
ICANN Transcription

GNSO Standing Selection Committee

Tuesday, 01 February 2021 at 20:00 UTC

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DEVAN REED: Good morning, good afternoon, and good evening. Welcome to the GNSO Standing Selection Committee call on Tuesday, 1st of February 2022.

In the interest of time, there will be no roll call. Attendance will be taken by the Zoom Room. We have listed apologies from Q Misell and Brian Winterfeldt. Our documentation and information can be found on the wiki space. Recordings will be posted on the public wiki space shortly after the end of the call.

Please remember to say your name before speaking. As a reminder, those who take part in the ICANN multistakeholder

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process are to comply with the Expected Standards of Behavior. With this, I'll turn it over to Arinola. Please begin.

TAIWO PETER AKINREMI: Emily, we can hear you.

DEVAN REED: If you're speaking, Arinola, you may be double muted. I see that you're not muted in Zoom.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Hello. Can you hear me now?

TAIWO PETER AKINREMI: Yeah. We can hear you now.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Okay. I guess I lost the network. I wasn't actually talking. If you see on the chat, I said I cannot hear anything. Okay. Good morning, good afternoon, and good evening, everybody. I want to say happy new year. Happy 2022 to everyone. Once again, I want to say thank you for the opportunity to lead the SSC. We'll be working as a team and we have the proposed agenda from staff. I want to say a big thank you to the staff. So far, the support has been very great.

So we're going to be working with the charter. I encourage us to get ourselves acquainted with the charter so that we can keep in

line with our expected duties. I think the next thing will be to ask if anybody has any updates to their SOIs. Do we have anybody with an update to the SOI? Okay. I see no hands raised. I think item one is done.

Well, let's move to item number two on the agenda. That will be the GNSO Standing Selection Committee Frequently Asked Question document. I believe the staff circulated the document a while back. I would be asking Emily, if it's not too much, for you to lead us through this. Emily?

EMILY BARABAS:

Hi, everyone. This is Emily Barabas from staff. So as you may have seen with the agenda for this call, there was an attachment. That's a brief FAQ document for new members. As noted in the agenda e-mail, the leadership team noted that this time around, there are a number of new members to the SSC as well as new members on the leadership team, and also from time to time there will be alternates or substitutes coming into the SSC as well who may be unfamiliar with the group. So the leadership team worked with staff to develop a brief document that could be used as quick reference, providing some answers to simple questions from the charter, from the standard process document, and some of the standard operations. We shared that with all of you.

If there are any questions, we're happy to answer them. I don't think it's necessary to take up too much of your time on this call going through it. But we're happy to answer any questions or if there are suggestions on ways to improve it, we're all ears of course on that as well. Of course, if there are other resources that

you need as members, we're happy to hear your feedback on that. I think that's all we needed to cover there. But as I said, this is just a moment for folks to share feedback or answer questions if necessary. Okay. Seeing no hands, I'll pass it on to Arinola for number three on the agenda. Thanks.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI:

Thank you, Emily. That was great. I see Alan already appreciates the document. Thank you, Alan, for taking out time to read through it. We appreciate that.

So we move to item number three, which is our main agenda for today. That is the selection process for the GNSO nominated Fellowship Program Mentor. So here, I believe we all took part in the survey. Thank you all for taking out time to fill out the survey and for responding. We shall be reviewing the polls, and also discussing on the candidate selection, keeping in mind that by the charter of the committee, we are expected to have a full consensus. That means each and every one of us has to agree. So that is the purpose of the discussion we're going to have. Once again, I will be passing it on to Emily, if it is not too much also, to lead us through this one, too. I yield the floor to you, Emily.

EMILY BARABAS:

Thanks. So I'm just going to do a brief run through the poll results. Hopefully you all had a chance to review them prior to the call. So I'm not going to be reading to you or trying to summarize people in my own words. But instead, I'll just highlight a couple of things. So we had nine responses, which is basically everyone who is a

regular member, as opposed to a nonvoting member. So thanks for putting the time into that.

So the first question that you were all asked to respond to is about whether you viewed the candidates as qualified for this role. All of you, all the responses indicated that Chris Disspain is indeed qualified for the role. And seven responses indicated that Imran Hossen is qualified, whereas two responses stated that they did not believe he was qualified or didn't know.

