
MINUTES OF MEETING
ICANN86 Policy Forum, 08-11 June 2026

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1. MEETING ATTENDANCE & MEMBERSHIP

76 GAC Members and 11 Observers attended the meeting.

GAC membership currently stands at 184 Member States and Territories (28 vacant), and 41 Observer Organizations (13 vacant). A list of ICANN86 GAC meeting Member and Observer attendees is provided in [Attachment 1 - ICANN86 Policy Forum - GAC ATTENDEES LIST](#).

The [ICANN86 GAC Communiqué](#) is published on the GAC website.

Presentations used by speakers during the meeting and supporting briefings prepared for the GAC can be accessed from the [GAC website](#).

Full transcripts for each meeting session are to be made available from the [ICANN86 Public Meeting website](#), via the relevant agenda items on the GAC's website agenda page listed above.

1.1. Opening Plenary Session

The GAC Opening Plenary Session began with welcoming remarks from the GAC Chair, who welcomed GAC representatives, observers and guests to ICANN86 in Seville and thanked the Government of Spain for hosting the meeting. The Chair reflected on Seville's history as a place of cultural exchange, navigation, governance and innovation, and drew parallels with the GAC's role in supporting a secure, stable and globally connected Internet.

The Chair highlighted the main areas of focus for the GAC during ICANN86, including DNS Abuse, Registration Data issues, Universal Acceptance and Internationalized Domain Names, Internet coordination and governance matters, and GAC operational issues, including continuous improvement and possible GAC participation in the ICANN Nominating Committee. The Chair noted that these discussions are foundational to maintaining a trusted, open, stable and accessible Internet.

The representative of Spain welcomed GAC participants attending both in person and remotely and underscored the importance of the multistakeholder model as the basis for the week's discussions. Spain noted the opening of the New gTLD Program Next Round and encouraged the GAC to continue its work on issues already under consideration, including Registration Data, DNS Abuse and broader policy processes affecting the domain name ecosystem. Spain emphasized the need to balance technical, operational and legal considerations while ensuring that public policy perspectives continue to be reflected in ICANN's policy development and implementation work.

GAC Support Staff provided an overview of meeting logistics and housekeeping matters. Members were reminded to use the Zoom raise-hand function whether participating in person or remotely, and were directed to the ICANN86 agenda page, GAC website and related logistical resources. Additional reminders were provided regarding seating arrangements in the GAC room, reserved

seating for the joint meeting with the ICANN Board, and the circulation of written materials in the meeting room.

The GAC then conducted a Tour de Table for in-person and remote participants. GAC Members and Observers introduced themselves, their delegations and organizations, and many expressed thanks to the Government of Spain for hosting ICANN86 in Seville. Several participants attending their first ICANN or GAC meeting were welcomed.

The GAC Chair reviewed notable GAC transitions since ICANN85, noting that 27 new GAC delegates had joined since the previous meeting. Members were reminded that GAC membership stands at 184 Members and 41 Observers, and were encouraged to contact GAC Support Staff for delegation updates or assistance with access to GAC systems. The Chair also noted the election by acclamation of Ian Sheldon of Australia as the next GAC Chair, whose two-year term will begin at the conclusion of the ICANN87 Annual General Meeting in October 2026.

The Chair then provided an overview of selected GAC activity highlights since ICANN85, including engagement with the ICANN Board on Issues of Importance reflected in the ICANN85 Mumbai Communiqué, the Board response and scorecard received in April 2026, GAC participation in policy development work on DNS Abuse and Registration Data issues, and preparations for the New gTLD Program Next Round. The Chair also noted that GAC Leadership had reviewed progress under the GAC Strategic Plan and annual plan during its Brussels retreat, and had discussed matters scheduled for full GAC consideration during ICANN86.

GAC Support Staff reviewed the GAC Communiqué development process for the benefit of new and returning Members. Members were reminded that the Communiqué is the key consensus output of a GAC meeting and may include summaries of community engagement, internal GAC matters, Issues of Importance to the GAC and, where agreed, GAC Consensus Advice to the ICANN Board. Support Staff outlined the preparation, drafting and review phases, and encouraged Members to coordinate with relevant Topic Leads and GAC Support Staff on any proposed Communiqué text during the meeting. The Chair emphasized that the process is intended to avoid surprises, increase opportunities for Members to consider proposed text in advance, and support efficient consensus-building.

2. PUBLIC POLICY AND SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

2.1. New gTLDs Next Round

The GAC discussed preparations for the 2026 New gTLD Program Next Round. ICANN org provided an update on program implementation, noting that the application window opened on 30 April 2026 and will remain open until 12 August 2026. Members were reminded that the Registry Service Provider (RSP) application window had also reopened and encouraged prospective applicants not to wait until the final days to submit applications or make payments.

