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For Immediate Release

Outgoing CEO Praises Expansion of ICANN's International Community

Beijing Announced as Site of April 2013 Public Meeting

Prague, Czech Republic... Rod Beckstrom, ICANN's President and Chief Executive Officer, today said that the organization he has led for the past three years has become dramatically more international in almost every way.

"We made appreciable and concrete progress in internationalizing ICANN," said Beckstrom. "We made it a priority to hire staff with multi-linguistic skills. Seven members of the ICANN executive team now speak nine different languages."

Beckstrom made the comments during the welcoming session of ICANN's 44th public meeting in Prague, Czech Republic.

"Leaders from governments around the world no longer are simply talking *to* us at our meetings. They are talking *with* us about Internet policy," said Beckstrom. "We now have 110 nations represented on our Governmental Advisory Committee."

The Prague meeting marks the end of Rod Beckstrom's tenure as ICANN President and CEO. Last August, he announced he would leave when his three-year contract expires on 1 July.

On Friday, ICANN Board Chair Stephen Crocker announced that Internet entrepreneur Fadi Chehadé will succeed Beckstrom as President and Chief Executive Officer no later than 1 October. Until then, Chief Operating Officer Akram Atallah will serve as CEO.

"The Internet is the greatest public gift," said Chehadé. "ICANN cannot become a fortress. ICANN must become an oasis - a place that people see and come to because it work, because it makes sense, because it's efficient."

"Accountability and Transparency continue to be all-important for us," Crocker told the attendees. "I have added effectiveness as an essential element for us. If we don't get the job done, and get it done properly and quickly, no one will care how transparent or accountable we are."

Dr. Crocker also emphasized the importance of ICANN's interactions with governments around the world.

“In broader areas, particularly abuse of domain name registrations, we are pleased to see closer and more substantive cooperation with the law enforcement community and with other parts of governments,” said Crocker.

During the Prague meeting, ICANN’s Board of Directors voted to hold the 46th ICANN public meeting in Beijing, China, on 7-12 April 2013. Twenty five percent of the world’s Internet users live in China. The meeting will be sponsored by China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC), the Internet Society of China (ISC), and the China Organizational Name Administration Center (CONAC).

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To download high resolution photos of ICANN’s welcoming session in Prague, go here: <http://www.icann.org/en/news/press/kits/prague44>.

To download a high resolution photo of Rod Beckstrom’s December 7 meeting with Minister Wang of the State Internet Information Office, go here: <http://www.scio.gov.cn/zxbd/wz/201112/t1061620.htm> .

To review the entire schedule for the Prague meeting, go here: <http://prague44.icann.org/full-schedule>.

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About ICANN: *ICANN’s mission is to ensure a stable, secure and unified global Internet. To reach another person on the Internet you have to type an address into your computer - a name or a number. That address has to be unique so computers know where to find each other. ICANN coordinates these unique identifiers across the world. Without that coordination we wouldn’t have one global Internet. ICANN was formed in 1998. It is a not-for-profit public-benefit corporation with participants from all over the world dedicated to keeping the Internet secure, stable and interoperable. It promotes competition and develops policy on the Internet’s unique identifiers. ICANN doesn’t control content on the Internet. It cannot stop spam and it doesn’t deal with access to the Internet. But through its coordination role of the Internet’s naming system, it does have an important impact on the expansion and evolution of the Internet. For more information please visit: www.icann.org.*