ICANN | GAC
Governmental Advisory Committee

ICANN 87 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Operational Planning

Session 8

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Session Objective

This working session will focus on practical aspects of GAC operations, participation and effectiveness. It will provide an opportunity for GAC Members and Observers to:

- Review the current distribution of GAC leadership, liaison, Working Group, Topic Lead and other volunteer roles, and identify opportunities for broader participation;
- Consider and vote on the proposed administrative amendments to the GAC Operating Principles following completion of the 60-day consultation period initiated at ICANN86;
- Agree next steps for implementation of the Continuous Improvement Program (CIP); and
- Time permitting, take stock of implementation of the current GAC Annual Plan and identify lessons to inform the next planning cycle.

Leadership Proposal for GAC Action

The GAC is invited to:

- Consider opportunities for additional GAC members to contribute to GAC roles and activities;
- Vote on the proposed administrative amendments to the GAC Operating Principles in accordance with the applicable revision procedure;
- Agree to commence the GAC's first CIP cycle, beginning with the Assessment and Prioritisation phase; and

- Time permitting, identify practical lessons from implementation of the current Annual Plan that should inform the next planning cycle.

Follow-up work will continue intersessionally, with GAC member participation and GAC Support, and will be brought back to the all GAC Members and Observers as appropriate.

Session Outline

1. GAC Roles and Participation

A significant part of the GAC's work is undertaken by members who volunteer for responsibilities beyond their participation as GAC representatives or observers.

These roles take different forms. Topic Leads and Small Groups help coordinate GAC work on particular policy issues; Points of Contact help maintain relationships with other ICANN community groups; Working Group leaders coordinate established areas of GAC work; and GAC appointees represent or contribute GAC perspectives in specific ICANN or cross-community processes.

This ICANN87 session provides an opportunity for GAC Members and Observers to take stock of the current distribution of these responsibilities; the overview will include:

- the GAC leadership transition taking place at ICANN87;
- current Working Group, Topic Lead and Point of Contact roles;
- relevant cross-community appointments;
- current or upcoming vacancies and role reviews; and
- opportunities for additional GAC members to become involved.

The purpose is to provide members with a clear overview of existing roles, current or upcoming vacancies and opportunities to become more involved in GAC work. Members will be invited to consider whether they, or others in their delegations, may be interested in particular roles or areas of work.

2. GAC Operating Principles - Administrative Amendments

At ICANN86, GAC Members agreed to initiate the formal revision process for a set of proposed administrative amendments to the GAC Operating Principles. The amendments are intended to improve clarity, consistency and alignment with current GAC practices and references.

Following the ICANN86 decision, the proposal underwent the required 60-day consultation period. No additional comments were received during that period beyond feedback submitted in June. The

more substantive issues raised in that feedback will be retained for the GOPE WG's subsequent phase of work.

In accordance with the applicable revision procedure, the proposal will now return to the GAC for a vote at ICANN87.

Discussion and decision: Members will be invited to consider and vote on the proposed administrative amendments.

3. Continuous Improvement Program: Starting the GAC's First Cycle

The Continuous Improvement Program (CIP) was developed by the ICANN community following a recommendation from the Third Accountability and Transparency Review (ATRT3). Its purpose is to help ICANN's Supporting Organizations, Advisory Committees and the Nominating Committee regularly consider how effectively they are working and where improvements may be useful.

For the GAC, this will be a **GAC-led self-assessment**, not an external review. The proposed approach is specifically designed to avoid creating a burdensome exercise. As far as possible, it will use information and work that already exist, including the GAC Strategic Plan, Annual Plan and previous work on GAC effectiveness.

Per CIP proposal the first stage is called **Assessment and Prioritisation**. In simple terms, the work will:

1. agree what effective GAC performance looks like;
2. use existing information to assess where the GAC currently stands;
3. identify areas where improvement may be useful; and
4. select a manageable number of priorities to take forward.

The GAC is **not being asked to carry out this assessment during ICANN87**, nor to agree now on specific improvements.

What will happen after ICANN87:
The detailed work will take place intersessionally. This will include developing the GAC's effectiveness criteria, reviewing existing information, identifying possible areas for improvement, and proposing a manageable set of priorities. The results will then be brought back to the full GAC for consideration before further action is taken.

4. Annual Plan Stocktake and Lessons for the Next Cycle

The GAC Annual Plan translates the Committee's longer-term Strategic Plan into more specific Expected Outcomes for each annual planning cycle. The current 2025/2026 Plan covers nine Strategic Objectives, including both substantive policy priorities and objectives concerning the GAC's own effectiveness and participation.

The accompanying Progress Tracker records progress against those Expected Outcomes. The current tracker, last updated on **2 June 2026**, shows substantial activity across the Plan while also identifying areas where work has faced challenges, has not yet started, or has required further prioritisation or ownership.

A refreshed high-level overview will be provided during the session. The purpose is **not to review every Expected Outcome or begin drafting the next Annual Plan**, but to identify a small number of practical lessons from the current cycle.

Discussion focus: Members will be invited to consider:

- What has worked well in using the Annual Plan to organise and prioritise GAC work?
- What lessons from implementation should be carried forward into the next planning cycle?
- Are some activities better treated as ongoing work rather than annual priorities?
- Are there lessons regarding prioritisation, ownership or follow-up that should inform the next Annual Plan?

The discussion will provide initial input for subsequent development of the next Annual Plan, including preparations for the **annual Chair and Vice-Chairs planning meeting in April 2027**.

Further Information

- GAC Annual Plan (2025/2026)
- GAC Strategic Plan (2024/2028)
- Proposed Administrative Amendments to the GAC Operating Principles – Clean
- Proposed Administrative Amendments to the GAC Operating Principles – Redline
- CIP Framework (July 2025)

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