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**MINUTES OF MEETING**  
**ICANN79 Community Forum, 2-7 March 2024**

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## 1. MEETING ATTENDANCE & MEMBERSHIP

71 GAC Members and 9 Observers attended the meeting.

GAC membership currently stands at 182 Member States and Territories, and 39 Observer Organizations. A list of ICANN79 GAC meeting Member and Observer attendees is provided in [Attachment 1 - ICANN79 Hybrid Community Forum - GAC ATTENDEES LIST](#).

The ICANN79 GAC Communiqué is published on the GAC website at:  
[<https://gac.icann.org/contentMigrated/icann79-san-juan-communique>]

Presentations used by speakers during the meeting and supporting briefings prepared for the GAC can be accessed from the GAC website at  
<https://gac.icann.org/agendas/icann79-hybrid-meeting-agenda>.

Full transcripts for each meeting session are to be made available from the ICANN79 Public Meeting website, via the relevant agenda items on the GAC's website agenda page listed above.

### 1.1. Opening Plenary Session

The GAC Chair opened the GAC public meeting at ICANN79 by welcoming attendees and he shared a brief review of notable historic event in Puerto Rican history. The Chair noted that this particular meeting was significant because it marked the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the GAC's first meeting in conjunction with ICANN 1 in Singapore. He noted that over the past 25 years, the GAC has grown in size, diversity, and influence, reflecting the increasing importance and complexity of the issues related to the domain name system and Internet Governance.

The Chair reflected that the constant changes in policy issues and the evolution of the DNS present constant challenges that require governments to work together, to share knowledge and experience, to respect diversity and commonality, and to seek solutions that are inclusive, transparent, and accountable. He noted that this behavior is the essence of the ICANN multi-stakeholder model, and reflects the spirit of the GAC.

The Chair introduced the representative to the GAC from the United States to share some welcoming remarks on behalf of the host country. In welcoming GAC representatives to the third GAC meeting to be held in Puerto Rico, she noted GAC participation is increasing and that over the past year there has been deeper engagement by a diversity of countries in GAC meetings. She observed that new GAC representatives are increasingly finding their voices at the microphone and contributing fresh perspectives. She remarked that governments participating in the GAC are coming to address topics that matter to their citizens back home and that makes their participation in ICANN more meaningful by driving discussion forward within the GAC on different topics. She noted that through its DNS Abuse mitigation work, the committee has recently addressed issues like

cybercrime, mobile phishing schemes and malware. She recalled that different governments have raised awareness about ccTLD issues that matter to them and some view the state of the IPV4 market and deployment of IPV6 as a priority. She noted that these are topics in which ICANN plays a direct role.

She remarked that the GAC leadership's recent work on strategic planning is very exciting because it will direct the committee with more focus and collaboration. In this context, she observed that the committee can engage in a deeper and more meaningful way with the different constituencies within ICANN.

She highlighted the upcoming planned session at ICANN79 for committee discussions on ccTLDs and regional internet registries and the opportunities for GAC delegates to engage directly and informally with ccTLD representatives as well as ICANN staff on the role ICANN plays in ccTLDs and in the global allocation of the internet's numbers. She also highlighted upcoming bilateral meetings this week noting the opportunity to connect with the people who actually work to deploy and maintain the internet's global resources in their day-to-day work. She encouraged attendees to stay with us in the GAC room today for the capacity development workshop and noted the value of planned language breakout sessions.

The GAC Chair followed with a review of the weekly meeting highlights and particularly noted the upcoming reception to acknowledge the GAC's 25-year anniversary; the bilateral meetings with the ALAC, ASO, Board, GNSO, GNSO contracted parties and the ICANN Nominating Committee; the discussion of the new GAC strategic planning effort and the experimental open mic session planned for later in the week.

He apologized for having to attend to Board responsibilities but welcomed the GAC vice Chairs and noted that the rest of the meeting sessions today would be in good hands.

GAC Support staff was introduced and asked to provide information about meeting logistical arrangements and practices for the meeting. GAC representatives and delegates then engaged in the traditional "tour de table" – with both in-person and then remote attendees introducing themselves to their existing and new colleagues on the committee.

The GAC Chair presented a few highlights from the most recent intersessional meeting period since ICANN78. He noted that 28 new delegates had joined the GAC since ICANN78 and 38 delegates had departed. He shared thanks for the contributions of several working group co-chairs and topic /subject matter leads, noting those who were stepping into new roles or where slots were open for new volunteers.

GAC Support staff then offered a short background on the development of the ICANN79 Communique and plans for that drafting effort later in the week.

## 2. PUBLIC POLICY AND SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

### 2.1. New gTLD Program Next Round

The GAC discussed recent developments pertaining to the new gTLD program next round, and specifically focused on timely items requiring GAC attention and input including Applicant Support and Public Interest Commitments (PICs) and Registry Voluntary Commitments (RVCs), as well as status updates on the Implementation Review Team (IRT) and the cost/benefit analysis of new gTLDs.

On **Applicant Support**, GAC topic leads reviewed the history of Applicant Support starting from 2006, underlining the length of time this topic has been of interest to the committee and broader community, and ultimately leading to a variety of efforts being undertaken to create a successful Applicant Support Program (ASP) for the upcoming application round for new gTLDs. These efforts include the GNSO Guidance Process on Applicant Support (GGP) which is currently under review by the ICANN Board, following approval by the GNSO Council of the Final Report from the GGP. GAC topic leads reviewed the highlights of the GGP final recommendations, including the target set to achieve a successful application process. The final report sets the target of 10 applications for ASP, which is lower than the GAC's expectations. Another recommendation which was reviewed pertains to communication awareness, underlining the importance of the community's future collaboration with ICANN to ensure that communication and outreach is done within the community and governments to help the overarching outreach program, alongside ICANN org. The GAC has also been involved with the Implementation Review Team (IRT) to develop an Applicant Support Program Handbook which is currently out for public comment. The GAC created a Small Team on Applicant Support, and this internal group has been meeting since ICANN78 to discuss the ASP Handbook and broader picture goals for the ASP. GAC members are encouraged to join this small group to provide a wide array of perspectives. Finally, GAC topic leads noted the alignment between ALAC and GAC views on the ASP and highlighted the hope to leverage ICANN79 for further collaboration between the two groups including pursuing a joint ALAC and GAC communication or statement on Applicant Support.

On **the Implementation Review Team (IRT)**, the GAC representative on the IRT and ICANN org presented recent developments pertaining to this effort, including the launch of three sub-tracks (Applicant Support Program, Registry Service Provider Evaluation and Registry System Testing). ICANN org reviewed the timeline for the path to the next and future rounds of new gTLDs, noting that the current date for the opening of the application window is now anticipated as April 2026. An initial public comment proceeding was launched for the first part of the Applicant Guidebook (AGB). GAC members were reminded that the entire AGB will go through a final round of Public Comment prior to the launch of the Next Round.

The GAC reviewed recent developments pertaining to the **cost and benefit analysis of new gTLDs**, which was submitted as GAC advice to the ICANN Board in 2016, noting the desirability for an objective and independent analysis of costs and benefits of new gTLDs prior to a new round of new gTLDs. This advice was followed up by the GAC in October 2023 at ICANN78, and ICANN org

produced a document<sup>1</sup> in response to this advice. GAC members discussed the content of the document provided by ICANN org determining that this was neither an independent nor objective analysis of the costs and benefits on new gTLDs since it was produced by ICANN org and the ICANN community. GAC members discussed how to move forward on this topic, while recognizing that the document provided by ICANN org does not meet the expectations of the GAC, this item should not be further pursued. GAC members, however, noted the importance of GAC advice and taking it seriously, and that further discussions should take place within the committee to ensure that GAC advice which is approved by the Board is acted upon in a timely manner, and meeting the GAC's expectations moving forward, as noted in the ICANN Bylaws.

On **PICs/RVCs**, GAC members reviewed the open community consultation on PICs/RVCs as initiated by the ICANN Board to determine whether a GAC collective comment should be submitted. The community consultation on PICs/RVCs focuses on determining whether the ICANN Bylaws should be amended, and GAC members noted this is of interest to the committee since it directly relates to GAC advice. ICANN org presented an overview of the process to amend the ICANN Bylaws as background information to the community consultation. GAC members reviewed GAC positions pertaining to PICs and RVCs, including GAC advice issued as part of the ICANN77 Washington D.C. In response to the GAC's advice, the ICANN Board instructed ICANN org to initiate a community consultation before initiating the implementation process for PICs and RVCs. GAC members reviewed the Implementation Framework produced by ICANN org, considered as a proposed solution or course of action document, in preparation for potential GAC input to the open community consultation.

The GAC Vice Chair presented an overview of the new **team of volunteers** within the GAC to prepare for the next round of new gTLDs, including the UK, Colombia and Chinese Taipei, coordinated by Canada.

#### **Action Points:**

- **GAC Members** to consider developing a collective input on the open public comment on the ASP Handbook, led by the GAC Small Team on Applicant Support.
- **GAC Members** to review the Implementation Framework to provide input to ICANN org's Community Consultation on PICs/RVCs.

## **2.2. WHOIS and Data Protection Policy (incl. Accuracy)**

Topic leads from the GAC Small Group on WHOIS/EPDP/GDPR reminded the GAC of the importance of this subject matter in light of the GAC Principles Regarding gTLD WHOIS Services (28 March 2007), following the entry to force of the GDPR and the impact on availability of WHOIS data. Example of the impact given during the session was the loss of the law enforcement investigators' ability to identify and speedily contact victims of ransomware via a phone call, which is needed

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<sup>1</sup> [Overview of Analyses Related to Costs and Benefits of a Next Round of the New gTLD Program](#) (22 January 2024), prepared in response to the ICANN78 GAC Hamburg Communiqué.

within 24 to 48 hours to be effective. These can now take weeks within jurisdiction and months across jurisdiction internationally.

