Open Forum on Internet Society Governance Reform: Board Diversity

Session 1  5 May 2022  03:30-04:30 UTC

Transcript

>> Ted Hardie: Thanks everyone for joining us for today's Board Open Forum. This Open Forum derives out of the work of the Governance Reform Working Group. We really appreciate the work of that group and as most of you know, they recently presented a report from the work of the group so far. Highlighted in the report were a number of issues that were clearly of concern to the community. And this forum, and the ones which will follow it, are an effort by the board to make sure we can hear the broader community on the topics which the Working Group identified as important.

The first of those topics is board diversity. That's the topic we will focus on today. Next slide, please.

There are a couple of housekeeping rules as part of today's open forum. First, as you know from signing in for the Zoom call today, there is a code of conduct for individual members of the Internet Society and we ask you to keep to that code of conduct today. There is simultaneous interpretation available in English, French and Spanish. Closed captions are available in English. The Zoom panel should show you those. Please keep your microphone on mute if you are not asking a question. Please use the chat for questions that you may have.

If you would like to make an intervention by voice, please raise your hand and I’ll notify you when it's your turn. We would appreciate if you are formatting your questions in chat to use your first name and country. In my case, for example, it would be Ted and Portugal. Please feel free to type your question in French or Spanish, they will be translated and sent to the chair. This is being recorded and a link for future viewing will be shared after the call.
This information shows you how the interpretation and captioning works.

Next slide. Thank you. The agenda for today is a quick welcome and introduction. That's where we are right now.

We will then review what the constraints on the Governance Reform Working Group were, because obviously there were some topics which were established for them to consider, but some which they were also asked to keep off of the Working Group considerations because of legal or other constraints.

There will be a little bit of additional housekeeping. And then the floor will be open for comments and questions. Thank you. Next slide.

Here are the constraints.

For those listening, the constraints were “Consistent with the Internet Society’s origin and mission statement and its incorporation documents, the proposals considered by this Working Group will not include proposals to reduce stakeholder communities’ ability to choose candidates to serve on the Board of Trustees, or proposals that would require relocation or dissolution of the Internet Society as it is currently incorporated in the United States. In addition, this Working Group will not consider proposals that would breach or negate current legal relationships and agreements between the Internet Society and ICANN or between the Internet Society and the Public Interest Registry.”

That brings us to the balance of time which is for discussion. And at this point the floor is open and I look forward to hearing your comments. John?

>> John Levine: Let me see if I can get my -- there we go. I know we have been going around with this a lot. Can you review what the nominating committees have been doing in recent years to try to come up with diverse slates of candidates. As I keep pointing out, the way the governance works, the three constituencies can pick
whoever they want to pick. And my impression is that each one has its own criteria about how it's going to look for candidates and sometimes it gets, you know, people from a wider geographical or gender balance and sometimes it doesn't. I haven't yet heard anybody come up with a plausible way that we could -- without doing some gross violence to the way trustees are selected. Basically, the question is, I haven’t been on the board for a while. What have the NomComs done recently to look for diverse candidates?

>> Ted Hardie: Clearly there are a couple of different NomComs involved. There’s both the NomCom the board itself runs for PIR and then there is the NomCom for candidates for the organizational member and chapter member elections.

Distinct from that is the selection mechanism done by the IAB but for the two, which are done related to the organizational and chapter members, I wonder if possibly one of the members of this year's committee would like to speak?

>> George Sadowski: This is George, I can speak to that now. I think the most effective way we have been able to identify a diverse candidate pool, is to get people on the NomCom who themselves make a diverse group. Last year – the year before – we had a very active member from Pakistan and as a result we had a candidate from Pakistan who was actually elected.

This year, we had a larger diversity in the NomCom itself and this has caused members of the NomCom who are obligated to do recruiting for candidates they believe are worthy of serving on the board, are going to go into their regions and countries and into their, the people they know, their colleagues in these countries and we get a better selection in that way.

