

GAC Strategic Planning

ICANN84 Plenary Session
25 October 2025

I C A N N | G A C

Governmental Advisory Committee

Agenda

- 1. Background on the GAC's Strategic Planning Effort**
- 2. Development of the GAC 2025/2026 Annual Plan**
- 3. Walkthrough of Expected Outcomes
in the GAC 2025/2026 Annual Plan**

GAC Strategic Planning Background

ICANN | GAC

Governmental Advisory Committee

Kigali, Rwanda, 17 June 2024

GAC Communiqué – Kigali, Rwanda¹

III. Internal Matters

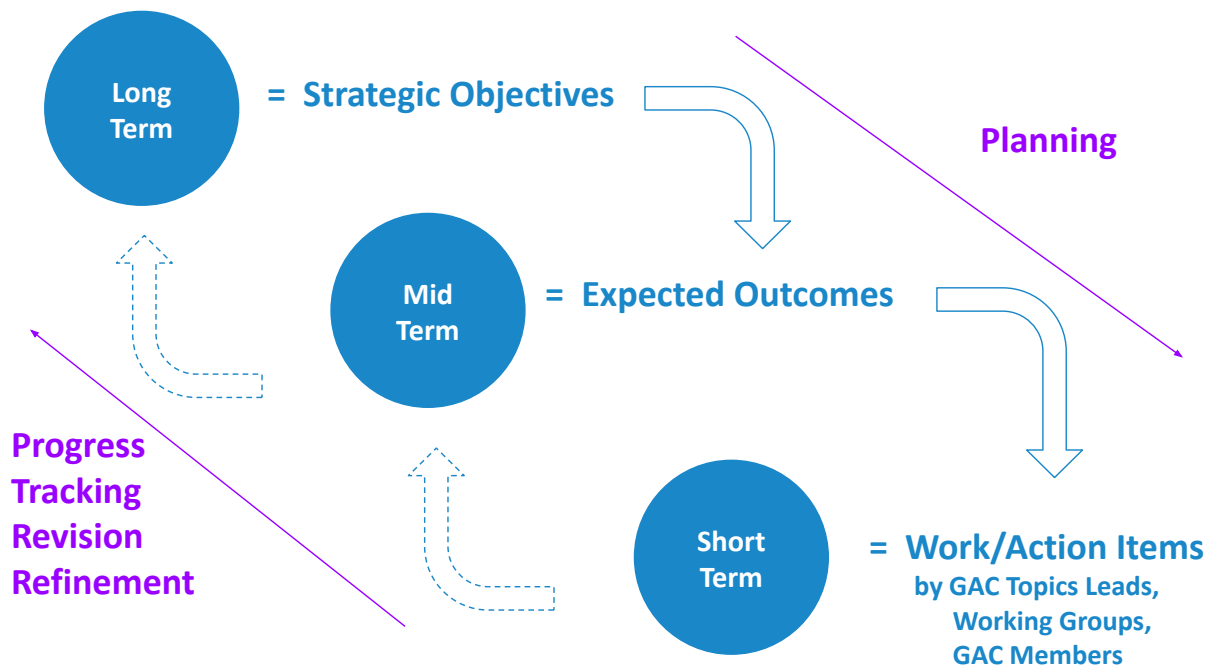
4. GAC Strategic Planning

Building on a process initiated in December 2023 by the GAC Chair and Vice-Chairs, considering the GAC plenary discussion during ICANN79 in San Juan, and several consultations of the GAC Membership intersessionally, the GAC finalized and endorsed the 4-year GAC Strategic Plan (2024-2028) and the corresponding 2024/2025 GAC Annual Plan².

The GAC expects that these Strategic and Annual plans will serve 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, new GAC Members, and ICANN stakeholders.

