



Addressing the global Internet

ICANN

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CEO and President

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Dear Jonathan,

Thank you for the letter of 31 August 2009, from the Asia Pacific Top Level Domain Association (APTLD)] regarding the IDN ccTLD Fast Track Process. I fully understand the important nature of this process for communities in the Asia Pacific region and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the APTLD, on behalf of ICANN for the work that your members have contributed to this important project of enabling IDN TLDs for production purposes in the root zone.

I appreciate your concerns about the timing of the launch of the IDN ccTLD Fast Track Process, and I can advise that ICANN staff is intending to provide the Proposed Final Implementation Plan for the IDN ccTLD Fast Track process, to the ICANN Board for their consideration, prior to the ICANN meeting in Korea. I can also advise, that the ICANN Board recently held a very successful retreat in Marina del Rey where we discussed all the topics raised in your letter. I believe we are on track to implement the process in accordance with the previously published timeframe of the 4th quarter of 2009.

As you are aware the timing has to do with enabling both a technically sound launch and a launch that is useful for the participants and, most importantly, for the end-users. There are some outstanding issues still being discussed by the community which require resolution and you have touched on a number of these in your letter. I will briefly address your concerns below, noting that the ICANN Board will ultimately decide the manner in which these issues are implemented.

I understand your concern that some ccTLD managers in the Asia Pacific region will find the proposed processing and annual fee an unreasonable burden. It is with this in mind, that ICANN has proposed an 'expected' but not mandatory payment of the proposed fees. The annual fee in particular is proposed to be based on revenue, which means that IDN ccTLD managers that do not generate revenue from the IDN ccTLD registrations will not be asked to provide an annual contribution.



With regard to the need for agreements with ICANN, while I acknowledge that many ccTLDs have successfully managed their ccTLD for many years without the existence of a formal agreement with ICANN, this will be the first time that IDN TLDs have been delegated in the root zone for production purposes. As you are aware, ICANN is responsible for ensuring the technical stability of the DNS and one option available to ICANN to do this, is through some form of agreement with the TLD operator, which, at a minimum, reflects an agreement to adhere to a number of technical standards identified as being critical to ICANN fulfilling its obligations to the Internet community and the end-users.

In relation to the management of variant TLDs in the root, I understand the importance of having variant labels addressed in the DNS to ensure broad community usability of IDNs in regions such as the Asia Pacific. Our goals here are: ensuring DNS stability, avoiding user confusion, and ensuring a satisfactory user experience. When ICANN initially proposed to allocate preferred variant TLDs (through "aliasing") the technical community expressed concerns about the readiness of the root- server system to accommodate the aliasing methodology. Since we are at the stage where the first IDN TLDs are about to be implemented, a conservative approach must be taken.

As you are aware ICANN staff have asked individual experts in the community to assist in developing implementation proposals for variant management. The team is scheduled to meet this month, after which their proposed solutions will be published for general discussions. I look forward to and appreciate your participation in these discussions.

I welcome the continued participation of APTLD members in the IDN related work, including the planned IDN activities in Seoul and I encourage you to stay in contact with Tina Dam on IDN related matters.

I look forward to seeing you in Seoul.

Yours Sincerely,

Rod Beckstrom
President and CEO