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Item 5 of the Provisional Agenda

Report of the liaison officers and international organizations

ICANN Report *

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ICANN REPORT TO THE 28TH UNGEGN SESSION

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General Information About ICANN

The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) was formed in 1998 to coordinate the Internet's unique identifiers around the world. It is a not-for-profit public-benefit corporation with participants from all over the world dedicated to keeping the Internet secure, stable and interoperable.

ICANN is responsible for managing and coordinating the Domain Name System (DNS) to ensure that every address is unique and that all users of the Internet can find all valid addresses. ICANN does this by overseeing the distribution of unique IP addresses and domain names. It also ensures that each domain name maps to the correct IP address. Please see <http://www.icann.org> for more information.

Part of the hierarchy of the DNS includes the identification of top-level domains, the label that comes after the last dot in a domain name. These include generic top-level domains (gTLDs) such as .com and country-code top-level domains (ccTLDs), such as .ca and .fr. Within ccTLDs, the DNS now includes Internationalized ccTLDs as well, such as .한국 (Republic of Korea in Hangeul) and .рф (RF, for Russian Federation in Cyrillic).

IDN ccTLD Process

The Internationalized Domain Name (IDN) ccTLD Fast Track Process enables countries and territories that use languages based on scripts other than Latin to offer users domain names in non-Latin characters. ICANN enabled this process for countries to request top-level domains that reflect their country's name in local scripts.

The IDN ccTLD Fast Track process was launched on 16 November 2009, and all activities related to the development and implementation of the Fast Track process can be found at <http://www.icann.org/en/topics/idn/fast-track>. To date, 32 countries and territories have completed the string evaluation stage of the process. Of these, 26 countries/territories (represented by 36 IDN ccTLDs) are delegated in the DNS root zone. A complete list of countries and territories that have completed string evaluation is available at <http://www.icann.org/en/topics/idn/fast-track/string-evaluation-completion-en.htm>.

Countries and territories requesting IDN ccTLDs from ICANN will only be granted IDN ccTLDs matching their country or territory name in an official language and script (non-Latin) for the country and territory as listed in the *Technical Reference*

Manual for the standardization of geographical names (part III) 2007, and subsequent updates (UNGEGN), or which is documented as a meaningful representation of their country name by an internationally recognized linguistic expert.

Within the Fast Track Process, ICANN has utilized assistance from UNGEGN to identify internationally recognized experts for those countries and territories which may need such expertise in their requests. Additionally, ICANN sought assistance from UNGEGN experts in creating examples of documentation that would demonstrate that a requested TLD is a meaningful representation of a country name.

IDN Variant TLD Program

An IDN variant TLD can be defined as one that may look like or be considered exchangeable with another TLD by a user of the related writing system. For example, a string in traditional Chinese commonly has an equivalent in simplified Chinese. A potential example is: 顶级域名 and 頂級域名.

Working with community volunteers, ICANN and Internet community participants realized the need to identify a system to variant labels. This led to the creation of the [Procedure to Develop and Maintain the Label Generation Rules for the Root Zone in Respect of IDNA Labels](#) (LGR Procedure). ICANN is currently in the process of implementing the procedure, which calls for community volunteers to establish and participate in panels that define the Label Generation Rules (LGR) for a given script or writing system used by a community of Internet users. Such panels are known as the Generation Panels. There is a pressing need for these panels, as LGRs must be established for each script to create a set of rules for IDNA labels in the root zone. Each panel should be comprised of volunteers with a diverse range of interests, expertise in a variety of disciplines, ranging from technical to linguistic script expertise, and share a commitment to driving the proliferation of a multilingual Internet.

ICANN is pleased to report that an Arabic LGR panel is now seated and working diligently to create the label generation rules for the Arabic script. There are significant efforts underway in the Chinese, Japanese and Korean communities to form their panels. However, panels for Cyrillic, Georgian, Greek, Hebrew, Latin, Neo-Brahmi scripts or any other interested script communities still need to be

formed. More information is available at:

<https://community.icann.org/display/croscomlgrprocedure/Root+Zone+LGR+Project> or by contacting the ICANN IDN team at identlds@icann.org.

Joint Working Group on Country & Territory Names

At the ICANN meeting in Singapore (23-27 March 2014), a new cross-community working group on the Use of Country and Territory Names as TLDs (CWG-UCTN) was jointly chartered by ICANN's Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) and Country-code Names Supporting Organization (ccNSO), see <http://gnso.icann.org/en/announcements/announcement-10apr14-en.htm>. The working group is currently seeking volunteers.

Participants in the working group will review current the current status of representations of country and territory names, as they exist under ICANN policies, guidelines and procedures and provide advice on the development of a consistent and uniform definitional framework across ICANN Supporting Organizations and Advisory Committees. The focus of this working group is on the use of country and territory names at the top-level in the DNS.

New Generic Top-Level Domains

Since the last report at the 27th UNGEGN Session in July 2012, ICANN & the Internet community have made significant progress in the introduction of new generic Top-Level Domains into the DNS. Through 18 April 2014, ICANN has signed contracts for 386 registry agreements and delegated nearly 200 new generic top-level domain names (<http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/announcements-and-media/announcement-2-18apr14-en>).

Many of these new generic TLDs reflect geographic, cultural and linguistic terms, and include such names as: Africa, Bayern, Berlin, Brussels, Budapest, BZH, Capetown, Cologne, Durban, EUS, GAL, Gent, Hamburg, Joburg, Koeln, KR, London, Miami, Moscow, Nagoya, NYC, Okinawa, Paris, Quebec, Rio, Ruhr, Ryukyu, Saarland, Scot, Tokyo, Vegas, Vlaanderen, Wien, among others soon to be contracted.