ICANN org reviewed the projected implementation timeline, noting that milestone dates remain dependent on the number and type of applications received. Members were reminded that Reveal Day and String Confirmation Day will mark the beginning of community review opportunities, including GAC Early Warnings, objections and other community input processes. An update was also provided on the cross-community session on the feasibility of a platform for Applicant Support Program (ASP)-supported new gTLDs, which follows GAC Advice issued at ICANN79 and ICANN80.

An overview of the Applicant Support Program (ASP) was presented, including updated regional statistics and the status of application evaluations. ICANN org explained that the majority of ASP applications had been submitted during the final month of the application window, creating temporary processing bottlenecks, but noted that additional evaluation resources had been deployed to accelerate processing.

ICANN org also provided an update on objections and appeals, including the availability of funding for national governments to cover the filing costs of one objection and one appeal, subject to the applicable conditions. Members were also reminded of the range of readiness resources available to support governments, including the Applicant Guidebook, topic overviews, Early Warning guidance, GAC workbooks and other materials published on the New gTLD Program website.

During the discussion, GAC Members requested that translations of the latest version of the Applicant Guidebook be updated to reflect the most recent revisions and be made available where possible to assist prospective applicants. Members also sought clarification regarding the funding process for objections and appeals, and ICANN org confirmed that approved requests would be funded directly by ICANN through the dispute resolution service provider.

Several Members discussed preparations for Reveal Day and encouraged ICANN org, if feasible, to publish application information before ICANN87 to facilitate GAC review during the meeting. Members also highlighted the importance of providing guidance for applicants in jurisdictions where equivalent supporting documentation differs from that commonly used in the United States. ICANN org confirmed that equivalent documentation would generally be accepted and that applicants could seek clarification where needed.

The GAC then reflected on the outcomes of the Capacity Development Session held during ICANN86. Members welcomed the interactive format of the session and agreed that it had helped

improve understanding of the various mechanisms available throughout the New gTLD application lifecycle, including Early Warnings, GAC Advice, objections, appeals and public comments.

Members emphasized that the compressed timelines following Reveal Day and String Confirmation Day will require timely preparation and greater intersessional collaboration. Building on lessons learned from previous GAC work, including the pandemic period, Members observed that consensus-building and the development of GAC Advice can be conducted effectively through virtual collaboration where necessary. Several Members suggested organizing additional intersessional webinars and virtual exchanges, developing practical guidance to map the different stages of the GAC review process, and compiling outputs from the Capacity Development exercises to support future preparations.

Members also encouraged ICANN org to make application data available in machine-readable formats to facilitate government analysis using automated tools. ICANN org confirmed that such formats would be available. The discussion further highlighted that GAC Advice should continue to be considered a measure of last resort and that greater coordination among GAC Members during the Early Warning phase would be beneficial. Leadership recalled that submitted Early Warnings would be published promptly and encouraged Members to submit them as early as possible during the applicable timeframe.

The final part of the session focused on government preparations for the Next Round. GAC Members exchanged experiences regarding national readiness activities, emphasizing the importance of beginning outreach well in advance of Reveal Day. Members described efforts to engage relevant ministries, law enforcement authorities, intellectual property offices, chambers of commerce, municipalities and other stakeholders likely to have an interest in future applications, while also raising broader awareness of ICANN's work across government.

Members agreed that practical experience from both the 2012 round and current national preparations should be shared more systematically to support government readiness. Suggestions included documenting best practices, developing practical guidance to help governments explain the New gTLD Program to colleagues unfamiliar with ICANN and the DNS, and continuing exchanges on effective national coordination models.

Members also noted that the expected volume of applications will require governments to prioritize their review efforts effectively. In this context, the importance of search, filtering and categorization tools, together with machine-readable application data, was highlighted as a means of supporting efficient identification of applications raising potential public policy concerns.

The discussion concluded with broad support for continued information-sharing, practical guidance and intersessional collaboration to strengthen government readiness ahead of Reveal Day and the subsequent community review processes.

Action Point(s):

- **GAC Leadership and Support Staff** to consider organizing additional intersessional exchanges and practical guidance to support GAC preparations for the New gTLD Program Next Round.
- **ICANN org** to review the availability of updated translations of the latest version of the Applicant Guidebook.

2.2. Registration Data Issues and Informational Session on Accuracy of Registration Data

The GAC discussed Registration Data issues, including the Standardized System for Access and Disclosure of non-public gTLD Registration Data (SSAD), Urgent Requests for disclosure of registration data, Privacy and Proxy Services accreditation, and accuracy of registration data.

