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BARCELONA – HLG: Global Digital Agenda and Internet Policies  
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MANAL ISMAIL: Welcome back, everyone. If you can take your seats, we'll be starting in a minute. Thank you.

So thank you, everyone. And please allow me to introduce again Mr. David Cierco, Director General of Red.es, chair of the fourth session of the high-level governmental meeting on global digital agenda and Internet policies. Mr. Chairman, the floor is yours.

DAVID CIERCO: Thank you very much.

Welcome back. We are now moving on the last session of the day.

During the next hour and a quarter, we will discuss the various Internet policies that are being developed by different international bodies and actors, such as the OECD and the U.N. and what measures they are taking to combat the digital divide.

We will also discuss the role of ICANN in developing a more inclusive Internet on a technical level and also with others on a political level.

Remaining obstacles to access and connectivity may well also be addressed, how work under the U.N. 2030 sustainable agenda can address the remaining problems.

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To expand on these aspects, I give the floor to the moderator on the table. It is a pleasure to have the attendance of Dr. Gulshan Rai, National Civil Society Coordinator government of India.

GULSHAN RAI:

Mr. David Cierco, Director General Spanish Ministry of Economy and Business and the Director General of the Registry Red.es. Chair of the session, Mr. Andrew Sullivan, Mr. Dirk Pilat, Mr. Nii Quaynor, the special experts, the other special information experts, Ms. Pua Hunter, and Mr. Khaled Koubaa, distinguished delegates, participants and friends, good evening to all of you.

It's really a pleasure to be here. And I thank the government of Spain as well as ICANN for giving me an opportunity to moderate this session, particularly when the distinguished panel of experts are on the right.

I also thank the chairman for providing a brief overview of the session and the kind introduction of me.

As mentioned by him, the digital technology now has gone way to a digital world which has facilitated economic growth improving health, social development, thereby lifting millions out of poverty.

I, during a long association with this industry, have witnessed the transformation which this technology has made to the global economy. The digital transformation has been a process which has involved diverse stakeholders for achieving sustained and inclusive growth.

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The (indiscernible) process has resulted into 53% of the Internet penetration worldwide. Around 5 billion digital transactions are being conducted worldwide which include about a billion digital payment transactions. Today 10 largest companies in the world by market capitalization six are technology companies, which gives a sense how quickly the digital economy has made inroads into our society. This growth has been facilitated by incredible reach of the mobile phone, which has served as a single catalytic factor in digital revolution and transformed nearly every aspect of life.

Various reports available in the market have also suggested that the flow of global data grew by a factor of 50 during the last decade and is projected to grow by another factor of nine in the next couple of years. The expansion of broadband connectivity, infrastructure, falling cost of computer sensors, deliberation of digitalization markets, and new technologies like big data, artificial intelligence, machine learning, Internet of things are fueling the growth of the digital economy to a new height.

There's a feeling that these disruptive technologies will impact the job employment. However, various studies, as available in the market, have projected that expending Internet access in developing countries to a level seen in developed countries calling out productivity by as much as 25% resulting in an economic growth. Regional GDP to the extent of more than just \$2 trillion and more than 115 million new jobs.

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This (indiscernible) has changed the requirement of home and capital exposed to new ideas resulting in new management and businesses and new challenge of market access.

It is not an exaggeration that there will be heavy reliance on the technologies like artificial intelligence, machine learning, and clouds both for routine and more complex tasks.

Nowhere is the impact of digital technologies more evident than in developing countries. 65% of the individuals in developing world now own at least one mobile phone. The mobile phone penetration in my own country is more than 70%.

There are more than a billion phones out of which 40% are in the category of smartphone. India's digital economy is to touch \$1 trillion by 2022 and will be \$4 trillion by 2030. More than 300 million people are awaiting UPI-based digital payment, a complete innovative solution which has been developed in the country. Digital interface between government, citizens is going to be more challenging in times to come.

Like these stories, success stories in India, the similar growth stories are available for other regions of the world, particularly Africa.

Projected growth in penetration of Internet will account for 10% of Africa's total GDP by 2025 and create three million jobs. Digital economy will be generating more than \$60 billion U.S. in gains, education, health, and agriculture.

The story of the growth is truly inclusive not only in my country but in the entire world and the new initiatives like financial inclusion, digital

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identity, digital interface between government and citizen in the remotest part of the world.

The dominant language used in the Internet has been English. However, 60% of the Internet users worldwide are non-English speaking. The expansion of the Internet and the corresponding increase of use of Internet by various nations, groups, and communities that speak different languages virtually resulted in the need for a domain name that consists of characters apart from English.

The IDN, so-called IDN is one of the most significant developments to the Internet since its inception and has the potential to catalyze the growth of Internet, digital economy, and digital divide and gender divide. Despite the impressive growth numbers, many countries have yet to realize the full benefit of the digital economy. There has been a lot of international efforts, both in the nature the policies, technology development, sharing of best practices to bring more synergy in the initiatives among nations so as to boost the inclusive growth of digital economy and digital world. ICANN has played a significant and impressive role in the digital transformation. After an inclusive -- after an inclusive and long debate in the nation and communities, a multistakeholder approach has been adopted. ICANN has played a lead role in development of the IDNs. ICANN has also achieved a successful IANA transition which has led to multistakeholder governments. The work undertaken by the global Internet community to develop a robust consensus proposal for IANA transition, demonstrated the legitimacy of the collaborative approach governing the critical Internet resources.

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The IANA transition is a powerful illustration of the multistakeholder model at work and formation of a consensus-driven process.

We now need to take IANA further to ensure distribution of critical access across the world.

Significant barriers still remain largely as a result of policy and other framework which have not kept pace with the technological innovation.

The digital world is a new kind of a concept. And, therefore, it requires a new type of approach. If you wish to create a future built on shared prosperity, digital technology will be critical.

The true multistakeholder models need to be adopted in a true sense. The government has to facilitate such multistakeholder model by facilitating and strengthening the governance structure with multistakeholder community to create the best practices, develop policies and revolution that enable the digital society to leverage digital penetration to complete and innovate. We need to enhance the resilience of digital assets. The strong cybersecurity policies and safeguards need to be placed there.

We have to truly work together in creating awareness, building consensus in framework like privacy, data protection, data access to ensure free and secure flow of information globally. We cannot afford any segmentation and partitioning of any network. We should very cautiously and transparently adopt policies which should discourage

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creating disconnecting policies and check misuse of digital infrastructure and malicious activity.

ICANN has a big role and responsibility in developing a more inclusive Internet on a technology as well as policy level. I'm sure the efforts of ICANN and global communities will truly go a long way in bridging the digital divide and the gender divide as well as connecting and enabling next billion of people on Internet online with the sustainable development goal of United Nations.

The multistakeholder model I'm convinced will play an important role in creating dialogue between stakeholders, a platform for sharing experiences, best practices, and expertise.

We must, therefore, transparently discuss the ways and means how we can collaborate to facilitate in the inclusion and sustainable growth of the digital economy, how the government should work in creating a balance between the different policy initiatives, legal aspects, and other issues which have emerged.

We must work together to improve the (indiscernible), build digital platform, IDNs, and expand entrepreneurship.

The role of the government in developing innovating an inclusive digital economy is -- has become very important in the light of the innovations and the adoption of the (indiscernible) has come.

We have three experts. The first entered is Mr. Andrew Sullivan. He is the president and CEO of the Internet Society. He has worked in an international infrastructure and standard since 2001.

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I give the platform to Mr. Andrew Sullivan for his.

