

ICANN | GAC

Governmental Advisory Committee

Bali, Indonesia, 26 October 2026

GAC Communiqué – Bali, Indonesia¹

The Bali Communiqué was drafted and agreed in a hybrid setting, during the ICANN87 Annual General Meeting. The GAC's discussions during this public meeting are reflected in the GAC Meeting Minutes and the transcripts of all sessions, available at <https://gac.icann.org/meetings-records/>. The Communiqué was circulated to the GAC immediately after the meeting to provide an opportunity for all GAC Members and Observers to consider it before publication, bearing in mind the special circumstances of a hybrid meeting. No objections were raised during the agreed timeframe before publication.

I. Introduction

The Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) met in Bali, Indonesia, in a hybrid setting, from 17 to 22 October 2026.

Sixty-seven (67) GAC Members and eight (8) Observers attended the meeting.

The GAC meeting was conducted as part of the ICANN87 Annual General Meeting. All GAC plenary and working group sessions were conducted as open meetings.

The Governmental Advisory Committee acknowledges and mourns the passing of Bertrand de La Chapelle, former GAC Vice Chair, long standing GAC Representative of France, and former ICANN Board Member. Bertrand has made distinguished contributions to the GAC, ICANN, and the governance of the Internet. He will be remembered for his vision, his collegiality and his unwavering commitment to dialogue and collaboration in advancing multistakeholder governance and the global public interest.

¹ To access previous GAC Advice, whether on the same or other topics, past GAC communiqués are available at: <https://gac.icann.org/>

II. Inter-Constituency Activities and Community Engagement

Meeting with the ICANN Board

The GAC met with the ICANN Board and discussed:

- Domain Name System (DNS) Abuse Mitigation Policy Gaps
- Readiness of System for Standardized Access/Disclosure Supplemental Recommendations Team (SSAD SRT) Recommendations
- Urgent Requests for Disclosure of Registration Data and Law Enforcement Authentication
- Privacy/Proxy Services
- GAC Preparations for the New Generic Top-Level Domains (gTLD) Program: 2026 Round
- Regional Internet Registry Governance

Meeting with the Country-Code Names Supporting Organization (ccNSO)

The GAC met with members of the ccNSO and discussed ccTLD Disaster Recovery.

Meeting with the Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) Council

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

- DNS Abuse Mitigation
- Registration Data Accuracy and the 15-Day Verification Timeline
- SSAD
- Next Steps on Common Priorities

Meeting with the Contracted Parties House (CPH) of the GNSO

The GAC met with representatives of the CPH and discussed:

- Next Round and the New TLD Applicant Group of the Registries Stakeholder Group
- How to Engage with Your Local Registry/Registrar
- DNS Abuse Mitigation
- SSAD SRT

Meeting with the Commercial Stakeholder Group (CSG) of the GNSO

The GAC met with representatives of the CSG and discussed:

- DNS Abuse Mitigation
- Registration Data Accuracy and Access
- Review of Reviews

Cross Community Discussions

GAC Members participated in relevant cross-community sessions scheduled as part of ICANN87, including Building a Secure, Stable, and Multilingual Internet for the Next Decade, and The Gap in Registrant Recourse.

III. Internal Matters

1. GAC Membership

There are currently 185 GAC Member States and Territories, and 41 Observer Organizations.

2. GAC Elections

The GAC elected Thiago Dal-Toe (Colombia) to serve the remainder of the Vice-Chair term of Ian Sheldon (Australia) ending at the close of the ICANN90 Annual General Meeting in October 2027.

3. GAC Leadership

The GAC expressed its sincere appreciation to Nicolas Caballero for his dedication as GAC Chair since 2023. Under his tenure, the GAC adopted a 4-year Strategic Plan and related Annual Plans which have contributed to increase the Committee's readiness to provide timely and effective advice and policy input, in the short term and for the future, in the furtherance of the global public interest.

