

TERRI AGNEW: Good morning, good afternoon, and good evening. The recording has started, and this is Terri Agnew. Welcome to the Standing Committee on Continuous Improvements call taking place on Wednesday, the 25th of March, 2026. We do have listed apologies from Anne Aikman-Scalese. Statements of interest must be kept up to date. If anyone has any updates to share, please raise your hand or speak up now. And Julf, please go ahead.

JULF HELSINGIUS: Well, no real update except that my SOI is actually sorted out again. It was somehow some IT failure had made it totally crap. You could not actually see anything on it, but by reverting to a previous version, I actually managed to get it to work. I heard other people have had the same issues, so you might want to check yours as well for everybody.

TERRI AGNEW: And if you do need assistance with your SOI, please write to GNSO-secs@icann.org. Just as a brief pause, John McCabe, I did send the additional Zoom prompt your way, but it is saying it has been declined, so I will go ahead and send it your way again to be moved over to panelist status. All right, so on with our intro. Here we go. All 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 state your name before speaking. As a reminder, participation in ICANN, including this session, is governed by the ICANN Expected Standards of Behavior, the ICANN Community Anti-

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Harassment Policy, and the ICANN Community Participant Code of Conduct concerning statements of interest. With this, I will turn it back over to our chair, Manju Chen. Please begin.

MANJU CHEN:

Thank you, Terri, and I hope you get well soon because I feel like from your voice, it sounds like you are not in your best condition. But yes, thank you very much and welcome everyone. Sorry, I am not turning on my camera because I feel like today the Internet connection at my place is not the best, so I am hoping to stay connected without disruption and increasing the bandwidth might not be the best that I should do now. And so that is that. And welcome everyone. I hope you guys had a relaxing week after Mumbai last week, had some rest and ready to start working again.

So I think we asked for SOI updates already, so we can probably move on to recap. Can we have the next slide? So the key outcomes out of ICANN 85 is basically we agree the scope and style of indicators, and we agree also for leadership team and the staff to take the first step of the indicators for Principle 1. And then today we are going to review the indicators of Principle 1 to see if that is where we want to be headed to. And if yes, we will continue the work and develop the indicators for Principle 2, 3, 4, and 5. So that is the recap. I am not seeing any questions or hands. Let's move on.

So we quickly move to agenda number 3, and we will start reviewing in a sense the indicators of Principle 1 and Criteria 1. Principle 1, as you can see from the slide, is that the GNSO is fulfilling its purpose. And to

examine or evaluate whether this is true, the first criteria, as you can see here, I am not reading all the words on the screen. This is a criteria, and according to the criteria, staff and leadership team has developed three indicators for this criteria. First is that the GNSO has at least one existing body that allows it to fulfill its purpose as described in the ICANN Bylaws. Second is that it has at least one mechanism in place that governs the process to allow it fulfill its Bylaws. Third is that at least 51, so at least more than half of the constituencies that are surveyed agree that GNSO is fulfilling its purpose.

So I encourage you guys to, instead of to drill on the words exactly, but more like, do you think this is the right direction in the sense that we are kind of mixing the measurements of a yes/no kind of style question, but also quantitative, so relying on more statistics or survey kind of measurements? That is what we are trying to do here, as you can see from the indicators. And this is also the result of what we discussed in Mumbai, which is the methodology that we are going to use to develop the indicators. I am pausing here to see if there is any question about this, and if there is any confusion that we need a bit of background again or anything. Not seeing any questions. Oh, I am seeing one hand. Steve, please.

STEVE CHAN:

Yeah. Thanks, Manju. This is Steve Chan from staff. And maybe to provide a bit more info and then also to fill up dead space since no one raised their hand yet. For Anne's benefit maybe, who is actually not on the call, but she helped inspire one of the changes that you see in Indicator 1 and 2. And so what she had suggested was essentially that

there might be more than one answer or more than one data point for indicators. And so you can see for Indicator 1 and 2, it says at least one existing body, and then two says at least one mechanism in place. And so I think the goal here was to allow for the data or the element to have a more richer response. So it is not just yes/no. You could potentially have a handful of different things that help achieve the indicator. So Anne, for when you review the recording, thanks for the suggestion, and you can hopefully see the change that you inspired in the indicators here. Thanks.