GAC Topic Leads reviewed recent developments following the ICANN Board's decision to continue the Registration Data Request Service (RDRS) pilot and not adopt the original SSAD recommendations as a package. The GNSO Council subsequently established a Supplemental Recommendations Team to consider lessons learned from the RDRS pilot and update the SSAD recommendations. GAC representatives from Canada and the United States are participating in that work, which is expected to deliver recommendations to the GNSO Council in early 2027.

The Chair of the SSAD Supplemental Recommendations Team provided an overview of the team's work, noting that its objective is to update, rather than replace, the original SSAD recommendations. The team is considering the needs of requestors, registrants and data controllers, and is seeking to develop recommendations for a centralized, implementable and cost-effective system for standardized access to non-public gTLD registration data.

The GAC also received an update on Urgent Requests for disclosure of registration data. Members were informed that the Registration Data Policy now includes a 24-hour response requirement for authenticated Urgent Requests involving threats to life, serious physical injury, critical infrastructure or child endangerment. The Public Safety Working Group and ICANN org are exploring operational approaches to law enforcement authentication, including the use of existing or developing identity-provider systems. ICANN org noted that a call for volunteers is expected for an input group to support technical and operational testing of such authentication mechanisms.

The GAC was briefed on Privacy and Proxy Services accreditation, including the distinction between privacy and proxy services, and implementation work underway on long-standing community policy recommendations. Issues under consideration include eligibility for accreditation, treatment of non-accredited services, and possible labeling of privacy and proxy registrations to improve clarity regarding where disclosure or contact requests should be directed.

Members raised questions regarding the relationship between the SSAD Supplemental Recommendations process and separate operational work on authentication for Urgent Requests. ICANN org clarified that authentication testing is intended to prepare for implementation but will depend on policy requirements developed through the SSAD Supplemental Recommendations

process. Members also noted that RDRS or a future SSAD would provide an additional voluntary request mechanism and would not replace existing legal cooperation or compulsory legal processes.

The GAC then discussed accuracy of registration data, with a particular focus on the existing 15-day timeline for verification of registration data under the Registrar Accreditation Agreement. GAC Topic Leads recalled the long-standing importance of accuracy to the GAC and noted previous GAC contributions to related policy work. Members questioned whether verification should occur before a domain name becomes active, particularly in light of DNS Abuse concerns and the upcoming expansion of the DNS through the New gTLD Program Next Round.

The GNSO Council and registrar representatives provided background on the 15-day verification requirement, noting that it derives from earlier registrar accreditation agreements and current contractual provisions. Registrar representatives presented initial operational data suggesting that most domains later suspended for DNS Abuse had already passed email verification, and that only a small proportion would have been affected by pre-activation verification. They also noted that any change to verification timing would require operational work and should be assessed in light of evidence regarding its likely impact.

Several GAC Members emphasized that the current timeline reflects a legacy approach and encouraged continued consideration of whether it remains fit for purpose. Members noted that some ccTLDs and certain jurisdictions already require verification before activation, and asked whether specific technical or operational barriers would prevent similar approaches in the gTLD space. GNSO Council representatives noted that possible changes could be pursued through policy development or contractual amendments, each with procedural and timing implications.

The discussion was characterized as the beginning of further dialogue among the GAC, GNSO Council, ICANN org and registrar community. Participants acknowledged a shared objective of supporting a secure and trusted DNS, while recognizing the need for continued discussion on evidence, prioritization, operational impacts and possible implementation paths.

2.3. DNS Abuse

The GAC held a session on DNS Abuse Mitigation, focusing on ongoing policy work, operational perspectives and broader considerations for effective DNS Abuse prevention and mitigation.

GAC Topic Leads recalled that DNS Abuse remains a GAC priority and reviewed recent progress on targeted policy development work, particularly the GNSO Policy Development Process (PDP) on Associated Domain Checks (ADC). Members were reminded that the PDP follows earlier GAC calls for narrowly scoped policy work on bulk registrations and associated domains ahead of the delegation of new gTLDs in the Next Round. A newly formed GAC DNS Abuse Small Group has been instrumental in supporting GAC participation in the PDP. Interested GAC Members were invited to join the Small Group.

The National Police of Spain provided a law enforcement perspective on cybercrime, phishing and domain name abuse, emphasizing the cross-border nature of online crime and the need for rapid

cooperation among law enforcement, judicial authorities, governments and actors in the Internet ecosystem. The presentation highlighted the increasing use of social engineering, phishing and Artificial Intelligence by malicious actors. In response, law enforcement must increasingly rely on cooperation mechanisms as provided by Europol, Interpol, Eurojust, AmeriPol and the Budapest Convention.

