



The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers

7 February 2014

Mehdi Abbasnia
Chairman & Managing Director
Asia Green IT System
No.11, 4th Floor, Block D, Metrocity Shopping Mall,
Kirgulu St., Buyukdere Ave., 34394,
Levent, Istanbul, Turkey

Re: AGIT new gTLD applications for .ISLAM and .HALAL

Dear Mr. Abbasnia:

Thank you for your letter dated 30 December 2013. As you are aware, the ICANN Board received advice from the Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) in its Beijing Communiqué concerning the applications for .ISLAM and .HALAL. Specifically, the GAC advised the ICANN Board:

that with regard to Module 3.1 part II of the Applicant Guidebook, 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.

Pursuant to Section 3.1.ii of the Applicant Guidebook, the ICANN Board New gTLD Program Committee (NGPC) and some members of the GAC met during the ICANN 47 meeting in Durban to discuss the concerns about the applications.

I read with interest your commitment to the multistakeholder model discussed in your 30 December letter. You indicated that:

AGIT is willing to work with the OIC and other stakeholders to manage the .Islam and .Halal TLDs through a multi-stakeholder approach that would serve the best interests of Muslims all over the world and truly showcase the merits of ICANN's own multi-stakeholder, community-driven approach.

In an earlier letter dated 4 December 2013, you elaborated on the proposed governance mechanism for each of the applied-for TLDs as follows:

At the core of this governance mechanism is the Policy Advisory Council (PAC)



contemplated for each TLD. PACs will be deployed for both .ISLAM and .HALAL. They will serve as non-profit governing boards made up of leaders from many of the world's various Muslim communities, governments, and organizations. The PACs will oversee policy development for the TLDs, to ensure they are coherent and consistent with Muslim interests. AGIT has invited the leading Muslim organisations, including the Organization for Islamic Cooperation (OIC), to become members of the PACs.

Despite these commitments, a substantial body of opposition urges ICANN not to delegate the strings .HALAL and .ISLAM. The Gulf Cooperation Council (25 July 2013: applications not supported by the community, applicants did not consult the community; believe that sensitive TLDs like these should be managed and operated by the community itself through a neutral body such as the OIC); the Republic of Lebanon (4 September 2013: management and operation of these TLDs must be conducted by a neutral, non-governmental multistakeholder group); the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (19 December 2013: foreign ministers of 57 Muslim Member States supported a resolution opposing the strings; resolution was unanimously adopted); and the government of Indonesia (24 December 2013: strongly opposes approval of .islam) all voiced opposition to the AGIT applications.

There seems to be a conflict between the commitments made in your letters and the concerns raised in letters to ICANN urging ICANN not to delegate the strings. Given these circumstances, the NGPC will not address the applications further until such time as the noted conflicts have been resolved.

Thank you again for your support of ICANN's multi-stakeholder approach to Internet governance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen D. Crocker".

Stephen D. Crocker, Chair
ICANN Board of Directors