

TERRI AGNEW: For the recording, this is Terri Agnew. Good morning, good afternoon, and good evening, and welcome to the GNSO Standing Selection Committee Call taking place on Wednesday, the 28th of January 2026. We have no listed apologies for today's meeting. 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 for the recording. As a reminder, participation in ICANN, including this session is governed by the ICANN Expected Standard of Behavior, the ICANN Community Anti-Harassment Policy, and the ICANN Community Participant Code of Conduct Concerning Statements of Interest. With that, I'll turn the call back over to the chair, Julf Helsingius. Please begin.

JULF HELSINGIUS: Well, thank you, and good morning, good afternoon, good evening, whatever for everybody. Does anyone have any updates to their SOIs? I don't see any hands, so I guess not. Then we can go right onto the actual business looking at the mentor thing, and I think you all seen the results, but do we want to go through them or do we just jump straight into discussing the results?

SAEWON LEE: I'm happy to provide a bit of background and context if everyone agrees, Julf.

JULF HELSINGIUS: Sure. Before that, there's one comment I want to make. There was one applicant that actually submitted their application too late and we had a quick discussion about that and I made the decision to allow it, but with a remark that it was too late. And I just wanted to make very clear that I made that decision without knowing from which constituency the person was. So, rather [02:00 - inaudible] happened to be from my own, so yeah, but it is what it is, right. Yes, if you could walk us through that would be great.

SAEWON LEE: Great. Julf, what you mentioned also it's clearly noted also in the list as well, and I'll also be mentioning that as well for the record. So, thank you Julf, and hi everyone, this is Saewon Lee from staff, ICANN Org for the record. I see Jeff with his hands up.

JULF HELSINGIUS: Yes, Jeff, go ahead.

JEFF NEUMAN: Thanks. Just real quick, so the only document I saw was, and I'm new to this group, so, the only document I saw was just each survey result, but is there a cumulative document that kind of averages, or did I miss that or that's it, it's just the few pages that like each -- I saw everybody's answer or everybody that responded, but I might have missed any cumulative averaging of scores. There you go. So, did I miss that?

SAEWON LEE: Yes, so this would...

JULF HELSINGIUS: I guess so. Yeah, two documents.

JEFF NEUMAN: Ah, okay. I only saw the one, but, okay, nevermind. Thanks.

SAEWON LEE: So, I'll be briefly going through this anyways today, and this was by the way, in page eight of one of the documents that you probably received, but I will be going through this. Before I do, I do want to direct everyone to this page. Obviously, everyone I think will be familiar with this by now. And I'm also sharing this on the chat for you. So, this is where all the process details as well as the candidates are presented. And I'm scrolling down for you quickly just to show you the candidate list. And again, I'm sure you went through this as you were assessing the candidates.

But basically, as I mentioned, I'll be giving you a brief background just so that it helps with a discussion and I'm hoping to be very brief. The survey, as you all know, opened last Monday, last as in 19th of January, Monday, ended this past Monday on 26th of January. It was a good full week, and luckily, we also had nine responses in total. I must say, in the time that I've actually supported this group, it's the most that I've had, so thank you all. Well done, everyone.

But I do want to mention that they did not necessarily represent all the stakeholder groups and constituencies, because actually some alternates also responded to the survey. So, that's just for the record, I wanted to mention that. Last year, one of the comments that we had also received that was during the call that we mentioned all the responders to the survey. So, I'll also do that today. Usually, I would actually list them in the order of the responses, but today I'm not going to do that. I'm going to actually list them in the order of how they're listed in the Wiki page members page as well as starting with the leadership team. So, here goes.

For the nine responders, Julf Helsingius from NCSG, Jeff Neuman from Registry Stakeholder Group, Natalie Howatson from Registrar Stakeholder Group, Asteway Negash from BC, and I'm sorry if I'm butchering your name, but Cameron Panepinto from IPC, Pedro de Perdigão from NCSG, Frank Anati from NCSG, Benjamin Akinmoyeje from NCSG, and Gaurav Vedi from NomCom.

