

TRANSCRIPT

Study Group on Use of Names for Countries and Territories

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Paul: Given that we're a few minutes after the hour and, as I said, I just wanted this to be, really, a catch up call. We've not been in contact since the last ICANN meeting and that's perfectly fine. Some of the work that we had to do was, really, to hand over to UNESCO, see them have their survey out. Unfortunately, Ungarta's has been caught up in a meeting so she hasn't been able to join us on this particular conference but, really, we were at a rather opportune, well-timed wait-and-see stage where the report that I had shared with everyone in Prague, or the status update, really only required us to, between Prague and Toronto, analyze some of the UNESCO survey data that came back in the same way we had the new gTLD data and then commenced development of our output reports. So given there's been a couple of months, I just wanted to recap briefly.

In Prague we sort of had a fairly sensitive discussion, as we did in Costa Rica, about some of the new gTLD applications, how they'd relate to our work. We were building an evidentiary-base above and beyond some of the preliminary policy analysis that we'd done previously.

The next stage, of course, was to sit back and see what had come back from the survey that we had organized in conjunction with UNESCO. I apologize. I've only sent that to everyone today. Ungarta has sent me an update in the last day or so and that was basically showing that we'd received about seven responses back so there's some feedback coming in but, in terms of the 25 countries that were supposed to provide feedback, it's still a work in progress. Obviously the explanation for that is that it is summer break for many countries. There are also potentially issues with identifying the right organization or individual to respond to the survey. So these things necessarily take time.

Is there anyone on the call at the moment who hasn't seen that? I mean, I've only sent the email through today but, had you seen there was an Excel spreadsheet that had come through?

Speaker: Yes, it came through.

Speaker: Yes. Good, good, good.

Paul: What that preliminary feedback has sort of shown us and Varta here and Ungarta from UNESCO and I sort of had a look at it and that was one of the most obvious omissions; and Gregory I see you there again in the chat room so hopefully you can hear us. But the point that you raised about question 7 and I'm sorry if I'm testing everybody's memory but again, we haven't had a call in a while. Question 7 was the one about how would you refer to the other countries that are participating in the survey in your native language or languages? And of course, that question doesn't have a lot of meaning if the survey respondents aren't aware of who else is participating in the survey. And after a bit of to and fro with UNESCO, we realized that no, in fact the respondents of the various commissions haven't been made aware of who the other respondents are. So when that preliminary data started coming back and it's a little bit obscure and they aren't consistent, that's because they haven't been given the right guidance. But we worked on that. We resolved that. UNESCO sent us some additional material they're going to send out to member states so, although I don't have anything meaningful to show the group and, really, just seven responses in an Excel spreadsheet isn't enough for everyone to digest properly, it is going along well and, hopefully, we'll have more meaningful feedback. You may see from the spreadsheet that, for instance, the Finish response is relatively comprehensive and I think we're going to see some more of that as the survey's finalized. That will just—sorry, go ahead Bob.

Bob: Maybe it's an idea to share with the group the names of the countries—the member states who received the survey and the number because it's a bit over

them we originally thought but this is, say, based on the UNESCO idea that, to make it as broad as possible but still manageable.

Paul: Bob, you're testing my memory here but did I not send that to the group at some stage?

Bob: No, not to my memory.

Paul: That's a no from everyone?

Chris: Christa, we've got a list of all the countries five or six days ago.

Bob: Oh, that's the one. Okay.

Paul: In that case, I win, Bob. So that document, Chris, you're absolutely right. That was the one which—that was the member states that received the survey so I apologize. It was a while ago that I sent it around. I received it from Ungarta and then it shot it on, just by way of notification that it was going out and, again, it's important to qualify that these countries and territories weren't selected by us; they weren't selected by the group. I didn't have input. Bob didn't have input. It was something that we relied on UNESCO's input for with an instruction that we're looking for linguistic and character diversity so script adversity. So as a result, sort of, I'm sure not everyone's got it in front of them but Europe East and Europe et cetera had Armenia, Georgia, Greece, Russia, Holland, Sweden, and then, of course, we've gone over into North America with Canada but also Finland. So there is a fairly extensive list.

If people don't have it I can resend it to everyone but the basic principle of it was that there be diversity in the script and the languages and the characters that we used across various regions. I did note that there was a little bit of comment from UNESCO about administrative expediency as well. There's a great diversity here in terms of the development of the various countries and their socio-economic status but they did indicate that there might be—they may have particular ins with particular agencies that they might be able to get better responses back for us and that might have guarded their decision making a little bit. But, in all, I didn't particularly have any concerns about the diversity of the list. Did anyone else? Do people want me to resend that email so you can see who got the survey again? I'll do it anyway.

Keith: Yes please.

Paul: Sorry, go ahead.

