**APrIGFDelhi 2014**

**Workshop Summary Report**

**Date:** 5 Aug 2014

**Time:**  11:00 – 12:30

**Workshop Title:** ICANN Globalization from a Regional Perspective

**Reported by & Contact Email:** hanliyun@cnnic.cn

**Moderators:** Edmon Chung

**Panelists:**

Mr. Edmon Chung, CEO of DotAsia Organization

Mr. Leonid Todorov, Deputy Director, Coordination Center for Russian CCTLDs

Mr. Yu-Chuang KUEK, VP Stakeholder Engagement Asia, ICANN

Mr. Pablo HINOJOSA, Strategic Engagement Director, APNIC

Mr. Hongbin Zhu, Senior International Strategist, China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC) [Remote participant, workshop organizer]

Ms. Liyun Han, Policy Research Manager, China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC) [Remote participant]

**A brief summary of presentations (If any)**

**Title:** ICANN Globalization from a Regional Perspective

**Summary:**

At present, even though ICANN has made efforts on its globalization in order to strengthen its multistakeholders mode, there are still some unsatisfactory issues that require serious concern and discussion. The underrepresented status and uneven representation of diverse regions as multistakeholders of ICANN has been exiting in the following aspects, namely the organizational structure of ICANN, the policy-making process and operation of ICANN, the supervision mechanism of ICANN, and IANA function transition issues.

However, the global connectivity of the Internet needs to play the full roles of regional engagements, balancing the diverse developing levels and culture differences. Therefore, in order to call for an elimination of this imbalanced status quo, the workshop and its target panelists aim to discuss some related issues including regional representatives’ influence and function on ICANN globalization, the better way to engage regional representatives in the policy-making and to build up a dialogue mechanism of inclusive IANA function transition process for diverse multistakeholders, as well as the way to build more accountable and actable root zone server operational structure to enhance the consumer trust.

**A substantive summary and the main issues that were raised:**

The workshop constitutes four sessions.

During the first session of warm-up, the Moderator, Edmon CHUNG introduced the themes of the session and each of the panelists. The purpose of the workshop is to bridge an effective dialogue between ICANN and regional representatives in order to promote ICANN globalization, through taking stock of the efforts what ICANN has made on engaging more regional participation as well as the regional progress and experience of participating in ICANN Affairs.

The second session is ICANN Asia Pacific Strategy and Local Engagement Channels.

Firstly, Mr. Yu-Chuang KUEK introduced ICANN Asia Pacific Strategy and recent development of global engagement tools as well as what ICANN has been devoting itself to on promoting regional participation, for example, in order to deal with the language and cultural diversity of this region, they have introduced the mentorship program to help people build up awareness of participation and model the ICANN board meeting, and translated the ICANN materials to different local languages to reach the audience. Moreover, there is still a long way to go to cover the gap of ICANN in the Asia-Pacific Region. ICANN has, indeed, endeavored to recruit more people to help with the translation for the local languages in this region since it does not have this in-house capability. Besides, ICANN is still working to overcome the time zone problem that may cause inconvenience to webinars. Yet, people still cannot ask an ICANN staff to arbitrarily change the call of the Working Group or the time of a webinar. So, people need to make the boundary clear.

And then, Mr. Pablo HINOJOSA, Strategic Engagement Director of APNIC, gave an introduction of regional efforts to promote the status of Asia Pacific Region in ICANN ecosystem. He pointed out that ICANN should try to deal with not only this region’s diverse languages and cultures, but more importantly, change people’s mindsets. In addition to this, brining the different stakeholders to cooperate is a big challenge for ICANN in this region because the Asia-Pacific Region owns the world’s largest number of Internet users. In the future, ICANN should work with some regional organizations to make the voices of this region’s Internet users heard in the Internet governance field, as well as in ICANN’s global processes.

The third session is Asia Pacific’s experience of participating in ICANN affairs.

