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# GOVERNMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (GAC): MINUTES OF MEETING

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## ICANN 57 Hyderabad

3-9 November 2016

### MEETING ATTENDANCE & MEMBERSHIP

Sixty-six GAC Members and six Observers attended the meeting.

The GAC welcomed Nepal as a new Member. This brings GAC membership to 170 Members, and 35 Observers.

A list of attendees is at **Attachment 1**.

The GAC Hyderabad Communiqué is at **Attachment 2**.

A statement made by Brazil on behalf of several GAC Members is at **Attachment 3**

Presentations used by speakers during the meeting can be accessed, where available, from the [GAC website](#) (as slides or word/PDF documents).

### PUBLIC POLICY AND SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES SESSIONS

#### Protection of IGO Names and Acronyms

The GAC discussed this issue in its meetings with the Board and the GNSO Council.

The GNSO Council reiterated its position that PDP procedures prevent re-opening the original PDP unless its conclusions can be shown to be incorrect or incomplete. There was disagreement on whether the GNSO had been aware of discussions in the "small group" between 2014 and 2016. However, Council members are willing to have further discussions with the GAC and the Board to find a solution.

The Board indicated that it would await the outcome of GAC consideration of the small group proposal and GNSO consideration of the PDP on Curative Rights Protection Mechanisms before considering further action on its own part, although the Board is willing to facilitate new discussions between the GAC and the GNSO.

The GAC agreed to advise the Board to facilitate discussions to resolve differences between GAC advice and GNSO PDP recommendations; that a starting basis would be the small group compromise proposal; that the GAC invites the PDP on Curative Rights to take the small group proposal into account; and that current protections should remain.

The GAC also agreed to include in the Communiqué that it takes note of the letter from the Secretary-General of the United Nations to Ministers concerning potential unauthorised use of IGO names and acronyms, and that it reiterates its previous concerns.

#### ACTION POINT

The discussions noted above to be incorporated in the Communiqué. **(Completed)**

## Red Cross / Red Crescent / Red Crystal

The GAC discussed permanent protections for names and identifiers of the international and national Red Cross and Red Crescent in its separate meetings with the Board and the GNSO Council.

The GNSO Council considers that it should be considered as part of the IGOs issue because it was included in the original set of PDP recommendations.

The Board stated that they would take the issue under further advisement.

The GAC agreed to advise the Board to request the GNSO Council to re-examine and revise the relevant PDP recommendations. GAC members stressed that early resolution of this issue would be a helpful signal for work on the IGOs issue.

### **ACTION POINT**

The discussions noted above to be incorporated in the Communiqué. **(Completed)**

## Competition, Consumer Trust and Consumer Choice (CCT) Review

The GAC was briefed by the Chair of the CCT Review Team, Jonathan Zuck, and GAC members of the Review Team (Megan Richards, European Commission; and Laureen Kapen, US Federal Trade Commission). The key issues raised were:

- Interim findings have been hampered by lack of data in many areas.
- The Team is aiming to release a draft report by December 2016.
- The findings on lack of take-up in under-served regions are of particular interest to many GAC members.

CCT-RT surveys and studies are available at [www.cct.wiki](http://www.cct.wiki).

### **ACTION POINTS**

GAC members to review interim findings as relevant and prepare for GAC comment on the draft report when released. **(All GAC Members + ACIG GAC Secretariat)**.

GAC nominees to the CCT-RT to provide regular updates to the GAC. **(European Commission and US Federal Trade Commission)**

## 2-letter country/territory codes at the second level

The GAC considered this issue in light of previous advice to the Board. The key issues raised were:

- It was unhelpful for the Board's most recent statement on this issue to be in the form of Resolution 2016.11.08.15 adopted on the morning of 8 November, the day on which the GAC prepared its Communiqué, making it difficult to determine exactly what the Board had decided.
- There continues to be a range of views within the GAC on whether national governments wish to be consulted on this issue on a case by case basis or not.
- A letter to ICANN from the ASEAN Telecommunications and Information Technology Senior Officials Meeting concerning ICANN's proposals on this matter was noted.

- The Board should be advised to clearly indicate whether the Resolution is consistent with the GAC advice given in the Helsinki Communiqué; and to always communicate its position on GAC advice in due time before adopting any measure directly related to that advice.

#### **ACTION POINT**

The discussions noted above to be incorporated in the Communiqué. **(Completed)**

### **Use of 3-letter codes in the ISO-3166 list as gTLDs in future rounds**

The GAC further considered this issue in light of ongoing discussions in the community, including in the Cross Community Working Group on Use of Country and Territory Names as gTLDs and the GAC Working Group on Protection of Geographic Names in Future gTLD Rounds.

There was discussion (in GAC plenary and during the GAC's meeting with the ccNSO) of possibly treating 3-letter country codes at the top level on a local basis, in effect as ccTLDs. There was interest in discussing this further within the GAC and with other stakeholders.

#### **ACTION POINT**

The discussions noted above to be incorporated in the Communiqué. **(Completed)**

### **Future gTLD Policy**

The GAC met with the Co-Chairs of the GNSO PDP Working Group on New gTLD Subsequent Procedures. The key issues raised were:

- There will be at least one more round of consultation through questions to constituencies, possibly in early 2017.
- There is a strong wish in the Working Group for detailed GAC input so as to avoid conflicting views with GAC at the end of the process.
- Some emerging issues will require further work to get consensus (for example, geographic names, especially beyond country and city names; predictability of the process; IGO protections). Others may need to be reconsidered from the ground up, for example "communities."
- Issues for underserved regions go well beyond the Applicant Support Program. GAC input to the Work Track 1 sub-group would be very welcome.
- Specific issues for IDNs will need more detailed consideration.

#### **ACTION POINT**

GAC members to actively participate in relevant PDP Working Groups in an individual capacity. **(All GAC members)**

Consider allocating more time for discussion of these issues at ICANN 58 **(ACIG GAC Secretariat)**.

### **Community-Based Applications for gTLDs**

The GAC noted the release of a report commissioned by the Council of Europe: [Applications to ICANN For Community-Based New Generic Top Level Domains \(gTLDs\)" Opportunities and challenges from a human rights perspective](#). The report has been

conveyed to the ICANN Board and the PDP Working Group on New gTLD Subsequent Procedures.

The GAC will consider the report's recommendations inter-sessionally.

#### **ACTION POINTS**

The discussions noted above to be incorporated in the Communiqué. **(Completed)**

Further consideration of the recommendations to proceed inter-sessionally and to be discussed at ICANN 58 **(UK, Switzerland, ACIG GAC Secretariat)**.

