

Joint statement of At-Large Advisory Committee and GNSO Non-Commercial Users Constituency regarding the proposed strategy for the implementation of new top-level domains

Luxembourg, 14 July 2005

We recommend that processes for the implementation of ASCII gTLDs and IDN gTLDs should be separated.

Addition of ASCII gTLDs is a known and straight-forward process and is ready for implementation of predictable, transparent, and objective procedures.

IDN gTLDs raise some new technical problems and policy concerns. In resolving these issues we strongly suggest that local language communities be encouraged and supported to take a central role in developing policy for the implementation of IDNs.

We stress that the expeditious implementation of both ASCII and IDN gTLDs is equally important. A rapid and parallel process for implementation of both is needed. The separation of processes must not become a reason for delaying the implementation of either ASCII or IDN gTLDs.

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At-Large Advisory Committee Statement on ICANN Budget

Luxembourg, 13 July 2005

Although registrars and registries are the primary conduits through which ICANN fees are paid, the money paid to ICANN each year ultimately comes from domain name registrants.

Accordingly, the At Large Advisory Committee believes that it should have appropriate representation on the ICANN Budget Advisory Group and asks the President of ICANN to appoint representatives of the ALAC to this important advisory group for the coming years.

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At-Large Advisory Committee Statement on Transparency and Public Participation

Luxembourg, 13 July 2005

The At-Large Advisory Committee would like to reaffirm the overarching importance of ensuring open and inclusive public participation in ICANN processes, through the ongoing implementation of transparency and accountability, and through practical measures aimed at making meaningful participation by all stakeholders possible. The need for increased transparency and effective means of public participation in Internet governance processes has been brought forward repeatedly at the international level in the World Summit on Information Society process.

The ALAC would like to propose some practical measures that ICANN can promptly address.

The ICANN Reform process conducted in 2002 contemplated the creation of an important new staff position titled "Manager of Public Participation." The role of the Manager of Public Participation was to "manag[e] the public comment and participation process for ICANN on all substantive matters" and to "solicit, receive and report to the Board on all public input on matters put out for public comment." While the position has been covered on an interim basis by ICANN's public relations staff person, it has not yet been filled on a permanent basis.

Public participation will continue to play an important, vital role within the ICANN process, and the ALAC encourages the President and the Board to fill the position with a full time employee "with support staff and other resources necessary to carry out [his or her] responsibilities effectively" as soon as a suitable, qualified candidate can be located.

Effective public participation at in person meetings like this one in Luxembourg is only possible when participants are able to prepare for the topics under discussion well in advance of the meeting itself. We encourage ICANN and all the constituencies to make a strong effort to publish agendas, documents and meeting times and places well in advance and keep those agendas current. We encourage ICANN to create a new committee, composed of members of ICANN staff and the ICANN community, to coordinate and plan these important meetings. The ALAC would welcome the opportunity to provide specific proposals on this Committee and to serve on it.

Also, effective public participation is only possible when accompanied by timely, complete and accurate information about ICANN's work. To that end, the ALAC would like to reiterate the need for prompt publication of ICANN's documents and of the Board's resolutions and minutes and the need for a better website, which more effectively apprises registrants and the general public of ICANN's activities. The strategic plan priorities regarding these matters should be promptly implemented, and the ALAC would welcome the opportunity to work with ICANN Staff to design and implement a more effective website.

Multilingualism is also a key issue in enhancing possibilities for public participation. While we recognize the efforts that ICANN has been making to this extent, the vision of multilingualism as only affecting institutional communication between ICANN and the public is reductive and, in our opinion, wrong. It is the internal culture and operating practices of ICANN that have to become multilingual; not just its leaflets and website.

Real-time translation of meetings and advance preparation of printed translated documents for discussion should become regular practice, and cover at least some major languages; core documents, such as the strategic plans and the policies, should be made available in as many languages as possible. While the costs of these practices would be significant, we think that they are necessary to grant legitimacy to ICANN's role; they are an integral part of its mandate.

To further the consideration of these and other suggestions and the definition of a set of clear and implementable actions to reach these objectives, we suggest that ICANN creates a Task Force on Transparency and Public Participation, including the appropriate staff officers as well as individuals from the different stakeholder groups, with the mandate to propose a plan of action for discussion at the Vancouver meeting and subsequent implementation by the Wellington meeting.