
GAC Strategic Planning

Session 2

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Session Objective

The GAC Leadership will seek to secure GAC endorsement of the next GAC Annual Plan 2025/2026 in implementation of the GAC Strategic Plan 2024-2028 endorsed in the GAC ICANN80 Kigali Communiqué.

GAC Leadership “caretakers” are planning to highlight changes in Expected Outcomes for relevant Strategic Objectives in the new Annual Plan 2025/2026.

Leadership Proposal for GAC Action

1. Securing GAC endorsement of the Next GAC Annual Plan 2025/2026.

Background

The role of the GAC, as provided in the ICANN Bylaws¹, 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 align ICANN policy outcomes with the public policy interests of governments.

Building on this evolution, the GAC Leadership has sought to establish a level of proactivity in GAC activities, in a more systematic fashion, with a view to increasing the Committee's readiness to

¹ See [ICANN Bylaws](#), section 12.2(a)

provide timely and effective advice and policy input. To this end, in early 2024, the GAC Chair 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.

The GAC Chair and Vice-Chairs proposed a set of 8 strategic priority areas, drawing from deliberations of the GAC over the recent past, as reflected in GAC Communiqués and the previous [GAC Action/Decision Radar](#). Based on subsequent GAC discussions, the following strategic priority areas were agreed upon:

1. Role for Governments in ICANN
2. Effectiveness of the GAC
3. Future Round of New gTLDs
4. DNS Abuse
5. Domain Registration Data
6. Universal Acceptance
7. New Technology
8. Internet Governance
9. Internet Number Resources

For each of these areas, the GAC considered a set of Strategic Objectives to support a more proactive stance of the committee in ICANN deliberations. These objectives were also expected to provide an opportunity for governments to discuss and align their interests within the GAC, and serve as a vehicle for communicating the GAC's priorities with higher levels of governments and ICANN stakeholders. Those aspirations are laid out in the [GAC 4-year Strategic Plan 2024-2028](#) which was endorsed by the GAC in its [Kigali Communiqué](#) (17 June 2024).

Further to these strategic objectives, the GAC considered and developed Expected Outcomes in a corresponding [2024/2025 GAC Annual Plan](#). This plan has now been revised for the upcoming period 2025/2026.

Recent Developments

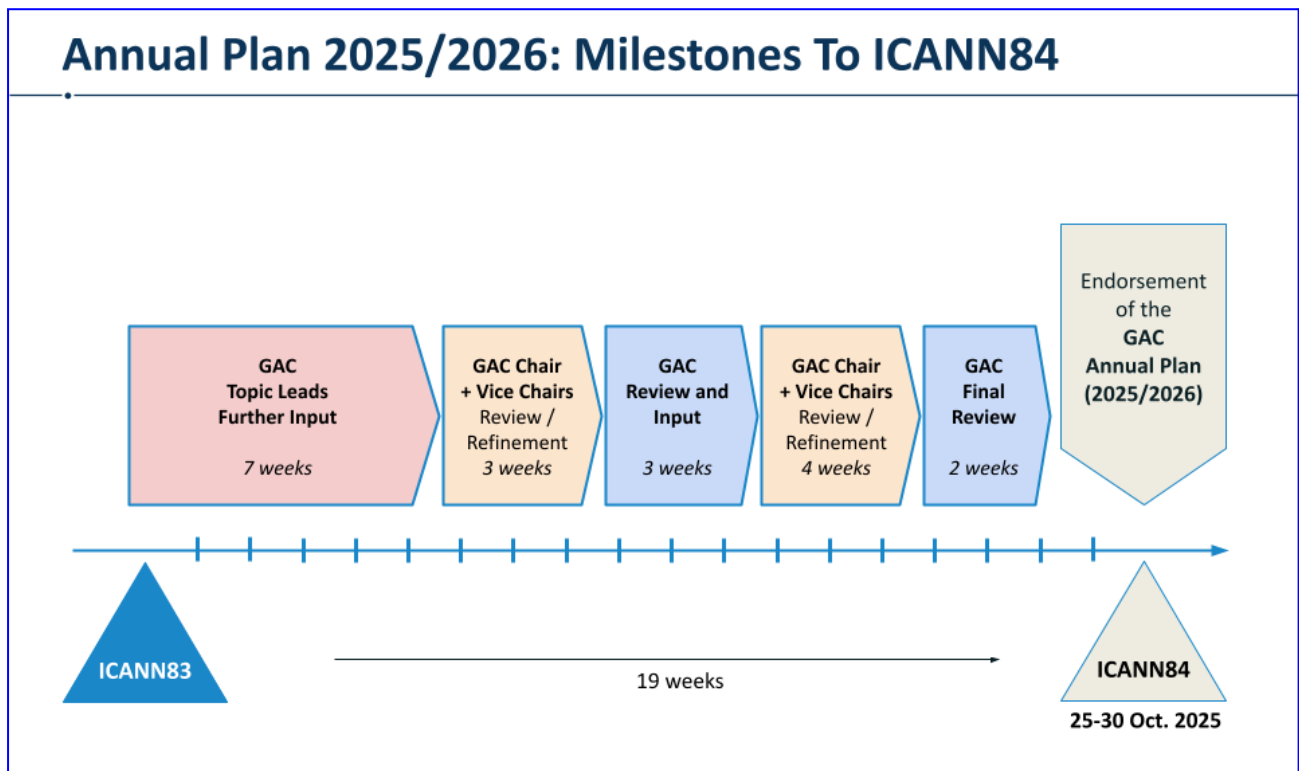
As part of coordinating and tracking the implementation of the GAC Annual Plans, in collaboration with relevant GAC Topic Leads, the GAC Leadership assigned each strategic priority areas to one or several of the GAC Chair and Vice-Chairs to act as “caretakers”, who are either directly involved in the delivery of the GAC's Expected Outcomes or engaged with the relevant GAC Topic Leads. Current “caretaker” assignments, revised following the seating of the new GAC Leadership team at the end of the ICANN82 meeting is as follows:

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|----------------------------------|--|
| 1. Role for Governments in ICANN | Jorge Cancio (CH) |
| 2. Effectiveness of the GAC | Ian Sheldon (AU) + Zeina Bouharb (LB) |
| 3. Future Round of New gTLDs | Marco Hogewoning (NL) + Thiago Dal-Toe (CO) |
| 4. DNS Abuse | Thiago Dal-Toe (CO) |

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 5. Domain Registration Data | Ian Sheldon (AU) + Thiago Dal-Toe (CO) |
| 6. Universal Acceptance | Christine Arida (EG) |
| 7. New Technology | Nicolas Caballero (Chair) + Christine Arida (EG) |
| 8. Internet Governance Awareness | Christine Arida (EG) + Jorge Cancio (CH) |
| 9. Internet Number Resources | Marco Hogewoning (NL) |

Following discussion during the ICANN83 meeting in Prague, the GAC Leadership team updated the timeline and process to develop the next GAC Annual Plan for the period 2025/2026, accounting for more time needed to coordinate with GAC Topic Leads and caretakers on the reconsideration of certain Expected Outcome and to allow for extensive review and input periods for GAC delegates.

The revised timeline was established as follows. It anticipates full committee endorsement of the plan during ICANN84:



During this same period, the caretakers for GAC Strategic Objective #2 worked with GAC Support staff to develop a committee survey intended to collect baseline information and metrics as a foundation to help the GAC measure progress, over the next several years, against continuous improvement goals included in the GAC Strategic Plan, the GAC Annual Plan, the [ICANN Strategic Plan](#) and the [ICANN Continuous Improvement Program Framework](#). That survey was initiated in late September and GAC delegates are encouraged to fill it out as soon as possible. The GAC Leadership hopes to meet an 80% response goal by the end of ICANN84, so that collective committee feedback can inform identification of areas for operational improvements by the GAC that can be measured over time. Delegates will be reminded about the survey throughout the ICANN84 meeting week.

Key Reference Documents

- [GAC Strategic Plan 2024-2028](#) endorsed in the [Kigali Communiqué](#) (17 June 2024)
- [GAC Annual Plan 2024/2025](#) endorsed in the [Kigali Communiqué](#) (17 June 2024)
- [GAC Annual Plan 2024/2025 Progress Tracker](#)
- [Draft GAC Annual Plan 2025-2026](#)
- [First Installment of a GAC Effectiveness Survey](#)

Document Administration

Title	ICANN84 GAC Session #2 Briefing - GAC Strategic Planning
Distribution	GAC Members (before meeting) and Public (after meeting)
Distribution Date	Version 1: 10 October 2025

ANNUAL PLAN 2025/2026

For endorsement by the GAC in the ICANN84 GAC Dublin Communiqué

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GAC Strategic Objective 1 - Role for Governments in ICANN

4-year GAC Strategic Objective (2024-2028)

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 live up to the highest standards of openness, inclusiveness, transparency, and accountability in the spirit of the multistakeholder approach, and provide sufficient and meaningful opportunity for the GAC, to develop, influence, and modify policy processes and outcomes.

