that right now ICANN is giving really good budget to UASG as a small community. And we are progressing on this. And it is really heartening to know that more and more people would like to join the programs of UA ambassador or programs of local initiative. You are most welcome and we would like to definitely expand the process and maybe to give the more financial support to all who are working on the ground. Second, you said that what are the programs to strengthen UA ambassador? Initially also during the whole presentation, I informed the community that we would like to provide training, we would like to provide all kind of support, whether it is material support when you are going to a community to work on spreading the UASG message. And we are with you. The third you asked is about preparing the online portal for support. For this, may I request Sarmad in case he has some answer on

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providing a online portal for UA ambassador to apply for the funding after they completed the work.

SARMAD HUSSAIN:

Sure, so currently I think what happens is they just send an email. And I think that is generally reasonably quicker than applying through portal and somebody going and checking to the portal because it comes directly to the mailbox. But we can discuss if you think there's some inefficiency in the process,.

ANIL KUMAR JAIN:

But at the same time, all ambassadors who are listening today or on site or online, in case there is any reasonable delay in getting your bills settled, I request to reach out to Nitin Walia. And you know his email address is available on UASG.tech also. And I hope that Nitin will volunteer to take up this job and help UA ambassador in case there is any further delay.

All right, then with these words, I would like to thank all who participated on site, online, in a very live discussion today. And again, before we go, I request all of you to kindly contribute with your suggestion, with your feedback, with your comments also on both the topics. Five-year strategic plan, as well as on the issues which touches everybody who are in UASG and in ICANN as a whole. So I also want to thank the ICANN staff, especially Sarmad and Seda, who has worked seriously, very hard in making this session a great success. And I would also like to thank all the organizers who have supported us with all kind of arrangements in this particular room and for the online portal also.

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Thank you very much. With this, I request to stop recording and we can close the session. Thank you.

**[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]**