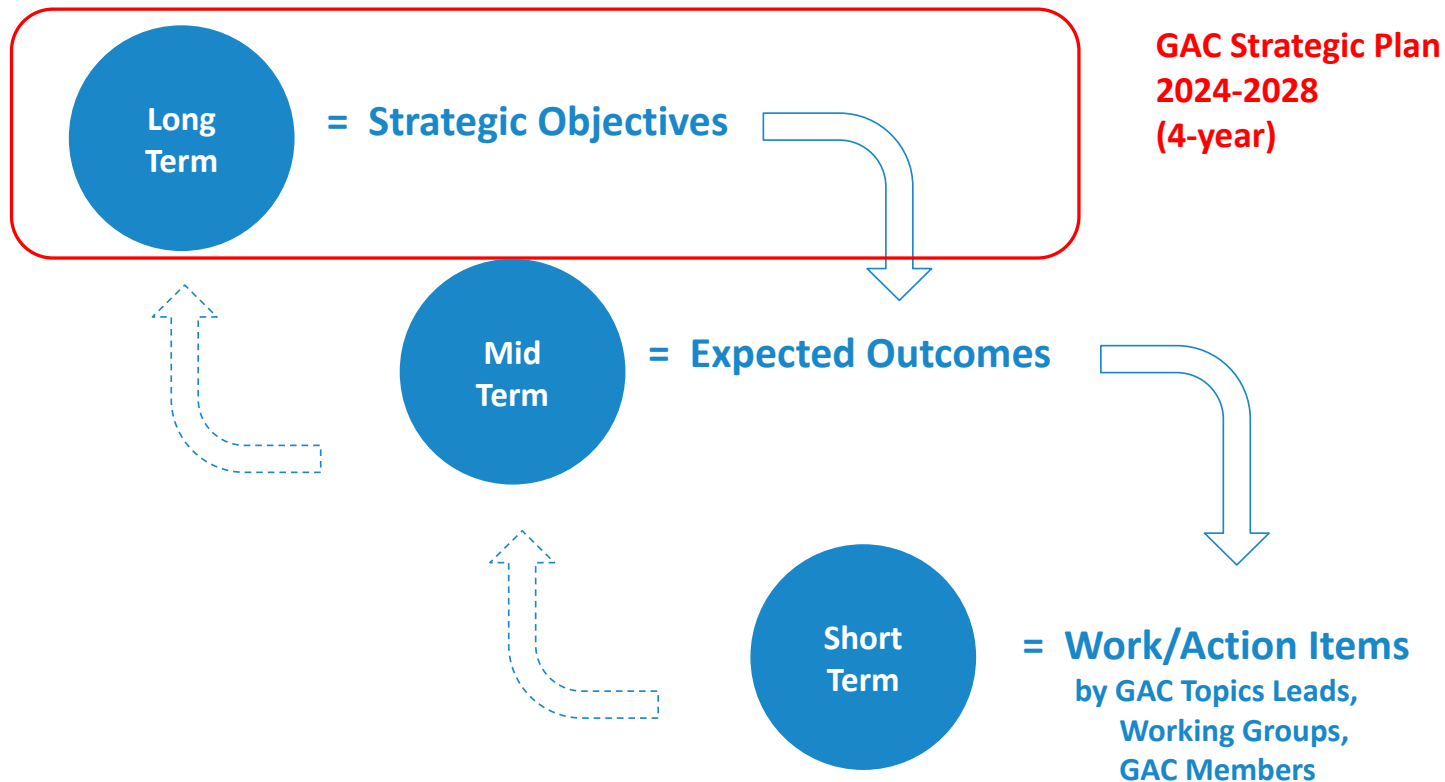
Reminder: Approach to Developing the GAC Strategic Plan

Strategic Objectives determine Expected Outcomes, which determine Action Items



Completion of Action Items inform attainability of Expected Outcomes, which inform achievability of Strategic Objectives

Reminder: Approach to Developing the GAC Strategic Plan



STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2028

Endorsed by the GAC on 17 June 2024

GAC Mission, Vision and Values Statement

Consistent with ICANN's Article of Incorporation and ICANN's Bylaws, including ICANN's Mission, Commitments and Core Values, in the following statements, the GAC aims to propose specific statements for the sole purpose of the Committee's Strategic Planning.

Mission

To provide public policy advice to ICANN on issues that affect the stability, security, and global interconnectedness of the Internet's unique identifier systems and to exercise its powers and rights to ensure accountability of the ICANN Board and organization, as a Decisional Participant in ICANN's Empowered Community.

Vision

The GAC envisions a future where the Internet's unique identifier systems remain a trusted and reliable foundation for the global digital ecosystem, reflecting the needs of all users and stakeholders across the globe.

