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RE: Competition, Consumer Trust and Consumer Choice Review Team call for volunteers

To Whom It May Concern:

I am posing my candidature for the CCT Review Team and am motivated by the opportunity to engage further with ICANN. In October I attended ICANN54 as part of the NextGen@ICANN program. This was my first ICANN meeting, and seeing the productivity of the multistakeholder process inspired me to become more involved. I believe you will find my background in enabling multistakeholder Internet governance, paired with my recent studies in telecoms regulation and policy along with my diplomatic nature essential to my success as a part of the CCT team.

Recently I completed a Master's in Media and Communication Governance at the London School of Economics. This included studies of regulatory and policy issues on topics of intellectual property, data protection, information systems and Internet governance. From my studies I gained a thorough understanding of regulatory structures (including weighing best practices against formal regulation) and market and consumer protections. As a result, I have experience interpreting statistical data and reports released by regulators and competition agencies. I also submitted public comments to open calls by governments on topics such as spectrum and net neutrality.

I will be joining the CCT team as a non-commercial user (currently awaiting confirmation of NCUC or NCSG membership). However, my background in facilitating multistakeholder governance with civil society groups in the global South as a Project Assistant at Global Partners Digital will greatly help my effective tenure on this team. In particular, I am interested in how human rights and logical layer of the Internet interact. Ensuring competition, consumer protection, and trust can have a great impact on human rights protection, namely the rights to free speech, access to information and privacy. For instance, the CCT team should ensure that participation in the gTLD marketplace is inclusive of the global South, particularly Africa which is a major importer of gTLDs yet lacks an export market. Access to gTLDs in local languages and topics does impact access to the Internet. As we work to connect the next billion through initiatives such as WSIS, it is integral to include all parts of the market.

Onto this I will add an important issue of privacy raised by gTLDs and the WHOIS database. As ICANN develops a new gTLD directory service, there is a need to rectify legitimate concerns of companies over intellectual property and copyright issues with the complex right to privacy. This absolutely plays into competition and consumer issues as the chilling effect of knowing one's personal details will be posted in a globally public forum will keep people from purchasing domains and acting in the free market. This can have detrimental effects not only on the individual's rights but also lead to an imbalanced and deflated marketplace. As gTLDs work to increase choice to the consumer, so too does ICANN's gTLD system need to ensure the protection of and encourage engagement with all consumers.

Sincerely,
Stacie Walsh