
GAC Strategic Planning

Session 10

Contents

Session Objective	p.1	Leadership Proposal for GAC Action	p.1	Background	p.2	Draft GAC Annual Plan 2024/2025	p.3
-----------------------------------	-----	--	-----	----------------------------	-----	---	-----

Session Objective

Members of ICANN’s Governmental Advisory Committee will consider endorsing both the 4-year GAC Strategic Plan (2024-2028), which was adopted intersessionally, as well as a related first GAC Annual Plan, for the 2024/2025 time frame.

It is expected that this Strategic Planning effort will serve to bolster the GAC’s proactive stance in ICANN deliberations, increase the Committee’s readiness to provide timely and effective advice and policy input, and to assist in communicating the GAC’s priorities with higher levels of governments and ICANN stakeholders.

Leadership Proposal for GAC Action

- 1. Consider endorsing the 4-year GAC Strategic Plan (2024-2028)¹ in the GAC Kigali Communiqué, as approved intersessionally.**
- 2. Consider approving and endorsing the corresponding and first GAC Annual Plan for the 2024/2025 time frame, in the GAC Kigali Communiqué.**

¹ See GAC Strategic Plan 2024-2028 in Annex to this Briefing.

Background

The role of the GAC, as provided in the ICANN Bylaws², has traditionally led to the GAC adopting a generally reactive posture, conducting its work and providing advice or policy input in reaction to developments in various ICANN processes.

In some instances, such a posture has led to unsatisfactory outcomes for governments, for participants in the ICANN community or for the ICANN Board. This was particularly the case during the preparation and launch of the 2012 round of New gTLDs. Based on this experience, and in connection with governments' concerns regarding priority ICANN issues such as New gTLDs, Registration Data and DNS Abuse Mitigation, GAC leaders and volunteers have adopted a more proactive stance, aiming to drive and align ICANN policy outcomes with the public policy interests of governments.

Building on this evolution, the GAC Leadership is seeking to cement a level of proactivity in GAC activities, in a more systematic fashion, with a view to increasing the Committee's readiness to provide timely and effective advice and policy input. To this end, the GAC Chair has invited GAC Topic Leads, GAC Working Group leaders and representatives of the GAC in various ICANN processes to consider, in their respective areas of expertise, what should be the strategic priorities and objectives of the Committee for the foreseeable future, as well as concrete outcomes to expect on an annual basis.

During ICANN79, the GAC discussed and approved, in principle, a set of 8 initial Strategic Objectives, which were complemented intersessionally, resulting in 9 Strategic Objectives in the following areas:

1. Role for Governments in ICANN
2. Effectiveness of the Governmental Advisory Committee
3. Future Rounds of New gTLDs
4. DNS Abuse
5. Domain Registration Data
6. Universal Acceptance
7. Impact of New Technology on Internet Unique Identifier Systems
8. Internet Governance
9. Internet Number Resources

The Final 4-year GAC Strategic Plan (2024-2028)³ was adopted intersessionally, on 3 May 2024, following two GAC consultations from 9 April to 17 April 2024 ([GAC Strategic Plan: Last Call for Strategic Objectives + Next Steps](#)), and from 25 April to 3 May 2024 ([Proposed Final 4-year GAC Strategic Plan 2024-2028](#)).

² See [ICANN Bylaws](#), section 12.2(a)