Presenters provided an overview of the continuing multi-phase efforts undertaken to define a new registration data policy framework which would include requirements consistent with applicable data protection law, as well as a final access system to non-public registration data for lawful and legitimate purposes. Since May 2018 and the adoption of a Temporary Specification, the ICANN Community has been actively involved in policy work in several phases. All three phases of policy development work have concluded. Implementation of policy recommendations is ongoing for EPDP Phase 1 (policy foundations), and remains to be started for EPDP Phase 2A (differentiation between legal and natural persons). EPDP Phase 2 (registration data access system) has moved into a pilot phase with the launch of the Registration Data Request Services (RDRS). Consideration of future policy development regarding the accuracy of registration data (Accuracy Scoping effort) is still paused.

The overview of ongoing and planned work also highlighted several emerging subject matters for which there is currently no timeline nor a clear plan moving forward. These include: addressing the specific needs of Urgent Requests for disclosure of registration data in emergency situation (such as imminent threat to life); and resuming the implementation of the Privacy Proxy Service Accreditation policy and resuming the Accuracy Scoping effort.

Regarding the **Registration Data Consensus Policy (EPDP Phase 1 Implementation)** which covers collection, transfer and publication of Registration Data by Registries and Registrars, it was confirmed that it is now published and must be implemented by Contracted Parties no later than 21 August 2025. Provisions related to the timeline for response to Urgent Request of registration data in *“circumstances that pose an imminent threat to life, serious bodily injury, critical infrastructure, or child exploitation”* were removed from the policy per an ICANN Board decision due to the inability of stakeholders to agree during the policy implementation process and a call for reconsideration of the matter by both the GAC and the SSAC.

Regarding the **Registration Data Request Service (RDRS)**, GAC Topic leads offered a review of user experience to date, with a succession of presentations covering the perspectives of business requestors and law enforcement requestors, as well as Registrars who receive and respond to RDRS requests.

A representative of the GNSO Business Constituency, representing a telecommunications service provider, reported attempting to submit 300 requests due to infringement or typosquatting of trademarks. Of these 300 instances of infringement, only 48 requests qualified to be submitted to the RDRS (all others could not be submitted since they related to domains managed by non-participating registrars) of which 12 resulted in disclosure of registration data. He encouraged RDRS users to provide feedback to ICANN in response to automated surveys conducted regarding each requests.

A member of the GAC’s Public Safety Working Group (PSWG) who represents the GAC in the GNSO Standing Committee following developments related to the RDRS, underlined the importance of using the RDRS and providing feedback to ICANN, as has been done by the PSWG. He stressed the importance of raising awareness about the RDRS and doing this effectively, suggesting, as the GAC

had done previously via public comment in Nov. 2022<sup>2</sup>, that the public WHOIS output incorporates references to the RDRS website for parties seeking disclosure of non-public data. Highlighting the framing of the RDRS by ICANN as a global, free, one-stop shop for request of registration data, the presenter reviewed possible disconnects and deterrents to usage of the RDRS by the general public, in particular:

- upon creation of a request, the user is redirected to another website (ICANN's lookup tool) to verify whether the domain name may have been registered through a privacy or proxy service, a concept likely foreign to general requestors;
- when requesting data for a ccTLD domain, instead of redirecting to the relevant registrars, the user is prevented to proceed.
- Among other issues encountered by law enforcement users: requests for confidentiality where automatically denied and redirected other specific registrar portals, outside of RDRS, thus preventing the collection of usage data; certain questions such as the assertion of a legal basis may prove a hindrance to user not familiar with the legal notions.

In term of usage data, it was reported that in the first two months of RDRS operations, of the 2,051 initial lookups of domain names, half pertained to ccTLDs or other non generic TLD not in the scope of RDRS, or to domains managed by non participating registrars. Of the 291 requests allowed to proceed and actually submitted, 46 were approved and resulted in disclosure of registration data. A representative of the Registrar Stakeholder Group indicated that the registrar's experience with RDRS has been positive so far, and that despite it requiring additional work for registrars, it is seen as a worthwhile endeavor. Among RDRS improvements, Registrars are seeking new requirements as it relates to information provided by requestors to support their identification, the categorization of their request and the justification of their urgency. The registrar representative stressed the necessity of human review of each request in order to perform an appropriate balancing of the rights and interests of both requestor and domain name holder, in light of who the requestor is, what purpose and legitimate interest it has, and the urgency of the request. In response to a GAC participant's question regarding the ability of registrars to respond to disclosure requests for ccTLD domains, the registrar representative confirmed that it could not be submitted via the RDRS, but would instead have to be addressed directly to the registrar who would process the request and respond appropriately.

A GAC Member reported on its own experience with the RDRS explaining that it was frustrating, due to various barriers, too much information being required, requests not leading to fruitful results, and generally not meeting users expectations. A GAC Member was interested to understand whether the jurisdiction of a requestor has had impacts on approvals of RDRS requests. It was suggested in response that this should be a question directed to ICANN org who is collecting usage metrics. While it was not immediately clear whether jurisdiction is indeed a data point collected as part of the usage metrics, it was suggested that this should be the case. A GAC Observer questioned the effectiveness of RDRS for law enforcement and referenced ongoing work related to the 2nd Additional Protocol of the Budapest Convention which aims to facilitate and accelerate international cooperation for the benefit of cross-jurisdictional law enforcement investigations. Another GAC

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<sup>2</sup> See p.2 of the [GAC Comments on the proposed RDAP and BRDA Contractual Amendments](#) (16 November 2022)

member suggested that capacity building efforts in the GAC be dedicated to training governmental users on the RDRS.

Regarding **Privacy Proxy Services**, which ICANN and the GAC have stressed may negatively impact usage of the RDRS (given that requestor may not obtain disclosure of underlying registrant information when such service are in use for a domain), GAC Topic leads indicated that ICANN org recently shared detailed analysis<sup>3</sup> to serve as input into ongoing discussion of resuming the suspended implementation of the 2015 policy recommendation to establish an accreditation regime for such services.

Regarding **Registration Data Accuracy**, one of the GAC's representatives in the GNSO Accuracy Scoping Team recalled the importance of accuracy of registration data as well as the importance of accessing registration data in order to study its accuracy. The work of the Accuracy Scoping Team remains on pause pending progress on various dependencies including agreement between ICANN and Contracted Parties on a Data Processing Specification as well as feasibility of data collection to support studies of accuracy. Most recently, ICANN shared analysis with the GNSO Council<sup>4</sup> which identified issues and challenges with all previously identified scenarios to study registration data accuracy and proposed possible new alternatives. It was suggested that a study by ICANN's Office of the CTO regarding cyberattackers' preferences in registration of domain (as project named INFERMAL for Inferential Analysis of Maliciously Registered Domains) is expected to shed some light on accuracy of registration data. In response to a question by a GAC Member regarding the current state of accuracy in registration data, referencing a figure attributed to an ALAC community member of 14% accuracy, it was recalled that the Accuracy Reporting System (ARS) which used to study accuracy of registration on a regular basis, was suspended and that this system would need to be restarted in order to provide rates of accuracy in domain registration data.

### 2.3. DNS Abuse Mitigation

This session aimed to continue GAC consideration of ICANN org and ICANN community initiatives to prevent and mitigate DNS Abuse, including outcomes and next steps on enhanced contract provisions, initially proposed during ICANN77, subsequently adopted by Contracted Parties and approved by the ICANN Board, and due to enter into force on 5 April 2024. In this context, the GAC received several presentations:

- A presentation from ICANN's Contractual Compliance unit on their plans for enforcement of the new DNS Abuse obligations
- A presentation by CleanDNS which discussed the expectations of performance under the new contractual obligations
- A presentation by the US Federal Trade Commission (FTC)

The US FTC presented their annual fraud statistics for 2023, as an introduction to the type and scale of harm that can be facilitated by DNS Abuse, recognizing that not all fraud is a consequence of DNS

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<sup>3</sup> See <https://gns0.icann.org/sites/default/files/policy/2024/presentation/ppsa-recs-by-category-03mar24-en.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> See ICANN org [Assessment of Registration Data Accuracy Scenarios](#) (13 October 2023)



Abuse. Among the trends highlighted by the presentation, a notable surge was reported in the United States of “imposter scams”, which can be facilitated by phishing or use methods such as Business Email Compromise. GAC members interested further in the data presented were invited to consult the “data spotlight” section the FTC’s website<sup>5</sup>.

**ICANN Contractual Compliance’s presentation** was provided in response to questions that were asked by the GAC in advance of the meeting<sup>6</sup> and aimed to discuss the readiness of the Compliance team to enforce the new contractual requirements. It was reported that Since June 2023, the compliance team has added three new employees, with the new DNS Abuse amendments as one of the justification for this increase in staffing. There are 15 compliance processors for the existing abuse-related obligations, including three subject matter experts who support the rest of the processors as needed, and two new staff currently in training. A subset of the team is mostly dedicated to the enforcement of abuse requirements, noting that they are also working on other areas of compliance enforcement because DNS Abuse requirements can be intertwined with other contractual requirements. Training materials, systems and procedures are being updated to account for the new requirements and to ensure that appropriate data is captured in order to enable appropriate reporting to the ICANN Community on the complaints received, the enforcement action taken and their outcomes. There are plans for the compliance knowledge base to be updated as more insight is gained through processing of new cases to ensure consistency across enforcement decisions. In summary, ICANN’s contractual compliance department reported being confident that it has the resources and the tools needed to carry out its mission, including the enforcement of the new DNS Abuse obligations. Should further resources be required, it indicated it would work within ICANN to evaluate and address the needs.