### **Public Safety Issues**

The GAC was briefed by its Public Safety Working Group (PSWG) on the group's current work. The key issues raised were:

- Inclusion in the Communiqué of a request to the ICANN Board for a detailed update on measures taken by ICANN and contracted parties to counter DNS abuse.
- Progress in the PDP Working Group on Next-Generation gTLD Registration Directory Services to Replace WHOIS.
- The PSWG lead role in two High Interest Topics at ICANN 57: on DNS Abuse and WHOIS.
- Translation of WHOIS data into other languages.

#### **ACTION POINTS**

Request for information to be included in Communiqué **(Completed)**.

PSWG to keep GAC informed of developments **(PSWG)**.

### **String Similarity**

The GAC reviewed and confirmed the position conveyed by the GAC Chair to the ccNSO Chair in a letter of 28 September 2016 concerning the Extended Process Similarity Review Panel Working Group proposed guidelines on the second string similarity process. GAC members confirmed the importance of facilitating roll-out of Internationalised Domain Names (IDNs).

#### **ACTION POINT**

The position previously agreed by the GAC to be conveyed to the Board as GAC advice. **(Completed)**

### **Review of Trademark Clearing House (TMCH)**

The GAC was briefed by the Analysis Group on the report of the independent review of the TMCH. An updated report will be completed by Q4 2016.

The GAC will give further consideration to this work, including the updated report, in the context of development of future gTLD policies.

## Dot Web Auction

The GAC noted that concerns have been raised by some parties about the process for the auction of the gTLD dot web. This issue was raised at the GAC's meeting with the Board, however the Board declined to comment as the matter is under dispute.

## Proposed CCWG on Auction Proceeds

The GAC agreed in principle to join the proposed CCWG on New gTLD Auction Proceeds as a Chartering Organisation, subject to a period of 14 days for comment on the GAC mail list.

### **ACTION POINT**

GAC leadership group to contact the Co-Chairs of the CCWG to propose that GAC join as a Chartering Organisation, subject to any further comments on the GAC mail list (**ACIG GAC Secretariat**).

## Digital India and Digital Telangana

The GAC held an interactive session based on presentations by the Government of India and the Government of Telangana concerning increased access to broadband and enhanced delivery of government services.

## CROSS-COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS

### Meeting with Generic Names Supporting Organisation (GNSO)

The GAC met with the Chair of the GNSO Council, Mr James Bladel, and members of the [GNSO Council](#). The key issues raised were:

- The final status report of the GAC-GNSO Consultation Group. The GNSO will adopt the report shortly, and when the GAC does so the group will terminate.
- Further options for GAC involvement in PDPs. Both sides agreed that their respective roles under the Bylaws should not prevent practical discussions at both the working group level and (possibly with Board involvement) at the near-final stages of reporting.
- A status update on current PDPs of interest to the GAC.
- Permanent protection of IGO names and acronyms. (See above for more details)
- Permanent protection of Red Cross Red Crescent Red Crystal names and acronyms. (See above for more details)

### **ACTION POINT**

GAC to decide inter-sessionally whether to adopt the Consultation Group recommendations (ACIG GAC Secretariat).

### Meeting with Country Code Name Supporting Organisation (ccNSO)

The GAC met with the Chair of the ccNSO Council, Ms Katrina Sataki, and other members of the Council. The key issues raised were:

- A proposed PDP on a review mechanism for decisions on ccTLD administration.
- A proposed PDP on retirement of ccTLDs.

- The final report of the CCWG on Use of Country and Territory Names as TLDs. Further work is expected to continue in the PDP on New gTLD Subsequent Procedures.
- Extended Process Similarity Review Panel. Efforts are being made to resolve apparent misunderstandings with SSAC with regard to IDNs.

## Meeting with At-Large Advisory Committee (ALAC)

The GAC met with ALAC leadership and members. The key issues raised were:

- Policy development for future new gTLDs, including community applications (GAC and ALAC will both consider the recent report commissioned by the Council of Europe, for possible action at ICANN 58); the CCT Review (both organisations need time to review the findings and reports); and gTLD categories.
- Diversity issues, including capacity building, involvement of tribal ambassadors from North America in ICANN, the AFNIC study on diversity in ICANN and opportunities for young people to engage through hubbing and remote participation.
- Implementation of new ICANN Bylaws with regard to the Empowered Community.
- The ICANN Academy Leadership Training Program. GAC has three places for the next round.

### ACTION POINT:

The GAC and ALAC will continue to engage in dialogue on the issues noted above. **(GAC Leadership Group + ACIG GAC Secretariat).**

## Meeting with ICANN Ombudsman

The GAC met briefly with the ICANN Ombudsman, who outlined the scope of his work and drew the GAC's attention to the [ICANN Expected Standards of Behaviour](#) adopted on 26 June 2016.

## IANA STEWARDSHIP TRANSITION & ENHANCING ICANN ACCOUNTABILITY

### IANA Stewardship Transition

The GAC noted that the IANA stewardship transition concluded on 30 September 2016 and that new arrangements for the IANA function are now in place. Several members welcomed the transition as a positive contribution to global Internet governance.

The GAC liaison to the Public Technical Identifiers (PTI) Customer Standing Committee (Norway) advised that the Committee would have its first meeting during ICANN 57.

Members noted the need for regular reporting to the GAC by all GAC appointees to external bodies.

### Enhancing ICANN Accountability – Work Stream 2 (WS 2)

The GAC-nominated members of the CCWG-Accountability WS2 reported on developments at the plenary and sub-group levels. The sub-groups of particular interest to the GAC are: Jurisdiction; SO/AC Accountability; Human Rights; and Transparency.

It was agreed that all GAC Members should make efforts to be involved in the work of the sub-groups as they move towards reporting by mid-2018.

Implementation by the GAC of relevant Bylaws arising from CCWG WS1 recommendations is covered under "Internal GAC Matters" below.

#### **ACTION POINT**

The Dashboard tool being developed by the CCWG to be circulated to the GAC (**ACIG GAC Secretariat**).

### **INTERNAL GAC MATTERS**

#### **Elections**

The GAC re-elected as Chair, by acclamation, Mr Thomas Schneider (Switzerland).

Elections were conducted by the ACIG GAC Secretariat for the five positions of GAC Vice Chair. The results of the elections were:

Ms Manal Ismail (Egypt) 76 votes

Ms Milagros Castañón Seoane (Peru) 66 votes

Mr Ghislain De Salins (France) 60 votes

Mr Mark Carvell (United Kingdom) 57 votes

Mr Guo Feng (China) 54 votes

Mr Pär Brumark (Niue) 40 votes

The first five candidates listed above were declared elected.

