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Cryptography Legend Whit Diffie Joins the ICANN Team

Washington, DC... May 14, 2010... Pioneering cryptographer Whitfield 'Whit' Diffie has joined the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers as Vice President for Information Security and Cryptography.

ICANN CEO and President Rod Beckstrom expressed ICANN's appreciation for Diffie's exceptional background and the value he brings: "Whit Diffie brings an extraordinary intellect and immense professional achievements to ICANN, and his appointment reflects my strong commitment to improving ICANN's technical security."

Diffie will provide advice on general security matters related to ICANN's mandate, and to ICANN in the design, development and implementation of security methods for ICANN-managed networks. He will oversee the continuous improvement and "best practices" process for information security and cryptography.

Globally recognized as a leader in public-key cryptography, encryption and network security, Diffie has a long and distinguished career as a leading force for innovative thought. He brings extensive experience in the design, development and implementation of security methods for networks.

With Stanford University electrical engineering professor Martin Hellman, Diffie produced the 1976 paper New Directions in Cryptography that laid the groundwork for solving one of the fundamental problems of cryptography - key distribution, a process to increase security through use of a secret key that is exchanged between parties prior to encryption.

Prior to coming to ICANN, Diffie served as Vice President, Fellow, and Chief Security Officer with Sun Microsystems, at which he had worked from 1991 to 2009. At Sun, Diffie focused on the most fundamental security problems facing modern communications and computing with emphasis on public policy as well as technology. Prior to joining Sun, Diffie was Manager of Secure Systems Research for Northern Telecom, where he played a key role in the design of Northern's first packet security product and in developing the group that was later to become Entrust.

Diffie received a Bachelor of Science degree in mathematics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1965 and a Doctorate in Technical Sciences from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich in 1992.

Diffie has received many awards throughout his career and was awarded a Degree of Doctor of Science (Honoris Causa) in 2008 by Royal Holloway College of the University of London. He received the Louis E. Levy Medal in 1997 from the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia and the National Computer Systems Security Award, given jointly by NIST and NSA, in 1996. In 2000 he became a fellow of the Marconi Foundation.

With Susan Landau, he is the author of the 1998 book *Privacy on the Line: the Politics of Wiretapping and Encryption*.

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About ICANN:

To reach another person on the Internet you have to type an address into your computer - a name or a number. That address has to be unique so computers know where to find each other. ICANN coordinates these unique identifiers across the world. Without that coordination we wouldn't have one global Internet. ICANN was formed in 1998. It is a not-for-profit public-benefit corporation with participants from all over the world dedicated to keeping the Internet secure, stable and interoperable. It promotes competition and develops policy on the Internet's unique identifiers. ICANN doesn't control content on the Internet. It cannot stop spam and it doesn't deal with access to the Internet. But through its coordination role of the Internet's naming system, it does have an important impact on the expansion and evolution of the Internet. **For more information please visit: www.icann.org.**