In terms of processing of complaints, after recalling the two-stage compliance process (informal and formal enforcement) and the consequences for ultimate failure to comply (suspension, termination or non-renewal of the contract), the presentation highlighted plans to specifically monitor complaints by law enforcement and cybersecurity professionals and to prioritize their processing. Efforts are also made to facilitate the submission of valid complaints that provide enough information so that prompt action can be taken. ICANN also highlighted that a single complaint against a Contracted Party is sufficient to trigger the compliance enforcement process and that repeated failure of a Contracted Party to comply with any contractual requirements is monitored and can justify expedited enforcement action. Finally, it was recalled that compliance enforcement does not solely rely on complaints made by external parties to ICANN. The ICANN Compliance Audit Program is designed, on yearly basis, to audit all or a subset of Registries and Registrars on the entirety or a subset of their contractual obligations. The new DNS Abuse obligations will be considered for future audits, once they have been in place for a sufficient amount of time, and enough useful data can be gathered.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/data-visualizations/data-spotlight>

<sup>6</sup> See [request for GAC Input on the GAC mailing list](#) (20 Feb. 2024) and the associated [list of questions](#)

In the meantime, ICANN Compliance plans to provide dedicated and granular reports on the enforcement of the DNS Abuse amendments, on a monthly basis, starting in June 2024, with a view to inform community consideration of their effectiveness.

After reviewing the main components of the new DNS Abuse obligations (actionable evidence, prompt action and stopping or otherwise disrupting DNS Abuse) and highlighting some of the questions their interpretation raise, the **CleanDNS** presenter suggested that a precondition to enable appropriate measurement of performance by Contracted Parties is the ability to measure the number of substantiated, evidenced reports of DNS Abuse. In response to questions by several GAC Members regarding standards for evidencing reports of DNS Abuse, CleanDNS suggested that this is work in progress and referenced efforts by the Registries and Registrars to define Abuse report requirements<sup>7</sup> and by SSAC in its SAC115 Report<sup>8</sup>.

CleanDNS also proposed that a measurement of appropriate action by contracted parties should be the Time to Live (TTL) of those domains for which there is evidenced abuse, since the time a threat is allowed to persist is directly linked to the extent of the harm it may cause.

In response to questions by GAC Members regarding threats posed by bulk registrations of domain names and Domain Generation Algorithm (DGA), CleanDNS confirmed the relevance of monitoring these practices, in particular from the perspective of the harm they cause, as Law enforcement agencies regularly do. A recent collaboration framework on DGAs developed by the GAC PSWG and Contracted Parties was referenced<sup>9</sup>.

GAC Topic Leads on DNS Abuse reminded the Committee of **areas for future consideration by the ICANN Community** that the GAC had identified in its submission to the public comment proceeding on the proposed DNS Abuse amendments<sup>10</sup>. These include issues for potential policy development such as providing guidance on key terms of the amendments (“appropriate,” “prompt,” “actionable,” and “reasonable”), due process considerations (appeal of a suspension of a domain), prevention of systemic abuse with thresholds triggering compliance inquiry, and training of industry actors. GAC Members were asked to consider these as a complement to the new contract amendments in advance of the next round of New gTLD applications.

As it relates to the measurement of progress made by the industry in the mitigation of DNS Abuse after the entry into force of the DNS Abuse amendments, several GAC Member suggested that 6-months would be a reasonable time frame to conduct a first assessment, which could be based on the monthly reports expected from the compliance department in the near future. It was also recalled that a representative of the Contracted Parties had suggested to the GAC that future work should only be considered once such an assessment is conducted.

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<sup>7</sup> See the [CPH Guide to Abuse Reporting Practices](#) (Jan. 2022)

<sup>8</sup> <https://itp.cdn.icann.org/en/files/security-and-stability-advisory-committee-ssac-reports/sac-115-en.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> See the [Framework on Domain Generating Algorithms \(DGAs\) Associated with Malware and Botnets](#)

<sup>10</sup> See [GAC Comments on the Amendments to the Base gTLD Registry Agreement \(RA\) and Registrar Accreditation Agreement \(RAA\) to Modify DNS Abuse Contract Obligations](#) (17 July 2023)

In closing, GAC participants highlighted the need to conduct effective education and outreach efforts to understand and address the well-known under-reporting of DNS Abuse.

### 3. GAC Operational Matters

#### 3.1. GAC High Level Government Meeting (HLGM)

Opening the session, the GAC Chair noted that preparations for the GAC High Level Government Meeting in Kigali this June continue to progress. The GAC representative from the host government of Rwanda shared that the planning efforts were going well and encouraged all GAC Members to reply to the invitations sent to senior officials.

ICANN org staff from the Government Engagement team reviewed the current agenda draft – shared shortly before ICANN79, explaining updates that had been made based on past GAC Member suggestions and seeking further feedback.

GAC Members asked questions about the status of invitations, commented on the agenda progress and offered additional proposals and specific suggestions about discussion topics during the meeting.

Some GAC Members offered insights based on past HLGM agendas and advised that care be taken to avoid disconnected or run-on statements from discussants. Others thanked the staff for updating the agenda to reflect the wishes of the GAC while cautioning the agenda planners to be a bit more neutral in how they go about phrasing things.

Additional topics suggested by GAC Members included adding specific agenda content about the ITU; a demonstration of how widely the internet is used in various regions around the world; broader discussion of new technologies; and information about the jurisdiction for setting policy on the Internet and how the world can avoid the potential of splintering this global infrastructure resource.

Members also commented on the framework and timing of the various sessions and the prospective panelists during sessions and asked about opportunities for their senior officials to engage in the discussions of the various session topics.

GAC representatives were encouraged to reinforce the value of the meeting for their senior government officials and the rest of the ICANN community. Representatives were also encouraged to facilitate RSVP responses to the Rwandan government invitation as soon as possible to facilitate further agenda/speaker development and to assist with meeting logistical planning efforts. A revised agenda based on contributions from this session will be shared with the GAC for further feedback after ICANN79.

### 3.2. GAC Strategic Planning

The GAC Chair presented an approach to developing and adopting a GAC Strategic Plan by ICANN80, with the aim 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.

The GAC Chair noted that Strategic Planning can be an elaborate and extensive process, as is the case, for instance, for ICANN org. The ICANN bylaws mandate a multi-step process to develop a 5-year Strategic Plan, a five year Operating Plan and the corresponding annual Operating Plan and Budget. Development of the ICANN Strategic Plan 2021-2025 took nearly 2 years. In contrast, the GAC Operating Principles do not prescribe, nor do they prevent, a specific approach.

In this context, the GAC Chair and Vice-Chair proposed a streamlined and agile process to develop the GAC Strategic Plan. This approach is based on the recognition that achieving results over different horizons of time require a different perspective: the long term horizon is best addressed by high-level Strategic Objectives, the mid term horizon by specific Expected Outcomes, and the short term horizon by concrete Action Items. While different, each of these perspectives are closely related to each other in that Strategic Objectives determine Expected Outcomes which determine Action Items. This is the planning process. Once in operation, these instruments also provide a feedback loop in which completion of Action Items informs attainability of Expected Outcomes which in turn inform the achievability of Strategic Objectives, thus enabling course correction and revision of plans, as necessary.

The Chair recognized that the GAC currently uses several tools to plan its work, in particular the GAC Action/Decision Radar as well as Work Plans of its working groups, which he noted generally address only the short-term and sometimes the mid-term horizon. The proposed GAC strategic planning effort would fill the gap, by addressing systematically, across the range of all priority areas of interest to the GAC, both the long term and mid-term horizons.

In order to develop a GAC Strategic Plan, the GAC Chair and Vice-Chairs (GAC Leadership) have proposed a set Priority Areas for which GAC Topic Lead input was requested in the January/February 2024 time frame in order to define what should be the GAC's Strategic Objectives. During 19-27 February, GAC input was requested on the resulting proposal. It is expected that the GAC Leadership will continue working with GAC Topic Leads to develop a set of Expected Outcomes for each GAC Strategic Objective.

The proposed list of Strategic Priority Areas for which a GAC Strategic Objective was proposed were as follows:

1. Role of 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 Identifiers
8. Internet Governance

Comments by GAC Members during the plenary discussion centered on several themes: expectation regarding what content a GAC Strategic Plan should include, the substance of certain proposed strategic objectives, and the process and timeline for adoption of a GAC Strategic Plan.

Regarding what the Strategic Plan should include, several GAC participants expressed interest in more details, including itemized lists of objectives and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) against which to measure attainment of objectives. Other GAC members argued that KPIs may not always be relevant and practical for the GAC which is tasked to “provide advice and communicate issues and views to the ICANN Board” and to “operate as a forum for the discussion of governments” (GAC Operating Principles 2 and 4). It was also noted that in the GAC’s international context, the more details are to be considered the longer it may take to reach agreement, hence suggestions to keep the Strategic plan “declarative”, “high level”, “generic”, or “open”.

Regarding specific proposed Strategic Objectives, several GAC members reiterated the input they provided during the GAC consultation on the wording of specific objectives, as recorded on the GAC mailing list and in the Draft GAC Strategic Plan document. Three of the proposed GAC Strategic Objectives were discussed: Role of Governments in ICANN (1), Effectiveness of the Governmental Advisory Committee (2) and Internet Governance (8). Several GAC Members were supportive of the suggestion to add a new GAC Strategic Objective related to Internet Numbering issues, and IP Addresses allocation in particular.

Regarding the process and timeline to adopt the GAC Strategic Plan, several GAC Members suggested further discussion intersessionally in order to finalize the GAC Strategic Objectives for adoption during ICANN80.

### **3.3. GAC Open Microphone Session**

GAC members scheduled an experimental “open-mic” session designed to help the committee expand its collaboration, information, and communications channels within the ICANN multistakeholder community. This pilot open-mic session invited community members in their individual or representative capacity to make brief statements to the committee.

The GAC Chair welcomed everyone to the Open Mic session. He noted that the session was proposed as an opportunity for all ICANN community members to share their views with the GAC about any DNS issues that were or should be of interest to them and governments in ICANN. He noted the DNS is a complex and dynamic field with many challenges and opportunities for innovation, security, governance, and co-operation. He shared that community members had been invited to sign-up for speaking slots during the session, but all comments would be welcomed. He noted that the GAC would be in “listening mode” during the session, and that GAC members were welcomed to speak or comment on any topics raised if they wished.