Expected Outcomes in 2025/2026

- 1.1. **Stakeholder's Understanding of the Role of Governments:** Enable all stakeholders to gain a clearer understanding of the role of governments in ICANN processes, including the GAC, leveraging the attendance and participation of senior levels of governments during the next High Level Government Meeting (HLGM), and particularly its discussion of ICANN, the ICANN Multistakeholder model and their role in the wider Internet Governance ecosystem.
- 1.2. **Discussion of Current Issues at Senior Levels - Next GAC HLGM:** Identify the timing and location of the next GAC High level Government Meeting (HLGM).
- 1.3. **Non-Represented Governments:** To promote broader participation in the GAC, seek to establish contacts with governments who are not yet, or not currently, represented on the GAC with the collaboration of ICANN's Stakeholder and Government Engagement teams. Collaborate among current committee Members to encourage and support delegations who need to fill any delegate or representative vacancies.
- 1.4. **Promote the improvement of ICANN's multistakeholder approach** in light of the principles and recommendations of the Sao Paulo Multistakeholder Guidelines (SPMG) including:
 - 1.4.1 **Transparency of ICANN processes:** Encourage ICANN to make all its activities and work efforts accessible to governments and citizens of the world through open, inclusive, transparent and accountable processes, in the spirit of multi-stakeholder policy making. This will include ongoing encouragement from the GAC to the ICANN Board to adopt ICANN's new Statements of Interest (SOI) framework by the end of the 2025 calendar year and other accessible tools, where appropriate..
 - 1.4.2 **ICANN Review of Reviews:** Contribute to the Community Consultation Group efforts regarding the new ICANN Review of Reviews work effort and maintain a watchful eye over the compliance by ICANN of the reviews foreseen in the Bylaws - including ATR4.
 - 1.4.3 **Establish a periodic informal exchange format between the GAC Leadership and the relevant Board Committee** for a regular assessment of ICANN's performance in terms of openness, inclusiveness, transparency, and accountability in the spirit of the multistakeholder approach -[drawing inspiration from the São Paulo Multistakeholder Guidelines and considering the ICANN CCG "Review of Reviews" Effort.
 - 1.4.4 Work with ICANN Government Engagement team to **showcase ICANN as a successful implementation of the multistakeholder model**
- 1.5. **Governmental Advisory Committee Influence on Policy Outcomes:** Consider case studies and initial assessment of specific ICANN policy areas or processes where there are concerns with sufficient and meaningful opportunities for the Governmental Advisory Committee to initiate, develop, influence, and modify policy development and outcomes.

- 1.6. **GAC Contributions to ICANN Nominating Committee:** Confirm committee membership preference for future contributions to annual ICANN Nominating Committee process, either through direct appointment of NomCom participants or continued annual written criteria contributions.

Resources

- Guidelines for multistakeholder consensus-building and decision-making, the **Sao Paulo Multistakeholder Guidelines** as part of the the NETmundial+10 Multistakeholder Statement¹
- **ICANN Government Engagement function:** this dedicated team of ICANN org, along with their colleagues in the wider Stakeholder Engagement function will be a resource to GAC Members to engage bilaterally with ICANN leadership as needed, as well as to conduct outreach to governments not yet represented in ICANN.
- **Advisory Committees of ICANN** other than the GAC, that is the At-Large Advisory Committee (ALAC) and the Security and Stability Advisory Committee (SSAC), and their leaders in particular, will be important resources for the GAC as it conducts its own assessment of its ability to influence ICANN policy outcomes.

¹ See section 3.2 at <https://netmundial.br/pdf/NETmundial10-MultistakeholderStatement-2024.pdf>

GAC Strategic Objective 2 - Effectiveness of the Governmental Advisory Committee

4-year GAC Strategic Objective (2024-2028)

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.