MANJU CHEN:

Thank you, Steve. And that also remind me another point Anne has raised in her email. Peter, we will go to you after I finish this. One of the points Anne raised in her email is about the survey constituents. What do we mean by constituents? Do we mean only constituents from the SG&C within the GNSO, or are we allowing people outside of GNSO to also fill in the survey when we are doing a survey?

And we checked with the CIP team, and we also discussed internally in the leadership team. We agreed that since this whole continuous improvement program are supposed to be, in a sense, self-evaluation of each structures within ICANN, we believe it is only reasonable for these constituents to be only consist of members in the GNSO, so essentially members of SG&C. But I am pausing here to allow any other opinions to be expressed. And Peter, I guess you wanted to raise your hand if you have any comments.

TAIWO PETER AKINREMI: Yes. Can you confirm you can hear me?

Oh, yeah. Thanks. Thanks, Steve, for the background on how this actually evolved because I was thinking we should allow data to actually speak for itself when we say at least one mechanism, because we know that GNSO has different mechanisms to fulfill admission. But if we say mechanism, at least one mechanism, we could say GNSO has mechanism in place, not at least one mechanism. Because if we want the data to also speak for itself, the data should help us to identify various mechanisms that GNSO has in reviewing those mechanism, whether those mechanism are actually being utilized and effective. That is just one that I am looking at that we might need to look into.

And the second point is, based on this criteria, does it look at the institutional capacity or the process, or any other things that... I just wanted to get an understanding on what those criteria are targeting because we are looking at it from institutional process perspective and performance perspective. And the third question I wanted to put forward is I lost my train of thought. Oh, that comes again. Whether we are looking at it from the entire GNSO body or we are looking at, or maybe we are still going to come to looking at the GNSO Council itself because we raised that concern, whether we are looking at the GNSO Council and also we are looking at the entire GNSO body. So I know that Manju touched on that. Thank you.

MANJU CHEN: Thank you, Peter. So I guess I will answer the questions in reverse order. Are we looking at this as a GNSO or GNSO Council? For this one, as you

can see from principle, it does not specify council. Criteria also, it is only GNSO. So we are definitely looking at it as GNSO as a whole instead of just GNSO Council. It is just like how the SCI is now composed of members from GNSO and not limited or exclusive to GNSO counselor.

This will be an examination of GNSO as a structure within ICANN instead of just GNSO Council. There will be some data points, I guess, in the future when we are reviewing the criteria that looks like GNSO Council specifically, when it is needed, when it is fit for purpose for that indicator, per that criteria. But generally, principally, we are looking at GNSO as a whole. And I am not sure I got your second question, but I am relying on if others have got it.

TAIWO PETER AKINREMI:

You want me to come up here again?

Okay. Yeah, the second question is on the GNSO, like the criteria indicator two, which talked about GNSO has at least one mechanism in place that govern the GNSO processes to allow you to fulfill the purpose. And saying, rather than saying at least one mechanism, we can just have it and say GNSO has a mechanism in place since we want data points to actually... We wanted to test that, and we are crafting that indicator to say, 'Okay, let the data point speak for itself.' You know, different kind of mechanism that is in place that GNSO is actually using, rather than saying at least one mechanism. Just wanted to put it that way, because if you say at least one mechanism, what backs that up? So are we trying to test an point just here? So that is another thing that comes to my mind. Thanks.

MANJU CHEN: Thank you, Peter. I guess so this is like there are series of indicators based on series of criteria. This is the first one, in a sense, out of the whole principle, like five principles, and under each principles there are several criteria. I think we are building on this and there will be in the future or later, you know, for Principle 2 or maybe later criteria as per Principle 1 that will build on this, there are at least one mechanism, and there will be other indicators to examine the... In a sense, I guess, what you are suggesting, the effectiveness of the mechanisms.

Because what we are thinking really when we are designing these indicators is that we have more than one mechanism in place in GNSO that governs the processes. So it will be more helpful if we keep this question open in a way that we are at the liberty to list out all of the mechanisms that are in place. And to build on these answers in the future, indicators on this list, we will be able to examine further how these mechanisms are effective and what are the indicators we are going to use to measure that in a sense. And I hope that answers your question.