ANDREW SULLIVAN:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, distinguished members.

One of the things that is always important to me when we come together to talk, particularly in this environment where the multistakeholder model has been -- has been discussed so much over the last -- over the last hours, and in fact yesterday as well, is the critical piece that we sometimes miss in discussing that.

We talk about it as though it is an important decision that we make about how we want to govern ourselves, but it's important to remember that we don't really have a choice, because the Internet is a network of networks. And each one of those networks operates according to its own needs, its own desires, its own agenda. And then they interconnect to one another. And when you interconnect to somebody else, you have to get them to agree as well. It's voluntary. So you have to have a multistakeholder system because everybody has a stake, and if you don't get them to come along with you, they just disconnect and you don't get the Internet. You get a bunch of disconnected networks.

So this also, though, reminds us of another really super important fact, and that is that there's no one solution to how we're going to -- how we're going to achieve the development goals that we want for all of the people in the world. At the Internet Society we like to say the Internet is for everyone, and everyone is part of everyone. And so you



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have to -- you have to find how you're going to connect different parts of the world in different ways.

This illustrates two very nice things. One is that not everything is done by everyone. Some things, for instance, are outside ICANN's remit. We heard David Conrad speaking a little bit ago, and he was talking about how ICANN's remit is fairly narrow, and there are parts of it that are really important, and they're important for the Internet, and there are parts of it that are just beyond ICANN's remit. One, for instance, is one that we work at the Internet Society, and that's why I have this map up, because if I tried to name all of the countries, I would inevitably forget one, and in this room in particular, that seems like a really bad idea. So I have this map to show you something that we work on, which are these community networks.

Community networks are a way of connecting to the network, to the Internet, in a way that is perhaps useful in environments that are otherwise not very well served. And interestingly, we're in a country where Agweefee (phonetic), who is one of our partners, has been extraordinarily successful with this model. But they started working in locations where other models were not going to work. It was not commercially feasible for somebody to go in or the -- or the geography was very challenging for more traditional ways of working, and so community networks are a means of giving the power to fix that networking problem back to the community that needs it. And we collaborate with various organizations throughout the world, as you can see here on the map. I suppose I should point to it as opposed to the monitor. As you can see on the map. We cooperate with these

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various groups in order to connect people who otherwise won't get that connection.

Last week -- I'm from Canada and last week I was at the indigenous connectivity summit which was in Inuvik in the very far north of Canada. We went to Tuktoyaktuk, which is a community about of 900 people, and you can imagine there's not a lot of telcos who want to run big fiber lines into a community of 900 people, but there are other opportunities there for other technologies to be useful.

And this is something that many different stakeholders working together can achieve in a way that no one group can do on their own. And this is -- This is something that is -- that is super important.

Another example just came up a moment ago having to do with the internationalization of the Internet. And this is a different example of where -- of where multiple people have a role. And this is an example of something where ICANN's role is quite important, because they have been promoting this technology, the standards-based technology that allows multiple writing systems to be used in the Domain Name System. It's not a perfect technology -- over time, you know, we have run into some bumps -- but it is a technology which enables this. And I think this is another example of using this distributed system.

So what is the role of governments in these cases? Well, actually, there's an important role in the case of community networks because many of the community networks use wireless spectrum in order to satisfy many of these -- many of these issues. And governments are really the only people who are in a position to influence the allocation

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of wireless spectrum within their -- within their geographies, and in collaboration of course with one another through the International Telecommunication Union. But there are unlicensed portions of the spectrum which are sometimes tightly controlled, and we find if the spectrum allocation rules in countries are altered a little bit you suddenly have capabilities you wouldn't otherwise have and you can reach populations that are otherwise unconnected.

Similarly in the case of internationalization. There are policies that governments can adopt. This doesn't require a heavy handed participation. It doesn't require a global answer to these -- to these problems, but instead requires local action by governments in order to support the development needs that are relevant within -- within those geographic areas.

So I urge -- I urge everyone to remember that the only way that we get the Internet is by collaborating on this goal that the Internet is for everyone, and then figuring out how we can hook people up, how we can give them the development tools that they themselves can use to empower themselves and use this remarkable tool for growth and innovation.

Thank you very much.

[ Applause ]

GULSHAN RAI:

Thank you, Mr. Sullivan. The role of the government has been very aptly put. They have to facilitate the policy for the fixing -- putting the

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solution for the particular columns, depending upon the -- what kind of issues one is handling, and the collaboration is one of the approach which it's underlying the additional technology on Internet.

The next, our expert is Mr. Dirk Pilat. Mr. Dirk Pilat is a Deputy Director of the OECD Directorate for Science, Technology and Innovation. He supports the director of the science, technology and innovation in overseeing OECD work on innovation, business, productivity, dynamic, science, and technology, digital economy policy, consumer policy, as well as the statistical work associated with each of these area. He also helps ensure this work contributes to the strategic objective of organization to support and develop better policies on (indiscernible).

I give the floor to Mr. Dirk Pilat.

DIRK PILAT:

Thank you very much, Chair. And let me again thank ICANN again for giving me the opportunity to talk a little bit about some of the work that the OECD is doing in this area.

I wanted to focus on some of the roles governments can play in this area and of course we're touching on many of those issues in this discussion here today.

One of the things, the OECD has been working, as many people here in the room, on Internet-related issues for a long time. We actually, only about 20 years ago, we had our first ministerial meeting on electronic commerce in Ottawa, Canada, which was the first time we were bringing governments together to talk about these issues.

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I think what's happened since is that the whole focus on the Internet, on the digital economy, has really broadened enormously. We now see at the OECD that pretty much every area of policy-making, there is an interest, there is a focus on looking at the digital economy because it is affecting every area of the economy, every area of society. And more and more policy areas are becoming interested in this topic.

And I think it requires that we look at this issue on a much broader context. We need to look a little bit across some of the silos we often see in governments and try to work on this issue more and more together with stakeholders, as I think happens here also in ICANN.

So what we have done at the OECD is to develop a new thinking, a new policy framework to help us think through some of the issues which we think we need to look at if we really want to maximize the benefits of the Internet, of the digital economy for growth, for well-being, for jobs, and so on. Now, some of those issues I think we've all spoken about already. Access obviously is still one of the fundamentals. If we don't get people connected to the Internet, if we don't get some of the remote communities, if we don't get rural regions, if we don't get all genders and also all small firms connected to the Internet, we risk losing many of the opportunities. So I think connectivity is still a very large part of the game.

However, we also see that even if firms are connected, or even if people are connected to the Internet, it doesn't necessarily mean they use it very much or they use it for the right opportunity. So I think we need to also develop this agenda of use, which is very much around skills

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development. It is sometimes about giving some new capabilities, developing some new capabilities and firms to make sure that we also sort of really get the use to bring out the elements that the Internet brings.

The third is innovation. I think a lot of the opportunities from the Internet come with new business models, with new firms, with new sectors where sometimes new opportunities are being created. So we need to look at basically how do we unleash innovation? How do we get that going? I think that means looking at regulation, looking at the rules, are they still fit for purpose, can we do things in a different way to really unlock opportunities.

The fourth area to look at is jobs, because I think we still see in a lot of countries the job impacts of information technology in a digital economy. In our view, we doesn't think it will really affect the overall level of jobs, but it will have an impact on the composition of jobs. We will lose some categories of jobs, routine jobs. We will probably get more qualified, less routine jobs back, and that means we probably need to help people in getting -- moving to some of those new opportunities, and obviously that is really about the skills agenda.