So diversifying the NomCom is the way in which it turns out we believe, so far the best way we have managed to address the diversity issue.
>> Ted Hardie: Thanks, George. In addition to that, the NomComs have historically tried to reach out to both the chapters and to the organizational members and to ask them to focus on diversity, as they consider who to nominate. So it's clearly the case that some of the diversity can be done by making sure that each of the constituent communities is aware of the desire of both the board and the larger community to have a diverse board.

Luis?

>> Luis Martinez: Thank you, Ted. Thank you, John, for your question. I can only say that the diversity of the NomCom reflects what happens in the chapters. There's nothing more diverse in ISOC than the chapters itself. So I believe, I strongly believe that chapters are, as you were referring to, constituencies that chapters are represented in the NomCom and what we are getting as nominations from the chapters, represent the diversity of ISOC itself. Thank you.

>> Richard Barnes: As the chair of the PIR NomCom this year, I would say my experience reflects George’s in terms of how we got diversity into our candidate pool. I think personal outreach and getting the word out is really the key point there. At least in the PIR NomCom this year, a lot of our candidates came to us by direct referrals from folks who were either on the NomCom or close to the NomCom or in the circle. The more people that can spread the word about these opportunities and encourage folks in their communities to get involved, that's how we can help out sourcing a more diverse candidate pool.

Another thing I think I put in my PIR NomCom report this year that's interesting to track is diversity thru the process, to make sure the diversity in the candidate pools is tracked thru as folks go through the process. That's a way we can hold ourselves accountable on diversity as well.

>> Ted Hardie: Thank you, Richard. There's a question in the chat from Gunela in Australia. Part of the accessibility SG, has any
consideration been done on quotas or similar on gender, disability and geographic diversity? Has an increase of the number of board members been considered to address diversity?

So people have discussed this, the point John Levine was making earlier is because each different constituency sends different members to the board, the idea of creating a quota has the practical effect of imposing something on three different groups, and those three different groups having to make independent choices which result in fulfilling that quota. Which is difficult to do. So mechanically that's been considered but it's also been somewhat difficult to reconcile that with the constraints that were placed in the Governance Reform Working Group to ensure the constituent groups of ISOC retained their ability to send members to the board.

And I will point out here there is a considerable difference between the way they are elected and the way they must act once they reach the board. Once people are placed on the board they have a fiduciary responsibility to the Internet Society as a whole. And so they are not there as representatives of the group which sent them.

So for example, I was selected by the organizational members but it is not the case that I represent the organizational members on the board. Like other members of the board, we all act in concert to serve the Society as a whole. That means the constituent mechanism for selecting people is intended to make sure the skills and passions of their community is present on the board, but they are not a representative of their constituency, once present.

The other point that is being made in chat is that quotas get complicated with multiple appointment pathways and that ICANN faces a similar issue. The other question you had, has an increase of the number of board members been considered to address diversity?

It has been considered and the way the current bylaws are written, the board can itself nominate or, sorry, the board can itself select individuals to join the board. A limited number may be selected
in this way. And the board has considered using that power to increase its diversity, either on gender or geographic lines. The difficulty there is the appointments are standard appointments to the board. They are three-year appointments. And the result is any effort the board makes to increase its diversity through this means, creates a three-year appointment that doesn't necessarily reflect the same problems that the board would face in the following years.

So if you saw, for example, a geographic diversity problem in year one, addressed it by making one or more appointments from the board itself to join the board, you then might have different geographic problems in year two and three of those appointments.

So it's a very limited power. And it's one we have not yet actually used. Although there was discussion in the board Governance Committee about it over this past year.

If it is used, it's most likely to be used for diversity issues, which appear to be quite long standing as opposed to those which we believe would be the result of a single year or two-year composition of the board.

There's a comment from Paul Wilson in the chat that the explanation makes it seem like the diversity of the board changes often but that's not the impression that one gets. I would suggest that a three-year appointment by the board would still have a better effect on diversity. Thanks for your comment, Paul. Would you like to follow up by voice?