So again, thank you to all those that participated, and your input does help speed up the discussion today, but I do want to reemphasize, as I also did in the email that for the record, this survey results should not affect the final decision. Obviously, the discussions will be what determines the outcome of the process. So please do note that for the record.

Now, as I mentioned and showed you earlier through the candidates, we had six in total, and I'll actually scroll down for you, the page. So, here we had six in total. And again, I also want to note for the record that this one candidate submitted the EOI after the deadline, and as

you've also mentioned, this was accepted at the discretion of the leadership team.

And the reasons were the EOI date actually marked was 16th of January, which was the deadline date. And at the time they considered that the number of candidates was quite small, so this was accepted. And obviously, not only is it noted in the Wiki, it was also noted in the survey. So, you would've all been aware of that.

As for the survey results, again, I shared with you through the email, but just for those that may not have seen everything, I do want to point you to this page. This is page eight of the data all file, and again, the two files were sent to you through email, and they're also posted on Wiki today's agenda page. And if you see in this page, you'll see that I have weighted the average but also ranked the top three from your results, and they're marked in red on the side.

And as you can see in the red frame, again, I'm so sorry if I'm butchering their name, but Imran Hossen has ranked number one overall with an average score of 5.1. And the comments were that as an ICANN fellow and a previous NextGen mentor, he's actually very active in the ICT policy and heavily involved in the ICANN working groups. He's highly qualified in this role with a great understanding of the fellowship program, and he has proved his experience with newcomers. Also, that his...

JULF HELSINGIUS: Sorry, Saewon, I had to interrupt you a little bit. I just got a message from Pedro that he's been trying to get into the meeting room, but he's still on hold.

SAEWON LEE: He's in now.

JULF HELSINGIUS: Okay, great. Thank you. Sorry for interrupting you.

SAEWON LEE: No worries. So lastly, that his application was also on point and was very detailed. With that, I do want to also mention the rank number twos which is a tie between Paulo Marcus Gampel Drewiacki, and Juan Manuel Rojas Piedrahita. They both had an average of 4.4, but when you do go into the yes or no response categories, Juan received eight yeses and one don't know, while Paulo received only six yeses with three don't knows.

They both received positive comments in the responses all file, most of them showing that they both qualified for this role in different ways. Paulo having great mentoring skills while Juan having great experience in the policy realm. So, I think this briefly summarizes the survey results, and with this result, I will hand the floor back over to Julf to start with the discussions. Back to you, Julf.

JULF HELSINGIUS:

Thank you, Saewon. Thanks for really good walkthrough. Yeah, I made the same observation. Juan actually had some more number ones than Paulo, even though both [00:10:55 - inaudible] number twos. So in that sense, I would maybe justify putting Juan number two and Paulo number three in this grading, but that's cut off. So the first thing I always do when I look at the results is, how many people got a no? And we had two. So, those kind of are straight out because we want a consensus, and if even one of the staff says no, then that person is no. So basically, we have two people who are so clear nos.

We also, as you can see from the results, clearly have three people who have some better results than the others. So, I'm gonna open the discussion, but my first question is, of course, does anyone have anything against picking Imran as number one just based on the results? Feel free to discuss. Jeff.

JEFF NEUMAN:

Yeah, so, this is not anything negative, but I put in my survey results and I don't care people who know it. I know came back anonymous. But there were three NCSG, I think three NCSG people, and what I said in mine is I don't know. I didn't say I don't know. Imran, I actually picked him second in mine.

But based on just reviewing the resume or the CV, but I said in there that I wanted to hear from the NCSG members as to how they would rank the three NCSG people because obviously you guys are much more familiar with the NCSG, and they said they're active in the NCSG. So, I don't know if there's anyone in the NCSG that wants to just talk about

Imran. And I think Juan Manuel's also in NCSG. If I'm wrong about that, then ignore it.

But that was just one of my things. I know Paulo and I know him well. For those of you that may not know him, aside from being in NextGen, he has participated recently in the Registry Stakeholder Group. He's been in there for a while as an alternate, but he was Rubens Kühl's -- he worked for Rubens, so he's sort of now taking over Rubens' role. So yeah, I actually picked Paulo as the top one just based on the fact that I know him, but love to hear from NCSG members on Imran and Juan, and I think there was another.