#### **ACTION POINT**

Brazil will prepare materials to assist further discussion in the GAC on the issue of geographic diversity within the GAC. (**Brazil**)

### **Implementation of New ICANN Bylaws**

The GAC considered, over three plenary sessions, possible approaches to implementing ICANN Bylaws which came into effect on 1 October 2016 and which implement recommendations of the CCWG-Accountability WS 1. The main outcomes were:

#### **GAC Advice to the ICANN Board**

- (a) The GAC will maintain the procedures adopted at the Helsinki meeting for preparing GAC advice in the Communiqué and work to continuously improve them.
- (b) The ACIG GAC Secretariat will prepare a discussion paper on this issue for consideration at the Copenhagen meeting. This will include research and analysis on procedures in other international organisations.

#### **GAC Appointments to External Bodies**

- (a) The ACIG GAC Secretariat will prepare a discussion paper on this issue for consideration at the Copenhagen meeting. This will include a table of current and possible appointments; and research and analysis on how selection criteria could be developed and applied, and on whether the agreed Draft Guidelines for GAC Participation in CCWGs could be extended to other appointments.
- (b) If there are nominations or appointments required before the Copenhagen meeting they will be handled in accordance with current GAC practice

### **GAC in the Empowered Community**

- (a) The GAC Chair will continue to represent the GAC in the Empowered Community Administration until the end of ICANN 59, with further consideration given to the issue at that time.
- (b) Advice will be sought (by the Secretariat through the GAC leadership group) from ICANN legal concerning the questions prepared by the ACIG GAC Secretariat on procedures to be adopted by the GAC under the Bylaws with regard to participation in the Empowered Community, and the options identified by the Secretariat, staff and GAC members during the Hyderabad meeting.
- (c) Information will be sought (by the Secretariat through the GAC leadership group) from other SOs and ACs on the procedures they are adopting for participation in the Empowered Community, in particular at the lower levels of the escalation process.

### **Statement by Brazil and other GAC Members**

Brazil made a statement on behalf of the governments of Brazil, Argentina, Chile, China, Colombia, France, Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Rwanda and Venezuela. This dealt with the role of the GAC as a Decisional Participant and associated GAC procedures. The statement is at Attachment 3.

### **ACTION POINTS**

As noted above.

### **Board-GAC Review Implementation Working Group (BGRI)**

The BGRI comprises all interested GAC members (currently Switzerland, United Kingdom, Iran, United States and Egypt); and Board members<sup>1</sup> Markus Kummer, Maarten Botterman, Chris Disspain, Ram Mohan (Liaison), Mike Silber and Lousewiese Van der Laan. Co-Chairs Manal Ismail (Egypt) and Markus Kummer convened a session with the GAC to review progress on the agreed work plan. The following issues were raised:

- Different perspectives of Board members and GAC members. The Board prefers advice that is clearly implementable, while GAC advice is often unavoidably at the level of principles.
- What constitutes GAC advice. Advice should be clearly labelled as such, but other forms of communication are also possible. At some point the Board must take decisions in the public interest and GAC advice is part of that process.
- Clarity of GAC advice. Advice should ideally include whether it is based on consensus; a rationale; and what are the intended public policy outcomes.

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<sup>1</sup> As per Board Resolution 2016.11.08.29

- A regular post-Communiqué discussion between the Board and the GAC. This should focus on clarifying any issues that the Board has. It could be organised on the basis of a small group from the Board and the GAC leadership group, but still open to all who are interested.

#### **ACTION POINT**

The BGRI will continue its work inter-sessionally, and requests feedback from GAC members on issues raised in the session (**BGRI, GAC Members**).

#### **Independent GAC Secretariat**

The GAC again confirmed its support for an independent GAC secretariat, complemented by ICANN support staff. However, funding remains an issue beyond June 2017. The key issues raised were:

- The ACIG GAC Secretariat again noted that the current contract terminates 21 days after the June 2017 meeting; that there are currently no negotiations to extend that contract; and that next steps are a matter for the GAC.
- Additional commitments from a range of countries were welcomed but there is still a shortfall for 2017-18 (under a new contract) and beyond.

#### **ACTION POINT:**

GAC members to again review the requests from the Chair for possible contributions to enable continuation of the independent secretariat. (**GAC Chair + Switzerland**).

#### **GAC Participation in the Nominating Committee (NomCom)**

Argentina, Brazil, Burundi, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Iran, France, Nigeria, Paraguay, Perú, Uruguay and Venezuela made a statement requesting that the GAC appoints a representative to be the non-voting liaison with the NomCom, which can be accommodate within the present NomCom structure. It was agreed that this request will be considered within the GAC.

#### **ACTION POINT**

The statement to be re-circulated on the GAC mail list and comments sought. (**ACIG GAC Secretariat**)

#### **Review of GAC Operating Principles**

The Working Group on the Review of GAC Operating Principles met as a Working Group and also conducted two GAC plenary sessions.

A number of revisions to the timelines contained in the current work plan were discussed and agreed.

## SSR2 Review Team: GAC Nominees

The GAC noted that 3 persons had self-nominated in response to the call for expressions of interest in being nominated by the GAC to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Security, Stability and Resiliency of the DNS review Team (SSR2-RT).

### ACTION POINT

The GAC leadership group will review these nominations and report back to the GAC. **(GAC leadership group + ICANN staff)**

## GAC WORKING GROUPS

GAC Working Groups reported to the GAC as follows:

**Public Safety:** The Public Safety Working Group (PSWG) continued its engagement with the community and with various ICANN initiatives.

Members of the PSWG participated in meetings of the Competition, Consumer Trust and Consumer Choice (CCT) Review, Registration Directory Services PDP Working Group, Privacy & Proxy Services Accreditation (PPSAI) Implementation Review Team, and the Security Framework Drafting Team.

The PSWG will develop recommendations to the GAC in the area of sensitive strings and child protection online; continue to engage in outreach and capacity building activities; and hold bi-weekly meetings to facilitate inter-sessional work.

The Working Group advised the GAC that it is considering draft procedures to guide working arrangements between the GAC and the Working Group, and hopes to present an update on this to the GAC at the Copenhagen meeting.