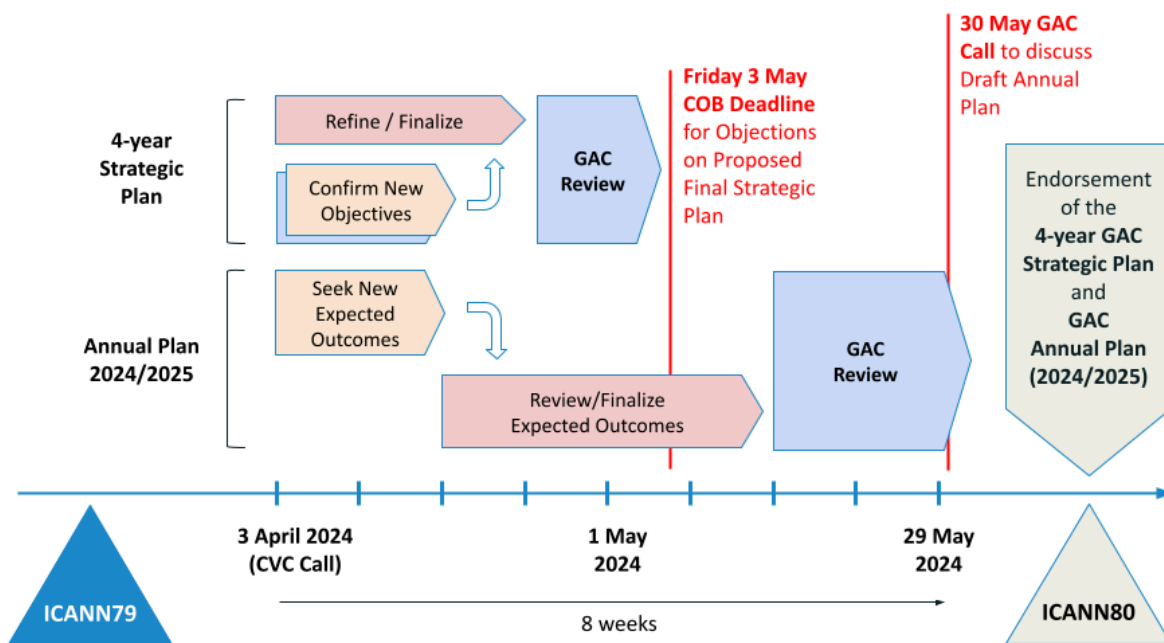
³ See GAC Strategic Plan 2024-2028 in Annex to this Briefing.

Draft GAC Annual Plan 2024/2025

The ICANN80 Plenary Session on Strategic Planning is expected to focus on discussion, and endorsement of the first GAC Annual Plan for the 2024/2025 time frame. A draft was circulated to the GAC on 17 May ([For GAC Review - Draft GAC Annual Plan 2024-2025](#)) for review until 29 May, at which time the GAC is expected to discuss Members input in a conference call scheduled prior to ICANN80 on [Thursday, 30 May at 13:00 UTC](#) [GAC website login required to access the link] consistent with the timeline discussed with the GAC since ICANN79.

GAC Strategic Planning

Updated Timeline towards endorsement during ICANN80



Legend: GAC Leadership GAC Topic Leads GAC

| 1

This [Draft GAC Annual Plan 2024/2025](#) draws from the [initial Draft GAC Strategic Plan document](#) that was populated with the contributions of GAC Topic Leads in the Jan.-Feb. 2024 time frame. It now reflects the final formulation of the GAC's Strategic Objectives in the GAC Strategic Plan 2024-2028 (in Annex), and proposes, accordingly, refined text and structure for the Expected Outcomes, possible Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), and relevant resources for each of the Strategic Objectives.

Document Administration

Title	ICANN80 GAC Session Briefing - GAC Strategic Planning
Distribution	GAC Members (before meeting) and Public (after meeting)
Distribution Date	Version 1: 27 May 2024

ICANN | GAC

Governmental Advisory Committee

STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2028

Endorsed by the GAC on [Date of ICANN80 GAC Kigali Communiqué]

GAC Mission, Vision and Values Statement

Consistent with ICANN's Article of Incorporation and ICANN's Bylaws, including ICANN's Mission, Commitments and Core Values, in the following statements, the GAC aims to propose specific statements for the sole purpose of the Committee's Strategic Planning.

Mission

To provide public policy advice to ICANN on issues that affect the stability, security, and global interconnectedness of the Internet's unique identifier systems and to exercise its powers and rights to ensure accountability of the ICANN Board and organization, as a Decisional Participant in ICANN's Empowered Community.

Vision

The GAC envisions a future where the Internet's unique identifier systems remain a trusted and reliable foundation for the global digital ecosystem, reflecting the needs of all users and stakeholders across the globe.

Values

- **Transparency and Accountability:** The GAC strives for open and inclusive policy development processes that ensure all voices are heard.
- **Multistakeholder Governance:** We recognize the importance of a collaborative approach where governments, the private sector, civil society, and the technical community work together for the benefit of the internet.
- **Global Policy Consideration:** We advocate for policies that are developed with a global perspective, taking into account the needs of diverse communities and cultures.
- **Stability and Security:** We prioritize the stability and security of the Internet's unique identifier systems to ensure their continued smooth operation.
- **Human Rights and International Law:** the GAC's values center on harnessing the use of digital technology, and specifically the Internet's unique identifier systems, for the benefit of humanity, upholding human rights and international law in the context of the digital age.

GAC Strategic Objectives 2024-2028

1) Role for Governments in ICANN

In support of reaffirming the critical role of governments within the ICANN multistakeholder model, the GAC will seek to ensure that governments can effectively pursue their public policy interests, through both existing and future ICANN processes and procedures. In particular, the GAC will work to assess whether current ICANN structures provide sufficient and meaningful opportunity for the GAC, to develop, influence, and modify policy outcomes.