TAIWO PETER AKINREMI: Thanks, Manju.

MANJU CHEN: Cool. So Steve, please.

STEVE CHAN:

Thanks, Manju. This is Steve again. And maybe it helps to talk a little more about the logic behind having things like Indicator 1 and 2 versus 3. So I think we had, at ICANN 85, we had talked about a set of sort of yes/no questions complemented by a more data-driven element. And the reason we thought this might make sense is because at least for the GNSO, there is a lot of structural and institutional things in place that are intended to help ensure that whatever the criteria is, that it is being met.

And so, by way of example, the data point or structural thing in place for Indicator 1 could be the GNSO Council. And then for two, it could be the GNSO operating procedures and maybe a collection of other things. As Manju noted, there might be a handful of different things that help achieve the indicator. And then I think to your point, Peter, 3 is in part at least about trying to get to whether or not these structural or institutional things in place are actually working effectively.

And then to Manju's point, there will be a lot more detail and drill down into different things like diversity and effectiveness that you will see later on when we get into the additional principles. But that is sort of the logic for why we had trying to pull on existing things or structural things that help to achieve the criteria, along with an assessment of whether or not they are actually working properly. So maybe that logic helps with understanding how they are... Well, at least from the leadership and staff point we are proposing, these can make sense. Thanks.

MANJU CHEN:

Thank you, Steve. And I also see Jen's question in chat. Anne's considerations fall under the larger umbrella of these high level indicators. I would say yes, because I think it is Anne's suggestion that encourage us or inspire us to have this in a more open-ended way of framing our questions, because otherwise we might be too fixated on 'yes, there's one mechanism' or 'there is mechanism in place,' instead of imagining it as a question that allows us to list out all the mechanisms in place, which on this foundation later on we can further expand on how these mechanisms are helping GNSO to fulfill its purpose. And Jen, I see your hand.

JENNIFER CHUNG:

Thanks, Manju. Jen, for the record. Sorry to keep us on this slide. I am sure you have other slides you want to go through. I had a thought when I am looking at this again in more detail that obviously one and two is the chance for this group, I guess, to really answer in a very detailed manner. Because as Steve has said, GNSO does have a lot of procedures and institutional mechanisms that are in place for this that should be listed.

For the third one, that is interesting because thank you for the answer about within GNSO, those are the surveyed constituents. I am wondering if there is a question of timing as well. Is it going to be... Or will they have this information that will be populated under one and two before they receive a survey and make that distinction or determination? Will there be different surveys sent out during different times to see what that might look like? Maybe I am preempting

something that was down the road that we might talk about, but these are questions I have in my mind.

And finally, that question about who will be surveyed is interesting too because thinking about the larger matrix of the review of reviews buckets, CIP is one of them, and there is also a question about whether CIP itself needs to be reviewed as well. But I will stop here because I will let us continue on with this.

MANJU CHEN:

Thank you, Jen. Great question. I think all of the questions you raised, aside from the last one, the timing of the survey, are the constituencies who are going to be surveyed going to have the information of what we discussed about the answers of indicators one and two before they get surveyed? This is something actually SCI can decide. We can decide whether we want to kind of share the results of these different measurements of indicators first and then do the survey, or do we think it is more authentic or honest if we surveyed them without giving them the answers? Or we can do both before and after.

That is definitely something we will have to discuss when we reach the point that we start to design the questions for the surveys that we are going to use and the timing and all of that. So that is definitely down the road in the sense that we will reach a point in the future that we have to consider all of these questions, and thank you very much for raising them. We will definitely note them too when we have to discuss it later after we have all the indicators in place and we are starting to design the questions for the surveys.

And for the CIP under reviews of reviews, I feel like there is a confusion too that a lot of people thought CIP itself is under review of reviews. But I think there is a different understanding that we have is actually the review of reviews when they listed CIP under its remits of reviews, it actually is a review of CIP itself instead of what we are doing now, like the content of CIP. I do not know if it makes sense. Steve maybe will be able to explain it better.