>> Paul Wilson: Thanks, Ted. If you are concerned that a three-year appointment by the board might have some adverse effects in the second and third year, that seems to assume that the diversity and the balance changes very often which, as I said, isn't the impression that one gets. So I’d have thought that even despite the three-year commitment that a board appointment would entail, that likely on the balance to still have a better effect on diversity than not to make an appointment like that at all. The other thing I might also observe
is that although the ICANN and ISOC board appointment processes are very different, my understanding is that one of the duties of the ICANN NomCom appointments is to actually allow to address the issues of diversity that arise from the stakeholder groups doing their own thing, independently appointing directors on the basis of their own criteria, which has a lot to do with technical or domain expertise, and which can well result in a lack of diversity, and therefore, the ICANN NomCom is there specifically to try to address that diversity, at least as I understand it, and I might be wrong, that's one of the duties of the ICANN NomCom and something possibly ISOC could try and replicate somehow, you know, without, as you suggested before, trying to constrain the actual operation of each of the constituencies in the selection of their best chosen board members.

>> Ted Hardie: Just to clarify one thing, it was not so much that making a single appointment would necessarily have that effect. But if the board exercised its power to the limit of its capacity which would add three, which would probably be required to meet gender parity, for example, or to even approach it, the results in the later years might create difficulties with other forms of diversity, the specific geographic diversity or similar issues. So it would also obviously increase the size of the board, substantially which has other effects.

There are a couple comments in chat and then I will turn to Cheryl. Just before that, Cheryl, the comments in chat are from Farzaneh, actually at GNSO Council have a quota, more or less, its hard but doable. And then Cheryl says in chat it has specific diversity requirements yes, Paul, so its balancing role is important, but not its only purpose. Cheryl, would you like to continue by voice?

>> Cheryl Langdon: Yes. I feel it’s important to follow on from Paul Wilson's intervention because I served in leadership of the ICANN nominating committee and I'm still currently involved in the
implementation of its most recent review processes, and its recommendations.

The balancing role that picks up after the various component parts have made their appointments to try to manage as best as possible and is limited. (Inaudible) It does indeed have an important feeling for various types of diversity. One of its primary points is to work in areas of diversity that may not be as obvious as gender, accessibility, language use, type of economy one comes from, but skillsets.

So there are nomination processes which balance desired skillsets in a board.

So I just wanted to throw that in there. That having that slightly different role, noting of course the ICANN nominating committee is in fact an appointing body, not a nominating committee in the manner of the ISOC one. Thanks.

>> Ted Hardie: Thank you. Richard?

>> Richard Barnes: Thanks, Cheryl for a couple points there. Especially about skills diversity. That's certainly an area we considered in the PIR NomCom this year as we tried to, much like the ICANN NomCom, the PIR NomCom is an appointing body, not a nominating body, so we were very clearly thinking about how to put together the right team for the PIR board, including dimensions like skills.

With that in mind, I have a couple questions, I would be interested in people's feedback on.

One, from that perspective of skills balance, clearly the board, I think, I certainly do, I think others on the board would have an idea of what skills we on the board feel like the board could use, and what would be a consideration that kind of skillset diversity. I'm wondering if folks would feel that would be useful for the sitting board to provide maybe more detailed desiderata, kind of advice to the community about what we think would be useful in the next round of appointments? So that's one question.
The other question, more generally, I would be interested to know which dimensions of diversity folks are most interested in here. How they think that relates to the work of the Internet Society board. Cheryl had a few: gender, geographic diversity. We talked about skill set diversity, accessibility. In the PIR NomCom we focused on metrics like geographic and gender diversity. Which aspects of diversity are kind of top of mind for folks in this community?

>> Ted Hardie: Thank you, Richard. I’ll note that Charles Mok has a very a similar question in chat following on Paul and Gunela’s questions and comments: does the NomCom have any assessment on the relative problems we have with gender, disability, geographic, and skill balance? Which is the biggest gap you see? And Cheryl has followed up with gap analysis and desirable skills are certainly useful things to have identified. Are there comments from the floor on this point?

>> Charles Mok: I will chime in. I’m Charles. I want to get an understanding of the current assessment from the NomCom on these issues. As you said at the moment, you decided that you basically haven't done that appointment yet. But what are the real reasons, or the only reason is the one you have cited, which was the requirements or the gap may change from year to year.