Interisle Consulting Group presented findings from recent research on malicious gTLD domain name registrations, noting that bad actors likely purchased 16.8 million gTLD domain names in 2025, representing approximately 20 percent of all new registrations sold. The presentation emphasized that abuse appears highly concentrated among certain providers and raised concerns regarding economic incentives that may allow abusive registrations to persist. GAC Members were reminded that both prevention and mitigation should be considered complementary approaches, particularly in view of the New gTLD Program Next Round and the related expansion of the name space.

The GAC discussed progress in the Associated Domain Check GNSO PDP Working Group with participants from across the ICANN community. Speakers generally expressed cautious optimism regarding the constructive pace of the work and noted that current discussions are grounded in the existing DNS Abuse contractual framework. Key issues under discussion include the trigger for conducting an ADC, timing and criteria for identifying associated domains, the meaning of a reasonable investigation, applicable safeguards and remedies in case of harm caused to innocent parties.

Several speakers emphasized that an ADC should be understood as an investigative tool rather than a takedown mechanism, and that any mitigation action should be based on actionable evidence of DNS Abuse rather than unverified allegations. Participants also highlighted the importance of operational feasibility of policy recommendations, clear and enforceable contractual obligations, registrant safeguards, remedies in cases of false positives, and mechanisms to measure whether any implemented policy is effective.

ICANN Contractual Compliance noted that it has followed the PDP closely and underscored the importance of clear, enforceable obligations. ICANN Compliance also noted that, if ADC obligations are adopted, registrars would need to be able to demonstrate that required checks are conducted, particularly given that complainants may not have visibility into the outcome of such checks.

NetBeacon Institute presented on DNS Abuse measurement and reporting and their respective products NetBeacon Map and NetBeacon Reporter. The presentation noted that NetBeacon Reporter handles tens of thousands of malicious domain reports each month and emphasized that report quality, including clear evidence of abuse and supporting screenshots, is a key predictor of subsequent mitigation. The discussion also noted that inclusion on a blocklist alone may not be sufficient for mitigation.

ARTICLE 19 presented research on the relationship between DNS Abuse mitigation and freedom of expression. The presentation emphasized that DNS-level mitigation actions, such as suspension or

deletion, can have broad impacts beyond addressing specific abuse and should therefore be proportionate, transparent and subject to appropriate safeguards.

3. GAC OPERATIONAL MATTERS

3.1. GAC Leadership and Operations Update

GAC Annual Plan Update

The GAC reviewed progress on implementation of the GAC Strategic Plan and discussed preparations for the next phase of the planning process. GAC Leadership encouraged Members that had not yet done so to complete the strategic planning survey, noting that the survey results would inform future discussions and priority setting.

Members exchanged views on the importance of maintaining a manageable number of strategic priorities while ensuring that the Strategic Plan remains aligned with the GAC's evolving workload and available resources. The discussion also highlighted the need to translate strategic objectives into practical work plans and measurable activities.

GAC Future Contributions to the ICANN Nominating Committee (NomCom)

The GAC discussed whether to appoint a voting delegate to the ICANN Nominating Committee (NomCom), noting that while the ICANN Bylaws provide for such a position, the GAC has not appointed a delegate in recent years. Instead, the GAC has contributed to the NomCom process through periodic submissions outlining desired candidate criteria.

The discussion was introduced as part of the implementation of the GAC Strategic Plan and sought Members' views on whether the current approach provides sufficient opportunities for GAC perspectives to inform the NomCom process.

During the discussion, Members identified a number of practical and procedural considerations. It was noted that serving on the NomCom requires a significant time commitment, including during ICANN Public Meetings, which would prevent a delegate from participating in GAC meetings and related activities. Members also recalled that NomCom delegates serve in their individual capacity rather than as representatives of the appointing body.

Several Members expressed reservations about appointing a GAC delegate, citing the confidential nature of NomCom deliberations and the resulting limitations on transparency and accountability. Members questioned whether the GAC could be sufficiently assured that a delegate appointed by the committee would appropriately reflect public policy perspectives while operating under strict confidentiality obligations. A number of delegations therefore expressed support for maintaining the current approach of not appointing a voting delegate.

Other Members observed that confidentiality requirements are not unique to the NomCom and drew comparisons with the role of the GAC Chair as Board Liaison, which also operates under confidentiality obligations. It was suggested that further work could be undertaken to better understand the NomCom's procedures and identify ways to strengthen trust and confidence should the GAC wish to revisit the issue in the future.

The discussion concluded without support for changing the GAC's current practice. Members broadly agreed to maintain the existing approach while acknowledging that additional dialogue with the NomCom could help address outstanding questions regarding its operation and the potential role of a future GAC-appointed delegate.

