

**Speech of the CEO of ICANN – Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers, Paul Twomey, in the opening ceremony of the ICANN Meeting in Lisbon, 26-30 March 2007**

Minister Gago,  
and my good friend Pedro, I think this is the tenth year we have come to ICANN meetings together, Pedro.  
Ladies and gentlemen,  
and for all the people who are looking at this event either through chat rooms or through video and audio streaming,

Welcome to ICANN's meeting here in Lisbon.

Minister, I have to say how pleased I am to be ending a journey. My first experience and engagement of the journey of Portuguese culture started with (saying name), which is closer to my home town, a small detour in India, quite some time in Brazil, but now I'm at the heartland, so now here we are in Portugal.

I would like to particularly thank the sponsors for this meeting. I'd like to particularly thank all the amazing effort of FCCN, not only the work they do in representing Portugal internationally but actually in the operations of the country code and in putting together what's been a fantastic meeting. Already.

I mean, the last couple of days has just been -- you could sense that things are going to get done very well and very professionally, and my staff are all much calmer than they can be, so that's been very positive, and we appreciate that very much.

I would also like to voice our thanks to the city of Lisbon and to other sponsors for their assistance.

As I pointed out, Portugal has been, through FCCN, a part of the founding of ICANN. It has been a founding member of the Governmental Advisory Committee in 1998, and has been a consistent participant and friend of the ICANN process and we thank them for that.

Minister, as we were discussing this morning before we came down here, what you see here before you are representatives of the sort of international organizational arrangements which are likely to continue to emerge in the 21st century, to coordinate technical, economic, and social activities in a globalizing world, bound together by the Internet and other networks.

And ICANN is an expression of the way in which multiple parties, multistakeholders can come together to help coordinate a function and set of issues that are truly global in their nature.

There are representatives here of the technical community, from the Internet engineering task force, from people who are involved in running registries such as the Regional Internet Registries, the country code registries, the top-level domain registries.

There are people here from business, both on the supply side, people, ISPs and the registries themselves, the registrars who help serve the registrants worldwide.

But also on the demand side. I see my friend Ayesha from the ICC in two-thirds of the room, the International Chamber of Commerce and others who represent the business zone, small as well as large.

You have people here from civil society, wide range of civil society representation. Importantly, during this meeting, we have three regional what we call at-large organizations who are coming to finalization in their discussions, which is an expression regional participation of the civil society grouping. Our experience has been how to have a mixture, if you like, of open participation, but also almost representational democracy. How do you ensure that you have representational groupings of people, both at say country code levels, at civil society levels, who can come together so that voices come from all regions of the world, not just from the powerful, the strong or the rich.

And importantly, we have governments. There are some 120 governments who are members of the Governmental Advisory Committee. There's some 40-plus meeting here today, or this week.

We have a special event, we say farewell to the longstanding chair of the Governmental Advisory Committee from -- Sharil Tarmizi from Malaysia, and we have a new European chair for the GAC, Ambassador Janis Karklins.

It's important to finish, Minister, as many people realize Portugal is at the center stage of European politics this year. The nation assumes the presidency of the European Union in the second half of the year, and of course the President Barroso from Portugal is the president of the European Commission. The EU is celebrating its 50th anniversary, so it's a series of celebrations here for Portugal. And we look forward to being in further engagement with you, as you assume your roles with the presidency, partly to help, I think, to further explore and defend and promote the sort of new models that I know you, as a physicist, have got a sort of understanding of these sort of new ways of thinking of the world. These new models which are very important for a stable coordination of a truly global function.

So welcome, and we look forward to your words.