So that makes me wonder, out of the different kinds of possible gaps, what is the NomCom or the board's assessment on what is the biggest one?

And what is the one, or more than one that might be ongoing? Isn't just -- I tend to think there are, you know, among the ones we have mentioned so far like gender, disability, geographic, skill balance, there are seem to be some of these that are quite long-standing. So why is it the board or NomCom still consider that, you know, they basically haven't exercised that option yet. Thank you.

>> Ted Hardie: Just as a reminder, because the NomCom isn't an appointing body, it provides candidates to the community and the
community selects among them. It's been the case for quite some time that the candidates presented are diverse. And it is not necessarily the case that the candidates, which contribute to specific forms of diversity have necessarily been selected. So that two-stage aspect of the process is one of the complications here that makes it difficult. If the board were to set, for example, a hard target of gender parity, which many boards have set, it would then have to work out how it achieved that without changing the right of the different constituents to select board members.

So that's one of the complications here. It is the case that gender diversity is a long-standing problem. And it is also the case that geographic diversity is a potential problem, depending how you define it. That's also been one of the issues. If you define gender diversity as, for example, at least one member from at least each of the following geographies, you get a different question than are the members of the Society geographically represented in proportion to their activity on the board? So there's more than one way of analyzing it.

There were a couple of interventions by chat. Richard Barnes noted -- sorry, Charles has a second question, what are the reasons for deciding not to make appointments yet? Richard Barnes noted thank you to Cheryl for the comments which he felt were actionable for the next NomCom cycle. John Levine points out that chapters and orgs can also nominate anyone by petition and voters can vote for whoever they want.

And Farzaneh notes she doesn't generally recommend looking at ICANN as a guide for diversity. They work hard on it but unfortunately face a problem of new volunteers and new entries and when new people actually run for positions they don't get elected. Gap analysis is great but when we want to stick to status quo and have the same people elected then ... well it is hard to have diversity. This happens at
RIRs as well. They do complain about diversity but when non-male candidates run they don't vote for them.

Charles noted we answered his second question. Cheryl points out that the difference between the appointments by parts of ICANN vs the ICANN NomCom appointments. And Luis notes as gender concerns, it is worth looking into gender balance in industry and in membership.

Luis, do you want to raise that question a bit more?

>> Luis Martinez: Yes, thank you, Ted. During the last months we have made some analysis on how the telecommunications industry is balanced in terms of gender. And also in other boards that may be comparable to ISOC.

And things are not balanced. There is no parity. So, if we look into membership, that will be reflected into the chapter's ability to provide candidates for the board. Then there's a -- I will say it in a very electrical engineering way: there's some mismatch of impedance, there is no parity on the origin. So it's hard to get a parity on the result.

And there's also many measurements. Even a number of organizations study the diversity within the boards. We are not on the line, but we are not very far from what you would expect from a charitable, charity organization, as happens in North America. Yes. And maybe in Europe. In Europe, there is a lack of studies on the balance regarding diversity in the boards. Thank you.

>> Ted Hardie: Thank you. Cheryl points out the ICANN NC is specifically designed to bring in where possible and practical new people to positions. And it is something that we do point out to each of the constituent groups on a periodic basis - that they don't actually have to elect folks who are directly part of their communities. So, it's possible, for example, that the IETF could select somebody who has not participated in the IETF if they felt that person was an appropriate board member and the best available candidate. So it's a problem for them to identify such candidates and
to solicit their participation in the process, but there is no restriction for example that the chapters select somebody who is currently a chapter member. That the organizational members select somebody who is currently part of the organizations or that the IETF select one of its participants. That does give them degrees of freedom there, that might help them address the problem that Luis is pointing out.

>> Charles Mok: Hi, it's Charles. It seems to me that, has it been considered that maybe an appointment for a shorter period of the term, like instead of three years, maybe one or two years. You know, one of the problems with NomCom is that you nominate, you might recruit or nominate somebody but the election result may not reflect the way that NomCom may try to hope to close a particular gap.

