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Introduction

Welcome to ICANN's 38th meeting. Welcome to our distinguished guests. And welcome to the heart of Europe.

Thanks to our hosts for their tireless work to ensure the success of this meeting. The warm welcome we have received is in keeping with Belgium's long tradition of gracious hospitality and exceptional cuisine.

It is always a great pleasure to come back to Europe. I had the chance to live here - in Germany, Switzerland and the United Kingdom – for several happy years and it is always heart-warming to return.

What a fabulous conference center. It's less than a year old, and a fascinating mix of old and new. Outside, the structure reflects Brussels' historic architecture and rich traditions; it blends immaculately with its environment. Inside, the brand-new interior is a visual expression of Europe's vision of its future: modern, sleek, dynamic, yet through its powerful evocation of Magritte's legacy, respectful of a country and a continent's celebrated history.

Europe and the Internet

We are honored to welcome the President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy, the first person to hold this eminent position. He has accepted a major challenge: to guide a new phase in the history of the European Union that began with the Lisbon Treaty. We also welcome the Vice President of the European Parliament, Silvana Koch-Mehrin, and by video, the Vice President of the European Commission in charge of the Digital Agenda, Neelie Kroes. Last but certainly not least, our local host, Marc Van Wesemael, CEO of Eurid.

The European Union's economic recovery began with an important acknowledgement: half the productivity growth of the past 15 years was driven by information and communication technologies.

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As a result, the European Commission launched an ambitious "Digital Agenda" to generate economic growth and spread the benefits of the digital era to all of society.

It has seven priorities: a digital single market, increased interoperability, greater Internet trust and security, much faster Internet access, more investment in research and development, enhanced digital literacy skills and inclusion, and the application of information and communications technologies to social challenges like climate change and the aging population.

The Internet is central to this plan, with interoperability, security and inclusiveness as central features of its development.

This is an extremely important statement for ICANN, which has these values in its core mission.

Europe is a key player in Internet governance, with a significant presence in ICANN's Governmental Advisory Committee, where EU member states and the European Commission have always played a prominent role. Ambassador Janis Karklins from Latvia has chaired the GAC for the past three years. The European Commission has provided the GAC secretariat in the past and the EU has been among the most committed participants in the World Summit of Information Society and the Internet Governance Forum process.

The Domain Name Space in Europe
Europe has been a consistent leader and innovator in the domain name space. The first international ccTLD was dot uk, created in 1985. Today Europe has six of the top 10 ccTLD registries in the world. Some examples: dot de in Germany, operated by DENIC, has 9.5 million registered names. Dot uk, operated by Nominet for the United Kingdom, has 8.5 million. Dot ru in Russia has 2.8 million, and now expands with the .rf Cyrillic IDN ccTLD. Dot nl in the Netherlands, operated by SIDN, has 3.9 million. Dot eu for the European Union, operated by Eurid, has 3.5 million and is among the fastest growing domain names in the EU.

Tens of millions of names are registered in European top-level domains, many by businesses and citizens in generic top-level domains. With the new gTLD program, applicants will be able to apply for top-level generic domains that will provide non-English choices and competition for .com, .edu, .net and others. The Catalan domain .cat, for instance, is the first generic top-level domain that directly addresses a linguistic community's distinct culture.

Dot se in Sweden was the first DNS-SEC signed ccTLD zone in the world, helping to lead the way in domain name registry security.

Europe has also been a leader in IP addressing. Under Managing Director Axel Pawlik's strong leadership, RIPE NCC, the regional Internet registry that handles Europe and the Middle East, has been an innovator in the address space. As the first regional Internet registry, RIPE NCC pioneered many of the tools, processes and procedures used by the addressing community today.

It promoted the introduction and support of TCP/IP networking within Europe – hence its name *Reseaux IP Européens*. RIPE also worked closely with Jon Postel, the original operator of IANA and a co-founder of ICANN, to decentralize the distribution of IP addresses.

A Multinational Institution
Surrealist artist Rene Magritte had a unique view of art and life. There's a new museum here in Brussels holding the world's largest collection of his works. Magritte famously painted a picture of a pipe and wrote on it, *"this is not a pipe."*

There's a lesson there. Challenge assumptions. Question what you see.

Many people think they know ICANN: they regularly label it a US-controlled, inward-looking and highly technical organization.

But ICANN today, in the wake of the Affirmation of Commitments, is a multinational institution working for the common good: a stable, secure and unified global Internet. And it is a multi-stakeholder work in progress, overseen by the world, for the world, reflecting its diverse international staff, board of directors and leadership of supporting organizations, as well as the increasingly global nature of its work.