There were a number of comments about Chris's skills and experience. As you'll recall, in the poll, there was an opportunity to provide comments on the skills and experience and the attributes of each of the candidates. So maybe I'll just pause for a moment and let me give you all the link if you want to follow along in your own version. But I'll just pause for a moment if anyone feels like they need to either elaborate on the comments they provided about Chris's skills and experience, or if they feel like they have a question about something that one of the other people responded. I'll note that there's going to be time later to actually deliberate on the candidates and Arinola will be facilitating that. This is more just about elaboration and clarification if it's useful to do so. Okay. Seeing no hands just yet.

We have again a number of comments on Imran Hossen's skills and experience. Any elaboration or questions on these comments? None yet? Comments on Chris Disspain's attributes? And comments and observations on Imran Hossen's attributes? Okay. It looks like everyone's feedback is fairly clear then at this stage. As I said, hopefully we all had a chance to read through it.

The next question in the poll is about ranking the candidates. Again, everyone answered this question. This little bar chart that's automatically generated is a little bit unclear in the way that it presents the results. I'll just scroll down here. So eight of the nine responses indicated that Chris Disspain is the preferred candidate for this role, and one respondent indicated that Imran Hossen is the preferred candidate. And then there are a few explanations for the responses with respect to ranking there. I will just note that in a lot of these comments, there's some really positive feedback about both of the candidates. So that's great that the group obviously has some pretty positive reflections about the folks that we have here, and that there are just some nuances that I think the group will discuss about the differences in preferences, and so forth. Okay. Seeing no questions about the poll results, what I'll do then is perhaps leave up these final comments here, pass it back to Arinola, and there'll be an opportunity for discussion. Thanks.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI:

Thank you, Emily. That was great. Thank you for running us through that. I think I would want to throw it open, especially considering that—could you scroll to the top where we have the bar that shows us all those who think that Chris is qualified, and then we had maybe a few dissenting for Imran. So we take it one at a time. Okay. Perhaps for those who do not think Imran is qualified, perhaps they might want to make some comments on this or probably run us through what their thought processes is so that we could all understand if they are on the call. Okay. I see no hands. Perhaps they're not on the call, maybe we could have it on the mailing list, and they might still want to share their thought with

us via the mailing list. Can we move to the next comment line so that we can run through them?

Okay. We have all the comments here. Would anyone want to elaborate on their comment so that we can actually discuss it and might want to share something with us? Okay. Olévié, I see you say Chris is the most experienced. Okay. Does anyone on the call have any issues they would want us to discuss concerning these two candidates? Oh, okay. Taiwo, please go ahead, please. Sorry, I didn't see that.

PETER TAIWO AKINREMI: Thanks, Arinola. I appreciate it. Actually, we have really beautiful comments concerning the two candidates. We might actually want to look at—because on the poll, we have really support for Chris and I might want us to go to the observations, whether comments actually shows diversity, because I could see there is observations for diversity and as well as why Imran should be considered. I guess we need to really have a good discussion about that. While we're looking at the comments, I just want to [inaudible]. Okay. I could see new hands. Back to you, Arinola.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: All right, thank you, Taiwo. Osvaldo, please go ahead.

OSVALDO NOVOA: Hello. My comment goes in the same line as Taiwo. I think they are both good candidates. Evidently, Chris has much more experience. But I think also we should consider regional diversity

here. That's why I supported more the other candidate. Thank you.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Thank you, Osvaldo. Do we have any other hands? Peter, is that an old hand or a new one?

PETER TAIWO AKINREMI: Sorry, an old hand. I want to bring in another thing.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Okay. Please go ahead.

PETER TAIWO AKINREMI: Point to the team so we can really have a discussion about that. When I was trying to do the evaluation, I was looking at—do we really have information about the age group of the participants of the Fellowship? When we're looking at the two candidates we have, are they actually youth, can relate well with the kind of age group bracket that we're encouraging for the Fellowship? So I was a bit looking at it. Can they actually relate very well? In some of [inaudible] the candidate, actually, they are good and they're well expressed in the ICANN process and procedure, and understanding of the Fellowship and the objective. But however, when we're looking at the age group or the youth relationship, I don't know. So we need to have a discussion around that. I don't know if I'm the one perceiving that. Just an observation I'm bringing to the team for discussion. This is something you can

chip in concerning the age group the kind the Fellowship actually encourages.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Okay. Thank you, Taiwo. If I may comment. I don't know. Maybe the first thing will be for us to find out amongst us as members of this committee, how many of us have been through the Fellowship program itself? Maybe by show of hands, we could know, and then that might guide our discussion process too. It will actually help us.

Okay. Sam, you have your hand up. Okay, Sam. Let me allow you to talk first. Please go ahead, Sam.

