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Commerce Department and ICANN Sign Historic Accord on Internet Governance

Washington, D.C... September 30, 2009... ICANN and the U.S. Department of Commerce have signed an historic Affirmation agreement supporting the ICANN model of international multi-stakeholder and bottom-up governance of the global Internet addressing system.

"This new Affirmation marks an exciting new stage in ICANN's development as a truly international entity and it confirms once and for all, that the ICANN model of public participation works, and works effectively" said Rod Beckstrom, ICANN Chief Executive Officer. "One world, one Internet, everyone connected – this is our goal at ICANN. This agreement gives international stakeholders an even more powerful voice in our activities moving forward."

More than a decade ago it was envisioned that the Internet's addressing system would be coordinated by a private, multi-stakeholder, non-profit corporation, specifically ICANN. The rationale was that the Internet not be controlled by any single government, group of governments or special interest.

"A decade ago the US government was a catalyst for a global discussion on how to coordinate the vital resource that is the Internet's unique identifiers," said Peter Dengate Thrush, ICANN's Chairman of the Board. "They understood that it needed to be coordinated not controlled. That vision has been affirmed in the model of private sector leadership that ICANN represents."

Under the Affirmation agreement, the U.S. will remain committed to participation in ICANN's Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC), which is one of the bodies that advises the corporation in its crucial mission of assuring that one human being can contact another anywhere on the planet.

The agreement also mandates that ICANN's accountability to the Internet community must be reviewed at least every 3 years by a committee made up of representatives of the community, which will include the U.S. Assistant Secretary of Communications and Information of the Department of Commerce.

Global business and Internet leaders welcomed news of the Affirmation agreement.

- *"The Affirmation of Commitments by ICANN and DOC fulfills a long- standing objective of the original formation of ICANN: to create an organization that can serve the world's interest in a robust, reliable and interoperable Internet."* – Vint Cerf, co-inventor of the Internet.
- *"Google and its users depend every day on a vibrant and expanding Internet; we endorse this Affirmation and applaud the maturing of ICANN's role in the provision of Internet stability."* – Eric Schmidt, Chief Executive Officer of Google, Inc.
- *"ICANN's assurances on openness, stability and competition are remarkable, particularly as they are backed up by a strong oversight process that involves the global community. This is what we needed for moving ahead into the next phase of the internet."* – Jim Lewis, Center for Strategic and International Studies.
- *"VeriSign commends the Internet Corporation on Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) and the Department of Commerce the ten years of work by both parties towards the evolution of governance around the Domain Name Addressing System. We are encouraged that the new agreement by ICANN and the U.S. Department of Commerce will allow for more international participation in the policy creation at ICANN and expand ICANN's efforts as technical coordinator of the domain name addressing system to ensure a robust and secure Internet."* – Mark McLaughlin, President and CEO of Verisign.
- *"The expiration of the Joint Project Agreement between the U.S. Department of Commerce and ICANN on 30 September 2009 is an important moment in the process towards the increased internationalisation of ICANN's coordination and management of the Internet DNS."* - Statement of the Swedish Presidency of the European Union.

To read additional reaction to the Affirmation Agreement go here:

<http://www.icann.org/en/announcements/announcement-30sep09-en.htm#reaction>

To read the Joint Affirmation Agreement go here: <http://www.icann.org/en/announcements/announcement-30sep09-en.htm#affirmation>.

To see a videotaped interview with CEO Rod Beckstrom discussing the Affirmation Agreement go here:

<http://www.icann.org/en/announcements/announcement-30sep09-en.htm#video>.

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About ICANN:

To reach another person on the Internet you have to type a domain name or IP address into your computer. It 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.