

Agenda Item 31: Communique Drafting

Issues

1. Purpose of the GAC Communique
2. Things to bear in mind when drafting the Communique.

Purpose of the GAC Communique

GAC Operating Principle 51 provides that: "After a private meeting has been held, the Chair may issue a communique to the media, such communique having been approved by the GAC beforehand."

In practice, the Communique has become the main (but not the only) way that the GAC communicates advice to the Board, as well as putting other GAC activities on the public record. It is actually published and announced by ICANN, following agreement by the GAC at this drafting session(s).

To bear in mind when drafting the Communique

- a) The GAC operates on the basis of consensus, and accordingly it normally requires consensus for the full text of the Communique.
- b) The ICANN Bylaws dealing with "GAC consensus advice" are relevant only to those parts of the Communique identified by the GAC as consensus advice.
- c) Those parts of the Communique dealing with matters other than consensus advice are usually seen as statements of GAC views that the GAC wishes to have on the public record. The GAC has recently adopted the practice of including a section on "follow-up to previous advice", on which it expects a Board response.
- d) The bylaws require GAC (and other Advisory Committee) advice to the Board to be "communicated in a clear and unambiguous written statement, including the rationale for such advice." (s.12.3)
- e) As a general rule, draft text should not be proposed during the drafting session if the issue has not previously been discussed by the GAC.
- f) It is helpful if draft text is provided to the Secretariat (and copied to the GAC mailing list) as soon as possible, preferably before or early in the meeting rather than waiting until the drafting session, so that it can be included and considered in context.

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