ICANN Continuous Improvement Program (CIP) Framework

The GAC discussed next steps for implementing the ICANN Continuous Improvement Program (CIP) within the committee. GAC Leadership recalled that the CIP will provide a structured approach for assessing and continuously improving the GAC's effectiveness over a multi-year cycle.

Members exchanged initial views on how the GAC should approach the implementation process, including the need to identify meaningful areas for assessment while ensuring that the exercise remains practical, proportionate and focused on continuous improvement. The discussion also highlighted the importance of integrating the work into the GAC's broader strategic planning activities and minimizing unnecessary administrative burden.

GAC Leadership noted that further work on the implementation approach would continue intersessionally, with opportunities for Members to contribute as the process develops.

GAC Capacity Development Working Group Proposal

The GAC received a proposal to establish a GAC Capacity Development Working Group (CDWG), outlining the need for a more coordinated and strategic approach to capacity development to support onboarding, continuous learning, and effective participation in GAC and ICANN policy processes. At ICANN86, the GAC agreed to establish the Capacity Development Working Group, which will serve as the central hub for coordinating GAC capacity development efforts, working with GAC Leadership, Working Groups, Topic Leads, and ICANN org to identify learning needs, develop capacity development materials, and ensure activities are aligned with the GAC's strategic and operational priorities.

GAC 2026 Leadership Election

. 2026 GAC Chair Election

The GAC noted the results of the 2026 GAC Chair election process. Following the close of the nomination period on 24 April 2026, Ian Sheldon (Australia) was the sole nominee for the position of GAC Chair. In accordance with GAC Operating Principle 32, Ian Sheldon was confirmed by

acclamation as GAC Chair for a two-year term commencing at the close of the ICANN87 Annual General Meeting and concluding at the close of the ICANN93 Annual General Meeting.

. 2026 Special GAC Vice-Chair Election

The GAC noted that a special election process will be conducted following ICANN86 to fill the Vice-Chair position that will become vacant upon the commencement of Ian Sheldon's term as GAC Chair. The individual elected through this process will serve the remainder of the Vice-Chair term ending at the close of the ICANN90 Annual General Meeting in October 2027.

Action Point(s):

- **GAC Members** to complete the [Strategic Planning survey](#) to support the next phase of implementation.
- **The GAC** will maintain its current approach of not appointing a voting delegate to the ICANN Nominating Committee at this time.
- **GAC Leadership and Support Staff** to continue developing the GAC's approach to implementing the Continuous Improvement Program and engage Members as work progresses.

3.2. GAC Operating Principles

The GAC Operating Principles Evolution Working Group (GOPE WG) Co-Chairs presented the proposed administrative amendments to the GAC Operating Principles, noting that the WG had completed a review of the text over the past two years and had circulated both clean and redline versions to the full GAC ahead of ICANN86.

The proposed amendments were described as administrative in nature and intended to improve clarity, consistency and alignment with current GAC practices. They include streamlining the preamble, updating terminology (such as replacing references to the "GAC Secretariat" with "GAC Support Staff"), and correcting editorial and numbering inconsistencies.

The GAC was reminded of the formal revision procedure under Principle 53, whereby initiation of a revision requires a motion, a second, and the support of a simple majority of Members present, followed by a 60-day consultation period before consideration of final adoption.

Following discussion, no objections were raised to initiating the revision process. The Netherlands moved to initiate the formal revision under Principle 53, Canada seconded the motion, and additional support was expressed by Egypt and Uganda. The GAC Chair confirmed broad consensus and declared that the formal revision process had been initiated.

The Working Group Co-Chairs encouraged GAC Members to review the proposed amendments during the 60-day consultation period and submit any comments or suggested refinements. They

also noted that the WG continues to consider additional amendments to the Operating Principles for future revision efforts.

Action Point(s):

- **GAC Members** to review the proposed administrative amendments to the GAC Operating Principles during the 60-day consultation period and provide any comments or suggested refinements to the GOPE Working Group.

3.3. Review of Reviews

Co-Chairs of the Review of Reviews Cross-Community Group (CCG) presented an update on the proposed framework for a renewed ICANN review system, aimed at simplifying and improving the effectiveness of ICANN reviews.

The proposed framework includes cadenced reviews (an Accountability and Transparency Review and a Structural Review), on-demand reviews (Special Topics, Emerging Topics and Consequential Effects), and a one-time review of the Continuous Improvement Program (CIP) following its pilot phase.

GAC Members discussed the distinction between the proposed Accountability and Transparency Review and Structural Review, noting a potential risk of overlap between reviewing ICANN's functions and its organizational structure. The CCG Co-Chairs explained that the former would assess whether ICANN is fulfilling its mission and accountability obligations, while the latter would assess whether ICANN's organizational structure remains fit for purpose.