Our relationship with the US government echoes this. Our close cooperation continues but within a broader international context.

We meet here today in an atmosphere of rapidly improving international relations as ICANN further integrates into the global community. The successful launch of internationalized domain names is a triumph for Internet users, especially for those in the countries involved, and for ICANN.

Since our very successful 37th meeting in Nairobi – and wasn't Kenya a wonderful experience? - I have had the pleasure of attending a series of highly successful IDN launches, visiting Egypt, Russia and the United Arab Emirates to celebrate their achievements, which have greatly enhanced critical relationships in the growing network of nations constructively engaging with ICANN.

For many millions of Internet users, the introduction of IDNs means they will be able to access the Internet entirely in their primary language. In our visits we witnessed pride not just in this achievement, but in the association of their

domain name with a country's identity, culture and national heritage. In Egypt, in Russia, in UAE we felt this rich mix of pride and tradition.

Since the launch of the IDN fast track process in November, ICANN has received 31 requests covering 19 languages. Four have been delegated and more will be soon. There are more IDN delegation requests scheduled for board consideration this week.

Innovation and creativity: expanding the name space
IDNs are an important step forward in the internationalization of the Internet, and of ICANN. The next important step is to make these names broadly available for a range of community, consumer and business interests around the world through the new generic Top-Level Domain program.

The fourth version of the gTLD *Draft Applicant Guidebook* was posted for public comment in May. This is a credit to the outstanding collaboration among ICANN community working groups whose expertise helped bring closure to several contentious issues.

The new draft includes trademark protection mechanisms, new rules for protecting geographic names, new measures to mitigate malicious conduct and a registry transition process model to protect registrants, including provisions for emergency transition in the case of registry failure.

Transparent and Accountable
Much has been made in the media of ICANN's consideration of the application for a .XXX top-level domain, which the board will address this week. This follows a non-binding decision by an independent review panel that the board should reconsider its earlier decision.

Although this issue predates my arrival at ICANN, I have been struck by the transparent way ICANN is dealing with this controversial issue.

Most people learned about the independent panel's decision when ICANN publicized it and subsequently requested public comment. Throughout the process we have sought opinions from all sides.

The Community Accountability and Transparency Review team constituted under the authority of the Affirmation of Commitments has already met near ICANN's offices in Los Angeles. It has been meeting again here in Brussels, and ICANN staff is contributing to this effort.

ICANN's staff, board and community have built an impressive record of accountability and transparency, and are building on these achievements.

In 2007 an independent 68-page report on ICANN by the One World Trust concluded that "*overall, ICANN is a very transparent organisation. It shares a large quantity of information through its website, probably more than any other global organisation.*"

It would have been easy to sit back and say "good enough" after praise like that. But we didn't.

We constantly renew our commitment to openness, and we act on it - every day, every month, every year. Even the pursuit of that commitment is done in utter transparency: we have an open, public assessment of further areas where we could improve.

For example, we are creating a comprehensive and searchable online database of all ICANN board resolutions going back to ICANN's founding in 1998. Doing this in a wiki allows transparent reporting on which resolutions were implemented and if the expectations of the community were met.

We recognize the right of the Review Team to publicize their views. But we also recognize the sizeable challenge they face - as a group that includes interested industry stakeholders and contracted parties - in attempting to produce an objective and independent report that the board and community will find useful. We look forward to publication of their framework and the objective basis for their work so the community will have an opportunity to review it.

The quest for greater transparency and accountability is an ongoing process. The challenge for ICANN is that no matter how good we are, we will never be "good enough". We are certain the Review Team will find areas where they believe further improvement can be made.

But we stand on our long record of pushing the edge to make ICANN as transparent and accountable as it is possible to be. We welcome constructive help and call on the community to join us in embracing this commitment.

Transparency, debate and discussion are hallmarks of our community, and a healthy indication that our multi-stakeholder model works.

Internet Governance and the Multi-stakeholder Model
ICANN's multi-stakeholder model works. How do we know? Because the Internet works.

Europe's support for the multi-stakeholder model in the next few months will be more important than ever.

There are those who do not believe in this model, or who seek to divert it for their own benefit at the expense of other stakeholders. Others want to see all private

sector and civil society stakeholders eliminated and to allow only governments to make the decisions, limiting the involvement of many parties that facilitate technological innovation.

The multi-stakeholder model is at the heart of our accountability to everyone who cares about the future of the Internet. It is responsive. It is transparent. And it hears all voices.

The future of that model is once again being debated in international bodies like the United Nations and the International Telecommunications Union. We must face the fact that governments control these institutions.