SAM LANFRANCO: Okay. Can you hear me?

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Yes, please.

SAM LANFRANCO: Okay. I was going to hold my comments until later. I thought we were going to do first one candidate than the other. But we've kind of segued into a comparison. So I want to speak sort of as an elder here, not "the" elder but an elder since I've been involved in mentoring for decades. They're both eminently qualified but I had shifted my way toward Imran on the assumption that I thought that his background would relate better to the Fellows. That's all I want to say here is I look not just at the skills of the people but how they

got to where they were, what kind of path they took, and what kind of skills impression, not just the diversity impression but the skills impression they would bring to the mentees. That's the only point I want to make now.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Okay. Thank you, Sam. Thank you very much for that. Emily, you have your hand raised up.

EMILY BARABAS: Thanks, Arinola. So I'm just bringing up again the Expression of Interest document, which was produced by Council that provides the sort of key elements or guidelines for the evaluation of the candidates. And just kind of looking at this list, I think there are certainly a range of considerations that the group is welcome to bring into the conversation. But, of course, I know under Council's guidance, the core elements of the evaluation are expected to be these elements here that are on screen, the skills and experience and desired attributes. So I just wanted to make sure that those are on the forefront of folks' minds and brought it up here as well. That's all I wanted to say. Thanks.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Okay. Thank you, Emily. Okay. Just not too long ago, I was trying to ask if we've had a Fellowship experience. I have been through the Fellowship before, and then with the BC, I've been privileged to mentor quite a few new intake. The Fellowship for ICANN has no age limit that is trying to address the point raised by Taiwo. The Fellowship has no age limit attached to it.

A mentor, for me, from my perspective, is someone who can run you through the system as it were. The idea of the Fellowship is the mentor will be someone who is grounded. I believe that the experience that Chris has from the Board will actually help a lot. It will actually help a lot with mentoring a Fellow. Most of the Fellows are people who are first timers with ICANN. And when they're coming in, they're actually scared. Because you come into a mammoth of crowd and you have a lot of acronyms, you have a lot of new faces, you find it very strange, and you feel intimidated. Actually, the first time you attend an ICANN meeting, especially coming in as a Fellow.

Chris stands a better chance to put you through because he's been with the Board. Actually, for me, he is actually a better option than Imran. As much as Imran was a Fellow, his experience as a Fellow might not necessarily translate to a good mentor for the ICANN system. Yes, he's got the experience from other environment, but I tell you ICANN ecosystem is quite unique. The multistakeholder model of the ICANN ecosystem is quite unique. It's extremely unique. It's a different kettle of fish. I have been through other Fellowship programs even before ICANN, but for me, ICANN Fellowship was something else. Fortunately, I had a good coach who was able to put me through and help me through.

So the confidence that the Fellows will need to work within the ICANN ecosystem, I believe, can more be provided by Chris Disspain than Imran. Imran, if you look at his Fellowship experience, I think he got on boarded into the BC not too long ago. So, his experience in the ecosystem cannot match that of Chris who has been in the system for over 20 years. And I believe

that the leaders, the veterans, should now be the one to mentor the next generation so that we find the baton being passed on the right way than in a clumsy manner. Because if the mentor is not confident enough or is not so well-networked, we might start having the GNSO itself—the structure itself is an interesting structure. You have the Commercial Stakeholder Group, you have the Non-Commercial Stakeholder Group, you have the BC, you have the NPOC, you have the NCUC. Now, if you have somebody whose focus is strictly the BC or business, it might now start affecting Fellows who are not business-minded. So Chris has been diverse, considering that he has served on the Board, which means he must have served without prejudice to a particular SO/AC. So that's my thought process. I don't know about others. So let's keep the discussion. I hope that was helpful.

PETER TAIWO AKINREMI: Yeah, sure. That was helpful. I guess Alan's hand is up before mine.

ALAN WOODS: Thank you very much. I just want to say thank you, Arinola, for that. Many of the things I would like to have said were absolutely said by you. I completely support your reasoning and your thought processing on that. I don't think anything should take away from Imran as a candidate. But certainly when it comes to the actual process and being one of the lawyers in the group, where we have provided with a list of specific skills and experience and desired attributes, and we're looking at a process and this, I think we should be led very clearly by those. I appreciate the comment

about the connection with perhaps younger people, but at the same time, speaking as a European as well, any consideration in this, which is the effects of the appointment of a position where we're bringing in concepts of age, it's a slippery slope, and I would advise all of us to steer away from that particular aspect of consideration.

