Draft of EURALO Board report/account of activities to GA in Paris, June 08:

1. Introduction and Chronology:

EURALO was created as one of the first ICANN RALOs in March 07 in Lisbon after two Prep-meetings in May 06 in Frankfurt and September 06 in Berlin/Germany. The by-laws and the MoU were accomplished and signed at the spring 07 ICANN meeting.

Soon after that founding ceremony, Board (April-May) and Chair (June) election were conducted. Some of the Board members met in Meissen in August (at the 1st Summer School on Internet Governance) to discuss first steps how best to organise the Board and EURALO work. A funding proposal was submitted for a first F2F Board meeting in the context of the ICANN-Studienkreis meeting in October 07 in Warsaw which was considered as an appropriate opportunity which was denied by the staff.

The Chair was invited to ICANN's 30st International Public Meeting in Los Angeles end of October 07. He couldn't make it to LA because he was stopped in the transit section of the Munich airport (by a private security comp.) "for not having a biometric passport" yet. From the EURALO Board, Annette, (Désirée?), Sébastien, Veronica and Wolfgang participated. Since the LA ICANN meeting Sébastien was strongly involved in the outline and draft of a first proposal to organise a ICANN User Summit in 2008 (which was suggested for Paris at the beginning). There were all kinds of involvement from Board members in ICANN activities but coordinated action by the Board as a group seemed to be rather difficult.

At the 31st ICANN Public Meeting in New Delhi in February 08 Annette, Désirée, Sébastien, Veronica and Wolf participated. This meeting was considered as rather important for the At-Large community for two reasons at least: (1) how to better structure and organise the ALAC work process and (2) to submit a substantiated Funding Proposal for a User Summit to the ICANN Board. Veronica co-organised a Workshop and conducted a survey on ALAC. The Chair sent a daily summary on the Delhi meeting to the EURALO list. At our first and single telephone conference we had so far before Delhi it was agreed to convene a first F2F Board Meeting after Delhi at the occasion of the IGF-Consultations end of February 08 in Geneva. A second funding proposal for travel expenses for some Board members was denied again. Some of the Board members could meet in Geneva on their own expenses. A report of this meeting was posted on the board list afterwards.

In February 08 the Chair participated in a penal discussion at the Domainpulse 08 conference in Vienna (organised annually by the registrars of Austria, Germany and Switzerland) to represent the user's view point in a discussion with Roberto Gaetano (ICANN Board), Markus Kummer (IGF) and others. The Vienna round table was moderated by Wolfgang Kleinwächter. This kind of outreach activities – to use conferences on Internet issues organised by other stakeholders – is considered as very useful for promoting EURALO and the user's cause.

2. Other activities:

Annette organised a Workshop at the last Chaos Computer-Days at the end of December 07 in Berlin with Wendy Seltzer (ICANN Board member).

Sébastien was strongly involved to prepare and organise the 32nd ICANN Public Meeting in June 08 in Paris with the ICANN staff. The Chair participated in the Paris Organising Committee as well.

Several Board members (Sébastien, Annette, Wolf, Wolfgang, Bill, Rudi and others) participated in the Summit working group over the last months. The Sub-group on

content is chaired by Wolf who prepared the Summit (Content) Questionnaire submitted to the ALSes with the staff which was posted to the various lists recently.

Some of the Board members actively participated in subjects and policy related working groups at ICANN.

3. Positions held by EURALO or Board members at ICANN:
- Annette Mühlberg and Sébastien Bachollet at ALAC;
- Wolfgang Kleinwächter, Vice-Chair of the NomCom;
- Karin Banks was selected as NomCom member at the end of April 08.

- In April 08 Veronica Cretu, EURALO ALAC member from Moldavia who was elected for two years resigned for professional reasons and EURALO has to nominate a successor immediately. Sébastien Bachollets one-year term expires as well. Therefore succeeding nominations have to be discussed and decided by the GA in June 08 in Paris.

4. Nomination of an ALAC Board liaison
EURALO and its ALSes were asked by the ALAC Chair at the beginning of June 08 to nominate an At-Large Liaison to the ICANN Board of Directors. This position is currently held by Wendy Seltzer. A consultation was started to meet the nomination deadline at the 16 June 08.

5. Some observations and conclusions:
Why this first EURALO Board as a group couldn't find a coherent dynamic for more and policy related contributions?

Over the last months a lot of frustrations have been expressed on and off the list and in personal talks to me. Those motions were sometimes marked as "excuses" but criticism and frustrations have to be taken serious and into consideration in any working environment particularly dealing/working with volunteers. The notion of an "enabling environment" is as fundamental as crucial for any involvement and participation of the famous "Internet User" at ICANN. And this sentiment is not typical for EURALO only but is shared by many others in the ALAC sphere: "(...) the culture around ICANN: Poor process = poor outcomes and unhappy people. Poor process makes good people act foolishly. I walked away from (an ICANN meeting) with a very favourable view of most people that I met, but a very unfavourable view of the scene."

According to the Chairs observations over the last months there are several (non-digital) divides to overcome: Between staff and volunteers, between high-skilled experts and beginners, between old-hands and newbies, the immanent divergences of expectations (set by the profs) versus time, capacity, experience, speed, language, culture etc. of volunteers. And I fear, if those factors are not taken into consideration by ICANN staff and professionals the cleavage will continue and hamper the involvement of newcomers. Our common goal "to represent users and the user's concerns in the ICANN structures" will continue being a good idea but mere wishful thinking in fact. It will be a never ending tension between Top-down and Bottom-up and who has to first and better adapt: The user community to ICANN or ICANN to the user / At-Large community? If we once would like to become Internet artists we need to become "process artists" (Dharma Dailey) as well. But for both, incentives, encouragement and support is needed. Planning and working autonomy for RALOs in their given geographical, political and cultural context would be a next step to begin with. Once we can rely on such enabling factors we are keen to present better results to ICANN and to our member ALSes at our next General Assembly.

Switzerland, June 08.
For the EURALO Board
Wolf Ludwig, Co-Chair