



Implementation Plan for Synchronized IDN ccTLDs

Proposed discussion draft: Potential requestors for synchronized IDN ccTLDs should not rely on any of the proposed included details as it remains subject to public comments (22 March – 13 April 2010).

22 March 2010

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Introduction

This paper provides the proposed implementation plan for introduction and management of synchronized IDN ccTLDs. This plan includes a proposed evaluation process to handle requests for synchronized IDN ccTLDs. Following successful completion of the evaluation process, the requesters may initiate delegation of the synchronized IDN ccTLDs by following ICANN's standard processes for TLD delegation, through the IANA function.

This implementation plan addresses an issue with the Fast Track Process brought to the attention of the ICANN Board during their meeting in Nairobi, Kenya. The issue relates to instances in the Fast Track Process where more than one official language or script exists within a country/territory, and where requests for multiple corresponding strings are considered equivalent. In these cases, those accessing domains under any of the strings expect that such domains will resolve to the same address or value. Strings meeting these requirements, and operated in a way to meet community expectations are referred to as synchronized IDN ccTLDs.

This implementation plan is based on a set of principles provided by the Board Working Group formed to consider this topic (the ES-WG). The ES-WG was formed <http://www.icann.org/en/minutes/resolutions-12mar10-en.htm#12> to review the issue relating to synchronized IDN ccTLDs, and provided a framework for resolution, and a set of principles to guide staff in development of the synchronized strings implementation plan.

As agreed by the ES-WG a procedure to accept requests for synchronized IDN ccTLD strings is appropriate and solves a real problem for the communities ICANN is seeking to serve by introducing IDN ccTLDs.

The synchronized implementation plan is presented as follows:

- Introduction
- Criteria for Participation
- Requirements for Synchronized IDN ccTLD
- Submission of Requests
- Evaluation of Requests
- Terms and Conditions

The implementation plan is scheduled for ongoing review and possible revision, for example to accommodate for the availability of improved technical standards for synchronized IDN ccTLD delegation and management.

A full overview of activities related to ICANN's IDN Program can be viewed here: <http://www.icann.org/en/topics/idn/>

Criteria for Participation

The ICANN Board ES-WG provided well-defined criteria for participation in the synchronized IDN ccTLD process that is expected to result in limited applications. These criteria are outlined in this section. It should be noted that this process is experimental in nature and should not pre-empt the outcome of any policy development process. Further a broader implementation of solutions related to the synchronized IDN ccTLDs is currently pending further technical development, analysis, and testing.

Strings included in a request for synchronized IDN ccTLDs must:

1. Have completed the String Evaluation step in the Fast Track Process.
2. Meet the definition for synchronized IDN ccTLDs set forth below.
3. Fulfill the operational requirements for synchronized IDN ccTLDs set forth in the next section, developed in accordance with the principles listed below.

2.1 Synchronized IDN ccTLDs

Situations have been identified in the Fast Track Process in which more than one official language or script exists within a corresponding country/territory; and where requests for corresponding multiple strings are considered equivalent, and users of the community accessing domains under any of the strings expect that such domains will resolve to the same address or value. These are referred to as synchronized IDN ccTLDs.

2.2 Principles

As agreed by the ES-WG, developing a formal procedure to accept IDN ccTLD Fast Track requests for synchronized IDN ccTLD strings is appropriate and solves a real problem for the people in the communities ICANN is seeking to serve by launching IDN ccTLDs.

The ES-WG developed the following principles (<http://www.icann.org/en/minutes/resolutions-12mar10-en.htm#13>) to guide staff in their implementation work, and which is included in this paper presenting such implementation plan.

1. Synchronized IDN ccTLDs must solve a significant problem for the communities that use the scripts, to be confirmed with sufficient due diligence by staff as defined in this implementation plan.
2. For string selection and validation of synchronized IDN ccTLDs, all existing Fast Track rules and requirements apply, and DNS security, stability, and usability concerns must be taken into account.
3. Synchronized IDN ccTLDs must have adequate and verifiable procedures to enable convergence at every level of the synchronized IDN ccTLDs, and to take immediate steps to remove any divergence that might occur.
4. If an improved technical standard for the delegation and management of synchronized IDN ccTLDs is established, and is applicable for such delegations, then

IDN ccTLD managers will migrate to that standard in a safe, stable, and timely manner.

Requirements

A request for a synchronized IDN ccTLD must have completed the String Evaluation in the Fast Track Process.

A request for synchronized IDN ccTLDs must be accompanied by the following information:

1. Documentation that the requested synchronized IDN ccTLDs solve a significant problem for the community using the associated script(s).

Such documentation could include, for example:

- A statement of the problem(s) being solved by delegation of the Synchronized IDN ccTLDs, including practical examples.
- An illustration of the unnecessary confusion that would exist if the Synchronized IDN ccTLDs were not delegated.

This material must be provided by the requestor, and can optionally be supplemented by a statement of agreement with the problem description and illustrations from community organizations, relevant public authorities in the country or territory, or by recognized individuals with expertise in the language represented in the TLD.

2. Documentation of adequate and verifiable procedures that the requester will use to enable convergence at every level of the IDN ccTLD, including information about the steps the requester will take to remove any divergence that might occur. Such documentation must include descriptions of the registry's plans to:
 - 2.1. Enable through a technical mechanism that synchronized domains resolve to the same address or value in each level of the DNS tree;
 - 2.2. Require in a registration policy that synchronized domains resolve to the same address or value in each level of the DNS tree;
 - 2.3. Ensure compliance with the registration policy for synchronized domains;
 - 2.4. Provide timely reports on synchronized IDN ccTLD experiences following the delegation and implementation of the synchronized IDN ccTLDs;
 - 2.5. Migrate in a safe, stable and timely manner to improved technical standard for the delegation and management of synchronized IDN ccTLDs if established, and applicable for such delegations.