At the end of the ICANN87 meeting the GAC Leadership Team will be composed as follows until the close of ICANN90 in October 2027²:

Ian Sheldon (Australia) (Chair)
Thiago Dal-Toe (Colombia)
Zeina Bou Harb (Lebanon)
Marco Hogewoning (The Netherlands)
Jorge Cancio (Switzerland)
Gloria Katuuku (Uganda)

² The terms of the current Vice Chairs will end at the close of ICANN90 in October 2027. The term of the incoming GAC Chair will end at the close of ICANN93 in October 2028. For reference, the terms of GAC Chair and Vice Chairs are defined in GAC Operating Principle 21 and 31 which were revised on 10 June 2025. See <https://gac.icann.org/operating-principles/operating-principles-june-2025>.

4. GAC Working Groups

- **GAC Public Safety Working Group (PSWG)**

The GAC PSWG continued its work to advocate for improved measures to combat DNS Abuse and promote lawful, effective access to domain name registration data. The PSWG contributed to the GAC sessions pertaining to DNS Abuse and Registration Data issues, and to cross-community plenary meetings on the policy gap related to registrant recourse and on DNS Abuse mitigation. Finally, and alongside GAC Members, the PSWG engaged with community stakeholders in meetings of: the GNSO Policy Development Process Working Group on Associated Domain Checks, the Law Enforcement Agency Authentication Mechanisms Input Group, and the Privacy and Proxy Services Accreditation Policy Implementation Review Team.

- **GAC Capacity Development Working Group (CDWG)**

The newly established GAC CDWG outlined its role in coordinating GAC capacity development activities and noted that its draft work plan would be shared with GAC Members for review and consideration following ICANN87.

The Working Group will continue collaborating with GAC Members and Observers, GAC Working Groups, GAC Topic Leads, ICANN org, and relevant ICANN constituencies to identify priority learning needs and deliver targeted capacity development activities as well as resources that support informed and timely participation in GAC and ICANN policy processes.

- **GAC Working Group on Human Rights and International Law Working Group (HRILWG)**

In the months following ICANN86, the GAC HRILWG has continued to advance several initiatives in line with its mandate.

As part of the implementation efforts stemming from Workstream 2 (WS2) Community Coordination Group (CCG) the group was asked to prepare a survey, which has been developed for GAC Members and distributed. Its results are expected to be presented at ICANN88.

The Working Group has also continued its efforts to promote sign language interpretation as a means of enhancing the participation of persons with disabilities in ICANN activities. Unfortunately, ICANN's budgetary constraints have left further implementation dependent on the willingness and support of host countries, at least temporarily. The Working Group intends to pursue opportunities to resume these efforts at future ICANN meetings, ideally with renewed support from ICANN.

The HRILWG supports the ongoing work on Universal Acceptance and hopes these efforts will lead to positive and concrete outcomes. The Working Group welcomed the initiatives undertaken by the Indonesian government, the host of ICANN87, to introduce local-language domain names using non-Latin scripts under its national ccTLD.

However, the Working Group noted the limited number of Internationalized Domain Name (IDN) applications submitted in the 2026 Round of New gTLDs. As highlighted during the GAC's discussions with the ICANN New gTLD Program Team in Bali, only 21 IDN applications were submitted, representing approximately 1.3% of the total applications. While the final figures will be confirmed following String Confirmation Day in November, these preliminary numbers indicate that the 2026 Round may not deliver the increase in linguistic and geographic diversity expected by the ICANN community.

- **GAC Universal Acceptance and IDN Working Group (UA-IDN WG)**

The GAC Universal Acceptance and Internationalized Domain Names Working Group held a session at ICANN87 in Bali to address ways of supporting the universal use of different scripts and languages, and longer TLDs online. The session highlighted the importance of integrating UA into national digital strategies, where a number of governments expressed their interest in the GAC UA Champion initiative and shared their experiences and challenges in implementing UA at a national level, especially in underserved regions, aiming to encourage UA adoption within digital public-sector policies and services in all countries. It was noted that the window for other governments to express their interest remains open.

Updates provided during the session included the UNESCO–ICANN Policy Brief, preparations for UA Day 2027, and the ICANN UA Expert Working Group.

