

18 May 2015

Mr. Thomas Schneider
Chair, Governmental Advisory Committee
Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers
gacsec@gac.icann.org

Reference: Country and Territory Names

Dear Mr. Schneider,

We note with interest the GAC's discussions on the release of country and territory names by new gTLD registry operators and [the letter](#) from GAC to ICANN Board Chair dated 23 April 2015. The letter reinforced the importance of this subject as noted in the 2015 Singapore Communiqué, in which the GAC first proposed to participate in the development of a public database to streamline the release authorization process for country and territory names at the second level.

Afilias is a respected and established registry service provider in the domain name industry, with a long history of working with governments and the GAC on the area of country and territory names. As noted in the [Montevideo Communiqué](#), Afilias and the GAC entered into a ground-breaking and cooperative agreement in 2001 regarding the release of country and territory names in the .INFO TLD, at that time one of the "new gTLDs."

Afilias believes that its proven experience with country and territory names in .INFO when it was a new gTLD as well as our experience with the new .VOTE and .VOTO TLDs could provide valuable input into the deliberations of the GAC at ICANN 53 in Buenos Aires on this matter. Afilias would like to propose a 10 minute session at the GAC meeting at ICANN 53 where we can share our experience in both the .INFO and the .VOTE/.VOTO cases regarding the release and use of country and territory names. We believe our experience might be useful as the GAC considers the sensitive issue of the release of country and territory names.

The .VOTE and .VOTO new TLDs are operated by Monolith Registry, a venture backed by Afilias. Monolith and Afilias have designed .VOTE and .VOTO to help governments, elected officials, candidates and organizations get information to voters such as voter registration information, candidate materials, ballot initiatives, and referendums. In the United States, the Secretaries of State for the territories of Arizona and Alabama have already adopted such names, with Alabama's official voter information now located at www.alabama.vote and Arizona's voter information at www.arizona.vote (which leads visitors to the harder-to-remember www.azsos.gov/elections/voting-election). We are already in discussions with Paraguay and Peru regarding the use of their country names in .VOTE/.VOTO. Clearly, this has a bearing on the allocation and appropriate use of country and territory names in the new TLD space.

We stand by, ready to share our experience with the GAC at ICANN 53.

Sincerely,



Roland LaPlante
Senior Vice President, Chief Marketing Officer
rlaplante@afilias.info

cc: GAC Secretariat