So when the reviewers of reviews, when they review CIP, they are only going to review if CIP should be continue instead of the details and context of what we are doing here as CIP. I hope that makes sense. If it does not, I will have to rely on Steve to explain it better than me. But I hope if there are no further questions or feedback, we can move to the next slide.

Yes. So here you can also see we are basically using the same methodology of designing the indicators. You know, there are at least one mechanism, and there are at least one part of the reports that GNSO publishes contains or demonstrates that we have considered global public interest during the process. And the third one, again, it is statistics and data points that we are envisioning. At least 51% of the survey constituents... So this is basically the methodology that we are using to design the indicators.

And it is okay if you cannot read all of the words on the slides yet. We will definitely circulate the whole thing afterwards. Just here we mainly are checking the vibes in a sense that are we agreeing this is the methodology we are going to use to develop further indicators and the layer principles and criteria, and if this feels okay for everybody, this is

what we are going to use and continue to do the future criteria and indicators. Sorry, just indicators based on the criteria.

Okay. So I guess we passed the vibe checks. Let's move to the next slide. This is the next slide. Again, you see we are using the same... Chris, I see Chris put in chat, 51% feels like it will still be a problematic situation. Well, I guess an ICANN of more than half is happy is like extremely successful already, but that is of course my personal take. We can definitely discuss what number-

CHRIS BUCKRIDGE: Yeah, I mean, I do not really have my-

MANJU CHEN: Yeah. We can definitely discuss what one number do you think is the best.

CHRIS BUCKRIDGE: Yeah. I mean, look, it is just-

MANJU CHEN: Sorry, Chris. You go ahead.

CHRIS BUCKRIDGE: No, no, no. That is okay. Look, I did not have a lot to say. Just I was curious about the 51% number that was appearing in there and sort of thinking if what you are looking for are indicators that the GNSO is

fulfilling its purpose, then if you get 51%, you are still in a situation where I guess you sort of... there are some serious questions to be asked.

So look, I do not have a strong alternative. I do not want to sort of say 60% or 66% or anything necessarily like that. But yeah, just as you say, vibe check, I just wanted to see if there had been any sort of thought gone into that. And yeah, Manju, I think you gave some of the sort of reasoning behind it. I think it makes sense, but I am just... As I say, from a vibe, it sort of made me wonder if it, in this situation, if being quite that quantitative is effective. So anyway.

MANJU CHEN:

Thank you, Chris. So I guess this is a chance then for us to discuss whether we want to raise this number, or this is something you can kind of sleep on and think for a week whether we need to raise this number. But I guess before I go to Steve, when we designed this, when staff designed it and they explained it to me, it is more of we set a lower threshold, and we can show it is actually we are reaching higher in a sense in the results. But yeah, I will ask Steve to explain it better than me.

THOMAS RICKERT:

Manju, it is Thomas. Sorry, I cannot raise my hand at the moment.

MANJU CHEN:

Oh, no worries.

THOMAS RICKERT: Yeah. Do we have to put a number in there? I mean, for number three, it is the same as for the statements number one or two. We do not yet know to what extent they are going to be supported. But I think it is probably unnecessary to ask for a percentage, you know, because we might unnecessarily put ourselves into a difficult situation if the number is not what we expect it to be. Why can't we just say, you know, 'constituents agree,' and then see what the feedback is and draw our conclusions depending on the percentage that expresses support?

MANJU CHEN: Thank you, Thomas. I believe Steve has an answer to it. Please, Steve.

STEVE CHAN: Yeah. Thanks, Manju. I will try. This is Steve again from staff, and I guess a couple things. One is that the CIP framework, whenever it had some percentage-based thing, it just said X percent. So I think the intention from the frameworks was to allow each of the SO/ACs flexibility to determine that percentage. So just FYI, there is flexibility to adjust this as needed.