GAC Members expressed concern that the proposed treatment of the Security, Stability and Resiliency (SSR) Review as an on-demand Special Topic review, rather than a regularly scheduled review, did not adequately reflect its central importance to ICANN's mission. They noted that ensuring appropriate expertise in review teams would be preferable to making the review optional. In response, the CCG Co-Chairs explained that the proposed model would enable the community to determine when such reviews are warranted through a prior scoping process designed to define the review scope and identify the appropriate expertise.

The CCG Co-Chairs further explained that the proposed Review Standing Committee would serve as a central coordination mechanism for the review framework, overseeing review planning and scoping and making recommendations to the community. Decisions on those recommendations would remain with the Supporting Organizations and Advisory Committees.

The CCG Co-Chairs noted that the draft report would shortly be published for Public Comment and encouraged the GAC to provide input through that process. They also suggested that the GAC consider how the points raised in the ICANN85 GAC Communiqué had been addressed in preparing its submission.

Action Point(s):

- **GAC Members** to review the draft Review of Reviews report and provide input during the forthcoming Public Comment proceeding.

3.4. GAC Capacity Development

Session 1

ICANN org provided an update on the 2026 Round of the New gTLD Program, including the application timeline, key milestones, application types, and the evaluation process.

The discussion focused on the various opportunities for community and GAC participation throughout the application process, including application comments, singular/plural notifications, GAC Member Early Warnings, GAC Consensus Advice, and objections. ICANN org explained the purpose and timelines associated with each mechanism and responded to questions from GAC members on topics including string replacement, variants, IDNs, geographic names, phonetic similarities, application fees, and the Applicant Support Program.

Interactive poll questions were used throughout the session to reinforce participants' understanding of the application process and the available community input mechanisms.

ICANN org also demonstrated the Application Comment Forum (ACF) and the TLD Application Management System (TAMS), and highlighted the Applicant Guidebook and other readiness resources available to support GAC members in preparing for the 2026 Round.

Session 2

This session consisted of interactive breakout exercises on GAC Early Warnings, GAC Consensus Advice, and national approaches to preparing for the 2026 New gTLD Round.

Following the breakout discussions, rapporteurs shared the key outcomes with GAC participants.

On **GAC Early Warnings**, rapporteurs highlighted discussions on the role of Early Warnings as a means for governments to express concerns during the application process. Breakout groups considered case studies, including .health and .africa, discussed the effectiveness of the Early Warning process, and raised the need to standardize what is identified as a geographic name. Participants also discussed the possibility of issuing GAC Early Warnings on behalf of multiple governments where concerns are shared, noting that this could present a stronger case.

On **GAC Consensus Advice**, participants recalled that it requires consensus and that, while it may be issued at any time, issuing Advice as early as possible in the application process is encouraged. Rapporteurs also highlighted the value of providing a clear rationale for proposed advice and suggested that practical guidance or templates could support its development.

On **national preparedness**, participants shared examples of how governments are preparing for the 2026 Round, including outreach to domestic stakeholders and government agencies, updating stakeholder databases and guidance materials, coordinating internally across government, and preparing processes to review applications following Reveal Day. Several groups emphasized the importance of beginning these preparations well before String Confirmation Day and noted the value of building on experience from the previous New gTLD Round.

The session concluded with a reminder of the resources available to support GAC readiness, including examples of GAC Early Warnings and GAC Advice from the 2012 round, the projected

application timeline, and supporting guidance documents and templates.

4. GAC WORKING GROUPS

4.1. GAC Public Safety Working Group (PSWG)

The GAC 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 contributed to the GAC sessions pertaining to DNS Abuse and Registration Data issues, and the GAC bilateral meeting with the ICANN Board. The PSWG also participated in panel discussions, including regarding Current and Coming Impact of Artificial Intelligence on DNS Abuse. Finally, and alongside GAC Members, the PSWG engaged with community stakeholders in meetings of the GNSO Policy Development Process Working Group on Associated Domain Checks, and in the Implementation Review Team for Privacy and Proxy Services Accreditation Issues.

5. CROSS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

5.1. Meeting with the ICANN Board

The GAC met with the ICANN Board and discussed:

1. New gTLD Program: 2026 Round - Applicant Support Program
2. gTLD Registration Data
3. GAC Engagement on the RIR Governance Document
4. Systemic Risks of Arbitrary, Non-Standardized DNS-Layer and Geo-Blocking by Private Service Providers and the Resulting Internet Fragmentation

Topic 1: New gTLD Program: 2026 Round - Applicant Support Program

Summary: The GAC sought an update on measures to further reduce the financial barriers faced by Applicant Support Program (ASP) applicants, particularly those from Least Developed Countries (LDCs), including the possibility of establishing third-party funding or micro-financing mechanisms to cover the remaining application fee.