**Human Rights and International Law:** The Human Rights and International Law Working Group (HRILWG) was updated by the Rapporteur of the CCWG-Accountability Subgroup for the development of a Framework of Interpretation of the Human Rights Core Value included in the Bylaws that entered into force on 1 October 2016. The HRILWG plans to prepare a GAC input to the public consultation on the draft FoI planned for next February. The HRILWG calls for increased participation by GAC Members and Observers in this cross-community effort. The HRILWG agreed to endorse the efforts by the HRILWG co-chairs to help the CCWG Subgroup Rapporteur in liaising with the UN Working Group on the issue of human rights and with transnational corporations and other business enterprises, in order to seek their informed opinion on the application to ICANN of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. Information was provided by the United Kingdom on the Council of Europe report "Applications to ICANN for Community-based New Generic Top Level Domains (gTLDs): Opportunities and challenges from a Human Rights Perspective" (see <http://www.coe.int/en/web/freedom-expression/coe-icann>).

The Council of Europe will submit the report to the New gTLDs Subsequent Procedures PDP Working Group and to the CCT Review Team for their active consideration.

The HRILWG was updated on the work of the Cross Community Working Party on the Corporate and Social Responsibility of ICANN to Respect Human Rights.

**Underserved Regions:** The GAC Underserved Regions Working Group held an Asia-Pacific Capacity Building session at ICANN57 with the kind participation of the ICANN

Board, CEO, ICANN GE, GSE, GAC Chair and GAC Members.

The Co-Chairs of the Working Group welcomed the suggestions made by the community regarding the work plan, and in particular the need to understand challenges and capacity needs of members from underserved regions. Community members agreed that there is a need to allocate necessary resources to enable diversity and meaningful participation of underserved region stakeholders.

**Protection of Geographic & Community Names in Future Rounds of gTLDs:** The Working Group on Protection of Geographic Names in New Rounds of gTLDs met during ICANN 57. The WG discussed a new text for "Best practices", which includes the proposal of creating a repository of names, reference to a due diligence process and associated procedures for applicants and other parties involved in the process. The Working Group received comments and welcomes additional comments, with the objective of sharing a new version with the Working Group prior to going to the full GAC before the next ICANN meeting.

**GAC Participation in the NomCom:** The Working Group on GAC participation in the NomCom met during the ICANN 57 meeting. The WG presented a new text for the "GAC Criteria" for the NomCom to be considered when selecting candidates for ICANN leadership positions. GAC members suggested changes to the text. The WG received comments and welcomes additional comments, with the objective of sharing a new version with the Working Group prior to going to the full GAC before the next ICANN meeting.

**Review of GAC Operating Principles:** See separate item above.

## DOCUMENT ADMINISTRATION

<b>Title</b>	GAC Minutes Hyderabad November 2016
<b>GAC Brief No.</b>	16-135
<b>Distribution</b>	GAC Members
<b>Distribution Date</b>	Final: 5 December 2016
<b>Related Meeting &amp; Agenda Item</b>	ICANN 57

## ATTACHMENT 1: GAC Attendees, Hyderabad, 3-9 November 2016

<b>Members</b>	
African Union Commission	Kenya
Argentina	Korea
Australia	
Austria	Luxembourg
Brazil	Malaysia
Bulgaria	Madagascar
Burkina Faso	Mexico
Burundi	
	Namibia
Cameroon	Netherlands
Canada	New Zealand
Chad	Nigeria
China	Niue
Colombia	Norway
Cook islands	
Costa Rica	Pakistan (remote participant)
Cote d'Ivoire	Palestine
Czech Republic	Paraguay
	Peru
Democratic Republic of Congo	Portugal
Denmark	
	Russian Federation
Egypt	Rwanda
Estonia	
European Commission	
	Senegal
Fiji	Singapore
Finland	Spain
France	Sweden
	Switzerland
Georgia (remote participant)	
Germany	Chinese Taipei
	Thailand
Hong Kong-China	
Hungary	Ukraine (remote participant)
	United Kingdom
India	United States
Indonesia	Uruguay
Iran	
Italy	Venezuela
	Viet Nam
Jamaica	
Japan	
<b>Observers</b>	
World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO)	Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation (CTO)
Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF)	Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)
Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU)	International Committee of the Red Cross

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## ATTACHMENT 2: GAC Hyderabad Communiqué

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Hyderabad, 8<sup>th</sup> November 2016

### GAC Communiqué – Hyderabad, India <sup>2</sup>

#### I. Introduction

The Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) met in Hyderabad, India from 3 to 9 November 2016.

Sixty-six (66) GAC Members and six (6) Observers attended the meeting.

The GAC meeting was conducted as part of ICANN 57. All GAC plenary and Working Group sessions were conducted as open meetings.

#### II. Inter-Constituency Activities & Community Engagement

##### Meeting with the ICANN Board

The GAC met with the ICANN Board and discussed:

- The timing of the Board's response to advice contained in the GAC Helsinki Communiqué.
- The need to work towards a common understanding of the respective roles of the GAC and the Board.
- 2-character country codes at the second level.
- IGO Protections.
- Protections for Red Cross/Red Crescent/Red Crystal.
- Measures to encourage diversity of participation across ICANN policy development work.
- The report commissioned by the Council of Europe on community applications for gTLDs.
- Dot Web Auction.

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<sup>2</sup> To access previous GAC advice, whether on the same or other topics, past GAC communiqués are available at:

<https://gacweb.icann.org/display/gacweb/GAC+Meetings> and older GAC communiqués are available at:

<https://gacweb.icann.org/display/gacweb/GAC+Meetings+Archive>.

## **Meeting with the Generic Name Supporting Organisation (GNSO)**

The GAC met with members of the GNSO Council and discussed:

- The final status report of the GAC-GNSO Consultation Group on GAC Early Engagement in Policy Development. The GAC noted the report's recommendations and will work with the GNSO on their implementation.
- Current policy development processes with potential public policy implications.
- The need to resolve the long-standing issues of permanent protections for names and acronyms of Inter-Governmental Organisations and Red Cross/Red Crescent/Red Crystal identifiers. It was agreed that a solution requires the involvement of the GAC, the GNSO and the ICANN Board.

## **Meeting with the Country Code Name Supporting Organisation (ccNSO)**

The GAC met with the ccNSO Council and discussed:

- A proposed ccNSO Policy Development Process on retirement and review of ccTLDs.
- The final report of the Cross-Community Working Group on Use of Country and Territory Names as TLDs.
- The latest report regarding the Extended Process Similarity Review Panel.

## **Meeting with At Large Advisory Committee (ALAC)**

The GAC met with the ALAC and discussed:

- Policy development for future new gTLDs, including community applications and the CCT Review.
- Diversity issues.
- Implementation of new ICANN Bylaws with regard to the Empowered Community.
- The ICANN Academy leadership training program.