Keith: Just yes please if you could resend it to the list.

Paul: Alright, Keith, will do.

Speaker: (Inaudible) 1st of September and that was not here from the—it says update and teleconference proposal on the subject line. It wasn't all that easy to track down, Paul.

Paul: Alright. But it was (inaudible) nonetheless.

Bob: I will resend it as soon as this call is over.

Paul: Thank you very much, Bob.

Cheryl: You're not (inaudible) subject, thanks, Bob.

Paul: Cheryl, this is for you. Send. But look. But aside from who the survey went out to, I welcome any comments and observations about that, as I said. It's largely a UNESCO process but (inaudible) and I had a chat with Ungarta from UNESCO a couple of days ago and she felt that the consultative process was going relatively well, aside from misunderstanding question 7 and that we would get a fairly good response rate back.

But, given that some of the delays over European summer that it might, sort of, bleed beyond the next ICANN meeting and that we may be getting results back into later October, I advised her that was fine. But, from the perspective of our work and given that we haven't moved forward in a while, the whole idea was to not only look at the new gTLD process but the survey results and then see what sort of data we got back from that. See if there were any particular issues that we could see with regard to country and territory names. Anything that piped up as a result of the G's process or IDMs and basically take those and work that into a final report.

Now my—the main purpose of scheduling this call was just to canvass with everyone; what we've done to date, acknowledging that we stopped a couple of months ago; basically fulfilled the requirements of the study group's mandate and with the exception of further analysis of the new gTLD process and the UNESCO data that's still coming in, my question to everyone on the group was, well, do you feel that we've done all that we should do? Anything that we need to do further? Or do you actually feel comfortable with us going away and sort of developing a draft output document which everybody can look at and have a better understanding of where we're at and use that as the basis for our deliberations in Toronto? Does anyone feel that's premature at this stage?

Silence is golden. I like that. Look, basically the intent is that I've scribbled down a few notes. They're basically based upon everything that we've done to date. The stock take of the various policies and processes that we've got going on in ICANN at the moment, the analysis that we do of new gTLDs and the presentations that we do that's Costa Rica and Prague. And we still don't know—I acknowledge that the UNESCO survey might pop up some interesting results; I still don't know. It's too early to tell. I've only just seen that Excel sheet that everybody's got a couple of days ago so please have a look at it. I haven't made any, sort of, meaningful analysis of that yet. But I'm very conscious that the group's, roughly speaking, supposed to deliver a final report around about the end of this year. That's to the ccNSO Council. That could stretch into next year if we really needed to, sort of the first ICANN meeting acknowledging that our delivery is supposed to be before the next round of new gTLDs. So we've got a very long time frame there.

But I basically want to, sort of, head into Toronto with Bart and I producing a skeleton of a final report or draft recommendations or draft comments and see how that goes. See what sort of conversation we have based around what you think of that. Have a look at it two weeks or three weeks out from Toronto and then see what you think when we meet face to face. Does anybody have any comments or concerns about that as a procedure?

Heather: Paul, this is Heather. May I jump in with a quick question?

Paul: Sure.

Heather: I was wondering where we are—I mean, I guess this will come up in your draft. One of the things that we've talked about is the group's warmness to the idea of recommendations, particularly around further work. Is that something that we'll discuss before Toronto or in Toronto? Let's say in terms of the formation of a working group or something like that.

Paul: Yes, good question, Heather. That is all up in the air at the moment. I've sort of luxuriated over the fact that once you're dubbed a study group, you can be relatively flexible with the output or the material that you come out with. There's no prescription as to whether we're coming out with—what are we coming out with recommendations for? As a study group, what I expect is that we're supposed to take or stock take of the policies and processes that have existed to date, some of the challenges that are coming up at the moment, mapping the two together and seeing what issues we may come up with.

That may end up being a recommendation for further work. I haven't actually decided that yet. I haven't had any thoughts, particularly about that. Haven't even discussed it with Bart or the other staff about where we may go and certainly we haven't had that discussion at a group level. But it may well be a recommendation for further work so—it may just be an observational statement. The whole idea is that we're reporting given that they convene this work to the ccNSO Council about these issues and what may come of—I think I'm blathering on but the whole issue is I don't know. I don't actually know what we're actually going to come out with and I think that we need to discuss that in Toronto. I understand—I've got some expectations with regards to framework and roughly where we're going to go so there's no pre-supposed outcome from the group. But did I misrepresent that or, in terms of council expectations?

Speaker: (Inaudible).

Paul: About what?

Bart: I think what is probably most valuable for the group as well that we first do a rough draft at least in identifying the issues, as discussed, by the study group based on, say, the material we have to date and then maybe come up with some rough ideas where we could go. And that, as you said, we are in a luxurious position and, at the end of the day, it's reporting back to the ccNSO Council and, of course, to the broader community as well but the working group was created by the ccNSO Counsel so it needs to go back to that council.