A representative from the GNSO's Non Commercial Stakeholders Group (NCSG) offered the only scheduled community comments during the session. The GAC was informed that the purpose of the NCSG is to represent the interests and concerns of noncommercial registrants and noncommercial Internet users. It was noted that the NCSG is concerned that the GAC's request for total confidentiality of law enforcement access to registrants' personal data, which would make it difficult to hold law enforcement agencies accountable in case of potential abuse of the registration data system. It was noted that it is possible to explore solutions that can balance transparency with some degree of confidentiality under exigent circumstances. The GAC was advised that in mitigating DNS abuse, the community should focus on fair processes and decreasing DNS abuse, not violating rights. For public interest commitments the NCSG urges the GAC to work with the community to understand the human rights implications. Finally, the NCSG urged GAC members to protect free, open and secure Internet within their borders.

GAC Members noted that the GAC has asked for confidentiality when it is appropriate, and thanked NCSG for its work. Additionally, work of the Council of Europe, such as the European Convention on Human Rights, Cyber Crime Convention and Data Protection Convention was acknowledged. It was affirmed that security in the Domain Name System is essential, and that open processes are needed in addition to providing data access to law enforcement to be able to resolve crime.

GAC Members also acknowledged the efforts of the GAC's Human Rights and International Law Working Group and noted that human rights must always be a factor when GAC considers law enforcement activities. In this context, it was also noted there would be a high-level ITU event included in discussions regarding the World Summit on Information Society +20 (WSIS+20) in Geneva at the end of May, and there are public invitations available to download.

With no other community comments scheduled, GAC members used the session time to discuss particular matters and upcoming events that merited sharing with their government colleagues

The GAC was informed of the upcoming NetMundial+10 event planned for Sao Paolo in late April. The focus of this event is global challenges to governance of the digital world. It will discuss the multistakeholder model and how it can be improved and reinvigorated. GAC representatives were encouraged to engage in this event.

It was noted that NetMundial+10 is not organized as a government event, but GAC members are relevant participants in this space. It was noted that the GAC represents a very interesting experience in its consensus-based processes, with good results by listening and considering the diversity of its members, and that is one of the objectives of the Net Mundial +10 discussion - to improve multistakeholder processes focusing on concrete results. GAC Members also clarified the distinction between the NetMundial+10 and WSIS+20 efforts. It was noted that both WSIS+20 events and Net Mundial+10 are taking place before ICANN80 in Kigali and that the GAC would welcome reports or updates on both activities during the GAC Meeting at ICANN80.

A short presentation summarized efforts by the “NETalent” organization which helps to remove child sexual abuse material to protect children from online harm. GAC Members were asked for any ideas or cooperation in that context to help with reporting or to help process this type of issue in order to protect current and future generations of young people.

It was also reported by leadership of the Human Rights and International Law Working Group (HRILWG) that efforts continue to proceed on increasing access to GAC and ICANN meetings. It was noted that during the ICANN79 opening ceremony there were sign language interpreters and three rows of representatives of that community from Puerto Rico.

Other notable prospective events mentioned during the session included:

- LAC IGF and DNS forum in Paraguay
- Local and Asia Pacific DNS forums contemplated in Papua New Guinea
- Asia Pacific Regional Internet Governance Forum (IGF) in Taipei
- EURODIG in June
- Upcoming DNS event in Indonesia
- DNS forum in Morocco and global IGF in Saudi Arabia

It was suggested that the GAC consider developing a calendar of upcoming activities for Member contributions and reference and requested help from GAC Support staff to explore this idea – including a consideration of other tools and platforms that could potentially be modeled or referenced for GAC information. It was suggested that a particular GAC resource would allow GAC members to contribute their own events and activities as a way of keeping all Members informed of upcoming DNS and IG events around the world. One notable resource mentioned was dig.watch.

Members also briefly discussed the transition from IPv4 to IPv6. It was noted that local operators need to find business value in transitioning to IPV6. It is an issue of scalability of services that must be rolled out. It was posited that ICANN can best address discussion and information sharing more constructively at the RIR level.

Members also mentioned and discussed the GAC’s future contributions and potential participation in the annual efforts of the ICANN Nominating Committee. Members noted the value of a further discussion of the pros and cons of increased GAC activity in this area.

Members also discussed the possibility of a future point of contact who could serve as a liaison to the Contract Parties (new gTLD Registries and Registrars) of ICANN. It was anticipated that further committee conversation could take place on this topic to explore the potential necessity, terms of references, timing, authority, responsibility, and whether such a liaison could represent the entire GAC.

#### **Action Points:**

- **GAC-wide** consideration of a Point of Contact for liaison relationship with the ICANN Contracted Parties



- **GAC Support staff** to explore possible development of a new committee tool to collect and display information about upcoming regional Internet governance events of interest to governments in various ICANN regions.

## **4. GAC WORKING GROUPS**

### **4.1. GAC Public Safety Working Group (PSWG)**

The GAC Public Safety Working Group (PSWG) continued its work to advocate for improved measures to combat DNS Abuse and promote lawful, effective access to domain name registration data.

The PSWG participated in a session to brief the GAC on DNS Abuse Mitigation that included a GAC Member's presentation about 2023 fraud data including frauds facilitated via email, websites, and phishing. The session also included information about a private company's efforts to detect and mitigate or disrupt DNS Abuse, noting the importance of minimizing the "live" time of DNS Abuse and looking at the impact, as well as the amount, of DNS Abuse.

Regarding domain name registration issues, the PSWG continued its participation to support the GAC Small Group and helped to update the GAC on these issues. The presentation to the GAC included updates on the Registration Data Request Service, including usage experience from law enforcement, a business, and a registrar. The update also noted the need to resume work on policies governing Urgent Requests.

The PSWG also continued its outreach, holding discussions with several stakeholder groups during the ICANN79 week.

### **4.2. GAC Underserved Regions Working Group (USRWG)**

The GAC Underserved Regions Working Group (USRWG) held three Capacity Development Workshop (CDW) featuring three sessions on Saturday 2 March 2024. Two sessions of the workshop focused on:

- ccTLD management led by presentations from .PR's experience regarding the management of its ccTLD;
- ccTLD transfer with focus on IANA's role related to the ccTLD transfer process presented by PTI; and
- IP addresses allocations and the role of Regional Internet Registries (RIRs) regarding the allocation of IP Addresses at the regional level presented by RIPE NCC.

A third session was dedicated to language-based breakout groups during which participants discussed the key takeaways from the sessions and their level of importance within the groups' country and region, including what could be the potential challenges and recommendations to help ICANN overcome them.

The six groups (French, Portuguese and Spanish, Chinese, Arabic, and two groups for English) agreed that the topics presented were interconnected.

On the matter related to ccTLDs, most groups agreed on the need to continue building capacity related to ccTLDs and particularly in developing countries, taking into account that ccTLD management is not run the same way across countries. Also of note were the Country Code Policy Development Processes, the resiliency of ccTLDs in natural disasters and their role in the recovery process. CDW participants shared concerns about the process of redelegation, DNS Abuse, and IDNs within ccTLDs.

Regarding IPv6, the CDW breakout groups highlighted the importance of promoting IPv6 adoption worldwide. The groups noted the need for coordination between governments and ICANN stakeholders, such as the ASO, to elaborate guidance on the management of numbers and systems, and shared resources.

## 5. CROSS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

### 5.1. Meeting with the ICANN Board

The GAC Chair welcomed members of the ICANN Board to the session and reviewed the agenda for all attendees, noting the array of topics the GAC shared with the Board in advance of the meeting.

The Board Chair noted the importance of receiving GAC input on topics under discussion within ICANN and the value of the exchange of ideas between the GAC and the Board.

The ICANN Interim CEO noted that while WSIS +20 was not a specific agenda item for today, that a separate community session was planned. She encouraged GAC members to participate and offered additional briefings on WSIS +20 matters to governments at their request.

The GAC Chair introduced the first topic, GNSO Statements of Interest, noting that the GAC has expressed recent concerns to the Board regarding GNSO operating procedures that permit participants to refrain from disclosing the individuals or entities that they represent at ICANN. He recalled that the committee has asked the Board to consider what actions may be taken to ensure that all of ICANN's constituent bodies, including the GNSO, are expected to require such disclosures in policy development and operational activities.

The ICANN Board noted that it is extremely important to ensure ethics and accountability within the ICANN environment. She noted that the Board fully supports full disclosure and to not disclose who you work for, or who you represent, runs counter to ICANN's principles of transparency and accountability. Advising that the Board takes this matter seriously, the Board Chair noted that when developing policies, it actually serves a very good purpose (i.e., produces "a better product") if people inform the infrastructure surrounding them, who they are and who/what they're representing. She said the Board has started a discussion on the need for a broader ICANN ethics policy that covers SOIs and disclosure requirements.

GAC members expressed appreciation for these views. It was suggested that ICANN devote some public session time to this matter in a future public meeting schedule.

The Board was asked what, if any, obstacles exist to the GNSO fully implementing this expectation of transparency. The Board Chair said that further conversations with GNSO community members were expected, expressed optimism and hope that those involved would move forward in good faith.

The GAC Chair then raised a second GAC topic regarding Urgent Requests for Registration Data seeking the Board's views on expected next steps for reaching an appropriate timeline for responses to urgent requests under the new Consensus Policy. Board members acknowledged that shared that the GAC wrote to the Board some time ago indicating that it was the GAC's view that the timeline that had been agreed on in the implementation review team to respond to requests where

the information was necessary to respond to circumstances that pose an imminent threat to life, serious bodily injury, critical infrastructure, or child exploitation. It was acknowledged that the GAC's comment was that the current timeline is not fit for purpose and the Board looked at that. It was noted that the Board agreed the timeline is not fit for purpose. Board members noted that at the urging of the GAC, they proceeded to issue the remainder of the policy to start on the implementation, and we agreed to take another look at this aspect of the policy.

