

**Keynote Address**

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*ICANN and the Global Internet*

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Thank you for your very kind welcome. Merhaba Türkiye!

My thanks to former Minister Binali Yildirim, who has done so much to expand Internet penetration and access speeds in Turkey. I would also like to recognize Ihsan Durdu, Advisor to the Minister of Transport and Communications of Turkey and Turkey's representative on ICANN's Governmental Advisory Committee. He has played a vital role in arranging my visit. Ihsan, thank you for your help and for your ongoing contributions to the GAC on behalf of Turkey.

What a great pleasure it is to be in İzmir, the "pearl of Turkey". And what a powerful experience to be in a city that can trace its lineage back to the third millennium BC. A city where the Trojan War – an event most would consider the far distant past – occurred some 2000 years into its recorded history. And where the legacy of the ancients remains such an integral part of life today. I come from a country that traces its history in the hundreds, not thousands, of years, and I stand in awe of İzmir's remarkable heritage.

It seems a great contrast to the modern communications issues that we are here to discuss in recognition of World Telecom Day.

**What is ICANN?**

Let me start with some basic thoughts about what ICANN is and does, and why it matters.

ICANN and its governing bodies were created to keep the global Internet secure, stable and interoperable, and this is critical to ensure that the world stays connected. Its principle function is to coordinate the domain name system and Internet protocols and parameters, the backbone of the Internet.

You need a numerical IP address to connect to the Internet, and as humans we need names to make sense of those numbers. You can only have one name on

a network or your browser would end up at a different website each time and your email would pop up in someone else's inbox.

So how does ICANN actually do this?

Here is a very oversimplified answer. Imagine the Internet as a big three-layer cake. At the bottom layer are the pipes and protocols that connect devices and define how communication takes place.

The second layer is the traffic, where devices are identified with specific addresses that are turned into names so that we humans can navigate around the Internet. This is the layer ICANN is involved in.

And the top layer is applications and content: your company's website, your child's computer games, your email program.

Living as we do in layer two, ICANN does not engage in how ISPs build or run their networks in the first layer, nor do we get involved with the content and applications of the third. By providing a functioning, evolving and neutral second layer, we facilitate changes in the other two, independently, accurately and often extremely swiftly. We make sure that addresses are unique and connect you to the person or website intended. And that means that the Internet works reliably, predictably and smoothly.

### **The ICANN model: structure and values**

ICANN was set up in 1999 by the US government with support from the Internet community because both recognized that they needed an organization to manage this complicated relationship between machines and humans.

With great insight, it was decided that ICANN would be private sector led and multi-stakeholder, while recognizing the legitimate role of governments in public policy. Its approach was – and remains – inclusive. If you are interested in the Internet, you are welcome to take part at ICANN. There is no other requirement.

So a series of groups representing many different stakeholders was created. The business community, non-commercial organizations, the technical community, the domain name industry, Internet registrars, registries and individual Internet users are all represented. A Governmental Advisory Committee was formed along with a policy-setting Board of Directors made up of elected representatives from each group. And the door is always open for other groups and individuals to take part.

This 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. It is multi-layered and includes international, national, and even local interests.

In some ways this is much like TÛTED. Both organizations are a forum for the interests of many stakeholders, and we all understand that this requires a careful balancing act. In the ICANN context it can create some raucous moments as controversial views are aired and challenged. But this transparent and balanced policy process is part of the model, and a principal reason for ICANN's success.

It is important to note that no one is in charge of the Internet. ICANN works toward a common good – a stable, secure and unified global Internet - but without the central authority of a government or governmental body. Many organizations and individuals play a role in its success.

The Internet is governed indirectly through consultation, consensus and the contributions of a broad and diverse community of people around the world. The key to success is to have as many people as possible contributing to that process. One of the most important things ICANN does to keep the system working is to stay out of the way.

If governance were to become the exclusive province of nation states or captured by any other interests, we would lose the foundation of the Internet's long-term potential and transformative value. Decisions on its future should reflect the widest possible range of views and the wisdom of the entire world community – not just governmental organizations.

The multi-stakeholder model represents a unique form of governance: global reach and outlook; bottom-up decision-making; decentralized control; inclusive and at times unruly processes; and attention to voices of the community as much as voices of power.