2) Effectiveness of the Governmental Advisory Committee

The GAC will seek to increase active and meaningful participation of GAC Members in its deliberations and operations. The GAC will also work to enhance its effectiveness as a participant in the multistakeholder processes of ICANN, including by ensuring that the voice of GAC members is expressed and appropriately represented, and by leveraging collaboration and alignment with other ICANN constituencies.

3) Future Rounds of New gTLDs

Leveraging the experience and lessons learned from previous rounds of New gTLDs, including on their costs, benefits and accessibility, the GAC will seek to ensure that any future rounds of New gTLDs:

- Promote competition, consumer trust and consumer choice;
- Contribute to reducing the digital divide, in particular through the support of applicants from underserved and underrepresented regions and the promotion of Internationalized Domain Names
- Incorporate appropriate security, stability and resiliency safeguards
- Include appropriate procedures and capabilities for the GAC to address unexpected issues arising from specific or categories of applications, in particular issues affecting the global public interest such as Geographical Names.

4) DNS Abuse

The GAC will engage proactively in the work of the ICANN community and will provide advice on the activities of ICANN as they relate to governments' concerns regarding DNS Abuse⁴, in order to:

- Promote the security, stability, and resiliency of the DNS
- Reduce the incidence and harm of DNS Abuse in existing gTLDs and New gTLDs
- Support the continuous improvement of DNS Abuse mitigation and prevention standards and their effective enforcement by ICANN
- Review and identify Best Practices in preventing and mitigating DNS Abuse for wider adoption
- Review, assess and encourage implementation of concrete measures to combat Phishing, Pharming, Botnets, Malware and Spam, in partnership with relevant institutions that deal with the issue.
- Provide GAC members capacity building workshops, sessions and potentially whole programs, either on a permanent basis or on an ad-hoc approach, in order to enhance understanding of these issues.

In its work, keeping in mind the ever-evolving nature of DNS abuse, the GAC will seek to survey GAC Members and Observers to better understand how to address concerns and meet expectations of governments.

⁴ See [GAC Statement on DNS Abuse](#) (18 September 2019)

5) Domain Registration Data

The GAC will work to identify and recommend steps to promote and support the continued accessibility and improved accuracy of domain registration information, consistent with applicable privacy regulatory frameworks and in line with the GAC Principles Regarding WHOIS Services.⁵

Acknowledging continued evolution in the uses of WHOIS data, the GAC will work with the ICANN community to ensure that registration data policy reflects and addresses the complexities of the current domain name industry. This includes ensuring that legitimate requests made to registrars for domain registration data are met with access to meaningful data. This data should clearly articulate the roles of each of the entities participating in the registration of a domain name, including the authoritative source of registration data and the end user of the domain name (e.g. beneficial user) to avoid confusion with other entities such as privacy and proxy services and/or resellers.

6) Universal Acceptance

The GAC will work collaboratively among governments and with all stakeholders to promote a multilingual Internet and to provide universal access by ensuring that all domain names, including new Top-Level Domains, Internationalized Domain Names, and email addresses are treated equally and can be used by all Internet-enabled applications, devices, and systems.

7) Impact of New Technology on Internet Unique Identifier Systems

The GAC will increase understanding and raise awareness of the challenges and opportunities of new technologies as they relate to the Internet's unique identifier systems. To that end, the GAC will leverage the expertise in the ICANN Community, governments and beyond, to share information and consider potential implications, for the benefit of GAC members and all stakeholders.

8) Internet Governance

The GAC will work to ensure that governments, the ICANN Board, ICANN org and ICANN community participants are kept regularly apprised of developments and challenges in the Internet Governance (IG) ecosystem that impact the Internet's unique identifier systems. The GAC may coordinate efforts among Members to make contributions to global IG processes, within the framework of the multi-stakeholder model.

9) Internet Number Resources

The GAC will work to ensure that its members receive regular updates on developments pertaining to RIRs Internet's unique identifiers allocation policies, including policy changes. The GAC may coordinate efforts among interested Members to make informed contributions to relevant processes.

⁵ The [GAC Principles Regarding WHOIS Services](#) (28 March 2007) recognize both the need to safeguard individuals' privacy and legitimate public interest uses of WHOIS data, including contributing to law enforcement investigations, combating fraud and misuse of intellectual property, complying with relevant laws, safeguarding the public, and contributing to user confidence in the Internet.