Submission of Requests

This section contains details of the process for requesting synchronized IDN ccTLDs.

ICANN will announce the starting date for submission of requests for synchronized IDN ccTLDs.

By submitting the request the requester agrees to the terms and conditions for request of synchronized IDN ccTLDs. The original of the signed request, including terms and conditions, must be provided to ICANN at the following address:

ICANN
4676 Admiralty Way Ste 330
Marina del Rey, CA 90292
USA

Attn: Request for synchronized IDN ccTLDs

All information provided in a request is suggested to be provided in English, or with an accompanying English translation, if possible.

Requests for synchronized IDN ccTLDs will be processed manually due to the expected limited number of requests.

Evaluation of Requests

Evaluation of synchronized IDN ccTLDs will proceed according to the following steps:

1. The strings are verified as having completed the String Evaluation step in the Fast Track Process.
2. The strings are verified to meet the threshold of Synchronized IDN ccTLDs (as described in the Requirements section of this document).
3. Supporting material provided by the requestor is verified to demonstrate that the requested synchronized IDN ccTLDs would resolve a significant problem for the community and therefore extra consideration should be given. Factors to be considered in the verification of this material include, but are not limited to:
 - 3.1. Demonstration that significant cultural or linguistic issues for the affected populations would be addressed by the delegation of synchronized IDN ccTLDs. For example such as where recent changes in writing forms for languages have occurred with adoption rates that vary by geographic location, by age of users, access to technology, or other.
 - 3.2. The affected community believes that the delegation of the Synchronized IDN ccTLDs would help solve the illustrated issues.
 - 3.3. That a substantial population of internet users would be affected.
 - 3.4. There would be other negative consequences of non-delegation of the requested synchronized IDN ccTLDs.
4. The request is verified to include satisfactory procedures to enable convergence at every level of the domain named by the synchronized IDN ccTLDs. Factors to consider in verifying that the established criteria are met include, but are not limited to:
 - 4.1. Demonstrated history of successful use of proposed convergence mechanisms or demonstrably effective and tested new mechanism for enabling convergence.
 - 4.2. Demonstrated requestor success at use of convergence mechanisms at second and/or lower levels.
 - 4.3. Demonstrated requestor success at use of convergence mechanisms in an adequate test environment.
 - 4.4. Description of a registration policy requiring convergence at every level of the domain named by synchronized IDN ccTLDs.
5. The plan for ensuring compliance with the convergence requirements in the registration policy for domains registered under the synchronized IDN ccTLDs, and the steps the requester will take to remove any divergence that might occur are verified. Factors to consider in verifying that the established criteria are met include, but are not limited to:

- 5.1. Availability of methods to deal with received reports or complaints of divergence.
- 5.2. Plans for implementing active monitoring mechanisms.
- 5.3. Plans for enforcement mechanisms to effectively remove divergence should it occur.
- 5.4. Plans for reports to provide confidence that convergence is effectively achieved and otherwise provide for continuing improvement.

If issues are encountered in the above evaluation, ICANN staff will contact the requester for additional information and work toward a successful completion of the synchronized IDN ccTLD evaluation process, if possible.

When the criteria above are met, ICANN staff will publish the synchronized IDN ccTLDs as having completed the synchronized IDN ccTLD evaluation process. The requester will be notified that they may initiate the delegation process for the synchronized IDN ccTLDs.

Terms and Conditions

By signing and submitting a request in the synchronized evaluation process the Requester acknowledges and understands that:

All terms and conditions agreed to when submitting a request for String Evaluation in the IDN ccTLD Fast Track Process remain.

By signing and submitting the request in the synchronized evaluation process the Requestor again commits to TLD operations that will secure and enhance the stability and interoperability of the Internet's Domain Name System (DNS) for the benefit of the local and global Internet community, and to working in good faith together with ICANN towards a stable and secure Internet DNS. The Requestor understands that ICANN reserves the right to take actions necessary to protect the security, stability and interoperability of the global DNS.

ICANN expects that Synchronized IDN ccTLDs will be established and operated in accordance with the terms and conditions agreed to in submission of the IDN ccTLD Fast Track Process, as well as:

1. Synchronized IDN ccTLDs must have adequate and verifiable procedures to enable convergence at every level of the domain named by the synchronized IDN ccTLDs.
2. If any divergence should occur, the Synchronized IDN ccTLD manager shall take immediate steps to remove any divergence.
3. The Synchronized IDN ccTLD manager shall provide reporting to ICANN regarding meeting of the convergence requirement, in a manner agreed to between the Synchronized IDN ccTLD manager and ICANN.
4. If an improved technical standard for the delegation and management of synchronized IDN ccTLDs is arrived at, and is applicable for such delegations, the Synchronized IDN ccTLD manager should migrate to that standard in a safe, stable, and timely manner.

If the Synchronized IDN ccTLD Requestor seeks to enter into a Documentation of Responsibilities, an Exchange of Letters, or a general TLD Agreement with ICANN after delegation, additional terms may be added to commemorate the additional commitments and responsibilities reflected above.

Requestor warrants that the statements and representations contained in the request (including any documents submitted and oral statements made in connection with the request) are true and accurate and complete in all material respects, and that ICANN may rely on those statements and representations fully in evaluating this request.

Requestor acknowledges that any material misstatement or misrepresentation (or omission of material information) will reflect negatively on this request and may cause ICANN to terminate the request.

By submitting this request, I represent that I am authorized to act as a representative of Requestor and to enter into the commitments undertaken in this request.

[Name]

[Title]

[Organization]

[Signature]