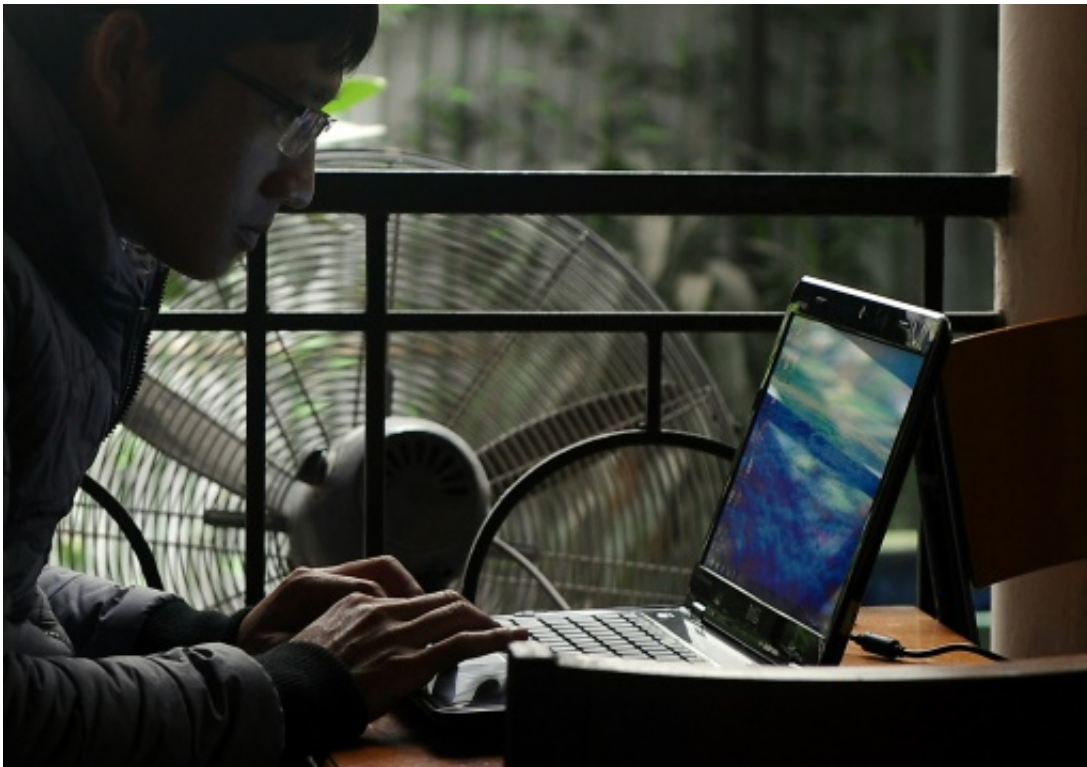


# End of US oversight role 'strengthens' Internet

July 9 2015, by Rob Lever

---



The US government's stepping away from a key oversight role of the Internet will strengthen its governance and ease political pressures, the top Internet administrator said

The US government's stepping away from a key oversight role of the Internet will strengthen its governance and ease political pressures, the top Internet administrator said Wednesday.

Fadi Chehade, president of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), said the end of the US role is now set for mid-2016, with the transition pushed back by a year to allow time for input from the Internet community and review by the US government and Congress.

ICANN will become an independent entity without US government oversight for the Internet's domain and address system, Chehade said, noting that the transition is likely to take place between July and September 2016.

"We will further empower the community to ensure the accountability of ICANN as an institution," Chehade said in an interview with AFP in Washington.

"If anything (the transition) strengthens this community and it removes the arguments of governments saying 'Why does the US have a unique role? Why can't we have a unique role?' By making this independent and neutral we are enhancing the longevity of this model."

Chehade said governments around the world appear to be coming around to accepting the existing "multistakeholder" model that allows for all groups of Internet users and interested parties to participate, instead of a "multilateral" model led by governments.

"Because the Internet by design is polycentric, its governance must be polycentric," he said. "Governments alone or the private sector alone or users alone cannot build policies and implement them because the Internet is transnational."

Chehade spoke after updating members of Congress about the transition at a hearing along with Assistant US Commerce Secretary Lawrence Strickling.

Chehade said the lawmakers "seemed to be comfortable" with the new timetable while noting that the plan could be subject to review in Congress if a proposed law known as the "Dotcom Act" is enacted.

The US government in March 2014 outlined its plan to step away from its oversight role and fully privatize the functions of ICANN.



Fadi Chehade, president of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), pictured at an event in Singapore, said the end of the US role is now set for mid-2016, with the transition pushed back by a year

Strickling told lawmakers Wednesday the US "would not accept... a government-led or an intergovernmental organization solution."

**Planned since 1998**

Cehade noted that the transition away from US government oversight has been in planning since ICANN—a nonprofit corporation under contract to the US government—was created in 1998.

"This is the culmination of 16 years of hard work to build an institution and make it accountable to keep the Internet stable and secure," Cehade said.

"Now is the point the US is saying it is all coming together and we will let go of a key oversight role."

No new entity will be created to supervise ICANN, but its bylaws and structures will be strengthened under the transition to ensure core values are maintained, Cehade said.

This would mean some elements of Internet management could not be changed by a simple majority vote, he said, comparing this to the more complex task of amending the US Constitution compared with passing laws in Congress.

"We are strengthening the mechanisms of protecting the core components of our constitution in a way," he said.



disclosure of the owners of all websites, a move to boost transparency but which has stirred privacy concerns.

Chehade said that without consensus, "a proposal will die."

"What people confuse us for is a regulator," he said.

"We are not a competition authority or a price authority or a content authority because the community has asked us not to do any of these things."

© 2015 AFP

Citation: End of US oversight role 'strengthens' Internet (2015, July 9) retrieved 24 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2015-07-oversight-role-internet.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.