Values

- **Transparency and Accountability:** The GAC strives for open and inclusive policy development processes that ensure all voices are heard.
- **Multistakeholder Governance:** We recognize the importance of a collaborative approach where governments, the private sector, civil society, and the technical community work together for the benefit of the internet.
- **Global Policy Consideration:** We advocate for policies that are developed with a global perspective, taking into account the needs of diverse communities and cultures.
- **Stability and Security:** We prioritize the stability and security of the Internet's unique identifier systems to ensure their continued smooth operation.
- **Human Rights and International Law:** the GAC's values center on harnessing the use of digital technology, and specifically the Internet's unique identifier systems, for the benefit of humanity, upholding human rights and international law in the context of the digital age.

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GAC Strategic Objectives 2024-2028

1) Role for Governments in ICANN

In support of reaffirming the critical role of governments within the ICANN multistakeholder model, the GAC will seek to ensure that governments can effectively pursue their public policy interests, through both existing and future ICANN processes and procedures. In particular, the GAC will work to assess whether current ICANN structures provide sufficient and meaningful opportunity for the GAC, to develop, influence, and modify policy outcomes.

2) Effectiveness of the Governmental Advisory Committee

The GAC will seek to increase active and meaningful participation of GAC Members in its deliberations and operations. The GAC will also work to enhance its effectiveness as a participant in the multistakeholder processes of ICANN, including by ensuring that the voice of GAC members is expressed and appropriately represented, and by leveraging collaboration and alignment with other ICANN constituencies.

3) Future Rounds of New gTLDs

Leveraging the experience and lessons learned from previous rounds of New gTLDs, including on their costs, benefits and accessibility, the GAC will seek to ensure that any future rounds of New gTLDs:

- Promote competition, consumer trust and consumer choice;
- Contribute to reducing the digital divide, in particular through the support of applicants from underserved and underrepresented regions and the promotion of Internationalized Domain Names
- Incorporate appropriate security, stability and resiliency safeguards
- Include appropriate procedures and capabilities for the GAC to address unexpected issues arising from specific or categories of applications, in particular issues affecting the global public interest such as Geographical Names.

4) DNS Abuse

The GAC will engage proactively in the work of the ICANN community and will provide advice on the activities of ICANN as they relate to governments' concerns regarding DNS Abuse¹, in order to:

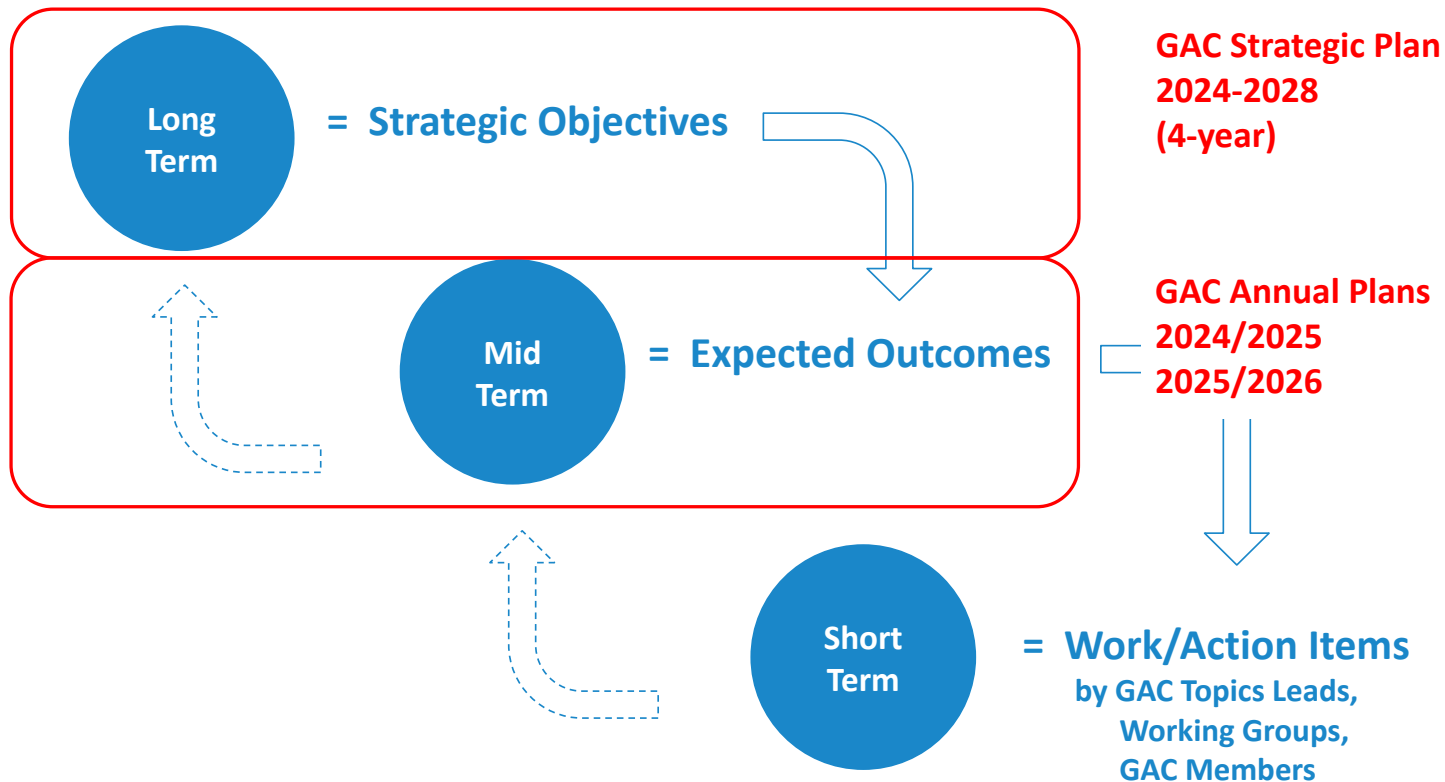
- Promote the security, stability, and resiliency of the DNS
- Reduce the incidence and harm of DNS Abuse in existing gTLDs and New gTLDs
- Support the continuous improvement of DNS Abuse mitigation and prevention standards and their effective enforcement by ICANN
- Review and identify Best Practices in preventing and mitigating DNS Abuse for wider adoption
- Review, assess and encourage implementation of concrete measures to combat Phishing, Pharming, Botnets, Malware and Spam, in partnership with relevant institutions that deal with the issue.
- Provide GAC members capacity building workshops, sessions and potentially whole programs, either on a permanent basis or on an ad-hoc approach, in order to enhance understanding of these issues.