The Board explained that the ASP had been implemented in accordance with community recommendations, with fee reductions ranging from 75% to 85% depending on the number of qualified applicants. While acknowledging that the remaining application fee may continue to represent a significant barrier, the Board noted that applicants are required to identify how they intend to finance the unsupported portion of the fee as part of their application.

The Board also outlined outreach undertaken by ICANN org to development finance institutions and other potential funding organizations to raise awareness of the program. Although these efforts had increased awareness, they had not resulted in funding commitments. The Board encouraged

governments to continue engaging potential funding organizations at national and regional levels.

In response to questions regarding the Board's recent decision not to allocate additional funding from the 2012 New gTLD Auction Proceeds, the Board explained that its decision reflected differing community views received during the public comment process. It confirmed that the current funding model would remain unchanged for the 2026 application round, while noting that the Applicant Support Program could be reviewed and enhanced in future rounds based on community input.

Key Take-Away: The Board confirmed that no additional Applicant Support Program funding will be introduced for the current application round. However, it acknowledged the continuing financial challenges faced by supported applicants and indicated that the structure and funding level of the ASP may be revisited in future rounds.

Topic 2: gTLD Registration Data

Summary: The GAC and the Board discussed progress on improving access to gTLD registration data, focusing on the development of a law enforcement authentication mechanism and the ongoing work related to the Standardized System for Access and Disclosure (SSAD).

The Board confirmed that development of the authentication mechanism is progressing in close collaboration with the GAC Public Safety Working Group (PSWG). The work is now transitioning from a small expert group to a broader, transparent community effort that will allow input from contracted parties and other interested stakeholders before implementation.

The Board also explained how the authentication mechanism relates to the evolution of the Registration Data Request Service (RDRS). Lessons learned from the RDRS pilot are currently informing revisions to the original SSAD recommendations, with an updated policy package expected to include the authentication mechanism and the agreed 24-hour response time for authenticated urgent law enforcement requests.

GAC Members emphasized the importance of implementing the authentication mechanism as quickly as possible and questioned whether it could progress independently of the broader SSAD policy work. The Board acknowledged the urgency of the issue but explained that the authentication mechanism remains linked to the revised SSAD recommendations, while stressing that the work has been identified as a community priority.

Key Take-Away: The Board confirmed that development of the law enforcement authentication mechanism is progressing and will continue alongside the revised SSAD recommendations, with implementation expected as part of the updated registration data framework.

Topic 3: GAC Early Engagement on the RIR Governance Document

Summary: The GAC sought confirmation that it would have sufficient opportunity to review and provide public policy input on the proposed Regional Internet Registry (RIR) Governance Document

before Board consideration.

The Board outlined the current timeline for the work being undertaken by the Address Supporting Organization (ASO) Address Council, noting that a revised draft is expected to be published for Regional Internet Registry community consultation later in 2026 before being submitted to the ICANN Board.

The Board confirmed that, once received, the document would be published for ICANN Public Comment and that the GAC would be invited to provide input on any public policy issues identified during the Board's consideration.

Key Take-Away: The Board confirmed that the GAC will have an opportunity to provide public policy input through the ICANN Public Comment process before any Board consideration of the proposed RIR Governance Document.

Topic 4: Systemic Risks of Arbitrary, Non-Standardized DNS Layer and Geo-Blocking by Private Service Providers and the Resulting Internet Fragmentation

Summary: The GAC and the Board discussed the public policy implications of DNS-layer blocking and geo-blocking by private service providers, including the potential impact on Internet universality and fragmentation. The Board reaffirmed its support for an open, interoperable and globally unified Internet while noting that ICANN has no authority over blocking decisions made by private service providers. It referred to the guidance contained in SAC127, which examines DNS blocking as a technical tool, highlighting both its legitimate uses and the risks of unintended collateral effects when applied at larger scales.

The Board emphasized that organizations implementing DNS blocking should carefully consider the broader consequences of such measures, including transparency, proportionality, redress mechanisms and unintended impacts on legitimate users.

During the discussion, GAC Members highlighted the importance of balancing mitigation measures with the needs of affected users and victims of online harm, while avoiding unnecessary Internet fragmentation. Members also requested that the Board's responses on this topic be provided to the GAC in writing for future reference, which the Board agreed to do.

Additional discussion focused on DNS abuse transparency. Members encouraged continued work to improve the availability of data supporting DNS abuse mitigation efforts and explored whether ICANN could play a greater role in collecting or facilitating evidence of abuse. The Board noted that discussions on measurement and reporting are ongoing within the community and that no proposal for ICANN to operate such a centralized system has yet been considered by the Board.