But has it been considered that maybe appointment afterwards is a way to help that kind of balance?

Thank you.

>> Ted Hardie: That was the general problem the board Governance Committee was discussing this year. That is specifically, if the Internet Society board were to make appointments, that were intended to resolve or to improve specific diversity questions, what would that process look like? And functionally, there is a question there. Would it be the board selecting it after an open call? Would it be the board selecting it from within the sets of people that the board itself felt would address the issue? Or would it be through some other process? And the Governance Committee, unfortunately made not great progress on that. I have to say that it's a difficult problem because if you say that the board itself is going to make the appointment to address a skills diversity issue, that sort of gives you one set of problems. The board itself may be aware of where it lacks - especially after a particular cycle - where it lacks specific capabilities. If it felt like it needed specific financial acumen for example that it didn't see in its own membership, reaching out to people who have
that specific financial acumen, may be the way to fill that kind of gap. But may not be the appropriate way to fill other kinds of diversity problems – a gender diversity problem, or a geographic diversity problem. And there, a modified open call may be appropriate, but it is a bit tricky, right? In all of these cases, there's almost certain to be more than one axis of diversity that could be addressed. And so, figuring out how you make that call, if you are going to make an open call is important. And if you're not, there's a real chance you are going to fill the gap with somebody who is already an insider. And that reinforces other ways in which boards can ossify. So it's something that the board discussed in that committee, and unfortunately just didn't make enough progress to bring forward a proposal at this time.

I see Richard's hand and then there's some interventions in the chat, which I will get to. Richard?

>> Richard Barnes: I was inspired by Charles's point about shorter terms. Just to comment on a different dynamic (Inaudible). The board, as its constituted, in part due to how trustees are appointed has, I think, an unusually high level of turnover relative to other boards of similar organizations. Which you know, can be good in terms of bringing in fresh talent but is also a challenge in terms of maintaining some level of organizational continuity, institutional knowledge, and things like that, keeping rapport on the board and building a team and things like that. So I think that's another thing to keep in mind if we were to consider things like shorter terms, that would increase that high turnover even further.

>> Ted Hardie: It would also require us to update the bylaws which specify the terms now. The interventions in chat, Paul Wilson notes, interested to know, are there accepted/useful means of measuring diversity in an objective way, such that performance can be measured and targets set? Also interested on behalf of APNIC. There certainly are different measures that have been used in the past.
Those can definitely be applied here.

Luis has put a set of references into the chat for you. I will not read those aloud, but for those of you who are listening, they will be in the transcript.

References:


>> Richard Barnes: I will add on Paul's measurement point, it could be an interesting point to embark on, if we do that, it might be interesting to put it in the context of some other measures of diversity in this community: diversity of the chapter population or the organization member population.

>> Ted Hardie: Thanks. I'll point out in reference to that, the point that Luis made earlier about the lack of diversity in some of the populations is quite concerning there. If you looked at the IETF recently ran a survey on its most recent meeting and among the survey responses were the self-identified gender diversity of the individuals at the meeting. And the gender diversity at that specific meeting was 10% of the community present were women or identified as women.
And obviously, that means that the pool of people that they might draw on, if they were looking internally, would not itself have the diversity that might be a target for the board.

Luis?

>> Luis Martinez: Yeah, thank you, Ted. Also, if we look into geographical diversity, it's a common measure, if we look at the places where ISOC has a presence, speaking specifically about chapters, we have to accept that in the Pacific region, there is not much ISOC presence as well as in many countries in Asia. So that makes also these impedance mismatch-up I was talking about. There is nothing of possibilities for having a real diversity. Rather than the places where we have a presence as a Society. Thank you.

>> Ted Hardie: Thanks, Luis. But I will point back to the point George made earlier, that if we have a NomCom which is diverse enough to include members from different geographies, the chance that the geographic diversity of the resulting candidate pool will increase is quite high, and the result then is that the board selection increases the possibility that its diversity will be high.

So it's definitely the case that we can encourage folks in different regions to participate as members of the NomCom or to send candidates to the NomCom and that that will help ensure that the output of the process has a higher chance of diversity, once the voting has occurred.

