Candidate Statement GNSO Chair
09 October 2021

Candidate: Philippe Fouquart (ISPs and Connectivity Providers Constituency - ISPCP, Europe)

Citizenship / Country of Residence: France

Dear GNSO fellow Councilors,

I would like to thank the Non-Contracted Parties House for their nomination for the GNSO Council Chair election. I gratefully accept this nomination and would be honoured to serve again the Community as GNSO chair from the ICANN AGM 2021 to ICANN AGM 2022. I confirm that my SOI is accurate; you may find it here https://community.icann.org/display/gnsosoi/Philippe+Fouquart+SOI

The following is my statement for this election.

I am an engineer at Orange Labs, in charge of Naming, Numbering and Addressing. My background may be found in my statement for last year's election https://gnso.icann.org/en/elections/fouquart-statement-20sep20-en.pdf.

I cannot start without expressing my deepest gratitude to our outgoing Vice Chairs, Pam Little and Tatiana Tropina, for their support throughout the year. It has been a privilege and a pleasure to work with them both, and the Community is extremely lucky to have members of their caliber. Their commitment to Council and the GNSO has been steady, *every single day*, despite time zones and daily job responsibilities. Pam, Tanya: thank you!

Looking back to 2020-2021

It has been a challenging year. We can all be grateful to those who committed so much of their time and effort to support our work despite the virtual format imposed by the global pandemic: the zoom meetings, the calls at ungodly hours, the patchy network coverage, the mobile phone that embarrassingly drops during a session etc. we have all been there and done that; despite all this and looking back to this year's achievements, there is a lot to be proud of.

As the manager of the Policy Development Process, Council has delivered two major reports that were long awaited by the Community, the New gTLD Subsequent Procedures and the Review of All Rights Protection Mechanisms in All gTLDs Policy Development Process Phase 1. Although most of the credit must go to the respective PDP teams, chairs and staff for those two five-year colossal efforts, Council did have a robust discussion before and during our votes, not only to make sure that the outputs of the working groups is properly handed over to the Board but also to learn from the experiences and make sure we capitalise on them, notably in terms of how much the chartering effort is important for a PDP to work efficiently. For RPM Phase 2 in particular, this has lead to Council requesting a Policy Status Report on the Uniform Domain-Name Dispute-Resolution Policy, which will help us determine how we approach the definition of the charter.

On the other end of the PDP spectrum, Council initiated three PDPs this year:

- The PDP Transfer Policy Review, to consider changes to the policy to improve the "ease, security, and efficacy of inter-registrar and inter-registrant transfers."
- The EPDP on Internationalized Domain Names, to define policy recommendations on the management of variant labels and how the Implementation Guidelines should be updated
- the EPDP on Specific Curative Rights Protections for IGOs, which, originally initiated as a Work Track, is tasked with developing a policy solution in lieu of the Recommendation 5 developed by the IGO and IGO-INGO Access to Curative Rights Protection Mechanisms Policy Development Process Final Report.

Finally, Council is in the process of considering the Final Report of the EPDP on the Temporary Specification for gTLD Registration Data Phase 2A on the differentiation between Legal vs. natural persons data and the feasibility of unique contacts. Through the updates made to Council during the lifetime of this EPDP as well as the initial discussions on the Final Reports, Council is fully informed of the challenges that PDP chair, leadership and team had to overcome and the delicate balance of views that the consensus found on this Final Report reflects. Whilst, as the minority statements note in the report, this may not reflect the result that each party would have preferred individually, it is clearly the best result that the team could achieve collectively at this point in time under these circumstances, and Council will approach the last stage of our work and our vote with these elements in mind.