Expected Outcomes in 2025/2026

- 2.1. **Survey GAC Members and Observers** on their experience and the performance of the GAC, on an annual or 6-monthly basis, to provide subjective measurements on the GAC's performance, to enable tracking the GAC's performance and to enable drilling down on specific areas as needed, and as part of the GAC's implementation of the ICANN Continuous Improvement Program (CIP) Framework (see EO# 2.4.2 below).
- 2.2. **Review/Update of the GAC Operating Principles** as appropriate toward improving the organization, scope, clarity and specificity of the committee's operating procedures moving forward. The GAC Operating Principles Evolution Working Group (GOPE WG) will identify areas where changes may be required and brief GAC members in plenary sessions at each ICANN meeting.
 - 2.2.1 **GAC Participation in the Empowered Community:** update GAC Interim Empowered Community Administration (ECA) Guidelines as appropriate to include internal processes and procedures for GAC Member input and decision-making
- 2.3. **Improvement and Development of GAC Advice-related Processes:**
 - 2.3.1. **ICANN Board response to and implementation of GAC Advice:** The GAC will consider developing tools and processes to evaluate ICANN Board responses and implementation of GAC Advice, as well as to facilitate access to previous advice per policy area, including status of Board action
 - 2.3.2. **GAC Communiqué Drafting:** the GAC will continue improving the efficiency and effectiveness of GAC Communiqué drafting, including continuing to develop pre-meeting Communiqué discussion, ensuring consideration of precedent, leveraging "Issues of Importance to the GAC" as opportunities to flag early public policy concerns with preliminary input, developing the GAC Chair's ability to advise when potential advice may create challenges, and exploring methods to streamline discussion of Communiqué text during ICANN meetings.
- 2.4. **GAC Implementation of Transparency and Accountability Recommendations:**
 - 2.4.1. **ICANN Accountability Cross Community Working Group Work Stream 2 (WS2) Recommendations:** Demonstrate progress on implementation of recommendations applicable to the GAC, including performing outreach to and inclusion of hearing impaired participants with sign language interpretation at future ICANN Meetings
 - 2.4.2. **Continuous Improvement Program Framework Implementation:** Review and assess ATRT3 suggestions to the committee and initiate "Assessment and Prioritization" Phase of the Continuous Improvement Program (CIP) Framework² that has been developed to evolve the bylaw-mandated organizational reviews of ICANN constituent structures.

² <https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/cip-framework-02jul25-en.pdf>

2.5. Increasing the level of engagement and participation in the GAC

- 2.5.1. **Regional GAC Coordination:** GAC Leaders, in collaboration with ICANN's Stakeholder Engagement team, to conduct outreach to GAC Members on a regional basis towards facilitating collaboration and active participation in GAC discussions and sessions.
- 2.5.2. **GAC Vice-Chairs, Topic Leads, Liaisons and Appointees:** clarify and provide further guidance, in writing, about roles, responsibilities and expectations for GAC participants volunteering in various roles such as GAC Representative (or alternate), GAC Vice-Chairs, GAC Topic Lead, GAC Liaison to other Advisory Committees or Supporting Organization, GAC appointees to ICANN policy processes or cross community initiatives;
- 2.5.3. **Agenda of GAC Public Meetings:** Ensure relevance of agendas for GAC Public Meetings, including discussion of high level public policy issues, and facilitate input by GAC Members in agenda setting.
- 2.5.4. **Lower Barriers to Participation:** Seek to lower barriers to participation of GAC Members in GAC and ICANN activities, be they logistical barriers (travel costs, visa restrictions and hybrid participation) or knowledge barriers (ICANN acronyms clarification and informational webinars offering)
- 2.5.5. **Exploring innovative methods to run GAC sessions** to increase engagement of GAC participants
- 2.5.6. **Identify incentives for GAC participants** to engage and actively participate in GAC meetings

2.6 GAC Onboarding and Capacity Development

- 2.6.1 **GAC Onboarding Program:** Document and assess existing onboarding and engagement program that makes information available to new GAC participants - consider development of **"Welcome package" for prospective countries/delegates joining the GAC** in all ICANN languages including a short introduction of why the GAC is important and what it does.
- 2.6.2 **Mentorship Program for new GAC Representatives:** Consider development of a new framework of role and responsibilities for mentors/mentees and create opportunities for the establishment and development of effective mentorship in the GAC.
- 2.6.3 **GAC Capacity Development:** Continue the deployment of capacity development initiatives through webinars and workshops, regionally and during ICANN meetings, with the assistance of the GAC Underserved Regions Working Group, to assist GAC Members in critical areas.

Resources

- **The GAC Operating Principles Evolution Working Group (GOPE WG)** was formally established by the GAC Chair during ICANN63 in Barcelona to review the GAC Operating Principles and make recommendations to the GAC for changes to the current Operating Principles. The GOPE WG will continue to leverage GAC meetings as well as intersessional activities, to consult with GAC membership and provide updates on its efforts.
- **Transparency and Accountability Recommendations** resources include work by the [GAC Human Rights and International Law Working Group \(HRIL WG\)](#), including prior consideration of GAC involvement in [Work Stream 2 recommendations implementation](#), as well as GAC involvement and consideration of the [Third Accountability and Transparency Review Team \(ATRT3\)](#).
- **The GAC Leadership, GAC Support Team and various ICANN org teams** have collaborated on resources meant to facilitate onboarding such as [GAC introductory webinars](#), dedicated [ICANN Learn modules](#) and a "living" GAC Leadership Onboarding Document currently being drafted.