I think all of the candidates, I think we got to exceptionally different but both very, very willing candidates, but when we think of it from the point of view of who's going to benefit from this, and that is the mentees, those members of the Fellowship program, I think realistically, the one person who can provide that guidance, that mentorship, the gravitas of the experience, and indeed just the general all-around knowledge and introduction to all things ICANN, I do think that it kind of has to be Chris Disspain at the end of the day. So thank you.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Thank you so much, Alan. Taiwo? Peter, you can go on.

PETER TAIWO AKINREMI: Yeah. Thanks so much for the opportunity to speak once again. I quite agree with your thought process and the other person who just spoke. Looking at the requirement for the positions that we're actually considering, there is no doubt about Chris's ability. I was just trying to strike a conversation. When we're looking at one of the requirements, it creates a good atmosphere. We're just trying to see in practical terms how people relate well. As an elderly person, when you're mentoring the young one it tends not to flow.

But when we're looking at the ICANN environments, it's very unique entirely. And the process is daunting when you're talking about policy. However, there's no doubt about Chris's ability, looking at it from behind growth, his experience, his exposure, what he has passed through in the ICANN environment and [inaudible] process, because we're actually looking for people that can get involved in the PDP, people that can be active. So we need people that are actually gone ahead or understood the ICANN process to be able to mentor the Fellow that actually come in. So basically, I was just trying to strike a conversation. So I agree with what were said and of Chris's ability and potential to step forward for this role. Okay. That's just my contribution.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Do we have anyone who would like to make further comments, please? Taiwo, is that an old hand?

PETER TAIWO AKINREMI: Yeah, old hand.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Okay. So do we have any other comments, any other area that one would like to—okay, Olévié, I see your comments in the chat room. Okay. Thank you, Olévié. Would you want to share it with everyone maybe your experience or your thought as it relates to our current discussion? Okay. Sam, would you like to share some of your thoughts with us also maybe further?

SAM LANFRANCO: No, I think I will leave it at that. I stated why I had a preference. But I'm strong for consensus here. We don't want to get too far into the weeds in this discussion. So I think that I have no more to say.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Okay. Thank you, Sam. I think we are done with discussions, if the signal I'm getting is right.

PETER TAIWO AKINREMI: I guess since no one is stepping forward, we might need to call for consensus. Emily can walk us through how that is done.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Yes. Well, to call for the consensus from previous calls that I have listened to, what is expected is for us to have a full consensus. That means even those that are not on this call will be allowed to put in their vote via the mailing list. However, for those of us that are on the call, we can go ahead and give our consent to the current discussion and the selection process, and send to our preferred candidate, whilst others will be allowed to do so via the mailing list. Emily, I believe I'm correct.

PETER TAIWO AKINREMI: Yeah, Emily's hand is up.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Okay. Please go ahead, Emily.

EMILY BARABAS:

Hi, Arinola. Yeah. You're absolutely correct. Typically, how this has worked in the past and according to the charter is that on this call, if you feel like everyone has contributed to the full extent of what they would like to share for this discussion, you as the chair taking into account the verbal comments on this call, as well as the comments received in the poll and the poll results, kind of looking that as a package, you're empowered to sort of propose what you think you're hearing as an outcome and sort of put that forward to the group to see if there's general agreement on the call or if there are any objections to that on the call. The SSC does operate by full consensus, which means that everyone ultimately needs to not necessarily agree but be in line with that decision.

Since not everyone is on the call today, and even if they were, typically what happens is a preliminary decision is made. If you can reach preliminary agreement on this call today, that's great. And then we'll put it out to the mailing list for typically 24 hours for folks to weigh in on the mailing list if they disagree with that preliminary decision. If no one speaks up on the mailing list, then it's considered a full consensus agreement, and that's then passed on to Council. If the group feels like it needs more calls or more deliberations, you can certainly have another call. But if you feel comfortable today, if you think you're hearing based on the input so far, there'll be an opportunity then for the group to react. I hope that's helpful and I'm happy to answer any questions. Thanks.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Thank you, Emily. I think before we call for—I would like Osvaldo to still take us through it, his own thought process, because I think every other person apart from him and Sam had the thought about why Imran should be our candidate. So I would still want them to share. Osvaldo, please, let's discuss further on your thought process.

OSVALDO NOVOA: Okay, yes. Do you hear me? Hello? Do you hear me?

PETER TAIWO AKINREMI: We can hear you.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Yes, loud and clear.

