

ICANN53: An exceptional experience never to forget

I had the chance to be one of the ICANN followers and represent my country Algeria in the ICANN53 meeting in Buenos Aires, Argentina last June 2015. And here is my story:

Before the ICANN meeting: My background on the internet Governance

I heard about the ICANN community for the first time in a workshop called “the Internet Governance in middle east and north Africa” organized by Hivos foundation on June 2014 in Beirut, by Fahd batanyeh “the stakeholder coordinator-middle east” who was there explaining to us about the community and its functions. At that time, I knew nothing about the internet governance, neither the ICANN; it was something strange and new for me. It was the first time I hear about that and I was wondering, what does the internet Governance mean? What is the ICANN? What they are doing?



From that moment, I started to learn, read, about the issue and the community and then, participate, and collaborate in the internet Governance world; and being one of authors in the internet governance issues with a huge interest about the IG in my country Algeria. As I attended meetings and workshops such as the IGF 2014, Arab IGF 2014, MEAC-SIG...



From the moment, I get selected:

When I have been selected by the ICANN to attend the 53 meeting, I was very happy and excited about the opportunity I had in my hand, and I waited impatiently the D-day.

During this period, I get a message of congratulation in my LinkedIn profile from a person I was not known before, it was M Abdel-Aziz Hilali “the president of ISOC morocco and a member of AFRALO”, saying that he was happy to see one from the region participating as an ICANN fellow especially from Algeria. He said, “It is the first time since my engagement with the ICANN I see one from Algeria attending this fellowship”. I felt proud when I get his message and I was waiting the day that I will get the chance to meet him in person.

During the ICANN meeting: feeling excited

I woke up the first day full of energy and very excited to live such experience. I met some fellows before going to the Sheraton hotel, with whom I had the chance to know and talk before the meeting. One time over there, the first person I saw when I enter the morning

session was Mama J, the fellowship program manager, she was there giving advice and welcoming us by her beautiful smile.



The session was very constructive; Janice and other members from the ICANN were there to introduce us to the community, and to the fellowship program. I was listening to them attentively to understand more how ICANN works. I liked this morning session, I felt really encouraged and pushed forward by attending it.

The session after was “Newcomer session”, which take all the day, and in which we had the chance to get many information about the multistakeholder model, the DNS, IANA function, Registers, register, the different acronyms and so on.

During the fellowship, we were advised to join a constituency, in which we feel that it fits our skills and expertise, I was lost, and I ask myself, which community should i join? Which session interest me the most? Thanks’ to the morning session that helped me a lot to choose and to find my way in the ICANN world. The NCUC, The noncommercial users constituency which is the home for civil society organizations and individuals. Me as a journalist/blogger/ and civil society, this constituency matches well with my interest.

People there was very nice and helpful, the speakers, ICANN stuff, the participant, all were there ready to respond our questions, inquiries, and get us into discussion about the IG world.

It was not easy to choose the right session every time, but I managed to jump from one constituency to another to fill the gaps and knowing more about each one of it. There, in the GAC meeting, I searched for any representative from the Algerian government, but the result

was disappointing, no one was there, I even met them in the Global IGF and the Arab IGF, so why not here?.



Next step after this fellowship:

Attending an ICANN meeting is a unique experience; we were coming from different region, different culture, and different background, all together talking, discussing and sharing our experience, having fun and learning more and more about the Internet governance world and the ICANN community. I learned a lot from this fellowship, from the followers, from the ICANN community, it was exceptional, to see this entire people from all over the world interesting in the same issue and trying to make the internet world better and better. I am very happy to be a part of this program and looking forward to attend it more and more. So now, what is the next step?

I gained a lot of knowledge from the different workshops, meetings, and trainings in the Internet Governance that I attended before. I wish and I will put my expertise into action, I started already by creating a blog that serve only to write in Arabic about the internet Governance in Algeria to spread awareness about this issue in my country and the Arab world, and I joined the NCUC constituency. In which I want to contribute and be active as much as I can.

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