It was reported that Board members have had a conversation with the GNSO and are in the process of establishing a structure under which this issue can be discussed further. The GAC was advised that the Board is treating this topic as an important matter and that there are some critical issues related to authentication of law enforcement that need to be addressed in order to have a timeline that is close enough to being responsive in urgent situations. It was noted that Board members expect to proceed in the near term to begin the conversation on this aspect of the topic with the GNSO. It was noted that the GAC will want to be involved in that conversation and the Board will certainly need the GAC's help to address that. GAC members welcomed that sentiment and indicated interest in participating in any future discussions.

When asked about a timeline for these further efforts, Board Members shared that they want to address this matter as quickly as possible. It was noted that a solution for authenticating law enforcement globally still does not exist and that ICANN would need the assistance of global law enforcement to set something like that up.

The GAC Chair introduced the next topic area – the next round of new gTLDs and asked how does ICANN plan to handle applications for new gTLDs in the next round with regard to the protection of terms with national, cultural, geographic, and religious significance? Consistent with the GAC principles regarding new gTLDs, March 2007, particularly principle 2.1b, will there be any specific measures in place beyond those recommended in the final report of the new gTLDs subsequent procedures policy development process to ensure these gTLDs do not infringe upon the sovereignty and cultural identity of the countries with which they are associated?

Board members recalled that, previously, the question of treatment of country or territory names was the topic for a special group. but after quite a lot of time, there was no consensus as to changes that needed to be made in the 2012 policy. Consequently, it was noted, the policy recommendation will remain the same. It was explained that, like every application, a geo name application will be reviewed for the requirements noted in the geo name section of the applicant guidebook, which requires a substantial amount of government support for a TLD string that corresponds to one of the protected names. If the sufficient level of local government support is not available, the application won't proceed.

It was further explained by Board members that the definition of what's a geo name includes approximately 5,000 names which generally correspond to geo names that are generally protected in international law and ICANN strives to and must provide the same kind of protections.

With respect to the measures related to strings that might infringe on sovereignty and cultural identity, it was noted that the same rules will apply. The applicant is responsible to identify whether the TLD string falls into those categories and is responsible for reaching out to the local government authorities to discuss and consult on that. Noting that if any early warnings are provided about a particular string or application, an applicant must address any concerns with the relevant government. If those concerns are not satisfied, the ICANN Board will consider if delegating the new gTLD string is in the global public interest.

It was noted that if the GAC provides advice with respect to a particular string, then the bylaws specifically spell out that the ICANN Board cannot proceed without a consultation and effort to find a mutually acceptable solution. And there are heightened standards required for the Board to act in a way that rejects GAC advice. It was also noted that there is an objection process that allows governments, private parties, the ALAC, and an independent objector to file objections on a number of grounds.

GAC Members expressed appreciation for the information shared by the Board and reiterated the importance of this issue. There are many countries with thousands of years of culture and very strong religious, cultural and geographical interests that require serious consideration in these matters.

GAC members sought guidance on how future applications could be tracked and monitored. Board members advised there will be total transparency from day one about what strings are in play. All of the applied force strings will be published, along with information about what the string is intended to be used for. It was explained that to the extent that there is concern by any government, the government is free to use the early warning system as quickly as possible. And once that happens, the process will be pretty easy to follow because the government is highly likely to be in the middle of the discussions about whether there is a way to address the early warning.

When asked about potential disputes between governments or countries, Board members noted that ICANN would be quite reluctant to insert itself in a dispute between two governments and would look to those two governments to resolve a dispute. ICANN is not in a position to do that.

It was also explained, in response to a question about future evolution or changes in cultural or ethnic references, that once a string is delegated and registered in the root, it would be quite difficult to take a registration out of circulation. Although it was noted that a public interest commitment dispute resolution process exists that could potentially address such issues – particularly if such a process were triggered by a government objection.

GAC members noted that the innovation to allow top level geographic names has proven to be very beneficial in a number of instances and that it is good to have safeguards in place.

The GAC Chair then moved to the topic of the Next Round Applicant Support Program (ASP). He asked the Board, “how will the Board ensure that the applicant support program is sufficiently funded and resourced so that it is globally inclusive and representative, ensuring that underserved

regions are prioritized as part of the program?” Board members advised that the ASP is a very high priority for the Board and explained that ICANN is currently working (holistically) on a number of ideas for expanding the ASP and making sure it's adequately funded and resourced so that it really is a valuable tool and can assist entities that don't have the financial wherewithal but have a really good idea to get a top-level domain. It was noted that there is nothing in the ASP or the applicant guidebook or the policy that prioritizes one region over another. But the goal is to make sure that there is a very diverse and very inclusive group of applicants who have the resources and support that they need to make a new gTLD successful.

GAC Members reinforced that applicant support should be “holistic” and include technical, advocacy and procedural support in addition to financial assistance. Communication and promotion of the next round were also emphasized. It was noted that the program must have a comprehensive communications and outreach plan with specific milestones, key performance indicators, etc., included so that the community can more easily be able to see how progress on this communication of the ASP is taking place. The interim CEP reinforced those thoughts, noting that global outreach is essential and ICANN is resourcing to do that. She assured that ICANN staff will share info with the GAC to assure understanding of how information will be communicated out as the ASP proceeds.

The GAC Chair then raised the topic of the recent ICANN analysis of the related costs and benefits of the next round of the new gTLD program. He thanked the Board for publishing the report and noted that GAC Members have reviewed the “overview” analysis. He reported that upon review, the GAC notes that the materials and content do not appear to satisfy the GAC's request for an objective and independent analysis of the costs and benefits of a new gTLD next round. Such an analysis should, in the GAC's view, include an attempt to quantify all significant advantages and disadvantages from a global perspective. As presented, he explained, the overview report seems to be an assessment of individual matters, an assessment of competition and consumer choice issues, and some considerations about DNS abuse. No quantification of advantages, disadvantages appear to have been sought, nor a listing of them. Moreover, he noted, all inputs to the present document have been prepared by ICANN stakeholders or the ICANN Org itself, all of whom in one way or another have a stake in the previous gTLD round or the next round of gTLDs, and therefore cannot be considered as either objective or independent.

The Board Vice Chair provided an overview of the report. He explained that this analysis is high level and identifies cost and benefit based on the three reports related to the program – the Competition, Consumer Trust, and Consumer Choice Review Final Report (parts of which are still in the process of being implemented), the Final Report on Subsequent Procedures, and the recent Operational Design Assessment.

He explained that the document includes background summary and key findings for each of those documents and executive summaries and that the document identifies the list of resources that might be used for additional analysis on the new gTLD program DNS marketplace. He noted that the rationale for the Board is provided in the document and that the Board has concluded that there is no economic basis that would justify stopping the new gTLD program next round from proceeding

and no further economic analysis will prove to be any more informative in that regard than those that will have already been conducted.

He noted that the document recalls to the GAC its rationale in the March 2023 decision and that the Board anticipates the overall impact of the new gTLD program on the community to be positive. Given the extensive community investment in policy and development of the new gTLD program so far, he explained that this is maybe a point in time where we should ask ourselves the question, is it really fit for purpose now to go into this anymore? He noted the cost to conduct global independent analysis at this time is questionable given that it will draw significant financial resources.

GAC Members reiterated the view that the report cannot be viewed as an independent or objective cost-benefit and acknowledged that considerable time (now six or seven years from the time of the GAC ICANN56 advice). It was acknowledged that the Board has taken a decision to go on and that the community has worked hard to make recommendations – some of which having already been implemented. The committee is not advocating to stop the process at this stage, but it must be recognized that the GAC advice has not been fulfilled in a way. GAC Members urged the Board “very much in the future” to take advice seriously and be more active looking at the GAC advice and informing the committee in the early stage on the results so to avoid similar situations in the future.

The GAC Vice Chair expressed that the Board takes GAC advice extremely seriously, noting that on this this particular matter there was a lot of back and forth in trying to really understand what kind of study should be and also how to capture the benefits. He expressed that the reminder about the future was appreciated.

With the session time about to expire, the GAC Chair proposed that any remaining issues be set aside for a future GAC/Board call or meeting. The GAC Chair and Board Chair expressed their thanks and the meeting was ended.

## **5.2. GAC Briefing on Universal Acceptance Strategies**

The GAC Chair welcomed several speakers from the ICANN Org to talk about Universal Acceptance, International Cooperation, Multilingualism, and technical challenges associated with UA acceptance worldwide.

ICANN staff began the session with an overview and background about universal acceptance (UA). They noted that digital inclusion has been a longstanding commitment by the entire Internet community going back as far as 2003 with the World Summit of Information Society in Geneva. It was further noted that a commitment towards multilingualization of the Internet as part of the WSIS 20 Tunis agenda in 2005.

Additionally, it was explained that UNESCO has also been leading the efforts on developing multilingualism in cyberspace since their 2003 recommendations. And they have actually been



working towards alleviating language barriers to access the Internet and addressing, basically enabling technology in all the different local languages.

It was noted that ICANN has been working with the community under the leadership of the community to make UA possible as well. Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs) were first introduced in 2003 based on the standards which were developed by Internet Engineering Task Force. And since then, ICANN has been supporting the IDN ccTLD fast-track process, which has allowed for countries and territories to apply for IDN country code top-level domains. And so far, we have successfully evaluated and announced 62 strings from 43 different territories and countries, of which 61 are already actually delegated. And these are shown here. These, of course, top-level domains allow users to have access to complete domain names in local languages.

In addition to the ICANN program for ccTLDs, which was announced in 2009, in the 2012 round for the new gTLDs, it was also possible to apply for IDN top-level domains, generic top-level domains. And there were multiple applications, of which 90 IDN gTLDs are now currently delegated and available for use by the users globally.