GAC Strategic Objective 3 - Future Rounds of New gTLDs

4-year GAC Strategic Objective (2024-2028)

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 related to the DNS and addition of new TLDs*
- *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.*

Expected Outcomes in 2025/2026

3.1. Role of GAC Consensus Advice and GAC Early Warnings in the processing of future New gTLD applications:

the GAC will continue to monitor and determine whether proposed application procedures for future rounds (revised Applicant Guidebook) provide the necessary instruments for governments to identify and screen applications that raise public policy concerns.

3.1.1 Development of GAC Process for GAC Early Warnings: GAC members will prioritize readiness efforts on developing the GAC Early Warning process and GAC Early Warning template.

3.1.2 Readiness for GAC Advice pertaining to new gTLDs: GAC members will review the process for submission of GAC objections and GAC Advice to specific applications as part of the new gTLD program next round.

3.2. Monitor for appropriate implementation of GAC Advice and input into the Next Round Applicant Guidebook, including:

3.2.1 Public Interest and Voluntary Commitments by New gTLD Registry Operators: follow up on the GAC Washington D.C. Advice to ensure that registry Voluntary Commitments (RVCs) and Public Interest Commitments (PICs) are enforceable through clear contractual obligations, and that consequences for the failure to meet those obligations should be specified in the relevant agreements with Contracted Parties

3.2.2 Closed Generic gTLDs: the GAC will review the follow-up on its Hamburg Communiqué Advice to ensure that, prior to the next round of New gTLDs, the forthcoming Applicant Guidebook language clearly states that Closed Generic gTLD applications will not be considered, as confirmed by the ICANN Board's resolution (21 Jan. 2024) which noted that "the Board has considered the GAC Advice and has determined that closed generic gTLD applications will not be permitted until such time as there is an approved methodology and criteria to evaluate whether or not a proposed closed domain is in the public interest."

3.3. Support of New gTLDs Applications from Underserved Regions: Recognizing that a successful Applicant Support Program (ASP) is essential to promoting greater geographic diversity in the new gTLDs application program, the GAC will partner with ICANN org and the broader community to significantly boost outreach and engagement efforts in specific countries from underserved regions to seek timely and effective communication and promotion by ICANN org of the ASP.

- 3.4. **Documentation to enable GAC and governments’ readiness for the next round of New gTLDs expected to launch in April 2026:** the GAC will leverage the briefing materials and documents prepared by ICANN org pertaining to GAC priority topics (including Geographic Names, GAC Early Warnings and objection mechanisms and Public Interest and Voluntary Commitments) , including **Key Topic Overview Documents** developed by ICANN org following input from GAC members on items of interest to governments, which provide succinct overviews of various AGB topics, relevant policies, and procedures, using plain language and tailored to governments’ and local community’s needs. GAC members to leverage these materials³ to provide practical information and best practices to prepare GAC members and observers to engage with future rounds of new gTLDs, including:
- **Key Messages to facilitate high-level government officials engagement** with ICANN discussions on New gTLDs that are relevant to national digital agendas.
 - **Guidance for GAC members** on how to use the various mechanisms for feedback during the new gTLD round, including the use of comments and early warnings
 - Guidance on how to prioritize GAC discussion and advice on individual strings

Resources

To effectively prepare for the upcoming round of new gTLDs and the upcoming workload, the GAC created a team of topic leads after ICANN79 under the coordination of a GAC Vice Chair. Additionally, the GAC formed several ad hoc groups of GAC participants to develop GAC positions on New gTLDs policy issues and to contribute GAC perspectives in relevant ICANN processes. These groups address specific issues such as the Applicant Support Program (ASP) and mechanisms to assist applications from underserved regions. The GAC is expected to continue assembling such informal groups of volunteers, if needed, to address other policy and procedural issues in the future, in particular in preparation for GAC Early Warnings.

The GAC and its representatives will continue to engage in ICANN processes pertaining to Future Rounds of New gTLDs such as ICANN org implementation of policy recommendations adopted by the ICANN Board, and the related Implementation Review Team (IRT), tasked to develop the Applicant Guidebook for the next round of new gTLDs.

³ See Key Topic Overviews at <https://newgtldprogram.icann.org/en/application-rounds/round2/agb/resources>

GAC Strategic Objective 4 - DNS Abuse

4-year GAC Strategic Objective (2024-2028)

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 resources in order to enhance the GAC's 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.