ICANN is itself a community, with a consensus-driven approach and solid commitment to a series of ideals:

- *Universality*, because the Internet is global and we must be, too.
- *Inclusiveness*, because everyone using the Internet has a right to be heard in its governance.
- *Unity and connectivity*, because the ability of anyone to connect to anyone anywhere depends on keeping the Internet whole.
- *Transparency*, because you can't have real accountability without it and ICANN is accountable to its stakeholders.
- *Innovation*, because the Internet is changing rapidly and the domain name system must keep up.
- *Security, stability and reliability* are our core values, because the Internet must keep running. Too much is at stake for us to fail.

ICANN works closely with groups such as the Internet Engineering Task Force - an incredible network of engineers that developed most of the Internet Protocols we rely on today. We have agreements with a wide range of organizations, from UNESCO to the African Telecommunications Union, the Commonwealth

Telecommunications Organization, Universal Postal Union and many others, and we are always open to constructive partnerships that advance the public interest.

ICANN is also an active participant in the Internet Governance Forum, another example of our strong commitment to international collaboration. The IGF is an important public forum created under the auspices of the United Nations, where interested parties come together equally to address Internet governance issues for the common good. Its greatest values are its egalitarian philosophy and its inclusiveness, and it is an effective building block in the governance of the global Internet.

I should also mention that ICANN has recently acquired some excellent support in the development of its outreach programs and global engagement strategies. Filiz Yilmaz, who is here with us today, is ICANN's Senior Director of Participation and Engagement. She is a native of Turkey who has worked on Internet policy since the mid-1990s, starting in Ankara at the Middle East Technical University and then working with the European Internet community, RIPE and RIPE NCC. We are delighted that she has joined us.

### **The Affirmation of Commitments**

The ICANN model continues to evolve. The Affirmation of Commitments - an agreement with the US Department of Commerce - was signed in 2009. It transferred ICANN's oversight from one government to the world, echoing the increasingly global nature of the Internet.

In the wake of that agreement, ICANN has moved firmly and rapidly to embrace its role as a multinational institution working for the common good. This status is reflected in its diverse international staff, board of directors and leadership of supporting organizations, as well as in the increasingly global nature of its work.

### **The Growing Global Internet**

The Internet is the greatest communications tool in the history of mankind. It is changing the world by facilitating the spread of ideas beyond national borders - enabling human freedoms, stimulating economic growth, enriching cultural diversity and nurturing the seeds of innovation and social change.

Through the Internet, ideas can blanket the world in a way that was virtually unimaginable only a decade ago, allowing competition and cross-fertilization of commerce, culture and technology among connected individuals and countries. Anyone can connect to anyone anywhere, spreading ideas beyond borders. This is a sea change in the way we have traditionally communicated, both personally and organizationally.

The Internet will eventually touch almost everyone on the planet. Indirectly it already does, through our increasing reliance on it to run electricity grids, phone networks, health services, transport systems and other major infrastructure.

The world has over two billion Internet users who access about 100 billion web pages every day. Around twenty-five percent of the seven billion on this planet reach the Internet directly by computer, and even more through smart phones and other devices.

These and other activities involve more than one trillion lookups in the domain name system – the Internet’s technical backbone - *everyday*.

Here in Turkey 35 million people - 45 percent of the 2010 population - have Internet access, an increase of nearly 285 percent since 2006. Turkey has seen a dramatic increase in the number of fixed broadband Internet subscribers - from 3.85 per 100 in 2006 to 9.4 in 2010 – but this is still low compared to Europe as a whole. With such a young population, Turkey can be expected to see a ratcheting up of that number as young people engage in social media and other online tools.

The world population will continue to grow, but Internet penetration is growing even faster. There is no end in sight to the world’s increasing dependence on the Internet for the basics of life: communication, infrastructure, economic growth and innovation.

The next few years will be pivotal for the Internet’s development. What changes will be needed to expand the reach of the global Internet, two, five or ten years into the future? This is something the ICANN community has already begun addressing.

### **Internationalized Domain Names**

Change – cultural, political, social and economic - is occurring on a massive scale, and the Internet is driving it. Commerce, culture and technology are shared across borders, across continents, across cultural divides. In many countries, the Internet has become as basic to daily life as transportation, water and power systems.

The next billion users will join this online community soon, and we must make it as easy as possible for them to do so if the Internet is to be truly global.