Attendees were reminded of Resolution 133 at the ITU Plenty Potential Conference in 2022 in Bucharest. This resolution on the role of administrations of Member States in the management of internationalized multilingual domain names emphasizes the importance of IDNs in promoting digital inclusion and acknowledges the roles of different stakeholders such as governments and technical communities in promoting multilingualism. The resolution emphasizes that IDNs contribute to sustainable development through the promotion of greater Internet accessibility and use of local languages.

It was noted that Resolution 133 raises awareness of universal acceptance and calls on Member States and sector members to consider how to further promote the adoption of universal acceptance in respect of IDNs and to collaborate and coordinate with relevant organizations and stakeholders in enabling the use of IDNs in the Internet. It was noted that for governments that manage digital strategies or are developing language policies or digital strategies and are focusing on digital skills. It was clarified that Resolution 133 was intended to raise awareness about IDNs, but noted that the resolution for promoting UA generally and can be a very useful leverage point for developing digital skills at the national level.

Attendees were also informed that it is now possible to have email addresses using these domain names in local languages as well, based on the standards which have been developed by the Internet Engineering Task Force. These new email addresses are functional, so one can now send an email to any of these email addresses. And we've set up an autoresponder that it will actually respond back to you, and you'll get an email response back in your mailbox. This technology will enable more and more people around the world, especially those who are going to come online soon.

It was explained to attendees that there are still about 2.5 billion people who are going to connect to Internet over the coming years and are still offline. And most of those people are going to come

online from Asia and Africa and will be using a local language. Many of these people will use their own local languages.

With technology now available, the challenge is that some of the software which is out there (e.g., email servers or social media applications) is not updated to support this technology. So when a server comes across an email address in Chinese or Greek, they may actually think that it is an invalid email address, even though it is actually a valid email address, because it's just older technology. That is a "UA" problem. UA means that all domain names and email addresses should be supported in all software applications. It was explained there is a significant role governments actually can play in making this happen.

Leadership of the Universal Acceptance Steering Group (UASG) spoke to attendees about how the group is meeting and addressing current UA challenges. The first challenge is availability. The UASG has seen only 3% of the total top-level domains assigned to IDNs. - which include both ccTLDs and gTLDs. Similarly, the emails which are being used are also very small.

The second challenge is reduced accessibility and innovation. In this area, the UASG is trying to address the "why" for organizations to adopt UA. What is the benefit which they are going to have? And this is going to touch upon the economic impact on the businesses and technical partners in achieving the universal acceptance.

The UASG has a five-year strategic plan with the group focusing on few key areas which could influence and motivate the adoption of UA. One key area is - government. The UASG is looking to consider setting up a focus group to address this area of work. The second big group is "big techs" like Google, Apple, Facebook, they touch maximum number of people in the community. The third key strategic area is the DNS industry, which include the registries, registrars, and the registrant. In the quantitative terms, the UASG has targeted 50% of support of enterprise application integration (EAI) and 99% ASCII emails using short and long ASCII by the end of five-year strategy plan. Similarly, in the email servers, 50% email should support level two, which include not only receiving and sending the email, but creation of emails in local language, and 90% support for level one, which include only receiving and sending the emails.

The UASG currently has four working groups, measurement working group, technology working group, EAI working group, and communication working group. Every working group has taken out an aspect of the five-year strategy plan, which they are going to implement.

UASG leaders also informed the GAC about UA Day 2024 – 28 March 2024. Fifty-six events are being planned throughout the world on UA day with a priority given to adoption, training, and curricular events.

GAC Members expressed appreciation for the work on UA. Clarification was sought on how procurement processes might be tailored by governments to support the goals of UA. It was clarified that the UASG is an advisory body and thus does not mandate any standard for UA procurement or other approaches to adoption of UA but would give it some thought. UASG members shared that the UASG web site hosts 12 "micro models" to help government and others

promote UA. GAC attendees were encouraged to review the curricula of those models. Attendees were also encouraged to review the presentations made during the ICANN79 Prep week for extra information in these areas.

GAC Members suggested that the UASG develop and circulate a “pitch” document that communicates the benefits for a government to invest in UA solutions. It was suggested that it could be very useful for GAC members who operate in the Latin script to have that handy as a means to start discussions with their internal tech people who look into public procurement. It was also suggested that GAC members actively engage in the WSIS +20 effort this year on this topic. GAC Members also acknowledged the UA challenge for handling diacritics even in the Latin script. GAC Members also encouraged each other to utilize ITU working groups as a means to promote UA.

GAC members were also briefed on the efforts of the ccNSO Universal Acceptance Committee (UAC). This new committee was established in 2023 to provide a platform for ccTLD managers to interact and share information related to the acceptance of ASCII or IDN domain names at the top level or second level. The UAC is establishing a liaison with UASG to share information. The ccNSO will be regularly updated on for UA matters and consideration is being given to holding awareness sessions for ccTLDs during future ICANN meetings and during the ccNSO Tech Day programs. The ccNSO is also establishing a moderated library where members or a subgroup of the committee approves the links and resources being published there. It will be a single point library for all relevant information, especially for ccNSO members, but also beyond. Links will not be limited to IDNs, but will also include EAI information.

The GAC Chair thanked all the presenters and adjourned the session.

### **5.3 Meeting with the At-Large Advisory Committee (ALAC)**

The Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) and At-Large Advisory Committee (ALAC) held a bilateral session to discuss issues of mutual interest. The agenda mainly focused on the Applicant Support Program (ASP) of the New gTLDs Program Next Round.

GAC topic leads on the Applicant Support Program effort provided context on the 2012 new gTLDs ASP, and highlighted that one of the main historical calls for pursuing another round of new gTLD applications was and remains to improve global representation, including from Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs). Subsequently, topic leads presented on the challenges the ASP faced in the 2012 round. Those challenges, previously discussed in the GAC, include low awareness (lack of applicants), high barrier to entry (difficulty with application process accessibility), as well as an emphasis on financial support and less on non-financial support. Topic leads presented a summary of GAC positions highlighting (1) the focus on geographic global diversity as an opportunity to promote global diversification of the new gTLD application program reaching organizations across Latin America, Asia Pacific and Africa; and (2) the holistic approach to the ASP advocated by the GAC, including the potential to substantially reduce or eliminate the ICANN Registry fees to expand financial support.

Topic leads concluded on the need to ensure that this program is more effective, that stakeholders need to do the necessary outreach, targeting the potential applicants unaware of the program.

ALAC topic leads on the Applicant Support Program work provided an overview of the ASP handbook modifications noting that the draft handbook contains certain dependencies that have not yet been resolved. Some issues pertain to the program structure, eligibility criteria, application changes and application evaluation. For instance, notable changes such as the application for the ASP status has been separated from the main round, enabling an applicant seeking support to find out whether they have qualified for support (legal, back end, bank end registry support, etc) before the main round opens.

For the next round, In the event an application does not qualify for support, the applicant still has the opportunity to apply for the string, unlike the first round where an application was simply disqualified.

Topic leads also reviewed the ASP handbook financial and non financial support, such as the ASP training program providing a variety of services, access to application counselors and the reduced or waived base Registry Operator fees. With regard to the training program, the ALAC noted that to meet the intended purpose, the ASP has to be well-funded, and aside from the financial support, needs targeted non financial/pro-bono support that meets the applicants needs.

Subsequently, ALAC topic leads summarized the positions of their committee regarding Applicant Support. The ALAC wishes to re-focus the attention on making the ASP a success by diversifying the applicant pool, targeting underserved and unrepresented regions, and increasing the number of applicants, ensuring sufficient ASP fund to support enlarged applicant numbers; and elaborating non financial support that meets the applicants' needs. Additionally, the ALAC noted that in terms of promoting awareness and with ICANN org's appointment of a communication vendor, it was important for the community to provide input to the communication plan being developed.

Lastly, both committee ASP topic leads flagged the opportunities to participate through the public comment period on the draft ASP handbook, and the GNSO SubPro Supplemental Recommendations Community Consultation (including recommendation 17.2 on financial support). Additionally, topic leads proposed a possible joint action either with a cross-endorsement of GAC and ALAC statements for the public comment, or a possible joint communication to the ICANN Board.

Finally, regarding the GAC-ALAC joint statement for enabling inclusive, informed and meaningful participation in ICANN, the ALAC provided an update on the approved request to ICANN to develop a number of short primers to help newcomers understand certain topics of common interest. Ten (10) items were identified for the introductory materials: Domain Name System [DNS] Abuse, internationalized domain names [IDNs and Universal Acceptance [UA], registration data access [RDA], information and transparency initiative [ITI], the ICANN multistakeholder model and the role of ICANN in Internet governance, expansion of TLD namespace, role of IANA, domain name system security extension (DNSSEC), community engagement resource, and ICANN activities on sustainability.

## 5.4 Meeting with the Address Supporting Organization (ASO)

The Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) and the Address Supporting Organization (ASO) held a bilateral session on issues of interest to the GAC related to IPv4 transfer policy and IPv6 deployment. The ASO provided answers to preliminary questions set forth by the GAC.

The ASO provided an overview of the role of the ASO, split into two structures, the Number Resource Organization (NRO) Executive Council, which runs the regional Internet registries (RIRs) and the ASO Address Council, which is the policy arm of the ASO.

On the IPv4 transfer policy, the ASO provided input on the number of transfers per region for 2023, noting a large number of transfers in the European region (RIPE NCC), and smaller transfers in other regions. In response to the questions related to the number of addresses transferred between the regions, the ASO indicated that those are highly variable as it is hard to find patterns/ trends in the transfer process due to the high disparity in the size versus the number of transfers. The point in opening up a transfer process within the RIR system was primarily to provide an incentive for IPv4 addresses, which are underused or little used. In terms of the destination of transfers, a lot of address space has been destined to the Asia Pacific region (APNIC), and similarly to the European region (RIPE NCC) from the American Registry Internet Numbers (ARIN). Noting that AFRINIC (African region) has no transfer policy and LACNIC (Latin America and the Caribbean) has transfer policy but the numbers are lower compared to the other RIRs. The total amount of address space is towards 20 million v4 addresses.