Expected Outcomes in 2025/2026

Building on the findings of the February 2025 survey of GAC Members, during the 2025/2026 period, the GAC will continue to deliver on its strategic objective regarding DNS Abuse in a two-pronged approach:

1. Advancing ICANN policy work on DNS Abuse before further delegation of new gTLDs; and
2. Building the subject matter capacity of GAC Members on DNS Abuse

Expected Outcomes regarding the advancement of policy work

- 4.1. **Support further commitments from Contracted Parties and ICANN org** to prevent and mitigate DNS Abuse effectively, through consensus policies, and contract amendments
- 4.2. **Monitor the Contracted Parties' progress in implementing their DNS Abuse contract and consensus policy obligations**
- 4.3. **Encourage the development and promotion of guidelines regarding implementation of contractual obligations, best practices, and cross-industry collaboration**, including between gTLDs, ccTLDs, and the wider Internet Ecosystem
- 4.4. **Develop a better understanding of market dynamics in the domain industry**, including business models, domain registration flows, as well as new trends, new technology development and new threats, to inform GAC deliberations on policy work.

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

Expected Outcomes regarding capacity building

- 4.5. **Increase the availability of training and briefing material on the fundamentals of DNS Abuse**, for GAC newcomers, as well as any interested GAC Members, including ICANN briefings, GAC webinars, studies, and other relevant content.
- 4.6. **Tailor training and briefing material** according to GAC Member knowledge needs.
- 4.7. **Provide GAC members with examples of best practices, guidelines, or trusted notifier programs** that may assist DNS Abuse policy development within their respective jurisdictions

Resources

The GAC topic leads will draw upon various resources, including GAC support staff, GAC volunteers, the GAC Public Safety Working Group⁵, ICANN Community member volunteers, and external volunteers to achieve the expected outcomes. .

GAC Topic Leads also expect to engage in a robust dialogue with the GNSO Council and its reconvened DNS Abuse Small Team towards achieving the GAC's objectives in effective, industry-wide, prevention and mitigation of DNS Abuse.

⁵ The GAC formed a Public Safety Working (PSWG) in 2015 to focus on those aspects of ICANN's policies and procedures that implicate the safety of the public.

GAC Strategic Objective 5 - Domain Registration Data

4-year GAC Strategic Objective (2024-2028)

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.⁶

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.

Expected Outcomes in 2025/2026

5.1. Registration Data Policy

- 5.1.1. The GAC will support implementation of the **Registration Data Consensus Policy** and seek input from ICANN community members to identify lessons learned from the implementation process, noting areas of success and any associated challenges.
- 5.1.2. The GAC will seek a swift conclusion to the Registration Data Policy discussions on the appropriate timeline for responses to **Urgent Requests for Disclosure of Registration Data** (i.e., in circumstances that pose an imminent threat to life, of serious bodily injury, to critical infrastructure, or of child exploitation).
 - 1. The **timeline to respond to urgent requests**, discussed in the Registration Data Policy Implementation Review Team (IRT), must be fit for purpose given the urgency in these scenarios.
 - 2. The GAC will continue supporting the PSWG's efforts to **develop authentication solutions for law enforcement and public safety requestors**, and the GAC will request updates from the PSWG on these efforts periodically.
- 5.1.3. The GAC will continue to track developments related to the **collection and publication of registration information related to legal entities** including expected work by ICANN and the technical community to develop any necessary standards needed to facilitate differentiation between legal and natural person registration data within EPDP and RDAP.⁷

- 5.2. **Registration Data Request Service (RDRS):** The GAC will continue urging the Board and the ICANN community to maintain and enhance the RDRS after the end of its two-year pilot period. The GAC will also seek input from the Board and other stakeholders to identify a path for efficiently achieving RDRS enhancements supported by the GAC in its Communiqués, such as making RDRS participation mandatory for all accredited registrars, supporting future authentication solutions for law enforcement and public safety requestors, and improving

⁶ 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.

⁷ See Recommendation 1 of the [EPDP Phase 2A Final Report](#) as [adopted by the Board](#) on 10 March 2022

support for requests related to privacy and proxy registrations. An improved RDRS will help address the needs of requestor communities.

