

GAC USRWG Terms of Reference

April 2015

To follow are the Terms of Reference for an internal working group of ICANN's Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC).

The overall objective of the working group is to increase the level of understanding and knowledge of the current GAC representatives from GAC member nations from under-served Regions, leading to an increase in meaningful participation from these regions, while simultaneously increasing the number of GAC members from under-served regions, resulting in an increase in the quantity of GAC membership from these Regions.

The focus of the working group will be on regions **under-served by the DNS industry, and on least developed economies and small island developing states**.^[1] A particular focus will be on under-served economies/countries from the Africa, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) regions.^[2]

An under-served region is defined as one that:

- Does not have a well developed DNS and/or associated industry or economy; and/or
- Has low awareness within its government of ICANN, ICANN's role and functions and policy processes and the way that these policies affect it.

It should be noted that these Terms of Reference form a 'living' document – this document may be revised over time to incorporate lessons learned and changed circumstances.

Objectives

GAC's Under-served Regions Working Group will develop a range of support, advice and assistance mechanisms aimed at:

1. Increasing the number and participation of GAC members from least developed economies and small island developing states
2. Increasing the knowledge, understanding and capacity of GAC representatives from the least developed economies and small island developing states to enable them to engage with ICANN policy processes (and specifically the GAC) in order to:
 - Increase participation and engagement from under-served regions during future new gTLD rounds.

- Encourage growth and development of the domain name industry (including registries and registrars) in regions currently under-served.

As appropriate, the working group will liaise and work with other working groups or initiatives (within GAC and within the ICANN community) that may be relevant to the needs of under-served regions, countries, economies or states.

Working Group Members

The GAC's Under-served Regions Working Group will be co-chaired by:

- Mr Karel Douglas (Trinidad and Tobago, co-chair)
- Mr Tracy Hackshaw, (UPU, co-chair)

All GAC representatives and observers are welcome to join the Under-served Regions Working Group.

Working group participants are expected to be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge or expertise about aspects of the objectives of the working group; and
- Commit to actively participate in the activities of the working group on an ongoing basis.

All participants will be listed in the working group's online workspace, within the members-only section of the GAC website.

The working group will be assisted and supported by the ACIG GAC Secretariat and the ICANN GAC Support team.

Deliverables and Timeframes

As a first step the working group should establish and adopt an initial work plan and an associated schedule (timeline). Relevant activities will include:

1. Liaising with relevant areas of ICANN including applicant support, global stakeholder engagement, government relations, Regional Vice-Presidents, ICANN Fellowships; the ICANN Academy, among others.

2. Liaising with the GAC Leadership for GAC-Travel Support Rules - Pre-approved Organisations to ensure that the output of the Under-Served Regions Working Group is incorporated in the GAC-Travel Support Rules
3. Facilitation of the ccTLD Survey among GAC members. This is to shed light on the way that ccTLD's are managed and provide the Under-Served Regions with lessons learned from others and practical guidance for strong management of their own ccTLDs;
4. Grow and develop the domain name industry (including registries and registrars) in regions currently under-served;
5. Engage the gTLD Review Working Group and share challenges and lessons learned by Under-Served Regions back into that group to contribute to outcomes for the next round of new gTLDs;
6. Engage the Auction Fees Working Group and the develop a proposal on how Auction fees might be purposed to benefit Under-Served Regions;
7. Capacity Building, including but not limited to:
 1. more translated material for GAC members in Under-Served Regions
 2. development of ICANN issues and policy briefings from the ACIG GAC Secretariat, targeted at the local level for these region
 3. face-to-face meetings during formal GAC meetings. Starting with Dublin (October 2015) or Marrakech (February 2016).[\[3\]](#)
 4. a range of best practice support, advice and assistance mechanisms aimed at meeting the working group's objectives
 5. create a GAC Newcomer Travel Kit

The work plan should include the timing and methods for informing the GAC of progress made by the working group. As a minimum, the Co-Chairs of the working group shall update the GAC about the activities and challenges of the working group, and its progress towards meeting its objectives, at each face-to-face GAC meeting. The initial work plan and schedule should be published on the web page of the working group. The Co-Chairs will be responsible for maintaining and updating the work plan and schedule and for informing the working group and the GAC Leadership Team of changes made to the work plan and schedule.

At the discretion of the Co-Chairs an email list may be established to aid the work of the group. Details of how to subscribe to the email list will be published on the web page of the working group.

Process for the Development of a Position or Statement

The working group, at its own discretion, may publish an Interim (or draft) Paper, which will contain a review and analysis of the topics it considers relevant, or a draft Statement.

The schedule for drafting and decision-making relating to a Position Paper or Statement should be included in the work plan.

In developing a working group Position Paper or Statement the working group shall seek to act by consensus. The consensus view of the members of the working group

shall be articulated in the paper. If full consensus cannot be reached, the co-chairs will seek to express the range of views of the WG's members.

Such a paper will be circulated to the GAC for comment, and may be published with a view to seeking input from the wider ICANN community and/or relevant stakeholders outside the community.

Any such Interim Paper or Statement must clearly state that it is produced by an internal GAC Working Group and does not represent a consensus GAC view.

After revising an interim Position Paper or Statement, the working group may seek formal GAC endorsement or support for the document. In the event that the GAC does not support or endorse a Position Paper or Statement, the working group may, at its discretion, reconsider and/or revise the Position Paper or Statement.

[1] As defined by UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (<http://unohrrls.org/> and specifically <http://unohrrls.org/about-ldcs> and <http://unohrrls.org/about-sids/>)

[2] Neither Latin America nor any specific geographic region will be excluded. However, a special focus on the already institutionalized cross-geographical grouping of African, Caribbean & Pacific (see ACP - www.acp.int) countries is being executed in alignment with (and as a "quick win" follow-up to) the recent efforts in ICT Policy & Internet Governance capacity building of the ACP countries through the EU@CP-ICT Programme, 9th European Development Fund (EDF). Similar efforts in other cross-regional groupings will certainly be considered for attention by this WG and identified for development following, or in parallel with, the execution of the ACP Pilot.

[3] Given the relatively rapid growth of the GAC in membership since the last capacity building event (ICANN47, Durban, July 2013) it may be timely to hold another. Both the Dublin and Marrakech meetings are likely to be attended by high numbers of GAC representatives from developing economies.