In terms of pricing, the RIRs are not parties in the transactions, and do not keep records. RIPE NCC recently engaged external researchers to analyze the transfer market within the region.

The price varies depending on the size of the transfers, there are transfers in the range of 50–55 USD per address down to 30-35 USD.

With regard to the expectations for the future, the ASO noted that realistically this market would continue to be sustainable, since there is a need for IPv4 space before all the ecosystem becomes IPv6 compatible.

The actual address, registration and allocation registration is a small component in the overall process of deploying Internet infrastructures. The pricing is a modest cost compared to the operation of an infrastructure. According to the needs of the communities, different RIRs have been involved in the promotion of IPv6 through training, education and funding towards IPv6 deployment.

On the effectiveness of the current policy measure in promoting IPv6 adoption, the ASO noted that Internet registries have not done specific research but have been building capacity and awareness on IPv6.

Regarding the question on AFRINIC, the situation is being followed closely by ICANN and RIRs. At this time, AFRINIC does not have a CEO and no definite answer can be shared on the current situation. Nevertheless, AFRINIC remains operational.

Finally, GAC members raised interest in pursuing discussions with the ASO on IPv6 deployment, on the governance of the model and accountability of the RIRs, as well as the different governance mechanisms and characteristics of the different RIRs.

## **5.5 Meeting with the GNSO Contracted Parties House (CPH)**

GAC members met with the GNSO Contracted Parties House (CPH) to discuss topics of mutual interest including DNS Abuse Mitigation, Registration Data Request Service (RDRS), the use of Statements of Interests (SOIs) in the GNSO and views regarding applicant support for new gTLD applications.

Owen Smigelski, the RrSG Vice Chair of Policy updated the GAC on the status of the DNS Abuse contract amendments, noting they will be effective starting 5 April 2024. He noted this will provide a meaningful baseline for registries and registrars to take reasonable and appropriate actions to disrupt and/or mitigate DNS abuse, which includes malware, botnets, phishing, pharming and spam. The amendments will allow registrars to require abuse complaints to come via web form, to ensure reports include actionable evidence. ICANN Contractual Compliance will also have greater authority to enforce these obligations. Domain Metrica (formerly DAAR) should provide more data, and ICANN's Contractual Compliance should be able to collect and provide more metrics to report back to the ICANN community. Owen Smigelski encouraged all GAC members to share any data regarding DNS abuse with the CPH. GAC members enquired how to prevent DNS abuse, and how to enforce the amendments. The RySG Chair replied that enforceability was a key factor when developing the amendments and that the CPH sees this amendment as a first step on a larger road on the topic of DNS abuse mitigation. The driving factor behind these amendments was to help ICANN's Compliance team to have a tool to take action when presented with evidence of clear-cut cases of DNS abuse. Regarding measurability, the CPH will work with the date that comes out of the impact of this amendment.

Moving on to the next topic, Sarah Wyld, Registrar representative on the RDRS Standing Committee, provided an overview of the Registration Data Request Serve (RDRS). At the end of the pilot project, the Board will use this data to inform their decision whether it is in the best interest of the community to build a full Standardized System for Access and Disclosure (SSAD). In the meantime, the RDRS Standing Committee continues to evaluate reporting data and discuss improvements to its usability. She then offered thanks to the GAC for providing feedback proactively in the small team.

Susan Chalmers, US, noted that GAC will be discussing RDRS during its Registration Data session, which will hopefully generate useful data, and that she supports efforts to educate requesters on the uses and limits of the RDRS. If there is a message that the CPH would suggest regarding request submissions, they would be interested to hear it.

Moving on to the next topic, Samantha Demetriou, RySG Chair, noted that in ICANN78 Hamburg, the topic of transparency in Statements of Interest (SOI) was something that came up in GNSO

Council discussions, and was a topic of interest to the CPH and the GAC. The CPH would like to hear more from the GAC about SOI transparency.

Jorge Cancio, Switzerland, noted that GAC shared its points of view with GNSO Council and ICANN Board noting that transparency is something the ICANN community should abide by at the highest level, and is not an issue which only impacts the GNSO. He further noted that in issues of transparency, accountability, and legitimacy, it is as important to abide by the rules as the perception of abiding by the rules, underscoring that even a small number of cases where members of a working group do not explain who they are working for, this tarnishes the whole system of transparency.

The RySG Chair expressed agreement, adding that it is inherent to the multistakeholder model to know who the stakeholders are.

GAC members noted that a letter was submitted by the GAC Chair to the ICANN Board, noting that the committee saw broad support across the board on the importance of transparency.

Opening the floor for any further questions, Elliot Levy, Tucows CEO, provided further background regarding data requests. He noted there was previously an untold amount of fraud and abuse of the WHOIS system, which has been eliminated and cannot be measured. Secondly, Tucows' developed system to receive requests and gather and publish data was rarely used, despite the effort that went into it. Thirdly, the main reason for refusing requests is because the requestor does not provide information sufficiently. When looking at the number of refusals, it is often people are using it to try to abuse it, and not to use it for legitimate reasons.

Susan Chalmers, US, thanked Elliot for his perspective and acknowledged there were concerns raised by the prior system which made everything publicly available with no safeguards, and has since come into a better balance with privacy concerns. At the same time, there still does need to be an effective system whereby those who are entitled to lawful access can get that. Regarding Elliot's second point about demand, that is hard to measure right now for RDRS as it is just being launched. Regarding the third point and reasons for rejection, if requestors cannot justify their request with reasonable basis, it should be rejected.

Theo Gurts, Realtime Registrar, noted that his registrar also developed a system to track abuse and cyber crime on their platform, but law enforcement was not providing information when asking about such criminals. That is why you see low turnout on the system. In his opinion, there is a gap between what law enforcement should address and what is happening. Cybercrime will continue to grow if there is no enforcement to keep it in check.

On the RDRS, Nigel Hickson, UK, noted that governments need to go back to this item, and asked what more could be done and how could governments help those who are not in the system. Sarah Wyld responded that requestors who want to request data from a non-participating Registrar can use the format of the form and send it to the Registrar. Under the new Registration Data policy that

will be implemented, registrars are required to publish information on their website about how to submit disclosure requests. More than 50% of gTLDs are represented in RDRS.

Zeina Bouharb, Lebanon, asked what promotion has been done for RDRS, as law enforcement should know about this and there should be a campaign to promote this service. Members of the CPH agreed.

The GAC Chair thanked members of the CPH for their engagement and adjourned the meeting.

**Action Point:**

- **GAC support staff** to recirculate the GAC Chair letter to the Board on transparency to the full GAC.

## **5.6 Meeting with the Nominating Committee (NomCom)**

Members of the ICANN Nominating Committee (NomCom) joined the GAC (in person and remotely) to inform GAC representatives about the role that individual delegates to the NomCom exercise in the consideration and nomination of future ICANN community leaders.

The NomCom speakers informed the GAC to the planned work of the NomCom for the rest of the 2024 calendar year. NomCom leaders outlined the leadership positions that they are looking to fill in 2024 including three ICANN Board Members; two At Large representatives, and one council member each for the ccNSO and the GNSO.

NomCom leaders explained the role and duties of all nominating committee delegates and described their time commitments. GAC representatives asked several questions about the confidentiality expectation of NomCom members and learned that the deliberations within the NomCom are closely held to protect the privacy of nominees and deliberations about individual applicants.

NomCom leaders explained that Nom Com delegates serve as individuals – not to represent any country or government. A NomCom delegate from the GAC would not represent the GAC but would serve as an individual who has a lot of experience and knowledge that would inform discussions about nominating future ICANN community leaders. NomCom delegates do not “report back” to their communities. The NomCom requests that an appointed delegate have knowledge and experience of how the ICANN community operates, what works well and what needs to be improved, because that is an important factor in the decision-making process about who gets selected.

GAC Members noted several challenges to participation in the NomCom - either regarding time to serve, inability to attend both NomCom activities and GAC activities and even certain government restrictions on their delegates to serve in additional roles within ICANN.

The GAC Chair closed the topic with thanks to the NomCom leaders for their time and information sharing.



## 5.7 Meeting with the Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO)

The Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) and Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) held a bilateral session to discuss issues of mutual interest. The main agenda focused on the New gTLD Program Next Round, GNSO Statements of Interest and Transparency, DNS Abuse Mitigation, WHOIS and Data Protection and Urgent Requests.

On the **New gTLD Program Next Round**, the GAC and GNSO discussed mutual areas of interest. The GNSO Council provided an update on the **Small Team Plus'** work in preparation for the next round of new gTLDs, noting that the Small Team has drafted supplemental recommendations which the team is considering. The aim is to submit them to the GNSO Council for consideration and vote, possibly during the April GNSO Council meeting. One topic was flagged by the GNSO Council stemming from the Small Team Plus' work which is the issue of **singulars versus plurals**, since the ICANN Board expressed concerns over the SubPro PDP WG recommendation on this topic. As such, this item was reviewed by the Small Team Plus, in particular the notion included by the SubPro PDP WG to attempt to look at the intentions behind the use of a particular string to make exceptions rather than a blanket prohibition. The Board specifically didn't approve the intended use notion, and expressed concerns over a blanket prohibition of singulars and plurals. As such, the Small Team Plus removed the content related to intended use and added clarifying content for the dot brands, but maintained the position that singulars and plurals are generally confusing. The GNSO Council thanked GAC members for their participation and input to the Small Team Plus effort, noting the importance of the GAC's input to the process.

On **Latin Script Diacritics in new gTLDs**, the GNSO Council provided an update to the GAC noting that the GNSO Council has been discussing this topic to identify the best way forward to address this. The GNSO is putting together a request for a study to develop the best approach, and ICANN org has been working on ideas for resolution which should be available for review in April. Further discussion is anticipated once this potential solution is brought forward.