In its work, keeping in mind the ever-evolving nature of DNS abuse, the GAC will seek to survey GAC Members and Observers to better understand how to address concerns and meet expectations of governments.

¹ See [GAC Statement on DNS Abuse](#) (18 September 2019)

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Reminder: Approach to Developing the GAC Strategic Plan



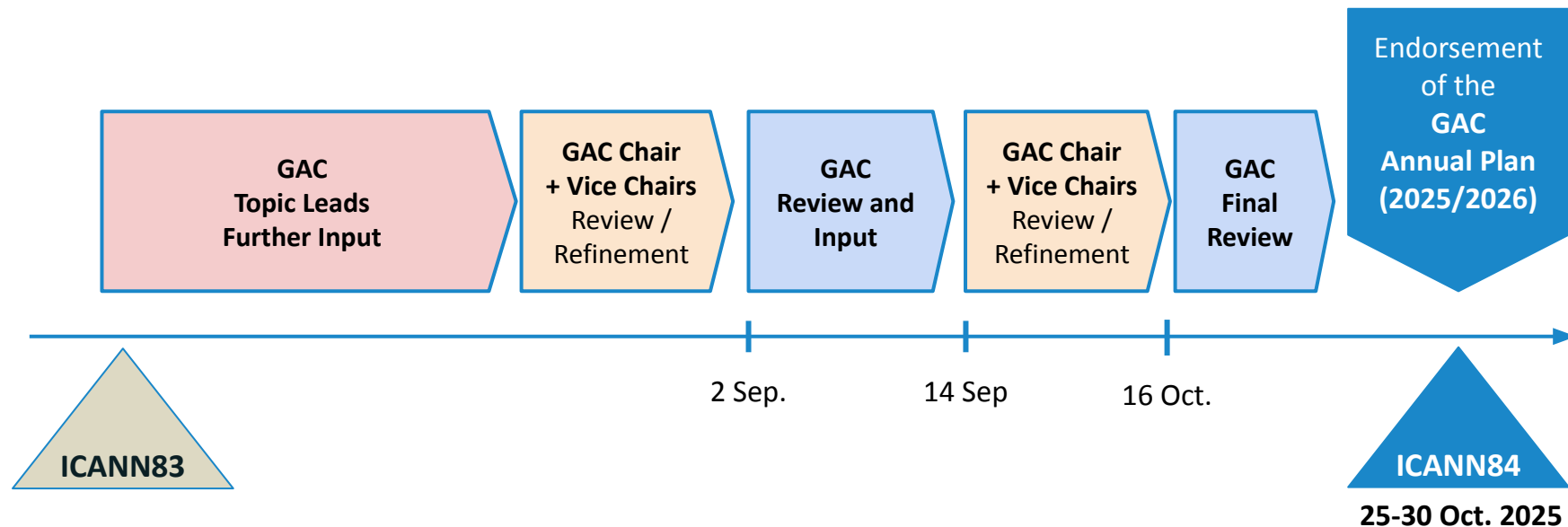
GAC Annual Plans 2024/2025 and 2025/2026