But second, I thought it might be helpful to talk about some of the next steps, which will maybe put the percentage into perspective. So one of the next steps is to identify the data points that seek to answer the indicators, so to speak. And so you could have a couple situations. Once we actually collect data, which is including designing the survey questions and then getting the survey responses back, you could have a

situation where, let's say, below 51% agree that the GNSO is fulfilling its purpose. That is an obvious red flag, and you know it did not meet the indicator. But you could also have a result where it is, you know, 51% or 52%, which as Chris and everyone is agreeing, is not a very good metric. And so you could also then thirdly have something like more around the 99th percentile, like Peter said, which is obviously quite a bit better outcome.

And I say all this to say that one of the elements that the SCI will have to do later is to target, based on the data returned, where the areas of focus should be. And so the percentage that is received from the surveys, that could tell you whether or not this needs to be an area of focus, as in it is a problem area. So you just meet the indicator of 52%. That does not say that things are obviously perfect. It means that this area could still remain a problem area and an area of focus for the GNSO to try to make improvements. So I guess I am just trying to stress the point maybe that the percentage here is not... It does not indicate by itself success or failure. It is a data point that helps the group, guide the group in determining where it wants to focus its attention on acute improvements. I hope that made sense. Thanks.

MANJU CHEN:

Yes, Steve. Thank you very much. So I guess it makes perfect sense, and this is what we are trying to do here. I think we are walking in a line between at the same time we want to prove that we are doing a good job somehow, somewhere, sometimes. But at the same time, we wanted to identify areas where we can improve.

So this number, we are not designing the indicators in the sense that we are going to score a perfect score for every indicator, and we are so perfect that we do not need any improvement, right? We are trying to find areas where we actually need improvement, and that is why these indicators are not... We are not designing this question in the sense that we are going to answer them perfectly. We are imagining there are some questions that we are going to fail, but at least not to fail too miserably, that we can easily identify also the areas of improvement that we can make after we do the first time of review. So I am just paraphrasing Steve. Unnecessarily, I guess. But yeah, thank you very much, Steve.

And I guess we can move on to the next slide in the sense that are we okay with 51 now? Because it is not about achieving 51, but more like we are seeing whether it is a good indicator that we need improvement. Not seeing any objections, and this is where we were, I guess. This is also the same methodology that we are kind of hoping to have more answers to one indicator, so we do at least one. And the third one, I think it is a yes/no indicator in a sense. And thank you, Chris.

Let's move on to next slide. So you can see sometimes one criteria has two indicators, sometimes they have three. We don't always have to have three indicators per criteria, and we can have as many or at least two indicators per criteria. That is why you are seeing sometimes three, sometimes two for criteria. Jen, your comment is referring to the previous slide, is it?

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- JENNIFER CHUNG: Sorry. It is, but you can just move on. I think that is just a me problem.
- MANJU CHEN: No, it is an easy change. We can change it to on a multi-stakeholder model.
- JENNIFER CHUNG: Or maybe ICANN multi-stakeholder model.
- MANJU CHEN: Sure. Thank you. We will note it down, and we will change accordingly. Let's move on. And we have already seen this. Next slide. Again, it is a vibe check. Are we okay with this kind of one is yes/no, one is a statistics, quantitative data that we are going to collect? How do we measure GNSO combating DNS threats? I think you are referring to slide previously. People, move your finger faster.
- Let's move back to slide ten. This is how we measure, Peter. Do you have any follow-up questions, or do you have any other indicators that you are suggesting to add to this criteria? I guess if no, we can move on. Again, same principle, same methodology. And I am waiting here for five seconds instead, just in case people are typing in chat. One, two, three, four, five.
- Okay. Next slide, please. So we have done with the vibe checks, I feel. And this is just reference material that we don't really need to look at because this is in case when we have questions why we developed the indicators. And I am stopping here before we move to next step to,
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again, check if people are happy with the methodology that we use for developing the indicators. Keeping in mind that we are not planning to achieve perfect scores for each indicator. The main purpose of this review, the whole point, is to identify areas to improve so we can do continuous improvement. Not seeing any hands. I take it as we are happy with how we are developing the indicators. Oh, okay, Asteway. I saw briefly your hand, but it was down again.

ASTEWAY NEGASH:

Yeah. I was not looking at my hand on the panel, so that is how I happened to be suspicious about my hand being raised. But it is about Chris's question. Maybe we need to think about some kind of a wording change on the 51% about it being an indicator rather than a vote, because this could actually be confusing to whoever might be looking at our reports in the future. I think it is a good point, but it might be clear to indicate it somehow that we are looking for an indicator from the constituencies and not some kind of a voting process. Thank you.

