

**Twenty-ninth session  
Bangkok, Thailand, 25 – 29 April 2016**

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**Item 5 of the Provisional Agenda**

**Reports of the liaison officers and international organizations**

ICANN Report \*

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# ICANN Report to 29<sup>th</sup> UNGEGN Sessions

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Patrick Jones, ICANN Global Stakeholder Engagement | 11 April 2016

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# ICANN Report to 29<sup>th</sup> UNGEGN Sessions

The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) is a global organization formed in 1998 whose mission is to ensure the secure and stable operation of the Internet's unique identifier system. ICANN also facilitates policy development by stakeholders from around the globe reasonably related to those technical functions. The ICANN multistakeholder model brings together thousands of representatives from large and small businesses, technical experts, civil society, researchers, academics and end users from all over the world.

ICANN is responsible for managing and coordinating the Domain Name System (DNS) to ensure 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 Internet Protocol addresses and domain names. ICANN also ensures that each domain name maps to the correct IP address. Please see [www.icann.org](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 .th. Within ccTLDs, the DNS includes Internationalized ccTLDs as well, such as .한국 (Republic of Korea in Hangul) and .рф (RF, for Russian Federation in Cyrillic).

## **IDN Program Update**

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

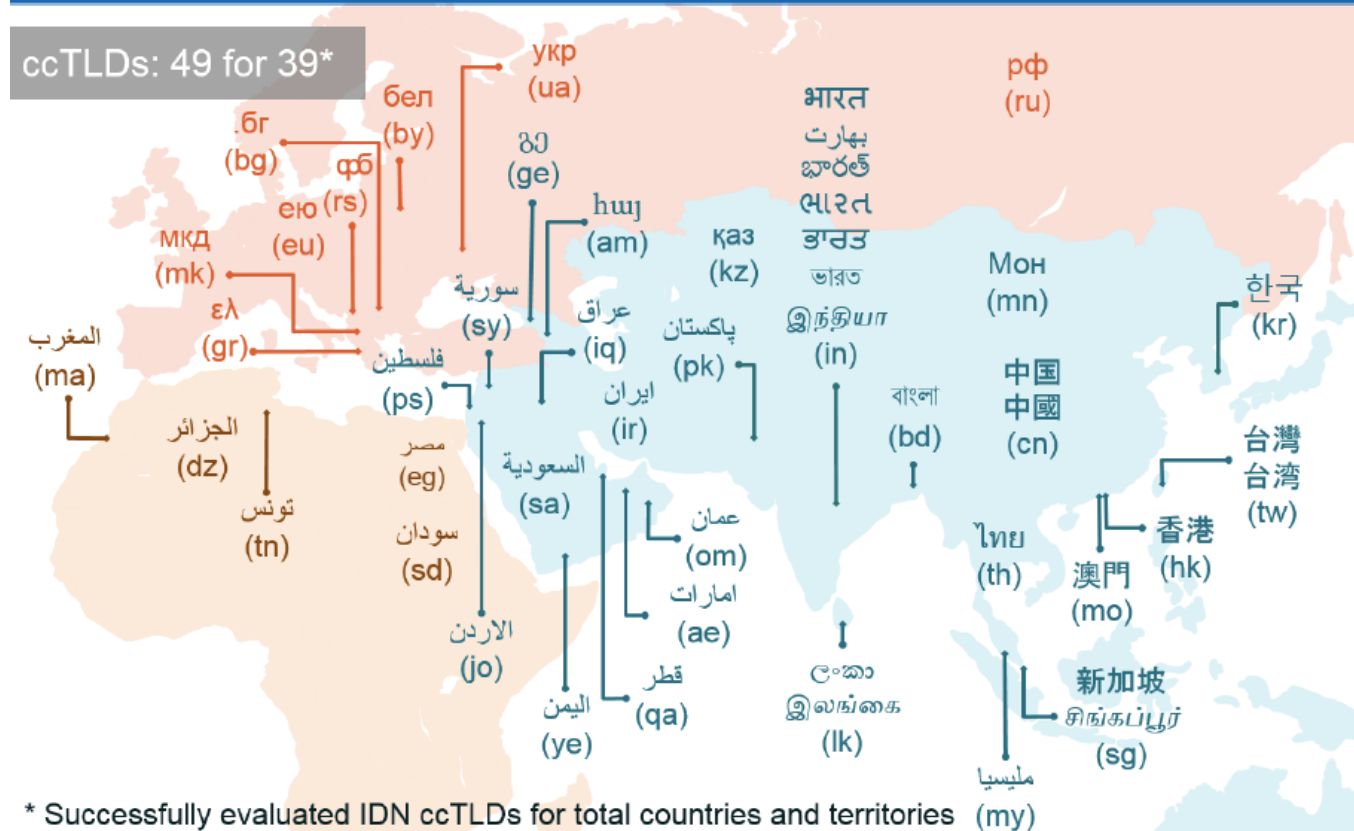
The IDN ccTLD Fast Track Process was launched on 16 November 2009, and all activities related to the development and implementation of the Fast Track process can be found at <http://www.icann.org/en/topics/idn/fast-track>. A complete list of countries and territories that have completed string evaluation is available at <http://www.icann.org/en/topics/idn/fast-track/string-evaluation-completion-en.htm>.