JULF HELSINGIUS:

John, yeah. I think, yeah, Imran is business. I see something in the chat that Pedro has responded his opinion, so also, as an NCSG member, I can say that Juan has really been active for a long time, so he would definitely have been -- from the NCSG people, he would be my number one pick as well. So, that's kind of my comment to that. Vivek.

VIVEK GOYAL:

Just sharing my feedback about Imran because he's part of the BC and I've been working with Imran for quite some time. He's a very engaged member of the BC, he puts his hand up for participating and volunteering for different aspects, different committees, and I know he has been very supportive and a mentor to a lot of NextGen members. And being a fellow, he has been very supportive and helpful to fellows as well. Just wanted to share my feedback about Imran. Thank you.

JULF HELSINGIUS:

Thank you. Gaurav.

GAURAV VEDI:

Hi everyone. Yeah, I concur with Vivek and some other members here as well. So, it seems like we have a unanimous winner here, Imran here. I also voted for Imran and I have never worked with any of the six candidates so far in any of the working groups or anything like that. So for me it was a completely unbiased opinion by simply looking at the EUI for each candidate. And I think Imran has the potential and the exceptional capability to actually support the fellowship program. My second winners, like second rankings were Paulo and Juan. So, I think there's a tie there.

My concern here is that in case if Imran is not able to take on the fellowship program lead role, then we should also look at the alternates or a backup in case Imran is not there. So, maybe between Paulo and Juan. Again, this is just my thought, and happy to discuss more with the members here.

JULF HELSINGIUS:

Thank you. I'm not sure we actually have a formal mechanism for actually appointing a spare or backup or vice. We pretty much have to give a recommendation to the GNSO council, and it's up to them then to decide how they do with it. We can, of course, come with a comment that saying, if there's a sort of backup needed, this person would be what we would recommend. Susan, you have your hand up.

SUSAN MOHR: Good morning, this is Susan Mohr for the record. And I apologize, although I wasn't able to complete the survey in time, I was able to go in and look at all the documentation and I would support Imran as the candidate, the final candidate based on my review of the documents and the final survey that was completed here. So, I just wanted to put that on the record. Thanks.

JULF HELSINGIUS: Thank you. That's valuable extra input. And my comment is that, if Imran is actually taking over from Rubens, no, sorry, it's Paulo is taking over from Rubens, that would definitely be a recommendation. But I'm gonna loop back to, does anyone have anything against picking Imran as number one choice? Susan, I assume that's an old hand.

SUSAN MOHR: It is. Thank you.

JULF HELSINGIUS: Ah, sure, thanks. Benjamin, yes, you are allowed to talk even though you're an alternate. We are happy to hear your opinion.

BENJAMIN AKINMOYEJE: Okay, thank you for allowing me to talk. I just wanted to quickly bring something to your observation. I also can't ignore Imran's CV, but what I also need to let the community know is that Imran seems to have been

somebody who has been privileged, maybe not privileged, opportune to have mentored because all of his credits came from NextGen mentoring and multiple of those.

So it was a no brainer to just select him, like, oh, he has mentored NextGen and all of that. But now I'm looking at it compared to other candidates who haven't had similar opportunities to be a NextGen and all of that, and how is it for us to look at them if they have value. So, I just want to also put that into the mix that I think to some extent, maybe in the future, how do you weigh candidates who haven't had so much ICANN opportunities compared to those who have had multiples of them.

That's just something I wanted to bring to your notice. Thank you. But I wouldn't doubt I also voted based on what the criteria that the Rubric was. Of course, Imran is a winner in that perspective because he has a whole lot of mentorship experience and participation in the ICANN space. Thank you.

JULF HELSINGIUS:

Thank you. So, anyway, it's off. Definitely seems nobody has anything against picking Imran as number one. And I think the only discussion is do we want to flag Juan as a number two just in case the GNSO Council wants to appoint us off spare or backup. It's something we can just solve when we send the answer to the GNSO Council, we just add to the, well, we picked Imran, but in case there's a backup needed, Juan would be the number two. Okay, Peter.

