Universal Acceptance Discussion
Session #4

Background and Session Objectives

Established during the ICANN66 Public Meeting in Montreal, the GAC's Universal Acceptance and Internationalized Domain Names Working Group (UA-IDN WG) helps the committee track, consider and address matters and topics relevant to governments in those areas. The GAC Leadership looks to the working group to provide perspectives, information and expertise on universal acceptance (UA) and IDN matters when they arise in various contexts.

The working group has been re-energized in recent months and has taken on an ambitious plan of action for 2026. Consistent with Expected Outcome 6.1 and 6.2 of the GAC Annual Plan (see Strategic Objective #6 of the GAC Annual Plan 2025/2026) the session agenda in Mumbai will inform attendees of the current community goals for Universal Acceptance (UA) and efforts in the multistakeholder community, intergovernmental communities and individual governments to support and promote universal acceptance in the global Internet ecosystem and identify future opportunities for governments to support and promote those efforts locally, regionally and globally.

Session Agenda

As part of this effort, the scheduled session on Saturday 7 March will feature updates on universal acceptance (UA) efforts from UNESCO (including a review of the recent UNESCO-ICANN Policy Brief drafting efforts), provide a preview of UA Day 2026 planning efforts and explore the role of governments in promoting UA with an opportunity to learn from specific government experiences to date. The session will also offer opportunities for GAC delegates to share views among themselves on key leadership opportunities that exist for them in their own countries.

- Updates on UA:
    - UNESCO-ICANN Policy Brief on Advancing Universal Acceptance for a Multilingual Internet.
    - UA-Day 2026
    - Exploring the Government Role: UA Expert Group Perspective & Updates
    - ccNSO Universal Acceptance Committee
- Advancing Universal Acceptance: The Indian Government Experience
- Panel Discussion:

- ○ Why should Universal Acceptance be considered a policy priority for governments, and what are the risks of delaying UA adoption at the national level?
  - ○ How can governments integrate UA requirements into national digital strategies, e-government platforms, and procurement policies?
  - ○ What role should GAC play in ensuring UA considerations are reflected in ICANN policy development and advice?

Key Reference Documents

- GAC UA-IDN Working Group Web Page - https://gac.icann.org/working-group/gac-universal-acceptance-and-internationalized-domain-names-working-group-ua-idn-wg

- GAC Annual Plan 2025/2026 - https://gac.icann.org/work-plans/gac-annual-plan-2025-2026.pdf

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