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First Four Internationalized Domain Names Pass Key Approval Milestone

Egypt, Russia, Saudia Arabia and UAE

Marina del Rey, CA... January 21, 2010... ICANN today approved the first four internationalized top-level domain names. Egypt, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have passed the language character (string) evaluation, intended to avoid confusion with other top level domain names. These countries may now request that their Internet names be included in the Internet domain names root system, so they can be accessed by all users globally by mid-2010.

"These international names will now allow people to type entire domain names in their own language. This marks a pivotal moment in the history of Internet domain names," said ICANN CEO and President Rod Beckstrom.

Sixteen applications in eight languages have been received. More are anticipated.

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To read more about the Internationalized Domain Names program, go to:

<http://www.icann.org/en/topics/idn/factsheet-idn-program-05jun09.pdf>.

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.