The GNSO Council provided an overview of the **SPIRT Charter Drafting Team**, noting that the SPIRT itself will not come into play until the next round of new gTLDs open, and its purpose will be to address issues that arise after applications are received. The SPIRT is designed to be a mechanism that works to implement the Predictability Framework. The GNSO Council hopes that GAC participants will step forward to serve on the SPIRT Charter Drafting Team, especially in light of GAC positions on the SPIRT and its future operations. GAC members are encouraged to take part in this effort which is expected to take place over the course of three months, with meetings taking place every two weeks.

The GAC and GNSO discussed the issue of the **GNSO Statements of Interest (SOI) and transparency**. The GAC underscored the importance of this topic for the legitimacy of the policy making process as noted in multiple GAC Communiqués, and that full transparency is enshrined in the ICANN Bylaws. The GAC discussed this with the ICANN Board and shared a common view that community discussions should continue. The GNSO Council noted that the GNSO went through an effort to amend the SOIs but it was unable to reach consensus, but welcomes further discussion and

potential community wide work to look at this issue and welcomes participating in the discussion. GAC members noted that the GAC met with Contracted Parties who also supported the notion of transparency and that no exception should be included in the SOIs. As such, the GAC asked the GNSO Council for further clarification to understand where the pushback is coming from and why, especially in preparation for the High Level Government Meeting taking place at ICANN80. The GNSO Chair noted that there are varied perspectives within the GNSO, and that this item will be taken back to the GNSO Council to see if these perspectives can be elaborated.

On **DNS Abuse Mitigation** The GAC was pleased to hear that the DNS Abuse amendments to the RA and RAA were approved by the Board and will become effective on April 5th. The GAC also understands that interest has been expressed in exploring different policy approaches for addressing maliciously-registered domains versus compromised domains. The GNSO Council is considering how policy development work in this area could improve the efforts on DNS Abuse mitigation, noting that the post contractual amendments are a significant change in the structure of the agreements. As such, the GNSO Council as an initial step notes the importance of collecting valuable data (via ICANN's Compliance Team) on the impact of the amendments, which could inform scoping work to determine what policy development would be appropriate. The GNSO Council is also liaising with a Contracted Party House Abuse Small Team, dedicated to discussing the issue of DNS Abuse. The GNSO Council further noted that the GNSO Small Team on DNS Abuse is currently paused while awaiting for data to be collected from the sources cited above, and will resume once further information is provided to determine what if any policy development might be appropriate to address gaps in DNS Abuse mitigation.

Pertaining to **WHOIS/Data Protection**, the GNSO Council provided an update on the data accuracy scoping team which worked to determine whether there is a problem on data accuracy and whether it can be properly addressed through policy development. One of the conclusions of the small team is that this work would be more effective when data processing agreements are in place between ICANN and Contracted Parties, thereby establishing a basis that data could be shared between ICANN and the Contracted Parties. As such, work on this item has been paused while awaiting the completion of the work pertaining to the agreements, which may be imminent.

On "**Urgent Requests**" the GAC highlighted the need to begin this work as soon as possible and asked for an update from the GNSO Council. This is currently a topic for the ICANN Board to review, and the GNSO Council is waiting for feedback from the ICANN Board to address this item constructively.

Finally, the GNSO Council provided a status report on the **Privacy Proxy Accreditation Implementation**, noting that there is a new policy called the Registration Data Policy which is moving forward, and ICANN recently informed the GNSO that it can begin its work on Privacy, Proxy Accreditation Implementation. The GNSO Council is considering how to move forward with this topic to determine if an Implementation Review Team may begin, but no timeline is yet set.

**Action Point:**

- **GAC Members** to consider volunteering to serve on the SPIRT Charter Drafting Team.

## 6. INTERNAL GAC MATTERS

### 6.1. GAC Wrap-Up Session

The GAC Support staff summarized a number of follow-up committee action items resulting from ICANN79 meeting discussions, including the following identified topics:

- Kigali HLGGM Preparations – GAC representatives were encouraged to process RSVP responses to the meeting invitations sent by the host Rwandan government as soon as possible. Timely RSVPs will help organizers set the appropriate schedules for meeting speakers and those intending to make statements and engage in discussions during the HLGGM. It is expected a revised HLGGM agenda will be circulated to the committee by the end of the month.
- ICANN80 Policy Forum Planning – Representatives were encouraged to begin developing topic proposals for the ICANN80 GAC meeting as soon as possible. The ICANN80 meeting will follow a Policy Forum format with fewer meeting days, so session times will be limited.
- Committee Strategic Planning Follow-Up – The GAC Chair-Vice Chair team will review decisions reached during ICANN79 and proceed to expand the strategic prioritization and planning documents discussed by GAC Members and Observers during the meeting weeks. Subsequent work will be conducted via email with ICANN80 targeted as a benchmark date for agreeing to both annual and strategic planning documents for the upcoming committee work year.
- GOPE WG Review of Operating Principles – It was noted that efforts by the operating principles working group will proceed in earnest between ICANN79 and ICANN80.
- GAC Reaction to Various Organizational Review Matters – GAC contributions to cross-community discussions regarding development of a Continuous Improvements Program format are expected to continue and the GAC C-VC will work to respond to a recent inquiry regarding a recommended delay for the start of the Fourth ICANN Accountability and transparency review effort. The expectation is that a delay will not have any negative implications for the committee.
- WSIS+20 Outreach Network Mailing List – GAC representatives were reminded of the creation of a mailing list to share information among the community about WSIS=20 efforts.
- Other Potential GAC Follow-Up - Several other recent inquiries were identified for potential GAC follow-up including (1) a letter regarding a proposed update to Recommendation 7 by the New gTLD Auction Proceeds Cross Community Working Group (expected interest potential interest from governments) and (2) Phase 1 Final Report of the EPDP on Internationalized Domain Names, no immediate interest was expressed by attendees beyond previous GAC comments on the draft initial report.
- Public Comment Forum Opportunities for the GAC - A number of open public comment forums available for potential GAC comments, including the Phase 1 Final Report of the EPDP on Internationalized Domain Names (closing 12 March 2024); the Proposed Language for Draft Sections of the Next Round Applicant Guidebook (closing 19 March 2024); the ICANN

Community Consultation on PICs/RVCs (closing 31 March 2024); and the Draft Applicant Support Program (ASP) Handbook (closing 2 April 2024).

GAC Support staff also identified a number of upcoming and open volunteer opportunities for GAC representatives including a role on the ICANN Customer Standing Committee; opportunities to serve as GAC Points of Contact to other communities; a reminder that more team members are welcome to help the GAC address topics related to the next round of gTLDs and general advice to contact GAC support staff if delegates desire to join any of the GAC working groups.

Given the opportunity to express any “lesson learned” that GAC delegates gleaned regarding the operations, logistics or planning for ICANN79, there was general agreement that the experimental “open-microphone” session ended up offering a good session of generally unstructured time for GAC representatives to note topics, news or other matters of interest to share with other GAC Members.

Attendees also reflected that capacity development sessions continue to offer great opportunities for new and tenured GAC delegates to learn more broadly about topics involving ICANN policy development, GAC priority topics and other critical operational elements of the DNS.

The GAC Chair ended the session with thanks to attendees, support staff, interpreters and the meeting technical team and adjourned the committee’s public meeting at ICANN79.

# # #

## Attachment 1 - ICANN79 Hybrid Community Forum - GAC ATTENDEES LIST

GAC Members (71)		
Argentina	Georgia	Russian Federation
Armenia	Germany	Rwanda
Australia	Hong Kong, China	São Tomé and Príncipe
Austria	India	Saint Kitts and Nevis
Azerbaijan	Indonesia	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Bangladesh	Islamic Republic of Iran	Senegal
Belarus	Italy	Serbia
Belgium	Jamaica	Spain
Bermuda	Japan	Sweden
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Lebanon	Switzerland
Brazil	Luxembourg	Chinese Taipei
Burundi	North Macedonia	Thailand
Canada	Malaysia	Timor-Leste
Cayman Islands	Mali	Trinidad and Tobago
Republic of Chad	Mexico	Tonga
China	Morocco	Uganda
Colombia	Republic of the Union of Myanmar	United Kingdom
Congo, Republic of	Netherlands	United States
Côte d'Ivoire	Niger	Uruguay
Croatia	Nigeria	Viet Nam
Czech Republic	Norway	Zimbabwe
Denmark	Pakistan	
Dominican Republic	Papua New Guinea	
Egypt	Paraguay	
European Commission	Portugal	

<b>GAC Observers (9)</b>	
Regional Technical Commission of Telecommunications (COMTELCA)	Smart Africa
Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU)	The Inter-American Telecommunication Commission (CITEL)
Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation (CTO)	Universal Postal Union (UPU)
Council of Europe (CoE)	World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)
League of Arab States	

## Attachment 2 - ICANN79 Action Points Compilation

#	Subject Matter	Action Point
1	New gTLD Program Next Round	GAC Members to consider developing a collective input on the open public comment on the ASP Handbook, led by the GAC Small Team on Applicant Support.
2	New gTLD Program Next Round	GAC Members to review the Implementation Framework to provide input to ICANN org's Community Consultation on PICs/RVCs.
3	GAC Open Microphone Session	GAC-wide consideration of a Point of Contact for liaison relationship with the ICANN Contracted Parties
4	GAC Open Microphone Session	GAC Support staff to explore possible development of a new committee tool to collect and display information about upcoming regional Internet governance events of interest to governments in various ICANN regions.
5	GAC Meeting with the CPH	GAC support staff to recirculate the GAC Chair letter to the Board on transparency to the full GAC.
6	GAC Meeting with the GNSO	GAC Members to consider volunteering to serve on the SPIRT Charter Drafting Team.