I will also point out there's always a little bit of a question about geographic diversity of how you are counting it.

For example, Charles - who is joining the board - is I believe currently in California.

But I know his work primarily from his work in Hong Kong. So there's a question of, do I count Charles from his current place, or from where the majority of his work has been, or from his natal place? Similarly for myself, I worked primarily in California, originally from the U.S. but I live in Europe, specifically in Portugal now. How
you count that diversity is another issue for ensuring you get geographic diversity. There's kind of no way of counting it that results in us not identifying at least some gaps on the current board. But it's important for us to understand what it is we are trying to achieve there.

Luis, your hand is up. Do you still have a second intervention?

>> Luis Martinez: Sorry, it didn't get tired of being up.

>> Ted Hardie: In chat, Gunela asks NomCom diversity seems to be a key part to improve diversity, are there good ways to stimulate NomCom diversity? Any comments on that from the board - or the floor?

George?

>> George Sadowski: I can comment on that, the committee is made up and must have at least one person recommended by chapters as a whole and one person recommended by all of the organization members. After that, the choice of additional members is initially up to the chair, obviously, to be approved by the board. And I purposely used that degree of freedom to select people who knew a lot about ISOC, there were two former ISOC board members on my committee, both female. And we went out of our way to get a diverse NomCom simply by selection. So in part it's a function of what the chair does and what the board encourages the NomCom to try to achieve.

Thank you.

>> Ted Hardie: Thank you. And just to follow-up on that, I'm not aware of any occasion where at least in recent memory, the board has rejected a recommendation by the NomCom chair for somebody to become a member of the NomCom. So it's definitely the case that the NomCom has a good bit of freedom there.

Hans Peter in the chat, notes that his experience from previous NomComs was that there were many axes of diversity. As long as experience on other boards or ability to understand US accounting rules or other special knowledge is used as filters it is very hard
to fulfill gender or geographic diversity. Hans Peter, did you want to comment further?

>> Hans Peter Dittler: Just as a quick comment. The priority of rules which is imposed either as the written rules or verbally when the NomCom starts its work, influences in a great way, in a big way, the ability to choose candidates from the rather small pools of candidates we have seen, at least in the years I was working on one of the committees.

>> Cheryl?

>> Cheryl Langdon: Thank you. (Inaudible) It distracts me, sorry, losing my voice. (Inaudible) His recent intervention there. The rules base and the ordinance of the rules base when you apply these sorts of filters is incredibly important. But they are far more easily applied to get greater effect, at least, in my experience, when one has an appointing committee, as opposed to a nominating committee that has a slate that then gets - almost as a beauty contest - voted on. You kind of lose a little of that influence in that particular model. Of course some entities deal with that by making it a bit of a hybrid, six of one half dozen of another.

(Inaudible) one mechanism and balancing of the board appointed often following in time slightly different appointing mechanism. I'm not recommending that, I'm just making that as an observation. Thanks.

>> Ted Hardie: Thank you for that observation.

I will remind folks if they would like to type their questions in French or Spanish, they will be translated. Or if they would like to make an intervention in French or Spanish, via one of the translators, please use one of the facilities for that.

Kevin, would you mind putting the slide for how to access the translation facilities back up for a moment?

So I will remind you that the floor is open. The board is here to listen. If you have further comments on this topic, we are ready to hear them.
Charles asks in the chat, given the current status with the GRWG what might be possible next steps to consider?

I think the current plan is for the board is to hold these meetings and discuss what the next steps are. So as the first of four, this will be input into that board discussion and into the next steps. And it looks like George, you have your hand raised?

>> George Sadowsky: Yes, thank you. I wanted to make the comment on diversity. Discussion in this year's NomCom seemed to center more around the area of cultural diversity rather than geographic diversity. That it was important to have various cultural frameworks from different regions with different customs available to make comments on the various candidates. That gets us away from geographic diversity and all of the issues that go with it, that have been mentioned. For example, you would be considered U.S. no matter where you worked. And Charles would probably be considered Hong Kong as a space, cultural space that he would represent. Thank you.