As usual, our discussions and votes on the outputs of the PDPs above would probably stand out as critical items where Council duly assumed the PDP stewardship. With a close look, however, it is noteworthy that (just?) about one third of our time was spent on these activities, that is, scoping/chartering the work at its initiation and monitoring during the work of the WG and at its conclusion. Another third of our time was actually spent on topics that are "post-final reports": the intent of EPDP Phase 1 Recommendation 7 and Initiation of the Thick WHOIS Transition Policy EPDP, SSAD related discussions with the Board such as our discussion on the financial sustainability of the SSAD and Ph1 Recommendation 27 and the associated the Operational Design Phase being good examples. It seems to me that such an even split is a bit unusual for Council; although the involvement of Council and the broader GNSO community in the IRTs have always existed. It is probably too early to say whether as I noted last year this may be the side effect of our expedited policy format, this certainly reflects a need (or a reminder) for Council to be fully involved in the whole lifetime of the product of a working group, in proportions that may , and this year can be expected to reflect the same pattern.

Room for improvement for the Chair

Before I come onto what is ahead of us at Council in particular, I would like to share a couple of thoughts on what I thought I could have done better.

First, in light of the questions received during the nomination of the SSAD Operational Design Phase liaison, we have to accept that our approach on this was not very clear, and we could certainly have done better in terms of communication to and engagement from Council – although on all accounts we could not have done better in terms of decision, and our oversight in communication was of no consequence from a practical standpoint. I am hopeful the process we will use for the SubPro ODP liaison through the Standing Selection Process will be more straightforward, and transparent for

councillors. Although the substance of the ODP is not quite new, its form is something we are still learning from and given the importance of these first two ODPs, we must get the associated process and its relationship with Council right.

Secondly, I am not sure there has ever been a precedent in a PDP for a liaison to Council to be also the Council Chair. In the absence of volunteer for that role, this is what I did for the EPDP P2A, as there was no alternative and it was important that the role of the liaison to be assumed at the outset of the PDP. With hindsight, wearing two such hats may not be an ideal configuration for a PDP, as it might create an understanding that by default Council leadership and Council are formally informed of the progress of the PDP - although the PDP chair's and liaison's updates during our Council calls that are there for that very purpose. I am not sure we could have made a different decision at the time we made it, but this confusion of roles is probably not optimal, possibly misleading.

Finally language inclusiveness remains a concern for me just as much as it was where I wrote last year's statement. I do not think the GNSO has improved in this respect, and to a large extent participation of non-native English speakers to GNSO PDPs and even to Council can be a challenge, even more so during the pandemic. The policies that the GNSO develops are implemented by registrars and registries around the world, which only 5% of the population have English as their native tongue. We could probably do better in this regard.

Virtual Working Methods – Council's Strategic Planning Session (SPS)

In addition to setting out the scene for all councillors for this coming year, the next Strategic Planning Session will focus on virtual effectiveness. 2020-2021 was marked by the need to work virtually throughout the year because of the pandemic, and the absence of face-to-face meetings obviously had an impact on the way we approach our work. For this same reason, we decided to have our SPS as early as possible in October/November.

We would like to take the opportunity of this SPS to consider ways to further improve our virtual working methods and improve our efficiency overall – during and hopefully after the pandemic. There are certainly experiences we can learn from. For example, the EPDP P2A has innovated with the introduction of mediation, adhoc bilateral sessions and more informal "virtual gatherings". Our SPS will endeavour to take this a step further within Council and see how this might be applied to our work. In addition to our usual review of the main work items for the year ahead, our SPS sessions will also build up from last year's SPS and the new tools that are at our disposal. We will also address practical challenges that councillors would face during their term such as how to balance their role with the role of representative from their SG/C, or make better use of expertise existing in the Council to spread work more evenly. With this SPS, our goal remains to build a new team of Councillors, fully aware of the tasks ahead and resources at their disposal to complete them.