The fifth area we look at is society. Can we also maximize the impacts for society in terms of, for instance, better health, better government, better education, all the opportunities that are there that we can, I think, really unlock if we get this right.

The sixth area we spoke about in the second area: Trust. How do we make sure the Internet is secure? How do we make sure privacy is being

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protected, data is being protected, consumers are being protected? A big area of work and something I think ICANN often touches on. And the final one is market openness. How do we make sure we have competition, we have trade, we have interoperability? Because that helps us make sure that prices go down, that more and more people can benefit from these tools.

So I think there's a lot we can do in looking at these issues. And this is not a theoretical framework. We are currently applying it in some of our countries. We have done a study for Sweden already. We're currently working at Colombia. We are trying to work through the issues with countries to try and see where we can go.

I think it is important to develop and look at these issues in an integrated way because that is a way to really make sure we get the opportunities, we mitigate some of the challenges which we know there are there, to make sure we get the balance right. And sometimes there are issues where if we only work on them in siloed away, we don't get them right. One I think is data protection. In many governments this is still very much looking -- we're still looking at the issues from a legal perspective, whereas I think we also need to look at this much more in a cross-cutting way to make sure we really unlock some of the opportunities in using data.

My final point was to basically a question I think which was raised in the agenda: Can we make this work for everyone? I think always technological revolutions or changes as are happening at the moment, they always create a lot of disruption. And disruption -- I'm an

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economist, disruption is not a bad thing, but it is important to make sure that we connect everybody, that we give everybody the opportunities to really work with this technology, that we try to develop work on skills because that, again, can help somebody gain some of the opportunities, that we help to drive prices down, which is about trade and competition. That we private sector privacy and consumers' rights, and that we also create some of these new opportunities by innovation and really sort of creating some of the new markets and the new jobs that we need.

We still think, and I think -- I see that we have a lot of -- I think we heard it from Dr. (saying name) as well, that this is something that's a really good opportunity if we can get this right, but there are a couple of things that governments need to help with to make sure that we get it right and that we basically unlock the opportunities and deal with some of the challenges that are there.

Thank you.

[ Applause ]

GULSHAN RAI:

Thank you, Mr. Dirk Pilat. Again, the points which have been stressed in the presentation in the collaboration, innovation, trust, secure, and market intraoperability. Community will have to facilitate the policy to develop and encourage the communities to develop a solution which finds good way to expand it.



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We have now the expert which we have. He is widely acclaimed to be the father of the Internet in Africa, Mr. Nii Quaynor.

In 1994, he established the first Internet service provider in Ghana and West Africa operated by Network Computer System, Unlimited. He then assisted in implementing the thought commission, thought commission on new technology throughout SubSaharan Africa. He has been a very, very well-known and respectable face in the Internet community. Mr. Quaynor.

NII QUAYNOR:

Thank you very much for the kind comments. His excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, at least I should wish you a happy 20th anniversary for everyone. I was fortunate to have witnessed the establishment of ICANN and pleased with how ICANN has helped many of us to contribute to the Internet.

I'll make some remarks on the ever elusive yet critical digital divide and on the global agenda on Internet issues in general.

The recognition of the digital divide by governments, the U.N. and other intergovernmental organizations soon after the Internet was introduced into the developing world has helped a great deal in mobilizing resources to address the issue. Today, technology is well mainstreamed in development programs, and we look forward to the U.N. 2030 sustainable agenda to make further advances.

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The Internet will no doubt strengthen the means of implementation of the development goals while ICANN has an interest in developing a more inclusive Internet on a technical level.

The local action orientation of the development agenda is very well aligned with inter-networks. Development occurs in countries, and similarly networks grow at the edge, also in countries. This concurrence makes it clear the special role of governments in developing innovative and inclusive digital economies in our countries.

Access, connectivity, and capacity are important parts of addressing the digital divide. This puts governments in position to provide leadership in determining what local policy or facilitation makes networks grow in order to benefit in the development initiatives. In this regard, we need to recognize that networks and infrastructure are not under one authority. Hence, cooperation among independent authorities is necessary to address the issues. This calls for much more discussion than usual; hence, multistakeholder, bottom-up approaches to decision-making is a good option.

There are already local in-country communities practicing these approaches. For example, ccTLDs, operator groups, national research and education networks, CERTs, and others. The success of the multistakeholder approach depends on increased participation and balance of roles. Thus, an encouraging local policy environment will stimulate more community involvement and discussions to create a more inclusive governance opportunities.

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IDNs offer enhanced access to the Internet by reaching out to new language communities and can also be used to preserve older and no longer spoken languages, especially from the developing world. However, IDNs do come with -- do come with increased multi-lingual content. This raises a question to ICANN on how far we'd be willing to engage. Would we only want to engage at the level of domain names or we would like to technically stimulate and activate local content skills?

Perhaps governments working with the emerging local Internet ecosystems might take on the role of continuously identifying language, committed local languages, and technically characterizing them for inclusion on the Internet and, when it makes sense, to participate in the IDN work at ICANN.

Technical capacity building and communities that retain knowledge are good weapons to combat the digital divide. These are best performed at the edge. Thus, a need of emerging economies to strengthen the local Internet technical institutions with best common practices and the know-how to effectively combat the divide when it's most needed.

On our part in Africa, the community reached consensus in 1998 to establish regional technical institutions that will build capacity and maintain communities. We have since been building operator groups, (indiscernible) registry, names registries and registrars, research networks, and others in response. These institutions promote and support in-country activities. ICANN's technical role in supporting

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identifiers has been strengthened with each regional engagement programs. We have to continue to find ways to amplify these regional activities to support more country initiatives. While we desire to help leapfrog the digital divide, we have to do it in such a way that it preserves knowledge and experience. Every technology wave leaves behind some knowledge and experience which may be valuable in future waves. The real challenge of technical capacity building is how to retain this knowledge in the communities as we go through the waves. Perhaps more quickly and with more participation. In other words, it may not be leapfrogged. It may be more like tunneling.

We commend ICANN and Internet Society for their support in technical capacity building in Africa, and we thank everyone for working against the digital divide.

Thank you very much.

[ Applause ]

GULSHAN RAI:

Thank you, Mr. Quaynor.

The presentation highlighted the special role of the government in developing innovative and inclusive digital economies.

The multistakeholder bottom-up approach has been suggested for more bringing more consensus involving more communities in the growth of the digital economy, the focus should be made on creating

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technical capabilities, activating all activity at a local scale. And the role of ICANN has been clearly identified.

I now invite our government senior government representative for the intervention. I request they give the floor first to Germany.

GERMANY:

Thank you very much. Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, as was pointed out already by the panel, it is of the utmost importance that all people can take advantage of the Internet.

Germany is very much committed to that goal. And I recall the commitment of the P20 to connect all people by 2025 that was given under the German G20 Presidency in 2017. In our view, the government needs to set the right framework and then give support where the market cannot cope with problems on its own, for example, in developing skills and in rolling out broadband in rural areas. That was already mentioned.

A few weeks ago the German government set up a cabinet committee on digitization chaired by Chancellor Merkel. And in three minutes I cannot point out all the issues we are discussing there, but I will highlight three policy areas.

The first is artificial intelligence. That is the next technological revolution. And at the moment we're not talking about super intelligent robots but about smart systems that support humans in various situations such as, for example, autonomous driving. The German government will present a national AI strategy at the end of this year.