Paul: And Bart, procedurally, that's absolutely correct but I just want to assure group members there's no intent for us to send out a draft of something that is couched as a near finalized recommendation document that hits everybody, sort of, two days before Toronto and then everybody's expected to achieve consensus on it.

Rather, we actually need to sit down in Toronto and have a really good discussion. Possibly, we could approach that on a teleconference call beforehand but certainly need to discuss it further in Toronto exactly what we collectively expect the output of this study group to be. I've got some ideas and what will help inform the conversation will be the notes that Bart and I put together about what we feel a final report or some recommendations could look like this. But then it would be up to everybody else as to whether we're agreed.

If I look into my crystal ball at this stage, we're just really trying to be thorough going through current processes. There are some issues. We've identified some clashes as part of new gTLD some of which, possibly Google, have removed themselves from the process but some that still exist. This was supposed to be a fact-finding and an information gathering exercise upon which further work would be based and I think we could probably make some recommendations along those lines but I don't want to pre-suppose anything yet. So yes, just to be perfectly clear, we will discuss it in Toronto, we will send something around—materials around that will help inform the group so that everybody's ready before then but you shouldn't pre-suppose that we will be going to Toronto expecting everyone to respond positively to a nine-tenths finished document. That's not the

intent at this stage. Especially given the UNESCO stuff has barely started trickling in.

Heather: It's Heather again. That's fantastic. I wasn't looking for any sort of crystal ball gazing or anything. What that signals to all of us is that it's on the radar. That that's part of the process of what will happen going forward and that's a fantastic answer. Thank you.

Paul: Well, again, as I—not to labor on the point but, as I've said previously, the purpose of this call was largely, aside from saying, hello again, long time-no see, that we hadn't discussed next steps and that what I was logically expecting—the point that we are going to head to next, I hadn't communicated that with everyone so I just wanted to check whether everyone was comfortable, that we were going to start heading towards an output document, that drafts that you will see—materials you would start seeing from us will be heading towards that end. And the open question for this call really was, have we done enough to get there; have we set enough of a base? Does anyone think that we've missed something, acknowledging that the UNESCO stuff is very much still in progress so yes, that was basically all my intent.

Now, very conscious that I don't actually have any other agenda items and I apologize for convening everyone other than for the purpose of just having a very brief update. Did anyone have any other questions or comments at this stage?

Henry: Hi Paul, this is Henry.

Paul: Hello, Henry.

Henry: Yes, sorry for not closely following the (inaudible) but I have a quick question. Do we have a deadline for the survey that we set to UNESCO?

Paul: Good point. The survey does actually impact upon the rest of our work so our original intent, you will note from some of the original schedules or timelines that we've drawn up for this group to where we're actually running a little bit behind with the UNESCO survey and this tends to happen when you involve external agencies and there was the issue of translating it into a number of languages. It hasn't been as simple an administrative process as you would expect.

As it currently stands, UNESCO has advised that, since most of the European countries are involved in the survey and are acknowledging that this is a global survey, they started pushing since they started coming back from summer holidays so they now received six, seven responses. They would expect a few more in a matter of weeks and I've encouraged them to keep pushing but not set them a firm deadline. So, to be perfectly honest, I think by the time we get to Toronto, just over a month's time, we still may be seeing some survey material coming in. I haven't set a hard deadline and that's only because every additional bit of information that comes in is useful and relevant to our work. But I have indicated that I'd like to do as much as we can before Toronto. So everybody may need to be checking their emails, well they will be, in the days before the Toronto meeting but, roughly speaking, that will be the point at which the consultations will close. Does that sound reasonable, Henry, or—?

Henry: Thank you, Paul. I think I would rather have more replies. I mean, giving UNESCO more time to get more replies from the greatest members instead of rushing for a date. Of course, we have the end of year, the overall in general final report delivery time but then we still have, like, three months. So rather wait a bit more for more replies.

Paul: Henry, that's a good point you raised there. The year's definitely—that's what I've conveyed to UNESCO. By all means, please, solicit as many responses as you can as soon as you can but do not set a hard deadline because, yes, the more information that comes in the more valuable the process is. But I also acknowledge that once you get survey material coming back in, then it's kind of hard to move to final recommendations while you're still analyzing data and probably the last opportunity we will have to discuss that face-to-face if we're going to meet our end of the year deadline is at Toronto.

As I mentioned to everyone in the group, there is some flexibility with our end of process. We could possibly move it into next year but that's all pending on agreement from the ccNSO Council and really only if we have to. But, again, I don't know how it's going to play out. I would expect the majority of the UNESCO responses to be in by the time we meet in Toronto. And that should actually be the focus of our discussions and the skeleton of a final document that Bart and I would present. Those two things would be the main ones on the agenda for our one meeting in Toronto.