Our work with the SG/Cs

The engagement with the SG/Cs obviously go beyond Council's activities, and it is something where it is important to strike a balance between overactivity and lack of communication between us, and where proportionality of our interactions is key given the exclusive prerogatives of the GNSO SG/Cs for

all that pertain to ICANN activities. Despite the virtual meetings, we have tried to achieve that balance on topics such as the Framework for Continuous Improvement Oversight and Implementation, cross-community coordination on specific WS2 recommendations, and obviously on the Empowered Community administration. Some of our non-PDP related activities, the newly-created CCOICI pilot and the long-standing SCBO are meant to articulate this cooperation on specific issues. Very much like resource prioritization, however, this synergy is something that is not "hardwired" in our work methods, and it remains a continuous effort. I and the incoming GSNO leadership will welcome community's inputs on how we can improve this, including during our virtual meeting formats.

The year ahead

On the PDP front, and as mentioned earlier, by the end of the year Council will need to consider the policy status report to develop a charter for RPM Phase 2 UDRP PDP. Likewise the now-EPDP on Specific Curative Rights Protections for IGOs will soon deliver its report to Council for consideration. The IDN EPDP will provide its workplan by the end of the year and proceed with their work. Later on in 2022, Transfer Policy Review PDP should provide their Initial Report.
DNS Abuse remains a topic of wide interest within the community and the GNSO, through Council and its SG/Cs will continue to engage and help determine the best possible way to address the issue. Through our respective liaisons, Council will also stand ready to assist with the on-going SSAD ODP and the SubPro ODP which should begin shortly.

Regarding all the items that are not related to the policy development process, Council has initiated a pilot on the Council Committee for Overseeing and Implementing Continuous Improvement. This pilot is initially tasked with reviewing the GNSO Statement of Interest and the GNSO Working Group Self-Assessment Survey. Through this, our goal is to optimise the use of the resources to reduce the workload that would befall on the community for such tasks while making sure transparency and endorsement is ensured. Council is expected to review the findings of this pilot and consider assigning other tasks by May 2022.

Looking outside of the GNSO, I am glad we have strengthened our relationship with our ccNSO colleagues in 2020-2021 through several initiatives such as the second review of the effectiveness of the Customer Standing Committee. I am sure our IDN PDP will also benefit from the ccNSO's experience in that regard. Our cooperation between our Standing Committee on Budget and Operations (SCBO) and the ccNSO's Strategic and Operational Standing Committee (SOPC) have also been extremely beneficial to both as our SCBO will prepare the Fiscal Year 2023 Budget and Operations cycle.

Looking forward to the year and beyond, we are aware of the risk of being too GNSO-centric at a time when our focus should be just as much in 'looking out'. Looking out to other SOACs obviously and make sure our work remains inclusive without compromising the prerogatives of our SG/Cs on the gTLD PDP. Looking forward to what can be improved as we will certainly take our part in the holistic review pilot and the evolution of the Multi-Stakeholder Model. And looking outside of ICANN to stand firm on this MSM and ICANN's responsibilities regarding the namespaces and numerical spaces of the Internet, to make sure that whenever and wherever its role and responsibilities are questioned in 2021-2022, the GNSO can engage with all stakeholders to preserve this model. In this respect I am looking forward to

our GNSO community's input to the CEO's planned initiative on interacting with the community regarding legislation and legislative proposals as they may affect the gTLD PDP.

In conclusion

I would like to finish where I started and pay tribute to all the members of the GNSO community who continue to contribute to our work and notably that of our PDPs. The global pandemic and its consequences, the constant use of on-line meeting tools and remote working methods and the time-zone differences have made our work at ICANN much more difficult, somewhat "dryer", a bit lonelier and so much "less fun" than with in-person meetings. At every Council or SG/C call or PDP WG meeting, (into the wee hours of the day for many of them), at every Expression of Interest for a leadership role, I am always astonished at how steady the commitment of our community members remains. Like you my hope is that we find some sort of normality back this year and can meet again in-person very soon.

I thank you again for your trust over the last 12 months, and I respectfully ask for your renewed support for the next AGM Council Chair election.

Merci.
Regards,

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