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Second, the support for young innovative economies already mentioned by the OECD. Startups and young companies are drivers of structure change. They put innovative ideas into practice, create new jobs and lay the foundations for future prosperity and growth. To achieve this they need a suitable financing environment and good conditions for venture capitalists to fund their growth, and we work on that.

Third, a digital policy framework. We need modern policy frameworks which permit digitization to develop dynamically whilst also avoiding structural upheaval and ensuring that there is a level playing field for all. Therefore, we will have to review our competition role.

In data economy, we are seeing markets which operate on the principle the winner takes it all.

Network effects could lead to market dominance.

But we as governments have to guarantee competition and contestable markets.

This is also important to guarantee that the benefits of digitalization are accessible for all.

Here I call for an intensive dialogue between governments and commerce, science, civil society, and the young generation. Because the state and governments cannot handle digitization on its own. On the contrary, we have to do that together. Thank you very much.

[ Applause ]

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GULSHAN RAI: Thank you very much. The emphasis is to set the right framework, be it policy or process, and facilitate the support to the communities.

I now invite -- I give the floor to France.

FRANCE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Dear delegates, dear colleagues, with your permission, because this session is on the world digital agenda, I would like to mention something that is quite important in the framework of this agenda to promote the different causes, the different topics that were mentioned during this panel. It is quite enriching. As you know, France will welcome the 2018 governance -- Internet Governance Forum with our friends at the UNESCO. And, during that event, the president of the Republic, Emmanuel Macron, will be present. There will be a digital program including the peace forum, the dev tech forum as well. All of those will occur in the days prior.

The summit that year will be the Internet of trust. And so the idea will be to exchange our opinions, our different visions, to talk about the challenges of the digital world to define the agenda.

And I would like to attract your attention on the international strategy as far as digital issues that was published by France.

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I would like to also reaffirm our support of the multistakeholder model even in the framework of the United Nations as we talked about with the World Summit on Information.

And then we would like to also propose different ideas, different work tracks to work on the next edition based on the work of our Swiss colleagues, which I would like to thank. I would like to see all of you in Paris in three weeks from now to continue our exchange. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

GULSHAN RAI:

Thank you very much. I give the floor to Nigeria.

NIGERIA:

Mr. Chair, I want to rely on the existing protocol which has been established. I once submitted a national broadband plan in Nigeria cover the period 2013-2018 for the deployment of fiberoptic cables, that is broadband, has been on a non-discriminatory basis in the Metro police across the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria. It has a target of 30% penetration, which we hope would be achieved by the end of this year.

Again, this has prompted the (indiscernible) of seven infrastructural companies in focus, we call them.

I want to say that there is room for foreign companies to come and invest in Nigeria in the provision of infrastructures.

And I think that this is a very good platform to announce to the whole world that you can come to Nigeria and bring your investment which,



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with the population of 200 million, you can be sure that you'll get good government -- I mean good returns.

Furthermore, to achieve our target in the national broadband policy, we're encouraging wireless deployment by auctioning 2.3 gigahertz and 2.6 gigahertz frequencies for the deployment --- the ERG will leverage on smart Nigerian economic projects to improve contribution to ICT-enabled activities with a view of establishing an ICT-enabled ecosystem.

May I take this opportunity to encourage on developing countries who are particularly here and are present here that, apart from mentioning the issue of investment potential as in Nigeria, I think that we have benefited, you know, greatly from the online broadcast of our Indian minister with regard to the very robust proposals which I want to suggest that all of us should look through properly with a view to benefiting from some of the ideas which have been initiated.

Lastly, may I humbly -- because we are supposed to have a hard -- our time previously before this session, I therefore, want to yield, with your permission, Madam Chairperson, to my director of NITDA. NITDA is National Information Technology Development Agency, to make a few points which we would have made earlier on. Thank you.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER:

So the presentation made so far has been made by the honorable minister of communications from Nigeria. But it's (saying name) Who is leading the Nigerian delegation.

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And, furthermore, we begin by thanking the Spanish government for hosting this ICANN in Barcelona, this beautiful city.

In addition, we also congratulate ICANN leadership on the successful organization of this very important strategic meeting.

And, furthermore, in Nigeria we are in support of a multistakeholder model. What has been discussed in the morning, we are in support of that approach. And we do hope that all nations are going to be treated equally.

As part of digital inclusion, we have been doing a lot in Nigeria. And this has been explained by the honorable minister of communications here.

We forecast on driving digitalization that is over government activities particularly at the National Information Technology Development Agency, an agency of the federal government that is mandated to develop our information technology in the country. And that is why, on behalf of the government of Nigeria, we focus more on digital inclusion, digital job creation, and the promotion of government digital cyberspace. We have several pillars. And five of them focus more on the issue of digitalization.

Also we're making a deliberate effort to ensure that we move from the Internet of information to Internet of value. And that is why we are doing a lot now in the area of digital economy.

And, in this regard, we have an advisory forum which has been chaired by the regulatory bodies in the country, like Center of (indiscernible) of Nigeria and the National Information Technology Development Agency.

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This advisory forum focuses more on trying to see how we can leverage on the disruptive technologies and emerging technologies and come up with policies and guidelines where we can use disruptive technologies in areas like financial sector, like in education, and the rest.

And at the same time, National Information Technology Development Agency, on behalf of the federal government, has been providing intervention of wide area networks in the higher institutions of learning where Internet is provided free for all the students and the lecturers. And in addition, we also have free Internet access in our airports, in our marketplaces. And we are working on the guidelines and policies in order to make it more secured. These are some of the things we have been doing.

And, finally, as the honorable minister has said, in Nigeria, the price of Internet is very affordable. Because our population, it's very similar to the price of Internet in Egypt, Tunisia, and a few other African countries, which is something that I think is commendable.

So we hope that with this government a lot can be achieved. And we still have a market that investors can come and leverage on and get a win-win relationship with the country. Thank you very much.

GULSHAN RAI:

Thank you very much. Negotiating best practices and sharing success stories of the building the digital economy in Nigeria.

Now I give the floor to my colleagues from Burundi.

BURUNDI:

Ladies and gentlemen, Mr. President of ICANN or CEO of ICANN, Mr. Director General of ICANN, dear invited guests, in the name of the government of Burundi, I would like to express my sincere thanks as well as my gratitude for the host country -- to the host country as well as to ICANN for having put together this high-level governmental meeting on ICANN and its role in the Internet governance, which is an important theme. Because the Internet has now become a necessary tool for our society and it is present in entire areas of the world economy.

As far as the themes related to governance of the Internet, the Internet can be used to destabilize and destroy when there are violent cyber attacks. It can be dangerous for businesses as well as for states. I trust that this high-level discussion that is occurring today will bring light and reinforce the multistakeholder dialogue that is necessary for the future.

As far as the Republic of Burundi, our ICT development plan has been adopted in July 2011. There is as well a national plan that we are currently developing. The ICTs have become a tool for socioeconomic development in the long-term with the development of infrastructure, in order to bring this advantage to most of our population, to all of our populations.

The Internet is a tool.

We have developed more than 6,000 kilometers of fiberoptics, which makes Burundi one of the most densely populated in terms of

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infrastructure. We have connected the different towns in my country. And there will be a second phase as well. We will deploy the last kilometers by connecting smaller towns.

This deployment means that we decreased the cost of Internet connectivity which means that the Internet is more accessible to the population. It amounts to \$1 per day. You can have 4G access for that amount for some operators. And for some others it is less than \$10 a month. And you can get mobile access with that.