As of 1 March 2016, a total of 49 strings from 39 countries and territories have been successfully evaluated for delegation through the IDN ccTLD Fast Track Process. Of these, 43 labels from 33 countries and territories have been delegated in the root zone. The most recent evaluations include EU (in Cyrillic), Macao, Greece and Bulgaria.

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 historically 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. ICANN has been using the national institutions recognized by UNGEGN for recent cases.

## IDN Country Code Top-Level Domains



Another aspect of the IDN program includes work on the treatment of variants. 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.

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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). At the most recent ICANN international public meeting in Marrakech, Morocco, the IDN Program provided an update on progress toward implementation of label generation rules and IDN variant TLDs (see IDN Update, 9 March 2016, <https://meetings.icann.org/en/marrakech55/schedule/wed-idn/presentation-idn-09mar16-en>). Proposals have been submitted by the Armenian and Arabic script Label Generation Panels, with 19 label generation panels covering over 28 languages and scripts currently forming, active or seated. Updates from the Khmer and Lao script generation panels were presented at the ICANN meeting in Morocco.

### **Generic Top-Level Domain Program Update**

Since the last report to the 28<sup>th</sup> UNGEGN sessions in April 2014, ICANN has continued to process applications received in the 2012 round for new generic TLDs. As of 11 April 2016, there are 1281 TLDs in the root zone. Many of these are community and geographic labels, representing cities or regions, such as Abu Dhabi, Alsace, Amsterdam, Barcelona, Bayern, Berlin, Brussels, Budapest, BZH, Capetown, Cologne, Corsica, Cymru, Dubai, Durban, EUS, GAL, Gent, Hamburg, Helsinki, Istanbul, Joburg, Koeln, KR, Kyoto, London, Melbourne, Miami, Moscow, Nagoya, NYC, Okinawa, Osaka, Paris, Quebec, Rio, Ruhr, Ryukyu, Saarland, Scot, Stockholm, Sydney, Taipei, Tokyo, Vegas, Vlaanderen, Wales, and Wien.

Several of these city and regional TLDs are promoting the adoption of these domains for local services. There are now over 300 million domain names registered worldwide, 16.6 million of these registrations are in new gTLD extensions launched since 2014.

As of 1 March, a total of 80 IDN gTLDs have been delegated in the root zone (a total of 123 IDNs delegated if IDN ccTLDs are included). A number of these delegations include IDNs representing cities or geographic names, such as .dubai in Arabic and .佛山 (city of Foshan in Chinese).

### **Cross-Community Working Group on Country/Territory Names**

The Cross-Community Working Group on the Use of Country and Territory Names as TLDs (<http://ccnso.icann.org/workinggroups/ccwg-unct.htm>) has been working since March 2014 to document the current status of representations of country and territory names at the top-level of the DNS. The Working Group has been considering the historical treatment of two and three-character codes as TLDs. There is no current consensus on removing restrictions on applications for new gTLDs matching ISO-3166-1 alpha-3 codes. The Working Group met at the recent ICANN international public meeting in Marrakech, Morocco and is continuing to develop a document outlining the treatment of three-character codes as TLDs.

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This Working Group is open to new participants from UNGEGN, governments and other stakeholder groups. The Working Group is scheduled to meet in person at the upcoming ICANN Policy Forum in Helsinki, Finland, 27-30 June 2016. More information on the next ICANN meeting can be found at <https://meetings.icann.org/en/helsinki56>.



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