5. GAC Operational Matters

Pursuant to GAC Operating Principle 53, and following the completion of the required 60-day consultation period initiated at ICANN86, GAC Members in attendance voted to adopt proposed administrative revisions to the GAC Operating Principles. Developed by the GAC Operating Principles Evolution Working Group (GOPE WG), these revisions are intended to improve clarity and consistency, update references and terminology, and align the Operating Principles with current GAC practices.

6. GAC Capacity Development

During ICANN87, two capacity development sessions were held, focusing on GAC readiness for the 2026 Round of New gTLDs and laying the groundwork for subsequent GAC plenary discussions. The first session provided an overview of the program, including application types, key milestones, string evaluation processes, and the Application Publication and Statistics (APS) system. The second session covered community input mechanisms, including application comments, singular/plural notifications, GAC Member Early Warnings, objections and appeals, and GAC Consensus Advice, followed by an introduction to the GAC operational readiness materials developed to support members' engagement in the application review process.

IV. Issues of Importance to the GAC

1. Review of Reviews

The GAC welcomes the opportunity to have a second Public Comment period on the report of the Review of Reviews (RoR) Cross Community Group (CCG), to allow feedback on modifications reflected in the Second Draft Report, and looks forward to reviewing it in light of previous GAC input provided in GAC Seville and Mumbai Communiqués.

The GAC considers that the RoR CCG revised framework should explicitly preserve the full substantive scope of Bylaws Section 4.6(b)(ii)(B). Any allocation between the Structural Review and the Accountability and Transparency Review should ensure complete coverage, avoid duplication, and preserve the GAC's own review arrangements under Section 4.4(b).

2. New gTLD Program: 2026 Round

a. Safeguard Assessments

The GAC welcomed the presentation by ICANN staff on Safeguard Assessments. GAC members noted that many applications are linked to government functions and public services or regulated sectors such as medicine, finance, education and fund-raising and that safeguards would be required. Members raised concerns about consumer protection and DNS Abuse. The GAC emphasises that the Assessments should be conducted in a comprehensive, prudent and responsible way and noted that GAC members would carefully review the outcomes of the Assessments. It was noted that the Assessments should take into account globally diverse cultural and linguistic perspectives. Some GAC Members are seeking clarification from ICANN Org regarding the Assessment of Registry Voluntary Commitments (RVCs), especially with regard to applications which relate to emerging technologies.

The GAC noted that Safeguard Assessments cannot prevent an application from proceeding but can lead to Public Interest Commitments being put in Registry Agreements as enforceable contractual obligations. In this regard, some members asked about the monitoring and enforcement of Safeguard Public Interest Commitments and about the jurisdiction of the applicable laws.

b. Geographic Names and Community Applications

Without prejudice to any applicable limitations on the disclosure of documentation regarding applications, the GAC expects that ICANN Org and applicants entertain best efforts to make documentation of letters of support or non-objection related to Geographic Names or Community Applications available to the extent permissible.

c. GAC Operational Readiness

In light of the upcoming application review phase, the GAC stressed the importance of timely governmental readiness to review applications in the 2026 Round. The GAC appreciates that it has various options to provide feedback into the evaluation process, which includes GAC Member Early Warnings and GAC Consensus Advice. The GAC intends to establish an operational readiness framework, including intersessional work, to enable members to identify potential public policy concerns and coordinate the members' responses, where appropriate.

d. Applicant Support Program (ASP)

The GAC acknowledges ICANN org's efforts in administering the Applicant Support Program (ASP) and the greater uptake compared to the 2012 round. However, it notes the gap between ASP initiated and approved applications as well as differences in regional participation, particularly affecting underserved regions. The GAC stresses the importance of a timely lessons-learned evaluation to understand applicants' experiences, including why some prospective and approved applicants did not proceed.

The GAC requests the ICANN Board and ICANN org to work with the GAC and the wider community to deliver this evaluation, building on existing evaluation activities and incorporating structured exit surveys and interviews, as appropriate, with approved and unsuccessful ASP applicants. The analysis should examine outreach, financial and non-financial support (including decisions relating to the ASP fee reduction and whether existing support levels are effective) and differences in regional participation, particularly for underserved regions, drawing on and capturing participants' experiences while these remain recent. The GAC expects initial findings to be shared with the community, ideally before ICANN88.