## **High Interest Topics**

GAC Members engaged actively in the range of cross-community sessions on High Interest Topics held as part of ICANN 57. The Public Safety and Underserved Regions Working Groups hosted well-attended sessions on Mitigating Abuse in gTLDs, WHOIS-Related Activities and Underserved Regions. The GAC will engage

with relevant follow-up processes as appropriate.

## **Outreach**

The GAC thanks the Governments of India and of the State of Telangana for providing valuable outreach opportunities for GAC Members at this meeting.

## **GAC-Community Engagement**

The GAC very much welcomes opportunities to meet with any stakeholders at and between ICANN meetings. However, GAC face-to-face meetings are scheduled well in advance, and it would be greatly appreciated if requests for meetings could be provided to the GAC Chair and Secretariat as early as possible to enable a GAC schedule that meets all interests.

## **III. Internal Matters**

### **1. New Members**

The GAC welcomed Nepal as a new Member. This brings GAC membership to 170 Members, and 35 Observers.

### **2. GAC Elections**

The GAC re-elected as Chair, by acclamation, Mr Thomas Schneider (Switzerland).

The GAC elected the following Vice-Chairs:

Mr Guo Feng (China)

Ms Manal Ismail (Egypt)

Mr Ghislain De Salins (France)

Ms Milagros Castañón Seoane (Peru)

Mr Mark Carvell (United Kingdom)

The new Vice Chairs will assume their mandate at the end of the Copenhagen meeting.

### **3. Board-GAC Recommendation Implementation Working Group (BGRI-WG)**

The BGRI met and discussed further work on:

- What constitutes GAC advice.
- Clarity of GAC advice.
- A regular post-Communiqué discussion between the Board and the GAC.

#### **4. GAC Working Groups: Updates as reported to the GAC**

**Public Safety Working Group:** The Public Safety Working Group (PSWG) continued its engagement with the Community and various ICANN initiatives. Members of the PSWG participated in meetings of the Competition, Consumer Trust and Consumer Choice (CCT) Review, Registration Directory Services PDP Working Group, Privacy & Proxy Services Accreditation (PPSAI) Implementation Review Team, and the Security Framework Drafting Team.

The PSWG will develop recommendations to the GAC in the area of sensitive strings and child protection online; continue discussing the Working Group's operating guidelines; continue to engage in outreach and capacity building activities; and hold bi-weekly meetings to facilitate intersessional work.

**Working Group on Human Rights and International Law:** The Human Rights International Law Working Group (HRILWG) was updated by the Rapporteur of the CCWG Subgroup for the development of a Framework of Interpretation of the Human Rights Core Value included in the Bylaws that entered into force on 1 October 2016. The HRILWG plans to prepare a GAC input to the public consultation on the draft FoI planned for next February. The HRILWG calls for increased participation by GAC Members and Observers in this cross-community effort. Finally, the HRILWG agreed to endorse the efforts by the HRILWG co-chairs to help the CCWG Subgroup Rapporteur in liaising with the UN Working Group on the issue of human rights and with transnational corporations and other business enterprises, in order to seek their informed opinion on the application to ICANN of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. Information was provided by the United Kingdom on the Council of Europe report "Applications to ICANN for Community-based New Generic Top Level Domains (gTLDs): Opportunities and challenges from a Human Rights Perspective" (see <http://www.coe.int/en/web/freedom-expression/coe-icann>).

The Council of Europe will submit the report to the New gTLDs Subsequent Procedures PDP Working Group and to the CCT Review Team for their active consideration.

The HRILWG was updated on the work of the Cross Community Working Party on Corporate and Social Responsibility to Respect Human Rights.

**Working Group on Underserved Regions:** The GAC Underserved Regions Working Group (USR) held an Asia-Pacific Capacity Building session at ICANN57 with the kind participation of the ICANN Board, CEO, ICANN GE, GSE, GAC Chair and GAC Members.

The Co-Chairs of the Working Group welcomed the suggestions made by the community regarding the work plan and in particular the need to understand challenges and capacity needs of members from underserved regions. Community members agreed that there is a need to allocate necessary resources to enable diversity and meaningful participation of underserved region stakeholders.

**Geographic Names Working Group:** The Working Group on Protection of

Geographic Names in New Rounds of gTLDs met during ICANN 57. The WG discussed a new text for "Best practices", which includes the proposal of creating a repository of names, reference to a due diligence process and associated procedures for applicants and other parties involved in the process. The Working Group received comments and welcomes additional comments, with the objective of sharing a new version with the Working Group prior to going to the full GAC before the next ICANN meeting.

**GAC Participation in the NomCom Working Group:** The WG on GAC participation in NomCom met during the ICANN 57 meeting. The WG presented a new text for the "GAC Criteria" for the NomCom to be considered when selecting candidates for ICANN leadership positions. GAC members suggested changes to the text. The WG received comments and welcomes additional comments, with the objective of sharing a new version with the Working Group prior to going to the full GAC before the next ICANN meeting.

## **5. GAC Participation in the NomCom**

Argentina, Brazil, Burundi, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Iran, France, Nigeria, Paraguay, Perú, Uruguay and Venezuela made a statement requesting that the GAC appoints a representative to be the non-voting liaison with the NomCom, which can be accommodate within the present NomCom structure. It was agreed that this request will be considered within the GAC.

## **6. Independent Secretariat**

The GAC re-affirmed its view that a sustainable, independent, accountable and transparent secretariat is essential for the GAC to perform its functions. Sources of funding will be explored with the aim of continuing to fund an independent secretariat after the current contract with ACIG expires in July 2017.

Noting with regret that Tracey Hind will leave her employment with ACIG, the provider of the independent GAC Secretariat, the GAC expressed its deep appreciation and warm thanks to her for her excellent services, wishing her all success in the future.

## **IV. Transition of IANA Stewardship Transition and Enhancing ICANN Accountability**

The GAC takes note of the completion of the process to transition stewardship of the IANA function to the multistakeholder community, and expresses its appreciation to all parties involved for their efforts.

The GAC is working on a series of measures to implement the ICANN Bylaws that came into effect on 1 October 2016. These include the provision of GAC advice to the Board; GAC appointments to external bodies; and procedures and conditions for GAC participation in the Empowered Community.

GAC Members will continue to participate in the activities of the CCWG-Accountability Work Stream 2, and the GAC looks forward to timely completion of this work.

## **V. Other Issues**

### **1. Competition, Consumer Trust and Consumer Choice (CCT) Review Team**

The GAC was briefed on the work of the Competition, Consumer Trust and Consumer Choice (CCT) Review Team by its Chair and its GAC members.