PETER AKINREMI: Thank you, Julf. So, just wanted to, like from, I know that I'm just here to observe because of the alternate. Just wanted to say like procedure wise, is this allowed and can this be actually initiated because I don't think this has been done before, and I want us to check with the staff if this actually can be done in terms of selecting alternate.

SAEWON LEE: Thank you for the question, Peter. So, it actually has been done before. Last year we actually had a case where we did provide an alternate through this group. It didn't go into action because the actual recommendation went through, the person who was chosen did fulfill his or her task, but at the time it was difficult reaching a conclusion that the ranking number two became an alternate or that was proposed as a motion. So, yes, there was a case that did occur.

PETER AKINREMI: Okay, awesome. Thanks for that. Because I observed last year that didn't get to the Council, so that was why I actually raised that. And in case that would SSC be looking at maybe like putting that in the guideline, just wanted to, I don't know if there's something like that before.

JULF HELSINGIUS: And that's a really good point, Peter, and in a sense, it's good that you speak up to that because in a sense, what we would do is basically dumping it on the GNSO leadership anyway, as in, we would give our formal answer, Imran is our choice, but then add as extra information

that if you need a backup, it would be Juan, and then it's really up to GNSO leadership and the council to make their decision.

It looks like we have a decision here. Jeff, I see your comment about Juan Paulo and how it's hard. What I'm looking at mainly is a guidance is how many people picked him as number one versus number two, but that's, yeah, it's just indicative anyway. Yeah, go ahead.

JEFF NEUMAN: So, how many people put Juan as, I'm sorry, either one of them is I don't know or I don't know them? Because I think that does affect the outcome or could affect. And is it zero, is that what we're saying?

JULF HELSINGIUS: I'm trying to see if we can see it from this graph. What we can see here is as of selections as number ones. I'm not sure we can see it as of I don't know.

JEFF NEUMAN: Because obviously Juan is in the NCSG, so the NCSG members know him well, but if Paulo got a bunch of I don't know hims, then I don't know, maybe it's a question for Saewon.

SAEWON LEE: Just to answer that because I'm not going to, I can only base it off of your suggestions through the survey. So, first of all, if we go up to, and again, so sorry for scrolling like this, but if you see, so Paulo, don't know

if you see it all on this page, but yes. So, he got six yeses and three I don't know, and then Juan received eight yeses and one I don't know, which I did briefly introduce in the beginning.

But if you actually go down to the ranking, as you can see here, Juan got four number ones while Paulo got one number one and four number twos while Juan got zero number twos, and they both got two number threes. So, I don't know if this helps you decide, but this is the result that I can provide to you.

JEFF NEUMAN:

Yeah, I think from my viewpoint, again, I think the fact that we have how many people in this SSC that are from the NCSG. Again, I think it's impossible to choose between the two because of the amount of people that didn't know Paulo, never worked with him. I'm not sure I could pick Juan over Paulo or Paulo over Juan for that matter. Because again, the I don't knows could be I don't know that person, or maybe the people that voted I don't know would like to say something. I want to know if I don't know means I don't know the person.

JULF HELSINGIUS:

Gaurav.

GAURAV VEDI:

Yes. By looking at the metrics that Saewon just presented, I think it's safe to assume that Juan received eight yeses versus Paulo's I think four or five. So, again, just my opinion, I think we do have a winner there in terms of second alternate. So, clearly Juan over Paulo. But again, I'll

leave the floor open for others to chime in and share their opinion as well.

JULF HELSINGIUS: Thank you. And I do have to point out that again, because we actually have to appoint by consensus, so basically, my question to Jeff is, are you against saying Juan is number two?

JEFF NEUMAN: In this situation -- can I see the questions again? What did they say in terms of is it, I don't know if they're qualified or is it, I don't know if the person, I can't remember. Sorry. Let me see the actual form.

JULF HELSINGIUS: Yeah, I think what Jeff is asking for is the actual wording in the question.

JEFF NEUMAN: Yes, thanks.