For the 2026 Round, the GAC encourages ICANN org to maintain targeted support guidance and access to pro bono services for ASP supported applicants, throughout the remaining application stages, to help prevent applicants' withdrawal due to further financial or technical barriers, including legal costs in objection proceedings and the costs of string contention resolution.

3. Universal Acceptance

The GAC welcomes and encourages the further adoption of Universal Acceptance (UA) for the better use of Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs), Email Address Internationalization (EAI) and new generic top-level domains to support the universal use of different scripts and languages, as well as longer TLDs.

The GAC notes that interested GAC members could promote UA readiness within digital public-sector policies and services, supported by practical technical guidance.

4. DNS Abuse Mitigation

During the ICANN87 DNS Abuse session, the GAC welcomed presentations by: the GAC representative from the host country and the Pengelola Nama Domain Internet Indonesia (PANDI), Indonesia's ccTLD operator; the Japan Publisher's Manga Anti-Piracy Conference (JPMAC) on domain name hopping and registration data verification; as well as ICANN Compliance and the Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO). ICANN Compliance updated the GAC on the status of enforcement action against a registrar that failed to promptly mitigate DNS Abuse, as required by the Registrar Accreditation Agreement. ICANN OCTO presented a new methodology for identifying domains potentially connected to known DNS Abuse.

GAC representatives continued their participation in the Policy Development Process on Associated Domain Checks (PDP1) during ICANN87, working alongside representatives from ICANN's various constituencies to incorporate public comments on the Initial Report into the draft GNSO policy recommendations. Recalling its submission to the Public Comment proceeding, the GAC encourages cross-registrar information sharing in the context of Associated Domain Checks, which could significantly increase the speed and effectiveness of DNS Abuse mitigation. The GAC appreciates the swift progress made by the PDP1 Working Group to date and encourages the community to continue this positive trajectory. To help stem the harm to the public of phishing and other forms of DNS Abuse, PDP1 consensus policy should be implemented and in place before new gTLD strings are added to the Domain Name System.

The GAC also discussed its one-time input to the GNSO Council on the Charter being developed for PDP2 (*Safeguards for Application Programming Interface (API) access to new customers*), which, *inter alia*, encouraged the Working Group to examine how behavioral indicators, account history and, where relevant, identity-related measures, may operate together or separately in establishing trustworthiness. The GAC looks forward to the early launch of this work.

The GAC understands that the GNSO Council is undertaking a prioritisation exercise for future work, including on DNS Abuse. The GAC reiterates its interest in receiving further information on this process and emphasises the importance of ensuring that the exercise takes into account issues previously highlighted by the GAC, including preventative measures, and mandatory DNS Abuse reporting³.

Finally, to promote accountability, the GAC expresses the need for industry-wide visibility over contracted parties' compliance with their DNS Abuse obligations. Whether provided by ICANN or other entities, reliable (and reproducible) measurement of Registry and Registrar DNS Abuse mitigation is fundamental to the development of evidence-based policy.

³ GAC Communiqués in [Prague](#) (16 Jun. 2025), [Dublin](#) (3 Nov. 2025), [Mumbai](#) (16 Mar. 2026) and [Seville](#) (15 Jun. 2026)

5. The 15-day Registration Data Verification Timeline

The GAC reiterates that “*maintaining accurate domain name registration data is an important element in the prevention and mitigation of DNS Abuse*” as stated in the ICANN72 Communiqué. Recent evidence, such as the INFERMAL report, states that validating registrant information during the account creation or before the domain delegation correlates to lower levels of abuse. Further research, including a recent 2026 study⁴, suggests that, in some types of abuse campaigns, malicious domains are often active only for a very short time. Experiences shared by some ccTLDs and GAC Members during ICANN87 also demonstrate that preventive verification measures can lead to lower levels of DNS Abuse without necessarily affecting registrations and renewals. Establishing meaningful friction in order to deter malicious Domain Name registrations therefore remains a GAC priority ahead of the delegation of new gTLDs.