The GAC will review the research to date and look forward to the opportunity to respond to a draft report in due course.

### **2. New gTLDs: Substantive Policy Issues**

The GAC discussed specific policy issues relevant to possible future release of new gTLDs, including:

- a. Community-based gTLD applications. The GAC noted the release of a report commissioned by the Council of Europe on: “Applications to ICANN for Community-Based New Generic Top Level Domains (gTLDs): Opportunities and challenges from a human rights perspective.” The GAC will consider the report with a view to its use within the community as an input to new gTLD policy development work.
- b. Support for applicants from developing countries.
- c. Categories for new gTLDs.
- d. Reserved names, including geographic names.
- e. Internationalised Domain Names.

### **3. Review of the Trademark Clearing House**

The GAC was briefed by Analysis Group on their report on the Trademark Clearing House. The GAC will give further consideration to the report, and the outcome of the public comment process, in the context of development of future gTLD policies.

#### **4. Dot Web Auction**

The GAC is aware of concerns relating to the dot web TLD. The GAC would like the Community to be kept fully informed of developments in this case in the interest of transparency.

#### **5. Protection of IGO Names and Acronyms**

The GAC takes note of the letter from the Secretary General of the United Nations to Ministers regarding policy development at ICANN related to the potential unauthorized use of IGO names and acronyms in the Internet Domain Name System. In this respect, the GAC reiterates its concern regarding the issue set forth by the UN Secretary General.

#### **6. Use of Three-letter ISO Country Codes as TLDs**

Further to the GAC Helsinki Communiqué, the GAC continued its discussion concerning 3-letter country codes as potential TLDs. Discussions will continue in the GAC.

### **IV. GAC Advice to the Board<sup>3</sup>**

The following items of advice from the GAC to the Board have been reached on the basis of consensus as defined in the ICANN Bylaws.

#### **1. Future gTLDs Policies and Procedures: Process and Timing**

##### **a. The GAC advises the ICANN Board:**

- I. The GAC reiterates its advice contained in the Helsinki Communiqué concerning process and timing with regard to development of future gTLD policies and procedures

#### **RATIONALE**

The rationale for this advice is the same as that contained in the GAC Helsinki Communiqué, to which the GAC has not yet received any response from the Board.

#### **2. Mitigation of Domain Name Abuse**

##### **a. The GAC advises the ICANN Board that:**

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<sup>3</sup> To track the history and progress of GAC Advice to the Board, please visit the GAC Advice Online Register available at: <https://gacweb.icann.org/display/GACADV/GAC+Register+of+Advice>

- I. To provide written responses to the questions listed in Annex 1 to this Communiqué no later than five weeks before the ICANN 58 meeting in Copenhagen.

### RATIONALE

The GAC has previously endorsed Law Enforcement Due Diligence Recommendations<sup>4</sup>

While the 2013 RAA<sup>5</sup> addressed most of these Recommendations pertaining to Registrars, the GAC is now seeking more information on implementation of some of these RAA provisions.

The GAC wishes to better understand how ICANN is using publicly available DNS abuse reporting resources and seeks specific information on ICANN's efforts in setting standards for abuse reporting and performance.

### **3. Two-letter country/territory codes at the second level**

#### **a. The GAC advises the ICANN Board to:**

1. Clearly indicate whether the actions taken by the Board as referred to in the resolution adopted on 8 November 2016 are fully consistent with the GAC advice given in the Helsinki Communiqué
2. Always communicate in future the position of the Board regarding GAC advice on any matter in due time before adopting any measure directly related to that advice.

### RATIONALE

The Board approved a resolution on this matter at its meeting of 8 November 2016. In this connection, the GAC expresses serious concern that the Board has proceeded to take a decision on this matter without responding to the GAC's advice provided in the Helsinki Communiqué, and thus impeded the GAC from having the opportunity to react. In the view of the GAC, this is not in accordance with established GAC-Board procedures.

### **4. Protection of IGO Names and Acronyms**

#### **a. The GAC advises the ICANN Board:**

- i. To take action and engage with all parties in order to facilitate, through a transparent and

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<sup>4</sup> The [Law Enforcement Due Diligence Recommendations](#) were referenced in several GAC Communiqués: Nairobi (2010), Brussels (2010), Singapore (2011) and Dakar (2011)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.icann.org/resources/board-material/resolutions-2013-06-27-en#2.b>

good faith dialogue, the resolution of outstanding inconsistencies between GAC advice and GNSO recommendations with regard to the protection of IGO acronyms in the DNS and to report on progress at ICANN 58.

- ii. That a starting basis for resolution of differences between GAC Advice and existing GNSO Recommendations would be the small group compromise proposal set out in the October 4, 2016 letter from the ICANN Board Chair to the GNSO, namely that ICANN would establish all of the following, with respect to IGO acronyms at the second level:
  1. a procedure to notify IGOs of third-party registration of their acronyms;
  2. a dispute resolution mechanism modeled on but separate from the UDRP, which provides in particular for appeal to an arbitral tribunal instead of national courts, in conformity with relevant principles of international law; and
  3. an emergency relief (e.g., 24-48 hours) domain name suspension mechanism to combat risk of imminent harm.
- iii. That, to facilitate the implementation of the above advice, the GAC invites the GNSO Working Group on Curative Rights Protection Mechanisms to take the small group proposal into account.
- iv. That, until such measures are implemented, IGO acronyms on the GAC-provided list remain reserved in two languages.

#### RATIONALE

IGOs undertake global public service missions, and protecting their names and acronyms in the DNS is in the global public interest.

IGOs are unique treaty-based institutions created by governments under international law.

The small group compromise strikes a reasonable balance between rights and concerns of both IGOs and legitimate third parties.

ICANN's Bylaws and Core Values indicate that the concerns and interests of entities most affected, here IGOs, should be taken into account in policy development processes.

## **5. Protection of Red Cross/ Red Crescent/ Red Crystal Identifiers and names of national committees**

Referring to the GAC's previous advice to secure and confirm the permanent protection of the Red Cross and Red Crescent designations and names based on public international law and on the national laws in force in multiple jurisdictions, the GAC recognizes and welcomes the goodwill and renewed understanding both within the Board and within the Community that the protections due to the Red Cross, Red Crescent and Red Crystal identifiers require distinct treatment and resolution.

