GAC Meeting with the ALAC

Session 5 - GAC Meeting with ALAC

Session Objective

The GAC and the At-Large Advisory Committee (ALAC) regularly meet during ICANN Public Meetings to discuss public policy matters of interest to both government stakeholders and Internet end-users.

Background

The ALAC is the primary ICANN-designated organizational home for the voice and concerns of individual Internet end users. Representing the At-Large Community, the 15-member ALAC consists of two members selected by each of the five Regional At-Large Organizations (RALOs) and five members appointed by ICANN's Nominating Committee. Advocating for the interests of end-users, the ALAC advises on the activities of ICANN, including Internet policies developed by ICANN's Supporting Organizations.

The GAC and ALAC have been meeting at ICANN Public Meetings in order to coordinate and discuss ICANN policy issues of common interest. In the past they have worked to develop joint statements on certain policy and operational topics.

The ALAC and the GAC did not meet face-to-face during the previous ICANN77 public meeting, but carried on telephonic discussions prior to that time. Reconvening in-person at ICANN78 will allow the groups to continue to explore a number of topics of similar interest.

Session Agenda

At ICANN78, the joint session is expected to focus on the following topics:

- Joint ALAC/GAC Statement on Enabling Inclusive, Informed, and Meaningful Participation in ICANN
- New gTLD Program Next Round (e.g., closed generics, applicant support)
- Nee gTLD Application Contention Resolution - Potential Joint ALAC/GAC Statement

Recent Developments

I.   Joint ALAC/GAC Statement on Enabling Inclusive, Informed, and Meaningful Participation in ICANN

In 2017, at the ICANN60 Abu Dhabi Meeting, the GAC and ALAC developed a joint statement on "Enabling Inclusive, Informed and Meaningful Participation at ICANN," stating that "in order to enable inclusive, informed and meaningful participation by all stakeholders at ICANN, the GAC and ALAC ask ICANN, inter alia:

- **To develop a simple and efficient document management system that allows** – even to non-insiders – **an easy and quick access to ICANN documents.** As a minimum, every document should have a title, a date and/or reference number; it should identify the author and indicate intended recipients, and make reference to the process it belongs to. Acronyms should be explained.
- **To produce executive summaries, key points and synopses for all relevant issues**, processes and activities, made easily understandable to nonexperts so that all stakeholders will be able (a) to quickly determine if a particular issue is of concern to them and (b) if yes, to participate in the policy process easily and effectively, on equal footing with other stakeholders. This should be done at least for issues put up for public comment."

Pursuant to the 2017 Joint ALAC-GAC Statement and 2018 ALAC follow-up statement, the ICANN Board introduced ICANN's development of the Information and Transparency Initiative (ITI), an operational activity to improve ICANN's content governance and infrastructure. ITI's goals include:
- Creating an integrated ongoing, operational process to govern, preserve, organize, and secure ICANN's public content.
- Implementing this governance through a new document management system (DMS), the content foundation for ICANN ecosystem-wide governance.
- Surfacing this content through a new content management system (CMS), which will serve as the backbone for ICANN's external web properties.
- Enabling a multilingual user experience (in the U.N. six languages)
- Upgrading and establishing a future-proof and content agnostic technology landscape.

In Hamburg, the GAC and ALAC will be discussing the potential significant changes made through the ITI project and whether it addresses the committees' concerns. As a follow-up to the ALAC-GAC discussions prior to ICANN77, in particular, the two groups will consider focusing on:
- 1) Establishing a numbering system for ICANN documents that include the date, title, and a number;
- 2) Creating primers on key topics, for which ICANN org has invited ALAC and GAC identify the 10 priority topics for such work.

II. New gTLD Program Next Round (e.g., contention resolution, closed generics, applicant support)

During the ICANN77 meeting, the GAC developed consensus advice regarding a number of issues related to new gTLD matters. Please consult the ICANN78 written briefing for Sessions 3 and 9 for more details and recent development on these issues which will inform the GAC - ALAC conversations in Hamburg.

III. Contention Resolution - Potential Joint ALAC/GAC Statement

This is what the GAC said in the ICANN77 Communiqué about auctions as mechanisms of last resort/private resolution of contention sets in new gTLDs:

> *The GAC advises the Board:*
>
> > *i. To take steps to avoid the use of auctions of last resort in contentions between commercial and non-commercial applications; alternative means for the resolution of such contention sets, such as drawing lots, may be explored.*
> > *ii. To ban or strongly disincentivize private monetary means of resolution of contention sets, including private auctions.*
>
> *While the GAC acknowledges that, in an attempt to reduce potential gaming, recommendation 35.3 of the SubPro PDP Working Group Final Report included the need for applications to be submitted with a "bona fide" intention to operate a TLD, the GAC reiterates concerns regarding the implementation of this condition, and notes that punitive measures for non compliance with the condition of submission of a "bona fide" intention are not sufficiently defined.*
>
> *Regarding Auctions of Last Resort, the GAC reaffirms its view that they should not be used in contentions between commercial and non-commercial applications. In addition the GAC reiterates that private monetary means of resolution of contention sets should be banned or strongly disincentivized, to prevent applications under false pretenses for monetary gain. Other means, like drawing lots, may be used to resolve contention sets.*
>
> *The GAC supports ALAC's view expressed in its advice to the ICANN Board noting that they believe there "should be a ban on private auctions" and that "by mandating ICANN only auctions, the proceeds of any such ICANN auctions can at least be directed for uses in pursuit of public interest, such as was determined through the CCWG on Auction Proceeds."*

Since that time, communications to the GAC from the ALAC have suggested the opportunity to develop a joint statement on the topics.

Key Reference Documents

- [2017 Joint GAC-ALAC Statement activity page](#)
- [Follow-up to original GAC-ALAC statement (2018)](#) - Clarifying statement language (paragraph 1)
- ICANN77 Communiqué (June 2023) - https://gac.icann.org/contentMigrated/icann77-washington-d-c-communique

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