- 5.3. **Privacy/Proxy Services:** The GAC will continue to track IRT discussions on whether implementation of the 2015 Privacy and Proxy Services Accreditation Implementation (PPSAI) recommendations from the GNSO may still be implemented, in whole or in part. The GAC will utilize opportunities that arise to comment on the work of the IRT and on other community discussions about privacy and proxy policies to ensure they are adequate for law enforcement needs.
- 5.4. **Accuracy of Domain Name Registration Data:** It is important to ensure that registration data is sufficiently accurate to meet the needs of law enforcement and other legitimate purposes. The GAC will seek input from stakeholders to identify potential areas for specific, achievable policy improvements at ICANN related to domain registration data accuracy. These discussions would consider enforcement and investigative needs, potential impacts on registrants with enhanced privacy needs, practices related to validation and correction of registration data, and relevant contractual compliance.

Resources

The GAC has formed a **Small Group of Topic Leads (Registration Data Small Group)** in May 2018 to follow and contribute to the policy effort resulting from the ICANN Board's adoption of an emergency Temporary Specification, which kicked off a multi-phase policy development process (the so called EPDP Phase 1, Phase 2 and Phase 2A). The GAC Registration Data Small Group has been participating on behalf of the GAC in various GNSO policy development Working Groups, Small Teams and Standing Committees, as well as ICANN Reviews and Policy Implementation Review Teams. They regularly report to the GAC during ICANN meetings or GAC Webinars and may propose GAC comments and statements for input into these processes, as part of public comment proceedings or for advice to the ICANN Board.

GAC Strategic Objective 6 - Universal Acceptance

4-year GAC Strategic Objective (2024-2028)

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.

Expected Outcomes in 2025/2026

- 6.1. **Information of GAC Members:** Keep GAC Member Governments informed of the ICANN goals for Universal Acceptance (UA) and efforts in the multistakeholder community, intergovernmental communities (e.g., the ITU) and the broader tech industry (e.g., vendors) to support and promote universal acceptance in the global Internet ecosystem.
- 6.2. **Government Support of Relevant Efforts:**
 - 6.2.1 **Identify opportunities for governments to support and promote those efforts** locally, regionally and globally as appropriate - including relevant policy development processes and facilitate reporting by GAC Members to the group about the status of UA in national government services;
 - 6.2.2 **Governments, in cooperation with their respective ccTLD operators, may also engage with local Registrars**, and/or ICANN accredited registrars serving their local communities, to achieve UA-Readiness and enabling local languages.
- 6.3. **Future New gTLDs:** Maintain GAC awareness of ICANN developments regarding Internationalized Domain Names as they relate to Universal Acceptance and have any impacts involving the Next Round of New gTLDs.
- 6.4. **Cross-Community Collaboration:**
 - 6.4.1 **Work with the ccNSO and other Community Groups**, as appropriate, on UA and IDN issues;
 - 6.4.2 **Follow-up and engage with ICANN's Expert Working Group on UA**, through GAC's appointee, to enable progress toward a UA-ready world

Resources

- At the ICANN66 Public Meeting in Montreal, the GAC formally established a [Universal Acceptance and IDN Working Group \(UA-IDN WG\)](#) to help the committee track, consider and address matters and topics relevant to governments in those areas. Going forward, the working group is expected to provide information and knowledge building resources and opportunities for GAC members, to develop positions and drafting recommendations for consideration by the full GAC on policy matters relevant to UA, and to provide perspectives, information and expertise on UA and IDN matters when they arise in various contexts.
- The GAC will continue to leverage its meetings during public ICANN meetings as well as intersessional activities, to **consult and receive briefings from experts in the ICANN Community and beyond**, including the ICANN's [Expert Working Group on Universal Acceptance](#). This will enable the GAC to stay informed on relevant developments and to discuss challenges and best practices, with a view to providing public policy perspectives and possible advice to the ICANN Board as appropriate.

GAC Strategic Objective 7 - Impact of New Technology on Internet Unique Identifier Systems

4-year GAC Strategic Objective (2024-2028)

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.

Expected Outcomes in 2025/2026

- 7.1. **Information Gathering and Issue Monitoring:** The GAC will gather information regarding the potential impact of new technologies on the Internet's unique identifiers. Methods of information gathering may include interactions with experts in the ICANN community and capacity development workshops.
- 7.2. **Artificial intelligence (AI):** the GAC will assess whether and, if so, to what extent, AI has implications for governance of the Internet's unique identifier systems, and consider, as appropriate, the development, use and impact of AI on the Internet's unique identifiers, raise awareness (AI literacy), and promote safe and responsible practices.
- 7.3. **Internet of things (IoT):** the GAC will consider the challenges and opportunities of IoT as it relates to the interplay with the Internet's unique identifiers. This may include consideration of standards for IoT security and privacy, and monitoring the use of IoT for sustainable development.
- 7.4. **Blockchains:** The GAC will consider the use of blockchain technology as naming and name resolution systems, when used in connection to the DNS, including for decentralization of DNS, as well as alternative name spaces.
- 7.5. **Cryptography and security:** The GAC will work to promote the use of cryptography to protect data privacy and security including in connection with and in support of ICANN's Knowledge-Sharing and Instantiating Norms for DNS and Naming Security (KINDNS) and Mutually Agreed Norms of Routing Security (MANRS) initiatives.
- 7.6. **New technologies, standards and practices** may be considered as development warrants, such as: DNS over QUIC (DoQ), DNS Hopping, AI-driven dynamic routing, Quantum Computing