Key Take-Away: The Board reaffirmed its commitment to an open and unified Internet, encouraged continued reliance on the principles outlined in SAC127 when considering DNS blocking measures, and agreed to provide the GAC with a written version of its response on the topic. The Board also noted that discussions on improving DNS abuse measurement and transparency remain ongoing within the community.

Meeting Follow-Up - Notable Post-Meeting Committee Dates to be tracked by support staff:

- Publication of GAC ICANN86 Communiqué - 15 June 2026
- ICANN86 GAC Minutes ~ July 2026
- ICAN86 Board-GAC Interaction Group Call ~ July 2026
- ICANN87 GAC Agenda Setting Calls (to review preliminary agenda) ~ late July 2026 (and potential #2 ~ mid/late - August 2026)
- Nominations Close for Special GAC Vice-Chair Election - 2 September
- ICANN87 Annual General Meeting, 17-22 October 2026, Bali, Indonesia

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Attachment 1 - ICANN86 Policy Forum - GAC ATTENDEES LIST

	Registrations	Attended (in-person & virtual)
Member Delegations	87	76
Observer Delegations	11	11
Member Delegates	125	109 ¹
Observer Delegates	11	13 ²

1. 7 Member delegates attended virtually without registration, 5 of which were the solo delegate of their delegation (China, Czech Republic, Hong Kong (China), Italy, Malaysia, Mauritania, Uganda)
2. 2 Observer delegates attended virtually without registration, both of which were the solo delegate of the their delegation (OAS, WIPO)

GAC Members (76)		
European Commission	Government of Germany	Government of Russian Federation
Government of Argentina	Government of Guatemala	Government of Sao Tome and Principe
Government of Armenia	Government of Holy See (Vatican City State)	Government of Saudi Arabia
Government of Australia	Government of Hong Kong (China)	Government of Senegal
Government of Azerbaijan	Government of India	Government of Serbia
Government of Bahrain	Government of Indonesia	Government of Spain
Government of Bangladesh	Government of Ireland	Government of Suriname, Republic of
Government of Belgium	Government of Israel	Government of Sweden
Government of Benin	Government of Italy	Government of Switzerland
Government of Bermuda	Government of Jamaica	Government of Thailand
Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina	Government of Japan	Government of Timor Leste
Government of Brazil	Government of Kenya	Government of Tonga
Government of Cambodia	Government of Korea, Republic of	Government of Trinidad and Tobago
Government of Cameroon	Government of Lao People's Democratic Republic	Government of Tunisia
Government of Canada	Government of Lebanon	Government of Türkiye, Republic of
Government of Chad, Republic of	Government of Libya	Government of Uganda
Government of China	Government of Malaysia	Government of Ukraine
Government of Chinese Taipei	Government of Mauritania	Government of United Arab Emirates
Government of Colombia	Government of Morocco	Government of United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Government of Comoros	Government of Netherlands	Government of United States
Government of Congo, the Democratic Republic of the	Government of Nigeria	
Government of Cote d'Ivoire	Government of Niue	

Government of Croatia	Government of North Macedonia	
Government of Czech Republic	Government of Norway	
Government of Denmark	Government of Paraguay	
Government of Egypt	Government of Poland	
Government of Finland	Government of Portugal	
Government of Georgia	Government of Qatar	

GAC Observers (11)	
African Parliamentary Network on Internet Governance (APNIG)	Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF)
Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU)	Smart Africa
Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation (CTO)	Universal Postal Union (UPU)
Digital Cooperation Organization (DCO)	World Broadcasting Unions (WBU)
League of Arab States	World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)
Organization of American States (OAS)	

Attachment 2 - ICANN86 Action Points Compilation

#	Subject Matter	Action Point
1	New gTLDs Next Round	GAC Leadership and Support Staff to consider organizing additional intersessional exchanges and practical guidance to support GAC preparations for the New gTLD Program Next Round.
2	New gTLDs Next Round	ICANN org to review the availability of updated translations of the latest version of the Applicant Guidebook.
3	GAC Leadership and Operations Update	GAC Members to complete the Strategic Planning survey to support the next phase of implementation.
4	GAC Leadership and Operations Update	The GAC will maintain its current approach of not appointing a voting delegate to the ICANN Nominating Committee at this time.

5	GAC Leadership and Operations Update	GAC Leadership and Support Staff to continue developing the GAC's approach to implementing the Continuous Improvement Program and engage Members as work progresses.
6	GAC Operating Principles	GAC Members to review the proposed administrative amendments to the GAC Operating Principles during the 60-day consultation period and provide any comments or suggested refinements to the GOPE Working Group.
7	Review of Reviews	GAC Members to review the draft Review of Reviews report and provide input during the forthcoming Public Comment proceeding.