And the numbers are staggering: five of the top ten languages in use on the Internet today rely on a non-Latin script: Chinese, Japanese, Arabic, Russian and Korean, in roughly descending order. That represents 647 million users. And another 310 million fall into the broad category of “other” languages – not in the top ten – and many of them will also rely on non-Latin scripts.

For many millions of these users, the introduction of internationalized domain names means they will be able to access the Internet entirely in their primary language.

Under the fast track process for approval of these new domain names, we have received 34 requests for consideration of IDN country code top-level domains. Twenty countries and territories now have IDNs in the Internet's root. They include Arabic, Chinese, Cyrillic and Indic scripts, together used by some three billion people worldwide.

## **IPv6**

In February I was part of a diverse group of Internet leaders who met to acknowledge an historic milestone - the allocation of the last address blocks of IPv4, the Internet protocol that has been largely unchanged for 35 years.

The expansion to IPv6 is far more than a technical advance. It is a vivid illustration of the Internet's amazing growth, and an essential path to a future of continuing innovation and communication.

IPv6 offers a quantity of addresses beyond the human imagination: *trillions* of times larger than under IPv4. I was delighted to learn that the government of Turkey has mandated that the government must be IPv6 ready. This is a very positive demonstration of Turkey's understanding of IPv6 and of its leadership in setting a strong example.

IPv6 is the platform for tomorrow's technology. Full adoption is essential to ensure that the Internet has room to grow, to accommodate the innovations we haven't dreamt of yet - the ones that in a few years may profoundly improve our lives. For that to become reality, we need global adoption of the new protocol. I urge you all to spread the word on its importance.

## **DNSSEC**

Perhaps ICANN's most significant achievement in security is the ongoing implementation of DNSSEC, or Domain Name Security Extensions. DNSSEC adds security on top of the domain name system to protect Internet users from certain forms of online fraud, such as phishing and man-in-the-middle attacks. Once fully deployed, it will help prevent criminals from redirecting users to fake websites that can be used to perpetrate cyber crimes.

It is being vigorously deployed around the world, at a pace that exceeds our most optimistic projections.

We encourage companies to deploy DNSSEC on their DNS infrastructure – in effect, to turn DNSSEC validation “on” and sign their company's domain names.

In less than a year since the root was signed, today we have 69 top-level domains signed, including .COM with its 90+ million delegations.

You might be interested to know that ICANN's critical DNSSEC operations at the highest level are conducted by and continue to benefit from an exceptional Turkish ICANN staff member, Mehmet Akcin, who is here with us today.

### **New Top-level Domains**

Innovation is a key value for ICANN, because the Internet is changing rapidly and the domain name system must evolve with it. Opening up the name space to new generic top level domains – the part that comes after the dot - is intended to promote competition, innovation and consumer choice in a safe and stable manner, with sufficient and appropriate safeguards to mitigate costs and risks.

The global debate on this issue has been intense at times, because the Internet matters and many people have much at stake.

ICANN's board is likely to bring this issue to conclusion next month at our public meeting in Singapore after many years of extensive policy development, consultation and study. Whatever their decision, the proposal that the Board will consider reflects contributions from many stakeholders around the world – a genuine example of the multi-stakeholder model at its best.

### **GAC: why is it important, and what is Turkey's role?**

One of the main players in that inclusive process is the Governmental Advisory Committee, or GAC, the advisory body that represents the interests of governments in public policy issues involving the domain name system.

With the Affirmation of Commitments, ICANN became responsible to all governments, not just one. This has always been our goal: to be accountable to all our stakeholders. As the forum for the world's governments within the ICANN community, the GAC is a cornerstone of the multi-stakeholder model. Its views and advice, while not binding on ICANN, carry enormous weight and are taken extremely seriously by ICANN's Board of Directors and staff, and by the wider Internet community.

A reflection of its importance can be seen in its growing membership. Thirteen governments and three observers joined in 2010, bringing total membership to 104 governments, plus 15 observers, and we expect that trend to continue.

Turkey has a pivotal role in the GAC, and through that forum its views can influence the future of the Internet. Turkey's GAC delegate, Ihsan Durdu, ensures that Turkey's voice is heard in this increasingly important consultative body within the global Internet community.

### **Conclusion**

The power of the Internet to change our lives is breathtaking. It is profoundly reshaping our communications, our infrastructure, our economies and our future.

ICANN is committed to ensuring that all voices are heard through the multi-stakeholder model as the future of the Internet takes shape.

Thank you.

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