So challenges in terms of governance -- those issues are of great important at a time we're preparing to enter into a totally digital economy. We need to keep deploying those broadband technologies. We need to also secure them. Distinguished guests, current news as far as cyber attacks, shows us on a daily basis that the digital world is not immune to criminal actions. The growth of this digital economy also enables fraud, fake identities, and opens up new areas of conquest. Our businesses are victims.

Despite all of those threats, we do not wish to build a world -- a secure world based on fragmentation of the Internet.

What we wish is a more secure world with worldwide cooperation promoted -- which promotes growth and cooperation between the different stakeholders. The development of a more secure world relies on permanent international cooperation with a goal to increase trust and dialogue and find consensual solutions with all stakeholders involved.

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To that effect, there are good solutions that can be used such as the one that ICANN proposes through different workshops, regional workshops to build skills. This is something that should be encouraged. I would like to use this opportunity to congratulate what ICANN has done in Nairobi and in Dakar because topics having to do with governance and the DNS are becoming more complex.

We are relying on ICANN to continue its work in this area to continue building skills, building capacities on Internet governance as well as other challenges linked to the DNS.

Those programs should take into account the needs in different areas of the world.

There are different efforts that ICANN needs to put forward. I think that tomorrow we will benefit of those -- the fruit of those efforts. Distinguished guests, I would like to thank you for your attention.

[ Applause ]

GULSHAN RAI: Thank you very much.

This brings us to the role of the government in the expanding the digital infrastructure and the cooperation and the emphasis on international cooperation and the different stakeholders to achieve the digital growth in the economy.

Now I give the floor to Canada.

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CANADA:

Thank you, Chair.

I have three points overall. The first I'd like to share some of Canada's experience.

Canada understands the challenges we all face to effectively address the digital divide to be able to provide to all our citizens regardless of where they live in rural or urban communities with the real opportunity to participate in the digital economy.

We have developed an innovation and skills plan which involves the focus on bridging digital divides across the country and equipping youth with the digital skills for jobs of the future. Some of the highlights are Connect and Innovate program which seeks to empower citizens in rural remote parts of our country with high speed broadband Internet access. And thanks, Andrew, for calling out the challenges of the far north.

We've also launched Connected Families initiative for affordable Internet access in partnership with the private sector, a CanCode program focusing on coding and digital skills education for youth and a digital literacy exchange program to support community-based digital literacy initiatives.

So my second point is we believe in addressing connectivity inequalities in the long term, building resilient technical infrastructure and developing digital skills in our societies requires a coordinated multistakeholder effort where governments, the private sector,

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academia, civil society, technical operators, and international organizations work together.

We each have a role to play.

A good example of this collaboration are the efforts led by GAC's underserved regions working group where ICANN, along with governments and the Internet technical community, are working together to develop technical capacity across the globe and enhance the understanding of how the GAC and ICANN work together to ensure governments can more meaningfully participate in the technical discussions and advance public policy priorities.

And, lastly, I'd like to close by emphasizing that Canada strongly supports achieving gender equality and recognizes the global gender digital divide is evidenced by women and girls facing serious barriers to access and meaningfully used digital services and tools, particularly in developing and least-developed countries, which affect their quality of life and limit their opportunities.

We stress that we should all continue to create opportunities that empower women and girls to participate in the digital economy.

Thank you.

[ Applause ]

GULSHAN RAI:

Now I give the floor to Samoa.



SAMOA:

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, I bring you warm greetings from the government and people of beautiful Samoa. I'm very thankful for the opportunity to address you all and wish to acknowledge with sincere gratitude the kind hospitality accorded to us by the government and people of Spain. We appreciate your hospitality.

I thank ICANN for the wonderful organization of this multistakeholder conference as well as the great work it is doing to ensure the world population enjoys the use of Internet.

This is the first time for me to attend high-level government meeting at ICANN and GAC.

I'm told that the attendance from GAC representatives in the Pacific have been very low. However, I want to assure you that ICANN/GAC can expect regular participation from Samoa to add to the diversity of view and narrow the gap of participation from underserved regions like the Pacific. I commend especially the ICANN representative in the Pacific, Mr. Save Vocea for the great work ICANN does in Pacific region. And its role is crucial in helping build capacity of our Pacific communities on how the domain name and IP addresses can assist in developing digital services and building digital economies, data protection, and privacy.

ICANN can also play an integral role in facilitating information exchange and adoption of appropriate Internet and data policies by those like us who have yet to develop certain policies that will ensure leapfrogging

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the digital divide. For example, they input entrepreneurship, strategy of Spain we heard this morning.

This year we held an inaugural Digital Pacific 2018 in Apia, Samoa. This was organized by the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology and United Nations system. We were joined by delegates from Pacific Island nations as well as digital transformation experts and private sector from around the world.

What has become apparent, something I think many people in this room will agree with, is that no one country can go alone on digital transformation.

Digital Pacific 2018 mapped the beginning of what we hope will be a regional dialogue leading to a regional partnership for digital transformation. We need to work together to achieve this.

Given the advancing states of connectivity in the Pacific, an intergovernmental approach to closing the digital divide, introducing national IDs, and establishing e-governance systems will significantly enhance opportunities for employment, business, and improved living standards through better access to services at an accelerated pace.

Taking a joint regional approach in the national (indiscernible) methodology and the eCommerce (indiscernible) will help harmonize our systems and significantly minimize costs. Samoa started this journey and is ready to share its lessons. Donors and partners from the region and beyond including Australia, New Zealand, Estonia and others as well as United Nations expressed interest in supporting our

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regional efforts on digital transformation. We see this as intricately connected with regional security. In a time where cybercrime is increasing, fake news is spreading, we must pursue this ambitious agenda for cybersecurity at its core. Emphasizing the importance of technology and digital systems and strengthening in country maritime and regional security more broadly an adopting a regional approach will be key to our success.

(Non-English word or phrase) and God bless.

[ Applause ]

GULSHAN RAI:

Thank you very much.

Now, I have nine more intervention and three for my distinguished panelists over here. I request -- We have already consumed the time allotted to us, so I request my colleagues and the panelists here if you can take only two minutes or so (indiscernible). I now give the floor to Ms. Pua Hunter.

PUA HUNTER:

Thank you, Dr. Rai.

The government of Spain, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon.

The GAC and the ICANN recognize the struggles many GAC members have in following GAC's policy development processes and the overall

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work streams in ICANN. And as a result, ICANN provided support to the GAC Underserved Regions Working Group to deliver capacity development workshops for GAC members. ICANN provided assistance through its Government Engagement team, the Global Stakeholder Engagement Team and the Public Responsibility Support team. In this regard, I am honored to be given the opportunity to quickly share with you GAC's capacity development initiative.

The objective of the capacity development workshop was to increase awareness and knowledge of the GAC and ICANN processes. The idea was to allow new GAC members and GAC members from the underserved regions to participate in the discussions on public-policy issues and the work of ICANN as a whole.

In the broader ICANN objective, the capacity development was established to strengthen diversity and lower barriers to participation in ICANN. As of January last year, a total of eight workshops with approximately 250 participants in total was held. The workshops were funded by ICANN and the host country and delivered to the regions of Africa, Asia-Pacific, Middle East, Caribbean, and Latin America. The post workshop surveys indicated increased understanding of the GAC roles, the ICANN ecosystem, policy concepts and technical issues related to Domain Name Systems and the role of ICANN in the broader, global ICT-related policy and technical processes. However, there was no measuring the impact at the individual GAC-member level to confirm the survey responses. This could be a possible follow-up activity for ICANN's consideration.