Henry: Thank you, Paul. I also would like to make myself clear on this that I support going forward with the final report. We could start now but I encourage that we will have more replies from the UNESCO as well.

Paul: Thank you, Henry. I appreciate the nuance there. The balance between trying to solicit as much commentary as possible up against actually meeting our deadlines as well, that's something we're going to try to keep balanced as we move forward so we'll certainly do that.

I know that Ron had his hand up in the Adobe room. Ron, did you have a comment to make?

Ron: Can you hear me?

Paul: Just barely. But go ahead.

Ron: Can you hear me?

Paul: I can.

Ron: Okay, that's good.

Paul: That's even better.

Ron: Can I talk specifically about the spreadsheet that was sent to us. There is one item so—4R I think it is, that brings up an issue and I don't now that we've really discussed before. It's discussing Lapland as being parts of various countries and a tourist area and we have access to or use of the suffix Lapland and I think that could well apply to island groups for examples or regions and do we have—have we discussed in any depth the possibility of using not national but some kind of regional suffix or such an issue?

Paul: Ron, that's a very good point and an incredibly complicated issue once we start burrowing down into regions localities, et cetera. Mercifully, we could as working group—as a study group and I would recommend that we actually avoid that discussion in any depth, simply because our charter is to look at country and territory names. We can note some of the issues with regard to regions or areas, localities but it's, roughly speaking, it's outside the scope of the group to delve into that. It's an important issue and I won't admit that from a draft final report. These things would probably need to be (inaudible) but we can note that the groups looking at country and territory names. However, the whole range of sub-

national issues are all the more complicated and worthy of addressing and probably take a heck of a lot more work. It's not trying to shake off the responsibility for the function but I just don't think it's strictly within the scope of the group.

Ron: Thank you. As I say, it leapt out from that cell as being a valid commentary by the Asian (inaudible).

Paul: Sorry, Ron I only got half of that. Is that valid commentary?

Ron: (Inaudible) the entry in cell number 4R stands out as very clearly showing it to be a concern of the country that completed that particular part of the survey

Paul: No and I agree with that and that sort of feedback that we've received and this is why it was worthwhile going through the survey process in particular was to—as a study group, if we go back to our charter, we aren't necessarily limited to country and territory name but if we've done our work properly, we can identify these particular issues and particularly allocate that commentary as a response received from the Finish Ministry of Education and Culture. That might be an issue. That's valuable feedback for our processes. I'm not sure where the group would actually go with the discussion of that though. It's a valid issue for us to raise. We could identify this thing is technically out of the scope of the study group but it is something that we can identify as part of further work or potential further work.

Ron: That makes sense. Thank you.

Paul: Anybody else have any further questions or comments? I think we're tracking well, then and I've just gone over my half hour promise.

The next steps, I would expect to see a note. We'll have to have at least one more teleconference between now and the Toronto meeting and I'll get the secretaries to organize that once we've had a bit of a discussion about timing. But I would expect that—we have a Monday meeting locked in for Toronto. There won't be a secondary Thursday meeting because of scheduling conflicts so the main agenda items, I would expect there is a more detailed analysis of what is coming back from UNESCO. I apologize, as Ron's identified, I basically just sent the spreadsheet and there isn't any commentary attached to that. So we'll try and clean that up and send that out for everyone to discuss. And then also a proposal regarding next steps. And also the skeleton outline of what we hope would look like a final report and recommendation. So I'd really encourage everyone to come with what they would expect as an output; where they'd see us going as an output document to Toronto but, hopefully, we'll discuss that (inaudible) via email and at least one more teleconference before we actually end up in Canada.

So with that, I think I'll bring the meeting to a close and thank everyone for their time.

Cheryl: Thanks, folks Cheryl, what's the exact time for the Monday meeting because I'm looking in my calendar and not seeing it?

Paul: Oh, yes. And now I'm going to look at either Bart or Christina or whoever's available to tell me exactly what time that meeting was to be on Monday in Toronto. Christina, do you have that?

Christina: Yes, (inaudible). Let me get the schedule out.

Paul: Because I recall, Christina, we had a discussion and I said yes, on meeting would be fine but.

Christina: Yes, there will be one meeting on the Monday at 2:30 for one hour.

Cheryl: An hour or 90 minutes?

Christina: An hour.

Cheryl: Thank you.

Paul: Done. Excellent. Well, thank you very much. If there's no other comments or questions, I thank everyone for their time and I will send a note summarizing this around for the benefit of members who weren't able to make this call in the next day or so and also to outline some next steps.

Speaker: Thanks, Paul.

Speaker: Thanks, Paul.

Paul: Bye bye.