At first, Mr. Edmon CHUNG, the CEO of DotAsia Organization, reminisced his engagement with ICANN during 1999 to 2012. And it is mainly about the ccTLD constituency from 1999 to 2000, the registrar constituency from 2001 to 2003, the GNSO from 2005-2009，etc. Through all these experiences, he concluded ICANN’s development from a meeting to the current organization, from low participation to a larger number of representatives. Yet, with more involvement of stakeholders from the Asia-Pacific region, there are challenges to face, such as costs and return of investment, language and time zone, and the sociopolitical environment of Asia-Pacific. For example, since ICANN has multistakeholders, whenever there is an ICANN meeting, the commercial entities may consider the time, cost and business opportunities via the meeting, which actually makes it a struggle for them. Besides this, the authoritarian countries in this region may incline ICANN to some extent. Therefore, these challenges should be a concern for ICANN in the future.

The second speaker of this session is Leonid TODROVE, the Deputy Director of Coordination Center for Russian ccTLDs. In his opinion, due to the language and cultural barriers, the concepts used by ICANN such as “community”, “multistakeholderism” and “Internet governance” is vague and difficult to understand for Russians because there is either not an equivalent term in the Russian language or the translated term may cause misunderstandings. In addition, he interpreted the reasons causing unsuccessful ICANN-Russian Internet community relations. According to him, Russia’s nation nature is of Soviet legacy and Russians still treat ICANN as an organization with distinctive mark of US-based corporation. And since the Russians regard US as their opponent, people will doubt ICANN’s purpose of efforts in this region. Moreover, because some ICANN’s stop cooperating with Russia, and despise the inevitable Internet bureaucracy in Russia, the ICANN-Russian Internet community relation is deteriorating. And it is the ICANNs that are to blame. He eventually hoped that some further discussions on the credibility of ICANN can be held openly.

Finally, Edmon read out the points of views held by CNNIC for Hongbin ZHU. Firstly, CNNIC is a stakeholder of ICANN while ICANN is also a stakeholder of CNNIC, thus a mutual engagement is also important. There are different roles that CNNIC plays at ICANN including the dot CN and a CCTLD and related to the root zone management, and CNNIC is also a new gTLD registry for some of the IGN TLDs especially, and is a provider for the emergency back end service provider, EBERO. Moreover, ICANN has and shares an office actually with the ICANN Beijing local engagement office. Secondly, the traditional top-down engagement method has its limits, such as less effectiveness, low awareness, limited diversity, etc. Given to this, the new bottom-up engagement method should be advocated for its benefits in policy-making, concern delivery, branding and marketing, etc. However, the bottom-up engagement method is underdeveloped in the Asia-Pacific region due to several reasons including the limits in industry, awareness and capacity. Therefore, we need to combine these two methods to raise people’s awareness and enhance capacity building through some programs, such as the new gTLD program.

The forth session is the discussion by all panelists and participating audiences at this panel, with respect to how to improve global engagement of ICANN in the Future. Due to the challenges that ICANN is facing, ICANN needs to continue its current efforts in the Asia-Pacific Region while working on its future plans to overcome more language and cultural obstacles. Meanwhile, it should also coordinate with different countries’ authoritarian nature, work more positively with different nations, and combine the bottom-up and top-down engagements to raise people’s awareness and enhance capacity building.

**Conclusion & Further Comments:**

In conclusion, in order to fully bring ICANN into play in the Asia-Pacific Region, ICANN should focus more on its Asia-Pacific Strategy in the years to come. Not only should ICANN continue its regional efforts in providing translations and launching mentorship program to fit with the local circumstances, but ICANN, from a regional and global strategic perspective, needs to adjust itself to regional characteristics and affirmatively approach the bureaucratic countries, to enhance cooperation with more countries in the region, and to combine the top-down and bottom-up engagements to raise people’s awareness, sharpen policy-making insights and enhance capacity building.