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An important response from the post survey -- from the post survey and relevant to this High-Level Governmental Meeting was the capacity development initiative requires a much broader approach to include higher level government officials and ministers. I personally support the suggestion because I think this will have the potential to develop champion high-level leaders at the national level who will then support its GAC representative to be more active in tobacco and ICANN.

Moreover, it will allow your country to include in your national policies related work being discussed at ICANN.

I am conscious of the challenges many of you face that hinders your active and meaningful participation in the work of the GAC; however, to ensure your voice is heard and that we get members to some extent work on equal footing, I am pleased to assure you that you can always reach out to ICANN staff and to veteran GAC members who will be more than happy to provide the necessary support that you require.

Thank you.

[ Applause ]

GULSHAN RAI:

Thank you very much, Pua. I now give the floor to Mr. Khaled Koubaa of the ICANN Board.

KHALED KOUBAA:

Thank you, Chair. Distinguished guests, head delegations, member of the Government Advisory Committee, colleague, and members of the

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ICANN community, it's my pleasure to reiterate the ICANN Board welcome to all of you to Barcelona, the site of the ICANN 20th anniversary, and to this High-Level Government Meeting.

I would like to thank Andrew as well to remind us that the ICANN has a very narrow remit, and we need to look at the ICANN responsibility within that remit and stay focused on our mission. It's very important to the -- for us to discuss the role of the ICANN in developing a more inclusive Internet on a technical level, such as the IDNs, and also with others, on other levels, capacity building and for governments and citizens.

As stated this morning by the ICANN Board chair, Cherine Chalaby, the Board is developing a five-year strategic plan that includes proposed new vision that will guide all of us in our work, which is to champion a single open and globally interoperable Internet to be the trusted guardian of the unique identifiers. And to fulfill this mission, we will be implementing it to the ICANN governance model that we have, and this governance model has need -- need to be discussed and its evolution, it's needed to ensure balances and increasing need of inclusivity, accountability, and transparency.

The strategic ICANN plan for the next year will also include proposals of strategic goals and objectives that include more engagement to promote IDN, universal acceptance, and thus to advance the multilingual Internet. For IDN, for example, ICANN mentioned the work that ICANN has done in the field of accessibility and the development of local content which has been made especially with UNESCO and others.

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And this with the objective to improve access to the Internet for people in many countries.

And globally, this work has been structured within the ICANN org around three pillars. The first one is to understand the needs, and this is why the ICANN has created and opened different offices around the world, in places in Africa and Middle East, Asia, South America. And the presence of ICANN staff on the ground will allow us, in fact, to be in touch with the local officials and realities to identify the needs.

The second pillar will be to respond to the needs by developing different activities, including the capacity-building programs. So there is for government in general and traditional and police authority. There's also activity for the GAC government members, and Pua already spoke about it.

For businesses, we do a lot of activities. I can mention the DNS entrepreneurship centers, the webinars. And for civil society we found a lot of participation in ICANN meetings.

I also tend to agree with Pua when it comes to the third pillar, which is to the need of evaluating those actions. And I look forward to stay available to answer any question.

Thank you.

[Applause]

GULSHAN RAI:

Thank you, Mr. Khaled Koubaa.

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I give the floor to China.

CHINA:

Dear delegations, as an increasingly important driver of global economic growth, the digital economy is playing a significant role in the following areas. First, to increase the -- or update the network to increase the infrastructure within China.

Second, to promote technological innovation so as to improve the high-quality growth. Third, to promote AI and big data, new technologies, so as to improve the prosperity of digital economy. And fourth, to improve opening up and protect data protection and privacy.

China will continue to follow the G20 Digital Economy Development and Cooperation Initiative to improve broadband deployment and increase investment, promote entrepreneurship, promote eEconomy and business so as to improve the inclusiveness of the Internet and cooperate with SMEs and countries from all over the world. We will continue to unleash the potential of the digital economy.

Thank you.

[ Applause ]

GULSHAN RAI:

I give the thanks very much.

I give the floor to UK.



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UNITED KINGDOM:

Thank you, Chair. Good afternoon, Your Excellencies, ministers, ladies and gentlemen. Let me first thank the government of Spain for hosting this excellent meeting, and thanks also to ICANN and to all of our panelists.

My minister sends apologies that she's unable to attend in person, particularly as the United Kingdom is honored to have served as a previous host of this important event.

As other colleagues have said today, information and communication technology and the Internet in particular is critical to delivering the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, but it is still the case today that 50% of people across the globe are not connected. This must be a critical priority, not only for governments but for all the stakeholders in the ICANN community.

Many developing countries are making great progress to deliver affordable connectivity, and there is much that we can all learn from them. They are demonstrating what works: competitive markets with streamlined licensing processes, transparent and predictable regulatory frameworks which support consumers, public-private partnerships to support investment, open processes for allocating spectrum, and support for capacity building and skills development.

This is a demanding agenda for all of us, including the UK, and we don't underestimate the challenges faced in particular by developing countries.

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But governments cannot act effectively on their own. The roles of the private sector, civil society, and the technical community are equally important. The private sector is of course by far the biggest investor. Without the private sector, the Internet that we use today would not exist and we would have no hope of achieving the sustainable development goals.

Civil society plays a very wide range of critical roles: defending the interest of users, promoting awareness of key issues such as cybersecurity, and the gender digital divide, and the importance of local content, for example. And we heard today about the work of ICANN and the Internet Society, good examples of how the technical community is promoting capacity building and addressing issues such as DNSSEC and Internationalized Domain Names.

The multistakeholder model brings all these stakeholders together and helps ensure we are working towards the same goals. ICANN is a very good example of how to try to achieve this in practice, and it is a model that other international organizations could learn from.

It's not always easy. In fact, sometimes it's difficult. But in the ICT environment of the 21st century, multistakeholder collaboration offers us the most effective way and perhaps the only way to deliver affordable connectivity globally and to support delivery of the sustainable development agenda.

This meeting we believe is making an important contribution to those efforts, and we look forward to working with colleagues in the future.

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Thank you.

[ Applause ]

GULSHAN RAI:

Thank you very much for the very useful presentation and the suggestion. Now I give the floor to Japan.

JAPAN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I glad to have the floor again to make some remarks here.

Countries are facing various challenges. For instance, they might be implement the issues such as global warming, threat to healthcare such as infectious disease or labor force scarcity due to aging.

As I mentioned in the previous session, achieving our digital agenda, Society of 5.0, would be a serious and progressive answer to such challenges. The Internet and the networked AI system, which must play an important role, will (indiscernible) these issues and will have the potential to promote further economic growth.

We think the role of government is to build an open and secure cyberspace. We set a five-point (indiscernible) for achieving an open and secure cyberspace. They are (indiscernible) of the freedom of information, the rule of law, openness, autonomy, and progress among multistakeholders. Without (Indiscernible) of the free flow of information, no one can enjoy the benefits of the digital economy.

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Each country has their own conditions and national needs and rater systems and (indiscernible) for them, while respecting the assurance of free flow of information will be achieved for development of the digital economy. We work on the idea measuring the importance of the free flow of information in the G20 Digital Economy Ministerial Declaration adopted in Argentina in August this year.

Japan would also like to welcome the proceedings of OECD's Going Digital project. OECD is the most active international organization for economic development with both public and private relationships. We expect -- we expect that the OECD would continue to provide insight and advice on the digital transformation.