Resources

The GAC will continue to leverage its meetings during official ICANN meetings as well as intersessional activities, to **consult and receive briefings from experts in the ICANN Community, including ICANN's Office of the CTO, and beyond.** This will enable the GAC to stay informed on relevant developments and to discuss challenges and best practices, with a view to providing public policy perspectives and possible advice to the ICANN Board.

GAC Strategic Objective 8 - Internet Governance Awareness

4-year GAC Strategic Objective (2024-2028)

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.

Expected Outcomes in 2025/2026

The GAC will continue monitoring and sharing information on WSIS+20 Review and other relevant UN processes and decisions, regularly apprising all GAC participants of Internet Governance developments taking place in 2025 and 2026 as relevant to the Internet's unique identifier systems, and to the work of the GAC and ICANN. For clarity, the WSIS+20 review is a UN process. Regarding WSIS+20, the GAC serves only as a forum to provide its members with information about this process.

8.1. ICANN's Communication and Engagement:

- 8.1.1. Inform GAC Members of ICANN org efforts to develop and implement communications and engagement strategies designed to address the WSIS+20 Review and other relevant IG processes, and communicate opportunities to contribute as individual governments.
- 8.1.2. Inform GAC Members of ICANN GE team activities and suggest potential IG topics of interest for GAC discussion and consideration, based on interactions, activities and connections with global governments

8.2. GAC Webinars and Information Exchange: Develop a program of GAC webinars based on ICANN's IG role and relevant GAC IG topics, including opportunities for exchange of information among GAC participants.

8.3. High Level Government Meeting: Plan for the inclusion of GAC matters of interest in Internet Governance to the discussions and agenda planning of the next HLG.

Resources

The GAC will rely on the expertise of its Members as well as that of the ICANN Government Engagement (GE) team, leveraging in particular the regular reports by ICANN GE to the GAC⁸ regarding global government interactions, activities and connections, as well as briefings from the ICANN GE team (at public meetings or intersessionally), as well as ICANN's WSIS+20 Outreach Network⁹ to report on key IG developments of relevance to the ICANN community.

The GAC may continue to leverage the specific Internet Governance mailing list that was created in late 2024 to support GAC participants' discussions on Internet Governance.

⁸ See <https://gac.icann.org/activity/icann-gsege-governments-and-igos-engagement-activities>

⁹ See <https://www.icann.org/en/government-engagement/ws20-outreach-network>

GAC Strategic Objective 9 - Internet Number Resources

4-year GAC Strategic Objective (2024-2028)

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.

Expected Outcomes in 2025/2026

- 9.1. **Information of GAC Members:** Keep GAC Member Governments informed and updated on developments pertaining to the Regional Internet Registries (RIRs) management of Internet unique identifiers, developments in allocation and registration policies and governance, including the discussions in ASO pertaining to ICP-2.
- 9.2. **Government Support of Relevant Efforts:** Identify opportunities and build capacity for governments to effectively engage in the regional policy development for management of Internet number resources by RIRs' communities. Promote policies and best practices related to use of Internet unique identifiers, locally, regionally and globally as appropriate - including promoting active participation by all stakeholders in relevant policy development processes.
- 9.3. **Cross-Community Collaboration:** Maintain ongoing dialogue and information exchange and engage with RIRs/ASO on topics of mutual interest, especially in relation to previewed policy changes and developments that may impact the distribution of number resources.
- 9.4. **Review RIR Governance: Ensure GAC** members can engage with other stakeholders and ICANN Board on the development and implementation of a new document that describes the recognition, operation, and derecognition of Regional Internet Registries (RIRs) that can replace ICP-2.

Resources

The GAC will continue to leverage its meetings during official ICANN meetings as well as intersessional activities, to **consult and receive briefings from experts in the ICANN Community and beyond**. This will enable the GAC members to stay informed on relevant developments and to discuss challenges and best practices