SAEWON LEE: Sorry, I'm trying to find it. Actually...

JEFF NEUMAN: Yeah, is there a way to just see the questions again?

JULF HELSINGIUS: I think we need to go back to the original questionnaire.

SAEWON LEE: While I try to share the screen, I think Peter has his hands up.

JULF HELSINGIUS: Ah, yes, Peter, go ahead.

PETER AKINREMI: Yes, just wanted to like bring in, because I wanted to steer conversations on how the SSC can actually have a broader applicant from the broader community because like Saewon noted that the applicants that SSC received this year does not represent a broader stakeholder community. So, wanted to steer the conversation from the SSC committee on how this could be done to ensure that SSC receive broader applications from the broader community.

JULF HELSINGIUS: Okay. Jeff, go ahead.

JEFF NEUMAN: Yeah, see, when I read this question, the whole based on the candidate's materials and your own experience, to me that wasn't -- now, I think every candidate has based on their -- I didn't answer I don't know for any of them because frankly I hadn't worked with any of them except Paulo, and I just looked at their CV and I said, yeah, based on the materials, it seems like, but I don't know if people that answered it

answered I don't know because they just don't know him at all, and therefore they were picking it that way.

The point is, I don't think we have enough information to definitely conclude that Juan is a number two, and I don't believe that the fact that more people picked him as one is something we should read into. Because my assumption is the people who said I don't know didn't pick Paulo as number one.

JULF HELSINGIUS: Okay. I want to address that. Can we go back to the original wording? And by the way, in previous times, we had a number of times where I actually had to say, I don't know if this person is suitable based on the materials. So, that is a totally valid thing.

And what I want to point out is it actually says based on candidate's materials and your own personal experience, if applicable. So, it's really, okay, if I know the person, then I can also answer from the personal experience. If I don't, then I look at the candidate's materials. And in some cases, I know at least I for one have had to say, no, I don't know if this person is suitable because the materials don't give a good enough picture.

I see Pedro's comment in the chat, and I think that is what we are arriving at. We don't have a consensus about an alternate, so let's just go for appoint a number one, and that's it. And if the Council comes back and says, we might need a backup, then they can ask us for that, but we haven't been tasked with that. Is that something we can all agree on? Great. Okay, yeah.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: [00:32:53 - inaudible] so I don't think we need to put so much time at this because I'm pretty sure Imran will be able to accept the position, so it's not really an issue.

JULF HELSINGIUS: Right. Jeff.

JEFF NEUMAN: Yeah, I agree with that, and maybe just as a note for future surveys that we figure out a way to differentiate whether the I don't know is due to the fact that they don't know the person or the fact that the materials, as Julf said, it's hard to tell from the materials alone because I just want to be sure the next time if we have to select a candidate and this comes into play, that we know why someone put I don't know.

JULF HELSINGIUS: Yeah, that's a fair concern and I wonder if we can deal with it just by having that put in the comments or whether we actually need to reform the way the questionnaire works. Okay. Saewon is saying she will resign the survey if possible. Great, okay. I guess we dealt with this agenda point then, so then it's become how do we go forward? And I think we want to proceed as fast as possible. Okay, Peter.

PETER AKINREMI: Yeah, and thanks, Julf. I don't want to intervene in the committee conversation. So, still wanted to raise what I raised on how SSC can attract and can get broader application from the community. So, it's still something that I think the SSC needs to discuss about to ensure that all the applications being received actually represent the broader community because it's something that needs to be addressed.

JULF HELSINGIUS: Yes. I'm just not sure how much we can do about it. I think a lot of it is really getting the information out when there's a call out to make sure, and I think it's up to the constituencies and the different parts to spread it out to their members that there is this call, please respond.

PETER AKINREMI: Yeah, thanks, Jeff, on that. So, wanted to ask Saewon, was this shared broadly on different SG?