>> Ted Hardie: Thank you for that reflection. To go back to Charles' question, the point that we were discussing earlier about whether or not the board would use its power to appoint, to increase a specific axis of diversities is one that I believe the board will continue to discuss. And to work through what mechanisms it would use, if it were to use that power. So advice from the community on whether they approve of the use of that power for this kind of diversity would definitely be welcomed.

And specifically, what process you would expect the board to use would be welcome. The other things the board might consider is taking some of the points that George made about the NomCom and working on ways to reinforce those either structurally or through communications. So that the diversity of the NomCom remained a mechanism for increasing the diversity of the candidate pool and thus eventually of the board.

Richard, you have your hand up?
Richard Barnes: Thanks. The other, you know, potential action here I think we touched on was this idea of leaning on someone's skill set, diversity and having the board provide some feedback to the community kind of what skills profile we think would be useful. That's something we have done for a few years on the PIR side, it's been helpful there. I think that's something we could definitely consider as an action for this community for the ISOC board.

Ted Hardie: Thank you, Richard. Muhammad?

Muhammad Shabbir: Thank you. Two points, one is related to the exercise of power. That's the question that Ted posed to the community. My suggestion there would be that after the election process and the nomination process completes, there is like two or three months' time, which is used for the preparation of the incoming trustees as well as the cycling process, until a new board starts working. So if at all, the board wanted to exercise its power of using or appointing the new trustees, perhaps a committee or even NomCom would consider the pool of candidates and the skill sets or the geographic or disability or any other diversity requirements that would be required at the board to fulfill and use this time, which was between the selection of the candidates, by the communities, and the actual start of the work of the candidates at the board.

This can perhaps provide some time and the diversity if the board wanted to exercise its power, number one. Number two is that we also have to consider that how the Internet Society and basic function of the Internet Society is to promote the Internet to strengthen it and to grow it.

So we would, by defining diversity for the Internet Society, we would want to consider that how Internet impacts people in different groups. As well as how the people impact the Internet. For instance, we always talk about the diversity and the disability of the diversity at different forums. Disability, in terms of population, if we see it is according to different estimates, 15% of world population. And it
is across gender. It crosses gender. It can have either gender. It is also trans-geographic. And also it's the cross cultural issue. So when we are fulfilling this kind of, or defining diversity, we would want to consider that how Internet and people using the Internet define diversity and impact it. This is my intervention if any folks have any question or comment, I would be more welcome.

>> Ted Hardie: Thank you very much for your comments, Muhammad. On your first point, I noted that it sounded like you were recommending that the board make an appointment during the period between when the NomCom has -- sorry, after the votes have been counted. And when the new members selected by the NomCom or the IETF are seated. I think that makes sense. But I will point out, it means that the board doing the appointment is not the board that the new members will be part of. Because of the transition, that would mean that the board, whose members are being replaced, in essence, or who are stepping down because of the term limits would be the ones making the appointment. And that would be something, I think, we would want to discuss with the community to make sure the community thought that was the appropriate board to make an appointment or whether it should be the board after the new folks who are seated, who examined the question of diversity and come to their own conclusion about who the right people might be to appoint. That's one of the transitional questions I think is why the use the board's power to appoint to address some of these issues hasn't been quite so simple as, well let's get some candidates in and do the right thing.

Muhammad, I don't know if your hand is up. Did you have a further intervention?

So we have just a few minutes left. The floor is still open before we wrap up. Are there any final thoughts?

Okay. Next, I would like to, just as a form of wrap up, thank both of the chairs for the Governance Reform Working Group for their work. Hans Peter and George, we appreciate the effort you and that
community put in for raising these issues to the board. And we appreciate each of you who joined us today for your thoughts and participation. There will be a second set of board comments later today. Another round of comments on this topic in order to make sure the different time zones have the opportunity to comment. And then there will be two more of these later this month to cover the other topic that was raised by the Governance Reform Working Group as a first-round set of discussions.

So we really appreciate your attention today and your participation, and we look forward to continuing the discussion with you in various other forums as we hold them.

Thank you very much.

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