Title:
ICANN73 to be Virtual Meeting, Board Affirms Intent to Hold Hybrid ICANN74

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The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) announced ICANN73 will be a Virtual Community Forum Meeting. The ICANN Board of Directors reaffirms its intent to hold ICANN74 as a hybrid meeting.

Announcement Content:
Today, the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) announced that ICANN73 will convene as a Virtual Community Forum Meeting due to the continuing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The resolution and full rationale from the ICANN Board of Directors can be found here. This Public Meeting was initially scheduled to be held in San Juan, Puerto Rico, from 5 to 10 March 2022. The ICANN73 Virtual Community Forum will take place in the Atlantic Standard Time zone (UTC -4) but the exact dates may change following consultation with ICANN community leadership.

The pandemic remains a persistent and volatile risk, particularly due to the more transmissible and globally predominant Delta variant. Although vaccination campaigns have advanced, COVID-19 continues to circulate widely in all regions. While there has been progress that might make it feasible to plan for and convene a meeting in San Juan, Puerto Rico in March 2022, the current risks and uncertainties remain too high to proceed with an in-person meeting or with an in-person component. This uncertainty also prevents ICANN org and the community from conducting the pre-planning activities necessary to hold an in-person meeting, and it prohibits any travel to conduct on-site technical and logistics planning that must begin months before the actual event.

The Board is committed to the multistakeholder model and the purposes of ICANN's Public Meetings. While the Board recognizes the value of face-to-face interaction and the advancement of ICANN community work that happens at these meetings, ICANN cannot move forward with an in-person meeting at the cost of the health and safety of attendees and participants.

Many other challenges and uncertainties factored into the Board's decision, such as the ability and willingness of participants to travel internationally and to be allowed to enter the United States; the advanced planning necessary to produce a successful meeting; the ability to complete the necessary health and safety protocols in time; and the current dialogue between the community and org to create a meaningful hybrid design that would meet the needs of those unable to attend in person.

Recognizing the importance of resuming in-person meetings as soon as it is practical to do so, the ICANN Board reaffirmed its intent to hold the ICANN74 Policy Forum, scheduled for June 2022 in The Hague, Netherlands, with in-person and virtual participation. In addition to its decision to convene ICANN73 as a virtual meeting, the Board has directed the ICANN President and Chief Executive Officer to coordinate with the ICANN community in designing ICANN74 as a hybrid meeting.