The GAC welcomed conversations with the ICANN Board, the GNSO Council, the Contracted Parties House (CPH), and the Commercial Stakeholder Group (CSG) on this matter during ICANN87, particularly regarding the 15-day timeline for validating and verifying registration data under existing contractual arrangements. The GAC continues to recommend that registrars be required to complete these validation and verification steps before a newly registered domain name can become accessible through the DNS.

The GAC appreciates the registrars’ willingness to continue engaging on the possible evolution of this timeline and proposes further intersessional discussion on this topic prior to ICANN88. Recalling the ICANN86 Seville Communiqué and the discussions with the ICANN Board during ICANN87, the GAC looks forward to the Board’s continued engagement and support in aligning relevant parties and for advancing timely consideration of the two available pathways, namely policy development process and contractual amendments. The GAC will also seek to provide further evidence and insights, including from ccTLD experience to inform these exchanges.

6. Registration Data

a. Registration Data Request Service (RDRS) and System for Standardized Access/Disclosure (SSAD)

The GAC welcomes the ongoing work of the GNSO’s System for Standardized Access/Disclosure (SSAD) Supplemental Recommendations Team (SRT) and appreciates the ICANN Board’s continued engagement through its liaisons. The GAC intends to comment on the SSAD SRT’s recommendations when they are published for public comment, shortly after ICANN87.

As the SSAD SRT finalizes its recommendations, the GAC reiterates that the SSAD should be permanent and mandatory for all gTLD registrars, with optional participation by ccTLD operators, as

⁴ *Examining newly registered phishing domains at scale* by Sharad Agarwal, Marie Vasek in Journal of Cybersecurity, Volume 12, Issue 1, 2026 at <https://academic.oup.com/cybersecurity/article/12/1/tyag020/8735840>

stated in the ICANN86 Seville Communiqué. The GAC notes its awareness that the future SSAD could be either an enhanced Registration Data Request Service (RDRS) or a successor system.

The GAC also emphasizes the importance of requestor authentication and of law enforcement agencies having the ability to act as Authentication Providers. The GAC appreciates the ongoing collaboration between ICANN org and the PSWG to develop a technical proof of concept for authentication of law enforcement requestors. The GAC also appreciates ICANN org's efforts in convening the cross-community "Input Group" on this issue and encourages a pilot with ICANN covering the end-to-end authentication process so that Law Enforcement Agency (LEA) authentication can be operationalized as soon as possible once the SSAD policy recommendations are implemented.

Regarding Urgent Requests, the GAC reiterates the need for clear timelines for operationalizing LEA authentication and the 24-hour Urgent Request requirement. The GAC also expects that Board approval and implementation of the SSAD SRT recommendations will be sufficient for the relevant Registration Data Policy requirements to take effect, without a need for further policy development to enable authenticated requestors to start submitting Urgent Requests. It further stresses the importance of ensuring appropriate alignment between the SSAD SRT recommendations and the recently adopted policy on Urgent Requests, as well as all relevant ICANN policies.

For requests submitted through the SSAD concerning privacy or proxy domains, the GAC notes that registrars should be required to evaluate and respond to such requests in accordance with the Privacy Services and Proxy Services Consensus Policy, once finalized. Registrars should treat requests regarding privacy or proxy domains as requests for disclosure of the underlying privacy/proxy customer data.

The GAC looks forward to continued constructive engagement with the SSAD SRT.

b. Privacy/Proxy Services Accreditation Issues

The GAC continues to follow and engage in the work of the Privacy and Proxy Services Accreditation Issues (PPSAI) Implementation Review Team (IRT) and intends to provide a submission in the upcoming Public Comment proceeding. The GAC notes that ICANN policy should provide a straightforward process for legitimate actors to seek disclosures of privacy and proxy customer data, even when the privacy or proxy provider is not affiliated with the registrar. Registrars should be required to consider privacy or proxy disclosure requests on their merits and to ensure urgent requests receive a response within 24 hours. Registrars should also be required to ensure that all privacy and proxy services offered by their downstream partners are compliant with the forthcoming Consensus Policy, even when a downstream partner is not affiliated with the registrar.

V. Next Meeting

The GAC is scheduled to meet next during the ICANN88 Community Forum in Lisbon, Portugal on 13-18 March 2027.