ICANN GAC Governmental Advisory Committee ANNUAL PLAN 2024/2025 Endorsed by the GAC on 17 June 2024	GAC Strategic Objective 1 - Role for Governments in ICANN 4-year GAC Strategic Objective (2024-2028) In support of reaffirming the critical role of governments in ICANN processes and procedures, the GAC will work to ensure that governments can effectively participate in ICANN processes and procedures. In particular, the GAC will work to assess whether current ICANN structures provide sufficient and meaningful opportunities for governments to participate in ICANN processes and procedures. Expected Outcomes in 2024/2025 1.1. Stakeholder's Understanding of the Role of Governments: To promote understanding of the role of governments in ICANN processes, including the GAC, leveraging the attendance and participation of senior levels of governments during the next High Level Government Meeting (HLGM), and particularly its discussion of ICANN, the ICANN Multistakeholder model and their role in the wider Internet Governance ecosystem. 1.2. Discussion of Current Issues at Senior Levels: To promote discussion of current issues relating to Digital Inclusion, and those relating to government as practicable. These discussions will be held as between governments and the ICANN community. 1.3. Non-Represented Governments: To promote governments who are not yet, or not currently, represented on the GAC with the collaboration of ICANN's Stakeholder and Government Engagement teams. Collaborate among current committee Members to encourage and support delegations who need to fill any delegate or representative vacancies. 1.4. Transparency of ICANN processes: Encourage citizens of the world through transparent and accessible tools. 1.5. Governmental Advisory Committee Influence on Policy Outcomes: Consider case studies and initial assessment of specific ICANN policy areas or processes where there are concerns with sufficient and meaningful opportunities for the Governmental Advisory Committee to initiate, develop, influence, and modify policy development and outcomes. Resources • ICANNB8 High Level Government Meeting: To promote understanding of the role of governments in ICANN processes, including the GAC, leveraging the attendance and participation of senior levels of governments during the next High Level Government Meeting (HLGM), and particularly its discussion of ICANN, the ICANN Multistakeholder model and their role in the wider Internet Governance ecosystem. • ICANN Government Engagement function: To promote governments who are not yet, or not currently, represented on the GAC with the collaboration of ICANN's Stakeholder and Government Engagement teams. Collaborate among current committee Members to encourage and support delegations who need to fill any delegate or representative vacancies. • Advisory Committees of ICANN: To promote governments who are not yet, or not currently, represented on the GAC with the collaboration of ICANN's Stakeholder and Government Engagement teams. Collaborate among current committee Members to encourage and support delegations who need to fill any delegate or representative vacancies. GAC 2024-2025 Annual Plan1	ICANN GAC Governmental Advisory Committee ANNUAL PLAN 2025/2026 For endorsement by the GAC in the ICANN84 GAC Dublin Communiqué	GAC Strategic Objective 1 - Role for Governments in ICANN 4-year GAC Strategic Objective (2024-2028) In support of reaffirming the critical role of governments within the ICANN multistakeholder model, the GAC will seek to ensure that governments can effectively pursue their public policy interests, through both existing and future ICANN processes and procedures. In particular, the GAC will work to assess whether current ICANN structures live up to the highest standards of openness, inclusiveness, transparency, and accountability in the spirit of the multistakeholder approach, and provide sufficient and meaningful opportunity for the GAC, to develop, influence, and modify policy processes and outcomes. Expected Outcomes in 2025/2026 1.1. Stakeholder's Understanding of the Role of Governments: Enable all stakeholders to gain a clearer understanding of the role of governments in ICANN processes, including the GAC, leveraging the attendance and participation of senior levels of governments during the next High Level Government Meeting (HLGM), and particularly its discussion of ICANN, the ICANN Multistakeholder model and their role in the wider Internet Governance ecosystem. 1.2. Discussion of Current Issues at Senior Levels - Next GAC HLGM: Identify the timing and location of the next GAC High Level Government Meeting (HLGM). 1.3. Non-Represented Governments: To promote broader participation in the GAC, seek to establish contacts with governments who are not yet, or not currently, represented on the GAC with the collaboration of ICANN's Stakeholder and Government Engagement teams. Collaborate among current committee Members to encourage and support delegations who need to fill any delegate or representative vacancies. 1.4. Promote the improvement of ICANN's multistakeholder approach in light of the principles and recommendations of the Sao Paulo Multistakeholder Guidelines (SPMG) including: 1.4.1 Transparency of ICANN processes: Encourage ICANN to make all its activities and work efforts accessible to governments and citizens of the world through open, inclusive, transparent and accountable processes, in the spirit of multi-stakeholder policy making. This will include ongoing encouragement from the GAC to the ICANN Board to adopt ICANN's new Statements of Interest (SOI) framework by the end of the 2025 calendar year and other accessible tools, where appropriate. 1.4.2 ICANN Review of Reviews: Contribute to the Community Consultation Group efforts regarding the new ICANN Review of Reviews work effort and maintain a watchful eye over the compliance by ICANN of the reviews foreseen in the Bylaws - including ATR4. 1.4.3 Establish a periodic informal exchange format between the GAC Leadership and the relevant Board Committee for a regular assessment of ICANN's performance in terms of openness, inclusiveness, transparency, and accountability in the spirit of the multistakeholder approach - drawing inspiration from the Sao Paulo Multistakeholder Guidelines and considering the ICANN CCG "Review of Reviews" Effort. 1.4.4 Work with ICANN Government Engagement team to showcase ICANN as a successful implementation of the multistakeholder model 1.5. Governmental Advisory Committee Influence on Policy Outcomes: Consider case studies and initial assessment of specific ICANN policy areas or processes where there are concerns with sufficient and meaningful opportunities for the Governmental Advisory Committee to initiate, develop, influence, and modify policy development and outcomes. Proposed GAC 2025-2026 Annual Plan - For GAC Endorsement in the ICANN84 GAC Dublin Communiqué
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Development of the GAC Annual Plan 2025/2026