Given the serious proposals for an alternative to our bottom-up, multi-stakeholder model, we must redouble our efforts to support it if we are to protect the global public interest. All our stakeholders must step up to the plate and defend our common interest. We will of course work closely with the Governmental Advisory committee. But we need the active involvement of *all* stakeholders. We need your help, through every means available to you, to counter the misinformation and ensure that governments understand what is at stake when these issues are debated in the UN General Assembly later this year.

Acknowledging the tremendous dedication, voluntary efforts and contributions of the community, we also seek to engage more people with a broader range of views. This starts with continuing and transparent dialogue, respecting the model that ensures that anyone with an interest in the Internet has an opportunity to be heard.

Security and Stability

The EU's Vice President for the Digital Agenda, Neelie Kroes, recently warned against complacency on Internet security. She specifically cited the reliability of the DNS as something that cannot be taken for granted.

So let me be very clear. *ICANN is not complacent.*

ICANN's mission is to ensure a secure, stable and unified global Internet. We must be an active catalyst for its defense. That means acknowledging that the DNS has weaknesses; no man-made system is invulnerable.

It doesn't mean the system is weak; in fact it is highly decentralized and in many ways quite strong, but like every important facet of the Internet, it is under attack by miscreants with malicious intent.

Our assumption must be that security can always be improved. How could we ever do enough? The Internet and the DNS are central to global communications, industry, communities and the world economy. They are a vital

public resource and I think we can agree that we must do our utmost to protect them.

We have an obligation to proactively identify and thoroughly analyze weaknesses, then aggressively address them. And we take that obligation seriously.

ICANN consults widely within the community on cyber security issues that relate to the DNS. We have moved ahead vigorously on a number of key security initiatives, including the DNS-Sec root signing now taking place.

Community dialogue on the Strategic Security, Stability and Resiliency Initiatives/DNS CERT is well underway. Progress will be reviewed with the board and we will seek community guidance.

We hired Whit Diffie, a well-known pioneer in the development of encryption and cyber security, to bring his exceptional expertise to bear on ICANN's technical security.

We have asked the ccNSO to survey their membership to provide factual, objective data on vulnerabilities.

My comments in Nairobi demonstrated my strong personal commitment to ensuring the security, stability and unity of the global Internet. And following that meeting, a very important and valid dialogue began.

You may disagree with what I said, and openness to different viewpoints is what makes our community strong. Some have asked why I said what I did.

Simple. I said it because I believe it is the truth. And more than twenty years of experience in risk management have taught me that in addressing highly complex systems, it is better to be more concerned about risk than less.

Since Nairobi, several security incidents have occurred, including DNS anomalies in South America and North America, and global address routing anomalies that affected up to 10 percent of global addresses.

Meanwhile, reports around the world indicate that cyber attacks are on the rise. It is a growing global phenomenon affecting many industries and no one has made a credible argument that the DNS is immune from this threat.

ICANN cannot resolve these issues alone. We need to work within our family of organizations - large and small, formal and informal - to draw on the wealth of expertise around us. In recent weeks I have reached out to those with the most immediate interest to re-emphasize our desire to work together to confront these challenges.

While we may differ in our interpretation of the existing evidence, we can all agree that DNS security must be a core strategic and operational priority. The entire Internet ecosystem must be engaged on this critical issue.

Specific data on the number of known attacks, performance degradation or outages, the level of investment in cyber security and related issues would deepen our understanding of the risks and enhance our ability to counteract them, providing a factual starting point for a constructive discussion.

This requires effective international cooperation – not just talking, but listening and acting. It starts with acknowledging that this is *everyone's* challenge. The community's. And the world's. We rely on the Internet more and more in our daily lives, at work and at home. The DNS is essential for a single, interoperable and reliable Internet. No one wants to experience in real life the repercussions of a major DNS outage. We have an opportunity to take strong preventative measures now so that we may try to avoid a major disruption to our daily lives.

We won't agree on everything. More important than any individual action is that we commit to addressing these vulnerabilities in a mutually respectful manner.

In that spirit of open dialogue and collaboration, later today we will hold a panel on the vulnerability of the domain name system, how to effectively pursue better risk management and how it might be improved. I urge you to actively take part. Let's hear what some of the world's leading experts have to say.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Internet is a transformative technology that empowers people around the world, spurs innovation, facilitates trade and commerce, and enables the free and unfettered flow of information in the public interest.

As a guardian of the public interest in the Internet, ICANN is like no other organization: a very real community, but with a vital global mission.

By continuing to strengthen that community and our bottom-up multi-stakeholder model, by bringing in diverse and occasionally contradictory voices, we are driving toward even greater innovation and openness, and laying the path to the Internet of tomorrow – the greatest potential unifying force of modern times.

Thank you.

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