Japan is working on achieving SDGs for the G20 meeting in Japan next year. Along with the three points described in (indiscernible) SDG's action plan, promoting Society 5.0 related to SDGs, regional revitalization empowered by SDGs, and empowerment of women and the next generation.

The SDGs is a wonderful agenda and which people born in different countries and with different backgrounds can work together towards the same goals. The SDGs made through that process of the multistakeholder approach will not be achieved without a (indiscernible) Internet which is grown on the multistakeholder basis. We understand the importance of cooperation with players in various sectors. With Japan, we'll do our best to achieve SDGs.

So then I have a suggestion to Mr. Chairman. In light of the SDG fight on gender equality and empowerment of the women and the girls, and

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given that we may need to leave the room in 20 minutes, I would like to suggest or try (indiscernible) the ordering of the speakers rest to now yield the floor to (indiscernible) representative of UNESCO.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

[Applause]

GULSHAN RAI:

Thank you very much for the suggestion. And I think it should be taken note of.

Now I give the floor to OIF.

OIF:

Thank you, Chair. I would like to speak in French.

Dear excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, I believe that several of you are quite tired. So I am not going to present everything that I had planned to do. I try -- I will try to be brief.

And I would like to first thank the host country. I would like to congratulate ICANN for the remarkable job that they have done organizing this session.

As many of you know, the OIF is an organization of cooperation that very early was involved in the issues of Internet governance.

We have a program for democracy and multistakeholder approach. The idea is to promote the French speaking countries and their

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involvement in the digital debate worldwide. With this in mind there are a certain number of activities that have been organized. And I would like to just mention here that the OIF promotes the contribution of those countries in the development of public policies on the Internet whether it is within ICANN or within the Internet Governance Forum and others.

There are also activities of training of capacity building. And the OIF also works very closely with ICANN. I would like to just remind you that there was a training that we put together jointly with ICANN in Dakar in order to build a capacity of speakers on the topic of Internet governance. We also have a summer university, a summer training in Burkina Faso, in Ouagadougou, where we train African stakeholders on the topics of Internet governance.

We support the development of domain name industry stakeholders through different training proposals everywhere in Africa.

Beyond all of that, what I would like to say very briefly is that today we help with digital evolution. There is -- this is a new program that will be set up in 2019.

This program will develop a few main points. First of all, digital governance, which, of course, will have to do with Internet governance, public policies, cybersecurity.

A second point the common good that the digital world represents. Third point innovation and emerging technologies, artificial intelligence, and others.

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We already talked about that earlier, I'm not going to go back on that discussion. But I would like to mention that it is of great interest to the OIF. And this program will prioritize women and girls.

And then the message really is that the OIF believes that the multistakeholder model is excellent, that it should be improved within ICANN, though, and that we should all make sure that the participation of governance is not just to be there and witness things but to be more active, more involved at the same level as civil society.

I would like to thank you for your attention.

GULSHAN RAI:

Thank you much for sharing your success story and the role the multistakeholders played in -- by your -- by the OIF.

I give the floor to Chinese Taipei.

CHINESE TAIPEI:

Thank you, Chair. I'm Morris Lin from Taiwan. It is my pleasure to have the opportunity to make a few remarks here.

First of all, on behalf of Taiwan, I would like to express our highest gratitude to Spain and ICANN for the excellent arrangement and the hospitality to this event.

Digitalization and the emerging technologies like IoT, AI, and big data have created new paradigms of services that have greatly changed our lives.

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We shall try our best not to -- not only to reap the benefits of digital economy but also to address its possible challenges.

Therefore, please allow me to share three observations with you. Number one, I believe governments, (indiscernible) and citizens are essential to successful industrial transformation in innovation.

While facing the disruptive innovation the digital economy brings, governments should be able to quickly adapt to face changing environment in order to provide sufficient growth opportunities for people.

In addition, to enable successful industrial transformation, governments shall play an active role in many aspects such as accelerating digital infrastructure deployment in the citizens for digital industry digitalization.

Second, I believe working with all stakeholders is important for governments to ensure everyone equally benefits from digital economy development. Given the crosscutting and the overarching nature of digital economy, governments need to work with both public and private stakeholders to develop holistic partnership frameworks that facilitate the development of digital economy while avoiding its potential pitfalls.

Moreover, to ensure all people have the opportunity to participate in digital economy, governments can work with academia in the industry to cutaway the digital skills by providing education, resources, and training.



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Number three, I believe cooperating with the international society enables governments to establish appropriate digital economy policies. Because the Internet is by its nature across border, the challenges we are facing and the efforts we are making now are relevant and similar. I suggest governments work closely with international societies, especially ICANN, to jointly establish Internet in the digital economy policies. ICANN is the organization in charge of the security, stability and the coordination of the global Internet. It developed policies that can impact global digital economy development.

For this reason, I believe ICANN is the perfect platform for all governments to keep track of new trends, share and learn from each other regarding Internet regulations and policies and to jointly develop an enabling environment for digital economy.

In conclusion, ladies and gentlemen, digital economy is full of opportunities and challenges for all of us. Let's continue to work together here in ICANN to create a wonderful future. Thank you for your attention.

[ Applause ]

GULSHAN RAI:

Now I give the floor to Argentina.

ARGENTINA:

Thank you. I will continue in Spanish.

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In Argentina soccer is a religion.

When I got here, I learned the news that Messi has had a fracture.

So I want to thank ICANN for the invitation and for organizing this successful event. I also want to extend my appreciation to the government of Spain for hosting this event.

In Latin America we have more than 100 million people who are not connected, approximately over 700 million. So this is not a marginal problem.

Since we took the chair of the G20, we have promoted the idea of giving importance to the development of infrastructure as part of the digital economy. Argentina is the 7th largest country in terms of size and number 32 in terms of population. Infrastructure to get Internet to all its citizens means a significant challenge.

In this regard, the government came up with clear rules for investors to be attracted to make investments and in order to reach out to larger number of people. And also to make public investment in those places where private investors are not making investments. We have a universal investment fund that has been allocated to the building of a fiberoptic network of 30,000 kilometers where no private operators can get there. We are also giving subsidies to companies for this deployment. And together with all these investment we are doing a significant job in terms of digital inclusion.

Along these lines, by the end of next year, we will have trained a million people in digital skills. We are also having a digital transformation in

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the government moving on to eGovernment, cooperating also with local governments so that they can become digital.

And in this context, we believe that ICANN plays a key role. We support in Argentina the multistakeholder model. We believe that for Internet to grow over the years with IG networks and with Internet of things, it is increasingly important for all countries to work in coordination. And ICANN is the right place for that.

And we also believe that, together with Internet growth, it is an increasingly serious problem to be disconnected. In the case of Argentina with the implementation of many activities and eGovernment, some -- many procedures over the Internet, some people cannot have access to eGovernment. In Argentina we also have the presence of CTCL, (indiscernible) which is part of the OES. So in that regard, we are placing the focus on digital infrastructure and digital inclusion. We believe that this is essential for Latin America. And that is the only way in which we can overcome poverty and connect all the people who are still not connected. Thank you.

[ Applause ]

GULSHAN RAI:

Thank you very much, Argentina, for sharing the success stories among the different (indiscernible.)

Now I give the floor to UNESCO.

UNESCO:

Hello, excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, dear friends from France, from Burundi, from the OIF, we -- and I know (saying name) is freaking out because he told me I had to have two minutes. And I'll try to keep it to two, but it might be three or four. I did a little back of the napkin calculation. And I think, as many of us have said today and reaffirmed, gender equality is a priority for ICANN. It's a priority for United Nations. It's a priority for UNESCO.