For GAC Endorsement in the Dublin Communiqué

Annual Plan 2025/2026: Reminder of Milestones To ICANN84



Walkthrough of Expected Outcomes in the GAC Annual Plan 2025/2026

Current GAC Strategic Objectives “Caretakers”

1. Role for Governments in ICANN

Jorge Cancio (Switzerland)

2. Effectiveness of the GAC

Zeina Bouharb (Lebanon)

Ian Sheldon (Australia)

3. Future Round of New gTLDs

Marco Hogewoning (Netherlands)

Thiago Dal-Toe (Colombia)

4. DNS Abuse

Thiago Dal-Toe (Colombia)

5. Domain Registration Data

Ian Sheldon (Australia)

Thiago Dal-Toe (Colombia)

6. Universal Acceptance

Christine Arida (Egypt)

7. New Technology

Nico Caballero (GAC Chair)

Christine Arida (Egypt)

8. Internet Governance Awareness

Christine Arida (Egypt)

Jorge Cancio (Switzerland)

9. Internet Number Resources

Marco Hogewoning (Netherlands)

GAC Annual Plan 2025/2026

1.4.2 ICANN Review of Reviews: Contribute to the Community Consultation Group efforts regarding the new ICANN Review of Reviews work effort and maintain a watchful eye over the compliance by ICANN of the reviews foreseen in the Bylaws - including ATR4.