MANJU CHEN:

Thank you. Thank you very much. I guess we will have to take this back and kind of brainstorm a bit within the leadership team on how to change the wording to make it less feel like a vote, but more like a quantitative data that is useful to identify areas of improvement. Again, we are not aiming at scoring perfect for each indicator. It is more of an exercise to learn and identify areas of improvement, but we will definitely take this feedback and see what we can do, and hopefully

next time when we share with you guys, it is going to be satisfying for all of us.

So for next steps, we can go to next slide. Because I feel like we are actually passing a vibe check, aside from the 51 that is something we will have to work on during our developing the further indicators and probably just trying to come back and see how it works. We were originally planning to have the next meeting next week the same time, but from this meeting, I feel like we are in general agreement of how we are developing the indicators.

So what I will suggest is that we do not go through principle by principle each week. We will actually try to develop the whole thing, so all the indicators for the five principles, and we will circulate the text to all of you by next week, so 1st of April. And you guys can... We all on site can review them. This is not the time to share yet with your stakeholder groups and constituency yet, just for yourself. We are going to review them, and we can come back probably two weeks after we receive the documents to, again, get a vibe check if we have any concerns of how the indicators are phrased.

And if not, we will take the indicators back to our stakeholder group and constituencies to get the vibe check with them. And so I think that will be a better use of all of our time to save you more time than having to meet every week to go through the indicators one by one instead of you can have it as a wholesale, and then you can review it in text at your ease according to your pace. Does that sound good for anyone? So this calendar basically is not what we are going to do anymore. We are just going to circulate the whole package of indicators for every principle by

next week, the 1st of April, on the mailing list to all of you guys. And we will not have a meeting next week.

We also will not have a meeting on the 8th of April, because we will give you guys two weeks to review the indicators at your own pace for yourself. If you have any question during that time, you are welcome to use the mailing list, and we can discuss on the mailing list. But we will try to come back at least on the 15th of April if we deem necessary to get a vibe check again if everything sounds good for everyone.

And if we do not feel like we need any calls, because we are all just very happy with the indicators, we will circulate the mailing list of what is next up for everyone to either bring it back to your stakeholder groups and constituencies to seek feedback, and we can come back for another two weeks. Or if we feel necessary, we can definitely have a call on the 15th. Does that sound good for everyone? I am not seeing objections. I am counting five just in case people are typing in the chats and with slow fingers. Everybody feels that it is a good idea.

Yes. I mean, I like to talk to you guys, but probably you guys are not as happy to hear my voice. No, just kidding. I definitely feel this is a better use of all of our time. And if that is cool, we will definitely keep it on record and send an email explaining what we are planning to do in text so it makes more sense or it sounds easier to all of us. Next slide. So this is also just for reference. I do not think we need to see them, and we can move to AOB. Are there any other business? If not, I will happily give you back for... Oh, John, please.

JOHN MCCABE: Thank you, Manju. As you were skipping forward there, there was some text that was lined out, and I was wondering if we could look at that real quick. That three to five criteria per principle. This was accomplished in Mumbai?

MANJU CHEN: Criteria was accomplished last year actually. So we are developing indicators per criteria now. That is where we are.

JOHN MCCABE: Okay. Three to five per criteria per principle. Three to five indicators per criteria. Okay. Gotcha. All right. I am sorry, I just saw it go past, and I wanted to ask the question. Thank you.

MANJU CHEN: Sure. Thank you very much. So if no further questions, I will happily give you back 30 minutes of your life, and we will see each other probably not in the very near future, because we all have our lives to live. But you guys will do your homework and review the indicators when we send it to you guys. Cool. Thank you very much, and I am counting five to any late hands, any late text to the chat. One, two, three, four, five. Okay, see you-

JOHN MCCABE: Thanks so much. Bye.

MANJU CHEN: I do not know when, but I will see you guys.

JOHN MCCABE: Thanks, Manju. Bye.

MANJU CHEN: Bye.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]