



November 19, 2013

VIA EMAIL ([steve.crocker@icann.org](mailto:steve.crocker@icann.org))

ICANN Board  
c/o Dr. Stephen D. Crocker, Chairman of the Board  
Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers  
12025 East Waterfront Drive  
Los Angeles, CA 90094

Re: .kosher gTLD Application

Dear Members of the ICANN Board:

Enclosed please find a letter from the Deputy Minister of Religious Services of Israel expressing opposition to the pending application for restricted use of .kosher by a single private party.

Sincerely,

*Union of Orthodox Jewish  
Congregations of America*

By: /s/ Rabbi Moshe Elefant  
Rabbi Moshe Elefant

*STAR-K Kosher Certification, Inc.*

By: /s/ Dr. Avrom Pollak  
Dr. Avrom Pollak

*Chicago Rabbinical Council, Inc.*

By: /s/ Rabbi Sholem Fishbane  
Rabbi Sholem Fishbane

*Kosher Supervision Service, Inc.*

By: /s/ Rabbi Ari Senter  
Rabbi Ari Senter

*The Kashruth Council of Canada*

By: /s/ Rabbi S. Adler  
Rabbi S. Adler

Enclosure



## סגן השר לשירותי דת

בסייד, יד' כסלו תשע"ד

November 17, 2013

To: **Avi Berman**, Executive Director  
OU Israel, Jerusalem

1. This letter is in response to your request to receive my opinion regarding the application to ICANN for the use of the domain name "kosher" by a private party.
2. In my view, terms that have religious or national significance for the Jewish people cannot be the property of any private individual or group.
3. In addition using the domain name "kosher" for business purposes diminishes the term by attempting to make it a brand name.
4. Furthermore, the term "kosher" can be subject to different interpretations which depend on religious perceptions, customs and ancient traditions. Purchasing the domain name by a private entity which could then prevent other organizations from using the domain, may be detrimental to Jewish religious points of view.
5. A law passed in Israel in 1983 concerning kashrut fraud by businesses, factories, etc., prevents them from representing their businesses as kosher unless they have a kashrut certificate granted by a recognized authority, such as a local rabbi, the chief rabbinate, or someone who is qualified to determine kashrut.



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In other words, using the term "kosher" in places where food is served, or in businesses that manufacture food, is permitted only with the approval of the requisite public bodies. The principle behind this law is to prevent public fraud. In this vein, I believe that allocation of the domain name "kosher" to a private group or organization could lead to fraud and should therefore be prevented.

6. The term "kosher" constitutes a symbol for all Jews everywhere and therefore no organization should be permitted to privatize it which could lead to controversy.

Sincerely,

*Edi Ben-Dahan*

**Rabbi Eliyahu Ben Dahan**

Deputy Minister of Religious Services