And on the stage there are six men to the one woman. And like the room, I didn't do a head by head count, but I think it's 10 to 1 in terms of the amount of time. And that's reflection of society. And I think this has been a really fantastic event. And I extend my warmest thanks and congratulations to the organizers and specifically within the Spanish government to the ministry of economy and business, which I understand planned everything from A to Z as well as the ICANN secretariat and for all the people. So it's not a criticism. It's just to justify why I might need an extra minute.

I wanted to again -- this outstanding event -- what I thought is there's such expertise in this room and both on the stage and also on the floor. And I have been personally very inspired. This is ICANN 63. For me this is ICANN 3. It is my third meeting. But it gives me so much hope for the future of the Internet and the future of our society.

I had a lot of other things I wanted to say. But I'll leave it at a few buzz terms, as David Conrad said in brackets, hashtags, if you will, of things that are important for UNESCO. If you want to talk to me afterwards in the cocktail or if you're in Paris at IGF and you can catch up with me or

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someone who has a better title and more important position, I can also connect you for that.

So -- that's done in jest. It's not meant sarcastically, although it is true.

Here are the hashtags. Diversity, #geographic diversity, #linguisticdiversity -- I'll drop the hashtag for now -- gender equality, as I said. IDNs, open Internet, human rights, freedom of expression, privacy, access to information, sustainable development, all 17 SDGs and especially SDG number 16, multi multistakeholder model within a multilateral organization.

All the things that people mention of UNESCO of existing cooperation, but there are also so many other areas I think with ICANN itself and as a community and with each individual member.

So I would just encourage you to please come speak with me afterwards if any of those buzz words that UNESCO uses are also used by your governments or organizations. I also say I can also connect you with our field offices, which we have in about 55 countries around the world. Thank you.

[ Applause ]

GULSHAN RAI:

Thank you very much for your very, very frank comment.

Now I give the floor to Cote d'Ivoire.

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COTE D'IVOIRE:

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Ladies and gentlemen, ministers, dear distinguished delegates, it is a pleasure and an honor for me to talk to you in the name of our minister of digital economy and the post in Cote d'Ivoire. I would like to thank you in his name and to thank the Republic of Spain as well as ICANN for the warm welcome that we received here in Barcelona.

The Cote d'Ivoire member of the GAC agrees with the management model in terms of the IANA functions and would like to stress again its commitment with high-level experts to the policy development process within ICANN.

Of course, the multistakeholder approach is an ideal way, an ideal process to make decisions at every level. It should also be flexible. It should be dynamic in order to take into account the new challenges that the world ecosystem brings which always evolves and develops.

In Cote d'Ivoire, the reforms that were started by the state led to a new digital strategy based on six points -- the elaboration of a strong regulation, the building of digital infrastructure with third, fourth generation structures, the establishment of different plans for equipment, the development of different uses through digital programs and the development of local contents, the development of human resources and training to ICTs as well as promoting youth within Cote d'Ivoire so that Cote d'Ivoire becomes a place for entrepreneurship. The idea is to promote development and to promote certain values.

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I would like to also mention a few things that we were able to do. We have new laws for security, the law on private -- privacy and data protection, laws on cyber criminality.

And, in terms of our national strategy for cybersecurity, we also launched a new migratory process from IPv4s to IPv6 addresses. We also have a new law on the information society to have the basis of an inclusive society, a secure society, a human society, that promotes economic growth within our country.

Access to the Internet is now a fundamental right thanks to this law. In conclusion, I would like to invite ICANN to collaborate actively with all the governments represented at the GAC and with all of the stakeholders in order to work on codevelopment of policies on the Internet.

Also we would need to continue to ensure stability, resilience, and stability of the Internet through different capacity-building workshops of decision-makers and key actors at the regional level.

The commitment of Cote d'Ivoire towards ICANN and to the entire Internet community is firm. I would like to thank you.

[ Applause ]

GULSHAN RAI:

Thank you very much. Now I have the last intervention. I give the floor to South Africa.

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UNKNOWN SPEAKER:

Thank you very much, chair. Good afternoon ministers, distinguished guests. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the government of Spain for their hospitality since arriving in this beautiful city of Barcelona.

I think we've all agreed that the digital divide has far-reaching implications such as leaving the majority of people, in particular in developing countries out of the digital revolution.

Breaching the digital divide is not just about connecting people. It's also about ensuring that the people once connected are equipped to take advantage of the digital economy, accrue value for it, therefore, improving their lives. It is, therefore, important for governments to develop and oversee implementation of enabling policies to ensure that digital societies are realized.

To this end, South Africa is in the process of implementing South Africa Connect and has also partnered with the World Economic Forum in a project called Internet for All, this, in order to connect the 20 million South Africans that are not connected yet. This is an effort to ensure that South Africans can participate and contribute to what is termed the fourth industrial revolution, I think the key word here being "contribute."

For a long time as a developing country, we have been passive participants and just consuming products and services from elsewhere. And I think it's about time that this has to change.



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We are also in the process of establishing the African Digital Transformation Center of Excellence, which will focus on the changing world of policy development due to the first evolving nature of the Internet.

Policy development in this era needs to be agile, dynamic and flexible. Same time we also address innovation, SMME development, as we believe that SMMEs are the center of economic development, and also assessing the social impact of these technologies on the society.

And at the global level we believe that it is critical that governments should as equal participate in the development of international public policies as this has direct impact on national policies.

Also this would be my final point because I stand between you and cocktail.

Taking stock of the last round of generic top-level domain names. Out of 1,930 applications, only about 30 came from developing countries.

This is a cause for concern. The ability -- the inability for developing countries to participate creates another divide in the DNS industry, because I believe that you all want to be part of DNS industry. We need to be able to participate as equals. We need to be globally competitive with developed countries. And we need to be there. And we need to have the technical skills required for us to be able to run our Internet in our countries. And we need to take responsibility also as developing countries for that.

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So it is important for ICANN to ensure that there is more participation by developing countries in the next round of gTLDs.

And also, I think one other point I would like to make is the fact that we, as government, also believe that we need to be informed in regards to the two country code second -- top-level domains whenever something under our country codes is registered.

Thank you very much.

[ Applause ]

GULSHAN RAI:

Thank you very much, South Africa.

This session is an interesting session. Several success stories have been presented.

A lot of work has been done. 50% of the population has been connected on the Internet, but still, we need to connect 50% more population on the network.

Useful suggestion has been made, both in terms of the role of ICANN as well as the commenter. ICANN has done a very good job, good work, but more a constructive and aggressive approach is required on their part. Whereas the government should play a concerted role to facilitate collaboration among the different stakeholders in laying the digital infrastructure, the technical capacity building, the -- bringing the trust, securing -- and preparing the security policy, and finally the innovation.

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This is the only way. This is of the way to succeed and to bring the rest of the 50% on the Internet.

I thank very much the chair for giving me the opportunity. I thank the government of Spain. I thank ICANN. And most of all, I thank my panelists on the dais as well as the high-level officials and the Excellencies who have made the presentation and intervention. It has been a very, very informative session for me and many other.

Thank you very much.

[ Applause ]

I now give the floor to the chair.

DAVID CIERCO:

Thank you very much.

Thank you all very much. It was without doubt a very interesting session in which I believe we're lucky enough to hear from exceptional speakers. Unfortunately, we have run out of time and we must give way to the closing session. I will now give the floor to Manal Ismail, chair of the GAC.

[ Applause ]

**[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]**