### **a. The GAC hence advises the ICANN Board to, without further delay:**

- i.** Request the GNSO Council, as a matter of urgency, to re-examine and revise its PDP recommendations pertaining to the protection of the names and identifiers of the respective international and national Red Cross and Red Crescent organizations which are not consistent with GAC advice; and in due course
- ii.** Confirm the protections of the Red Cross and Red Crescent names and identifiers as permanent.

### **RATIONALE**

The GAC's consistent advice in this matter is based in the distinct legal protections accorded to the words and identifiers of the Red Cross and Red Crescent under universally agreed norms of public international law and the laws in force in multiple jurisdictions. It is also founded in the global public interest in preserving the names of the respective Red Cross and Red Crescent organizations from abuse and fraud. The above grounds constitute the motivation for the GAC's request that the recommendations of the past GNSO PDP that are not consistent with past GAC advice be revised.

The GAC wishes to emphasize that this course of action will offer a clear signal, to the ICANN Community and to the States represented on the Government Advisory Committee, of ICANN's commitment to resolve difference arising among its constituencies and to do so with all due consideration and attention to public international law and to global public policy interests in accordance with the aforementioned legal regimes.

## **6. Underserved Regions**

### **a. The GAC advises the ICANN Board to:**

- i. Take required action to enable implementation of GAC Underserved Regions activities, including but not limited to capacity building and participation in ICANN policy processes.

### **RATIONALE**

The multistakeholder approach that is fundamental to ICANN has contributed to impressive collective efforts, towards developing complex policy and technical processes. However, it is imperative that we acknowledge and remain mindful that while the approach is meant to enable inclusiveness and diversity providing all stakeholders full voice and influence in ICANN decision-making, developing regions still face a multitude of challenges that constrain their participation.

The GAC has developed a work plan that aims to address some of these challenges and provide recommendations.

## **7. String similarity Review**

### **a. The GAC advises the ICANN Board that:**

- i. The Board should apply the views expressed by the GAC in the letter from the GAC Chair of 28 September 2016 to the ccNSO Chair concerning the Extended Process Similarity Review Panel Working Group proposed guidelines on the second string similarity review process.

### **RATIONALE**

Facilitation of IDN ccTLDs, through the relevant local Internet community, has always been supported by the GAC as a way of making the domain name system more inclusive and accessible. Issues of potential confusability can and should be addressed on a practical and workable basis.

## **8. Enhancement of mutual cooperation and understanding**

### **a. The GAC advises the ICANN Board to:**

- i. Engage in enhanced and more regular communication with the GAC and Supporting Organisations with a view to fostering better mutual understanding of each other's and procedures in the ICANN framework.

- ii. Engage in enhanced and more regular communication with the GAC with a view to foster mutual understanding of the nature and purposes of the GAC's advice on issues of public policy and related to international and national law, and also with a view to better understand the GAC's expectations and the Board's deliberations related to the implementation of GAC advice.
- iii. Make it a regular practice to schedule a post-Communique Board-GAC meeting to ensure mutual understanding of its provisions, either at the relevant ICANN meeting or in a call four weeks of a Communique being issued.
- iv. Consider publicly posting draft resolutions in advance of Board Meetings.

### RATIONALE

At the first post-Communique conference call between the Board and the GAC on 20 July 2016, the GAC realized that such interaction contributes to a shared understanding of the provisions of the advice issued. Such enhanced interaction seemed to assist the Board to better understand the GAC's intentions and expectations when issuing advice, and helped the GAC to better understand the Boards' deliberations when analysing and processing GAC advice.

In addition, and in the interest of transparency, the GAC has the view that it may be useful for effective interaction between stakeholders if the content of the Board's draft resolutions were made available before their adoption.

## **VIII. Next Meeting**

The GAC will meet during ICANN 58 in Copenhagen, Denmark, scheduled for 11-16 March 2017.

## **ANNEX 1 TO GAC HYDERABAD COMMUNIQUE**

### **Questions to the ICANN Board on DNS Abuse Mitigation by ICANN and Contracted Parties**

#### **I. Implementation of 2013 RAA provisions and Registrars Accreditation**

1. WHOIS Accuracy Program Specification - Cross Validation Requirement  
What is the implementation status of the 2013 RAA, WHOIS Accuracy Program Specification<sup>6</sup>, Section 1 (e) which provides that Registrar will “*Validate that all postal address fields are consistent across fields (for example: street exists in city, city exists in state/province, city matches postal code) where such information is technically and commercially feasible for the applicable country or territory*”? Specifically, ICANN should provide:
  - a. Detailed information on what registrars and ICANN have done to fulfil this RAA requirement to date;
  - b. A timeline with specific milestones & dates, including a projected closure date for complete implementation of this requirement;
  - c. Detailed information on cross-field validation software, approaches, etc. that have been considered, including supporting data and research;
  - d. Detailed information regarding registrars' concerns about why specific options are not technically and commercially feasible, including supporting data and research; and
  - e. Current proposals for cross-field validation (published at the time they are shared with any registrar).
2. Enforcement by ICANN of WHOIS Verification, Validation and Accuracy Requirements  
Per the 2013 RAA WHOIS Specification, how does ICANN enforce all registrar WHOIS verification, validation and accuracy contractual obligations? Please provide examples that demonstrate how ICANN is enforcing each of these contractual obligations?
3. Diligence by ICANN in Relation to Registrars' Duty to Investigate Reports of Abuse  
What is the standard of diligence that ICANN applies to registrars in the registrar's duty to respond to reports of abuse according to Section 3.18 of the 2013 RAA?
4. Awareness Efforts by ICANN on Registrars' Obligations:  
What efforts does ICANN undertake to ensure registrars, are educated and aware of their contractual obligations? Per 2013 RAA, Section 3.13, can ICANN provide details of required training, for instance:
  - a. Is there an ICANN training program with corresponding links and information?
  - b. How often is this training provided?
  - c. Other details of the training program?
5. Vetting Registrar Accreditation Applications  
ICANN has listed criteria for registrar accreditation<sup>7</sup>. Please explain how these criteria have been put into practice and enforced?  
Specifically:
  - a. How does ICANN verify information provided in registrar accreditation applications? What databases, record checks, etc. are used?
  - b. How many applications has ICANN received since the new process began? Of those, how many applications have been rejected, why?
  - c. How long does it take ICANN to evaluate each application?

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/approved-with-specs-2013-09-17-en#whois-accuracy>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/application-2012-02-25-en>

- d. What are the financial costs associated with processing each application, including verification costs?

