



The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers

9 May 2016

Wardner Maia
President of LACNIC

Eduardo Santoyo
President of LACTLD

Ariel Grazier
President of LAC-IX

Dear Wardner, Eduardo and Ariel,

On behalf of the ICANN Board I wish to express our sympathy to your expressed concerns. We hear and share them.

We acknowledge the importance of keeping the rotation of ICANN meetings for exactly the reasons you explain in your letter, namely, to engage with the local and regional communities and to bring ICANN closer to the world. This is why, even in the absence of a local host that offers to host a meeting, ICANN Staff takes a proactive approach and looks for a suitable venue located in the region in turn according to the rotation of our meetings. This was the case with Panama.

As you are no doubt fully aware, we have an extensive list of requirements we have to satisfy to run a successful ICANN meeting. This has become an increasingly complex task considering the growing number of our community, the increasing number of parallel sessions and the particular room formats required by community members for ICANN meetings. Accordingly, there are now relatively few venues in the world that satisfy all our requirements. When we choose a venue it is because it complies with all of the requirements. Panama City and San Juan in Puerto Rico both offer outstanding facilities to hold an ICANN meeting.



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On rare occasions, due to events outside ICANN's control, we face challenges sufficiently severe that we feel we cannot proceed with meetings in the venue we have planned. When this happens, we will postpone rather than cancel the meeting and work in close cooperation with the relevant local community members to mitigate the impact of delay. Most recently we have completed this in Marrakech, ultimately achieving one of our most successful meetings ever.

We understand that changing the venue of an ICANN meeting affects many groups in our community. Finding an alternate venue from an ICANN Staff and Board perspective is very problematic. Believe me that the last group that wants to postpone a meeting is the group who chose the venue in the very first place after a very thorough analysis and scrutiny.

As you know, moving away from Panama was due to the outbreak of the Zika virus in the Latin America and Caribbean Region. Our meetings team has been following closely the development of the virus, travel warnings and the potential negative effects it has on the health of human beings. According to this research and the available information, it is our understanding that the Zika virus poses a serious threat to human health. We have consulted extensively on risks and considered whether under the circumstances we can hold an efficient and safe meeting. In this instance we have decided this is a serious risk and decided to go to an alternate venue for the safety of our community

Given that the next programmed meeting ICANN 57 is scheduled to happen in San Juan, Puerto Rico where there are also concerns regarding the Zika virus, we have consulted with our AC and SO leaders, Board and staff. Unfortunately, the Zika virus is not lessening and more evidence is emerging of serious health issues. Many people are exhibiting significant concern at travelling to Puerto Rico at this time. A decision has not yet been made regarding the San Juan meeting.



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I am acutely aware that you will not have the opportunity to engage with your communities during the ICANN meeting as you have originally planned. I have asked Akram to organize a staff team to continue the work started with you in Marrakech and to agree with your priorities to mitigate the negative impact of this difficult decision.

We appreciate your offer to help us assess the risks when dealing with venues in the Latin America and the Caribbean. I personally think this is a great idea and I will ask the Staff to consider this sort of involvement with our community in the future when this kind of problems arise.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Steve Crocker". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Steve Crocker
Chairman of the Board