




Dear Mr. Cherine Chalaby,

I would like to refer to my letter to GAC chair dated 4 November 2013 and her reply dated 29 November 2013 regarding the new gTLD applications for .halal and .islam. I wish to seize this opportunity to thank you all personally for paying due consideration to our concerns, as well as for the understanding of ICANN for the OIC's position on gTLD applications for .halal and .islam.

As I mentioned in my past communication, the Foreign Ministers of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) maintain the position that the new gTLDs with Islamic identity are extremely sensitive in nature as they concern the entire Muslim nation. In this sense, I enclose the relevant documents bearing on this critically important issue for your information and record.

Therefore, I would like to bring to your kind attention that OIC Foreign Ministers unanimously re-adopted a resolution in this regard as a confirmation of its previous resolutions on the same matter.

With the above in mind, I would like to bring again to your kind attention the official opposition of the OIC Member States towards any probable authorization that might allow the use of these new gTLDs .islam and .halal by any entity.

Please accept, Mr. Chair, the assurances of my highest consideration. 

Sincerely,



Yousef A. Al-Othaimeen

Secretary General



To: Mr. Cherine Chalaby Chair, Board of Directors, ICANN

Cc: Mr. Göran Marby the CEO and President of ICANN

Cc: Ms. Manal Ismail, Chair, Governmental Advisory Committee

ORGANISATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION
THE SECRETARY GENERAL

ORGANISATION DE COOPERATION ISLAMIQUE
LE SECRETAIRE GENERAL



منظمة التعاون الإسلامي
للأمين العام

OIC/SG-01/2013

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04 NOV 2013

Dear Ms. Dryden,

I thank you for your kind letter dated 2nd October 2013 that confirms the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) becoming an Observer to the Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN).

You are kindly aware that the OIC is the second largest intergovernmental organization with 57 Member States spread across four continents. It also has five observer members including the Russian Federation and the USA, the UK, France, Italy, Canada and Australia maintains official relations with the Organization through appointing Special Envoys. Besides, it is the sole official representative of the Muslim World representing 1.6 billion Muslim peoples around the World.

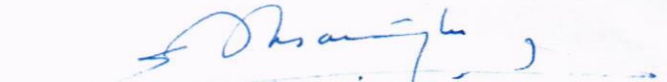
As such, I take this as my responsibility to bring to your kind attention our firm and clear position with regard to the use of Islamic terms such as; .Islam and .Halal gTLDs. The OIC took note of the "GAC Advice to the ICANN Board" incorporated in the GAC Communiqué dated 11 April, 2013 adopted at Beijing, People Republic of China. Specifically, the advice contained in Article 1/a/i/ii with regard, to Module 3.1 part II of the applicant Guidebook, quote **"the GAC recognizes that Religious terms are sensitive issues. Some GAC members have raised sensitivities on the applications that relate to Islamic terms, specifically .Islam and .Halal. The GAC members concerned have noted that the applications for .Islam and .Halal lack community involvement and support. It is the view of these GAC members that these applications should not proceed"** unquote.

To this end, the OIC feels that the observation of the GAC members about the lack of community involvement and support was based on absence of proper information. The involvement and support of the OIC as the sole official representative of 1.6 billion Muslims are tantamount to the involvement and support of the World Muslim populations. Moreover, to give this claim on .Islam and .Halal gTLDs more legal footing, the Foreign Ministers of 57 Muslim Member States of the OIC is going to adopt a resolution to the effect of protecting and having a united stand towards the use of the new gTLDs with Islamic identity. This Resolution will be adopted at the forthcoming OIC Council of Foreign Ministers Meeting (CFM) scheduled to be held in Conakry, Guinea on 9 -11 December 2013.

In view of the above, the OIC would be happy to engage and fully cooperate with the GAC of ICANN to find an appropriate solution to this crucial issue. In the meantime, I would request you to kindly consider this letter as an official opposition of the Member States of the OIC towards probable authorization by the GAC allowing use of these new gTLDs .Islam and .Halal by any entity not representing the collective voice of the Muslim people.

I look forward to having your positive consideration on the issue as well as to engaging in further institutional cooperation between the OIC and ICANN.

Sincerely,


Ekmelëddin Ihsanoglu

Ms. Heather Dryden
Chair, Governmental Advisory Committee
ICANN
CC: Mr. Fadi Chehadé (President and CEO of ICANN)







Governmental Advisory Committee

29 November 2013

Mr. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu
Secretary General
Organization of Islamic Cooperation

Dear Mr. Ihsanoglu,

Thank you for your letter dated November 4, 2013 regarding the new gTLD applications for .islam and .halal. In this letter you correctly refer to the GAC advice regarding these applications in the Beijing Communiqué. It deserves to be noted that this advice concluded the GAC's discussions on this matter, an aspect that was highlighted for clarity in the Buenos Aires Communiqué (section II.7).

I further note that you will undertake discussions within the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) regarding these applications in a meeting 9 – 11 December. While I wish you and the OIC membership a successful meeting, I must at the same time reinforce that the GAC deliberations on this matter have concluded and that there is no opportunity to reintroduce the matter for GAC discussion. However, the OIC might wish to advise the Board of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) directly about the OIC meeting to be held in December, and its relevant outcomes.

Sincerely,

Heather Dryden
Chair, Governmental Advisory Committee