## **II. Implementation of New gTLD Applicant Guidebook and Registry Agreement**

### **1. Vetting Registry Accreditation Applications**

The New gTLD Applicant Guidebook<sup>8</sup> (v. 2012-06-04), Module 1, Section 1.2.1, Eligibility states that “ICANN will perform background screening in only two areas: (1) General business diligence and criminal history; and (2) History of cybersquatting behavior.” How is ICANN monitoring, enforcing and/or verifying continued compliance with Section 1.2.1?

### **2. Security Checks, Specification 11, Section 3(b)**

- a. Does ICANN collect and/or review these statistical reports or otherwise verify that the Public Interest Commitment is being met?
- b. Is ICANN conducting any type of independent research that allows it to obtain metrics and generate statistics related to concentration of malicious domain names per registrar/registry and how this trends over a determined period of time?
- c. If ICANN is conducting this research, please provide a brief explanation of how the analysis is performed and what specific actions ICANN takes in response to the results indicated by the data.
- d. If ICANN is NOT conducting this research, please explain why not. In the interests of transparency, the GAC requests a report containing these statistics and summaries of actions taken in response to the security threats identified above.
- e. The GAC would like to remind ICANN that the list of Security Threats in the New gTLD Safeguards is not meant to be exhaustive. In fact, the Security checks Safeguard applicable to all New gTLDs refers to “*security threats such as phishing, pharming, malware, and botnets*” (emphasis added), which does not exclude other relevant threats. Please describe what analysis and reporting is conducted regarding other relevant threats not listed above, including spam?

### **3. Awareness Efforts by ICANN on Registries’ Obligations:**

What efforts does ICANN undertake to ensure registries, are educated and aware of their contractual obligations? Is there an ICANN training program with corresponding links and information?

## **III. DNS Abuse Investigation, reporting and mitigation performance**

### **1. Abuse Investigations, Research, Reports**

ICANN’s ISSSR programs are an internal resource that could be utilized for contract enforcement purposes. In addition to ICANN’s IS-SSR programs, there are several publically available anti-abuse reports that can be used to assist ICANN in enforcing contractual obligations with gTLD registries and registrars<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> <https://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/agb>

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.domaintools.com/content/The\\_DomainTools\\_Report\\_Distribution\\_Malicious\\_Domain.pdf](http://www.domaintools.com/content/The_DomainTools_Report_Distribution_Malicious_Domain.pdf) and <https://www.spamhaus.org/statistics/registrars/>

- a) Is ICANN contract compliance staff aware of such publically available abuse reports?
  - i. If so, does ICANN utilize these to assist in contract enforcement?
  - ii. If ICANN utilizes such publicly available abuse reports for contract enforcement purposes, how does it utilize such reports?
  - iii. Identify what reports or sources ICANN utilizes?
  - iv. If ICANN does *not* utilize these reports for contract enforcement purposes, is there any reason why not to? Are there any plans or a willingness to do so in the future?
- b) Does ICANN have any intention to utilize its IS-SSR programs for contract enforcement purposes?
  - i. If so, how?
  - ii. If not, why not?
  - iii. Has ICANN's IS-SSR considered establishing a baseline for good registry and registrar behavior? If so, please provide details.

## 2. Multi-Jurisdictional Abuse Reporting

ICANN's former Chief Contract Compliance Officer, Allan Grogan, published a blog post on 1 October 2015 entitled "*Update on Steps to Combat Abuse and Illegal Activity*"<sup>10</sup>. In this blog post, Mr. Grogan indicates the complainant must identify the law/regulation violated and the applicable jurisdiction. Many cyber/malware/botnet attacks affect many TLDs spread across many international jurisdictions.

- a) Please clarify what procedures should be followed when a complainant seeks to submit valid reports of abuse to registrars involving incidents in multiple jurisdictions?
- b) In particular, what does ICANN require from complainants to identify those laws/regulations in the jurisdictions of each affected registrar?

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.icann.org/news/blog/update-on-steps-to-combat-abuse-and-illegal-activity>

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## **ATTACHMENT 3: Statement by Brazil on behalf of several GAC members concerning GAC in the Empowered Community**

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The following statement was made at the GAC meeting on 9 November 2016 by Brazil on behalf of several governments.

**BRAZIL:** I would like to make a few comments on that subject. These comments reflect the position of the governments of Brazil, Argentina, Chile, China, Colombia, France, Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Rwanda and Venezuela. Okay. According to the NETmundial multistakeholder statement, Internet Governance, and I quote, "should be built on democratic multistakeholder processes, ensuring the meaningful and accountable participation of all stakeholders including governments." The WSIS+10 outcome document further recognizes that, and I quote again, "The effective participation, partnership and cooperation of governments, the private sector civil society, international organizations, the technical and academic communities and all other relevant stakeholders within their respective roles and responsibilities especially with balanced representation from developing countries has been and continues to be vital in the developing of the information society. As a multistakeholder organization, ICANN has to adopt and refine mechanisms that allow for effective and meaningful participation of all sectors that have a stake in coordination and management of Internet unique identifiers. Some issues raised during this ICANN meeting in Hyderabad, particularly the protection of IGO/INGO acronyms, have shown the need for governments to be early involved in PDPs to make policy development within ICANN more effective and legitimate. Likewise, with the completion of the IANA stewardship transition, ICANN has developed new accountability mechanisms that require proper involvement of governments. As of October 1st 2015, the GAC -- 2016, sorry -- the GAC is officially one of the five decisional participants in the empowered community and has now the duty such as the other SOs and ACs to develop the conditions under which to operate in this new structure. Failure to do so not only would be detrimental to the governments but also to icann itself as it would impact ICANN's own legitimacy.

That being said, we would like to state our support for the following:

Point 1: With respect to powers to be exercised by the GAC in the Empowered Community, it is our opinion that as a matter of principle, the GAC should participate in the exercise of all powers, all seven of them. As all of them potentially relate to public policy and public interest aspects, occasional abstentions should be decided on a case-by-case basis depending on the content of the issues brought to the GAC. Point 2: With regard to the thresholds to adopt petitions from both internal and other decisional participants, we believe that consensus should be sought whenever possible within the GAC. But in case it cannot be achieved in the time frame established for the decision, simple or qualified majority should be considered, depending on the particular stage in the escalation process. Simple majority is in fact the current way the GAC approves changes to its operating principles and should, therefore, be adopted as an initial step of these new procedures. We firmly reject any solution that requires full consensus as a last resort, as it might lead to the GAC's deliberations toward that end by granting veto power to individual GAC members. With a current membership of 170 governments, it would not be acceptable to have one country blocking the decision of all the others. A final word on this statement. The text is being now circulated to other governments in other countries. And other countries may offer their support at the later stage, hopefully, during ICANN 58. Thank you.