Discussion:

- Purpose of Reviews
- Questions for ICANN Plenary Discussion during ICANN84
- The GAC's unique situation per the ICANN Bylaws

Review of Reviews Cross Community Group (Reviews CCG) | Draft Purpose of Reviews Statement - 21 October 2025

The purpose of reviews is to assess whether ICANN is fulfilling its Mission, Commitments and Core Values as set out in the ICANN Bylaws in a transparent and accountable manner, by reviewing:

a) ICANN's execution of its commitments in its Articles of Incorporation, By-Laws, Strategic Plan and Financial and Operational Plan, namely that:

- ICANN's activities, processes and culture remain consistent with its mission, commitments and values
- Board, Officers and senior management remain accountable to the global multistakeholder community (Empowered Community)
- ICANN is meeting its stated goals and objectives
- ICANN is maintaining and where necessary improving robust mechanisms for public input, inclusiveness, accountability and transparency

Expected Outcome 1.4.2 - ICANN Review of Reviews Discussion (3/5)

- Outcomes of ICANN's decision making are in the public interest, transparent, and accountable to the global multistakeholder community (Empowered Community) in accordance with the IANA Stewardship Transition
- Communication channels are effective and accessible, and decisions and outcomes are reported clearly and openly
- ICANN duly takes into account the public policy advice of governments and public authorities

b) The results of the SO/AC/NC Continuous Improvement Program as they relate to each SO/AC/NC and to each other

c) Whether the overall structure and components of ICANN and its SOs, ACs and NC are fit for purpose

d) Whether the ongoing reviews in the future are fit for purpose

So as to, where necessary, recommend improvements or paths toward improvement for any problematic issues found in the reviews, to the Board and Empowered Community.

Questions

- Do you think that this first draft of the purpose of reviews is heading in the right direction?
- What is missing from our list of purposes?
- What are the things you think should be reviewed?
- Complete this sentence: a review succeeds if it...?

Expected Outcome 1.4.2 - ICANN Review of Reviews Discussion (5/5)

ARTICLE 4 ACCOUNTABILITY AND REVIEW - <https://www.icann.org/en/governance/bylaws#article4>

Section 4.4. PERIODIC REVIEW OF ICANN STRUCTURE AND OPERATIONS

*(a) The Board shall cause a periodic review of the performance and operation of each Supporting Organization, each Supporting Organization Council, each Advisory Committee (**other than the Governmental Advisory Committee**), and the Nominating Committee (as defined in Section 8.1) by an entity or entities independent of the organization under review. [...]*

*(b) **The Governmental Advisory Committee shall provide its own review mechanisms.***

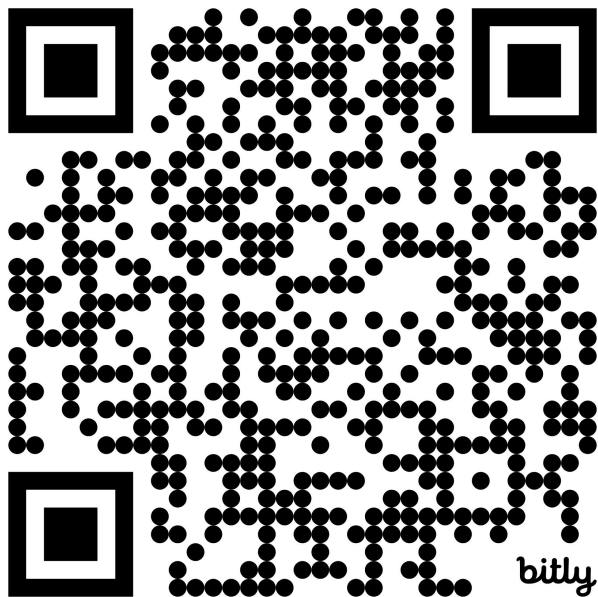
Section 4.6. SPECIFIC REVIEWS

(b) Accountability and Transparency Review

(ii) The issues that the review team for the Accountability and Transparency Review (the "Accountability and Transparency Review Team") may assess include, but are not limited to, the following:

(B) assessing the role and effectiveness of the GAC's interaction with the Board and with the broader ICANN community, and making recommendations for improvement to ensure effective consideration by ICANN of GAC input on the public policy aspects of the technical coordination of the DNS;

Expected Outcome 2.1 - GAC Effectiveness Survey



<https://bit.ly/gac-survey-so2-wave1>

- **Short survey** as part of GAC Continuous Improvement (Strategic Objective #2)
- Please respond based on your personal experience **as an individual GAC participant**
- Several responses per GAC delegation are welcome.
- **Response rate** (GAC Delegations represented)
 - Current: 10%
 - **Goal: 80%**