SAEWON LEE: Yes. So, for every SSC call for volunteers and any EOI announcements, we not only share it. So, first of all, it's announced through the ICANN Org website, and then we upload it again or announce it again separately for the GNSO nominees. And then we also share it through the SGC mailing list. And we, as you saw through just the survey as well, we send constant reminders. So to the extent possible, we try to reach out to as many as broad as possible. I hope that answers your question, but yes. I think Pedro also mentions that it has been an issue in the past. Again, I don't think it's just an SSC issue. It is an issue that needs

to be resolved, but at least for the SSC side, we do the outreach as much as possible.

PETER AKINREMI: All right. Thank you, Saewon. So, just wanted to say, because I know I've been here also, I wanted to see if there is a way to improve, so that's why I raised. Apologies for taking your time.

SAEWON LEE: Thank you. And as you all know, Peter is here as our Council leadership representative, so it's very valid concerns that he's sharing with us. Again, I think it's something that we need to think about on a more high procedural level which we will definitely try to consider for future processes. So, thank you Peter.

JULF HELSINGIUS: Right. So, next steps. Saewon, do you have the timetable in mind?

SAEWON LEE: Yes, I do. So, I think we've reached a decision. So, with this decision, if you see the timeline in the screen here, you'll see that following today's meeting, a consensus call message will actually be sent out for 48 hours. So, it will be until Friday the 30th of January. And if no objections, because this has to be a full consensus decision, the preliminary decision will be sent to the ICANN Fellowship Program prior to the Council confirmation because they require this decision by 10th of

February while the Council meeting which will confirm this will be on the 12th of February.

So, with this in mind, the request to the members here is just to look out for the consensus call message that will be out for the next 48 hours.

JULF HELSINGIUS: Thank you. Jeff.

SAEWON LEE: I think that's all.

JEFF NEUMAN: Yeah, thanks again. Sorry for so many questions, but this is my first time. So, with the consensus call, do we have to vote yes, or is it we just don't vote no? In other words, are you expecting a response from everyone or only if you object.

SAEWON LEE: So, the way that the message will be sent out is that we don't expect any response from you unless there is an objection. I hope that answers your question, Jeff.

JEFF NEUMAN: Yes, thank you.

JULF HELSINGIUS: So, it's basically a speak up now or shut up.

SAEWON LEE: Not in so harsh, but yes.

JULF HELSINGIUS: Right. Okay, I guess that's pretty much it on the agenda. Any other business, anything anyone wants to bring up? Jeff.

JEFF NEUMAN: Yeah, sorry again. I'm just trying to just plan timing and stuff. Is there any position or anything that's coming in the near future as something we should be expecting?

SAEWON LEE: So, thank you for that question, Jeff. Usually, when we do have a next process that's already announced or in line, we do share that as one of our next steps or AOB. Right now, we don't. I also checked with our group as to what there may be that we can anticipate, and as of now, there is none and that's why we are not announcing any right now. And usually, how the SSE processes go, we also don't know until it's announced or provided to us. So, it's a very tight turnaround because everything's announced at the last minute to us or provided to us at the last minute. So, at the moment, no.

JULF HELSINGIUS: Yeah. Perhaps, Peter, do you have anything to add, what's on the council radar?

PETER AKINREMI: -- that relate to SSC.

JULF HELSINGIUS: Oh, I see. What positions do you think will be coming up that need our help in appointing?

PETER AKINREMI: Initially, I'm thinking of the DNS Abuse PDP, but currently, I don't know how that will go, whether that will come directly to the SSC. But I'm not yet clear on the process yet because I'm saying whether it's -- I'm sure that is gonna be between the SSC and also with the leadership that is gonna look at that, but I'm not yet clear on that process yet. But I'm sure that SSC is going to get something soon on that on if the GNSO Council decide that that will be the best route.

JULF HELSINGIUS: Thank you, Peter. Yeah, I wanted to bring that up to everybody that is possible thing coming up. And to Jeff's question in the chat, no, there's nothing regular. It's whenever the Council needs something appointed, then we get together and do that. but there's nothing fixed in the schedule that we have to do. I think that brings us to the end, unless anyone has any more questions or AOB items. Then I guess I just thank

everybody for participating and we had a really good discussion. Thank you, everybody.

SUSAN MOHR: Thank you. Thanks, everyone.

PETER AKINREMI: Thank you.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]