OSVALDO NOVOA: Okay. I wrote it down in the chat. I know that Chris is a better candidate than Imran but I think Imran is a good candidate. I like the idea of some diversity in the mentors, but I see most of the people support Chris. And I know Chris is a better candidate. I will support it for consensus. So that's it. Thank you.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Thank you, Osvaldo. Going by the pros and going by what we have discussed so far, Tomslin, you're just coming on. Probably we could hear from you.

TOMSLIN SAMME-NLAR: Thanks. I was just listening to what Osvaldo said. He says it's for consensus that he's supporting Imran. I didn't quite understand that. But I'm not really voting. I don't have a vote in this other than just taking back or taking a consulting role here, but I was keen to know a bit more or understand a bit more what Osvaldo meant by his choosing, his voting for Imran just to get consensus.

OSVALDO NOVOA: Excuse me, this is Osvaldo. No, the other way around. I voted for Chris in order to reach a consensus. I was supporting Imran first. Thank you.

TOMSLIN SAMME-NLAR: All right, I understand now. Thank you.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Okay. Thank you, Tomslin. It was good hearing from you. I think now that we're done with our discussions, it will be time for us to reach the preliminary agreement from the polls. The first choice of candidate happens to be Chris Disspain. So far we have had our discussions and what I still understand is that it is Chris Disspain. Am I right about this?

PETER TAIWO AKINREMI: Sure, yeah.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Okay. Maybe we could do that by show of hands so that it will be easier for us to know. Thank you very much. So on record now we have it that every voting member on this call agrees to Chris Disspain being the selected candidate for the GNSO mentor for the Fellowship program. Do we have any objections from any member on this call to Chris being the selected candidate? Is there any member on this call who has an objection to Chris Disspain being the selected candidate for the GNSO Fellowship mentor? Okay. I see none. It is on record that every voting member on this call agrees that Chris Disspain should be the selected candidate. So staff will be sending the mail for those who are not on the call to be part of it. Emily?

EMILY BARABAS: Thanks, Arinola. As Arinola mentioned—and it seems pretty clear that no one's raised any objections here on the call today—like many GNSO processes, the consensus call is obviously not a vote per se but more sort of a qualitative assessment of state of agreement. As there have been no objections, typically, what happens based on that preliminary agreement is that we send an e-mail asking for anyone to raise anything, objections or concerns on list. Typically, we give 24 hours. If folks think that's sufficient, we'll do that. And then following that period, if nothing is raised, a motion will be submitted to Council. Does that sound okay with everyone in terms of process?

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: It does.

EMILY BARABAS: Okay, great. Then staff will take an action item to follow up on that. Just noting that the document deadline for the upcoming Council meeting is Monday. So that should give us plenty of time, should that indeed become a full consensus decision to submit that motion. And perhaps we can bother Tomslin to be our submitter if that's something he feels comfortable doing. But we can circle back on that after the call.

TOMSLIN SAMME-NLAR: Definitely, I can do that.

EMILY BARABAS: Okay. We'll coordinate offline on that. Thanks.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Thank you, Emily. I think we need the agenda now. Okay. Having been done with item three, we'll move to item number four. Do we have any other business? Emily, do we have anything from staff angle?

EMILY BARABAS: Nothing from staff. Thanks.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: All right.

PETER TAIWO AKINREMI: Arinola, my hand is up.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Oh, okay, Taiwo. Peter, sorry about that. Go ahead, Peter.

PETER TAIWO AKINREMI: I just wanted to touch on the FAQ that [inaudible]. I haven't gone through it. Please [inaudible] treat any member in this [inaudible]. Please do update yourself with the document actually the staff put together file information. That will be at full, please [inaudible]. I just wanted to point on that. Thanks.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Thank you, Taiwo. Okay. All right. Okay. Bearing no other issues to be raised, I want to say thank you to everyone for making out time to be on the call. Thank you for your input, suggestions. Like Taiwo said, we should all try as much as possible to go through the FAQ document. It's actually something that would help put us through. We are practically new, all of us. I am new to the committee. And I believe most of us are coming in for the first time. But this is just to help us get a soft landing and to help us take off properly. So I will be giving everybody back some minutes of their day, about nine minutes of your day back so you can catch up with other things. The meeting is hereby adjourned. Thank you once again.

PETER TAIWO AKINREMI: Thank you all.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Thank you.

DEVAN REED: Thank you all for joining. Once again, this meeting has been adjourned. I will end the recording and disconnect all remaining lines. Have a wonderful rest of your day.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Thank you.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]