To: Chair ICANN Board of Directors
CC: CEO ICANN Org, ccNSO appointed Board Members

Re: Closure ccNSO PDP 2 and evolution Fast Track Process

Dear Cherine,

As you will know, the Fast Track process was introduced in November 2009 to meet the pressing need of some communities to introduce IDN ccTLDs and to provide an experimental basis to inform the efforts to develop a policy that would replace the Fast Track Process. It was agreed that the Fast Track process would need to be replaced by a process that is grounded in a policy developed through the ccNSO Policy Development Process.

In September 2013, the ccNSO submitted the ccNSO Recommendation for an overall policy on the selection of IDN ccTLD strings and inclusion of IDN ccTLDs in the ccNSO (hereafter, ccNSO PDP 2). However, by mutual agreement at the time, the Board did not discuss the proposals nor has taken a vote on the ccNSO PDP 2 as required under the ccNSO Policy Development Process defined in the Bylaws. The Board and ccNSO agreed to await the introduction of the Extended Process Similarity Review Panel, and - later - the conclusion of the third Fast Track Process review.

As you will recall, the ICANN Board of Directors and ccNSO have discussed and worked on various aspects of the selection of IDN ccTLD strings and related matters under the Fast Track process. The latest iteration was the introduction of the risk mitigation panel, which was proposed to review measures to address possible confusing similarities issues identified by the DNS Stability Panel or EPSRP. With the introduction of the Risk Mitigation Procedure under the Fast Track Process, the third review of the Fast Track Process was concluded. As we have indicated earlier, the ccNSO believes that it is time to focus on the development of policy to replace the Fast Track Process. Such a policy would include for example ccNSO proposals on how to define and manage IDN variant labels for current and future (IDN cc)TLDs as requested by the Board in its resolution of 4 March 2019.

To prepare for the next steps, the ccNSO Council tasked a Review Team to conduct a high-level review of the proposed policy to understand whether there are any gaps and/or topics that need to be included, replaced and/ or updated in ccNSO PDP 2 to replace the Fast Track process. The Review Team was also asked to propose method(s) to address the identified issues.

On the assumption that it is easier to use ccNSO PDP 2 as basis, but ensure that IDN ccTLDs should be enabled to become part of the ccNSO as soon as possible, the Review Team recommended the ccNSO Council to:
1. **Launch the ccNSO PDP 4.** Launch a new ccNSO Policy Development Process in accordance with Annex B of the ICANN Bylaws, building on ccNSO PDP 2 and the experience of the Fast Track Process to address the limited set of issues identified by the Review Team. In some areas a more detailed approach is proposed (confusing similarity review and variant management) to ensure a possible mechanism to optimise and streamline the efforts to harmonize the development processes, procedures and/or criteria pertaining to the selection of IDN (cc)TLD strings and to meet the Board request for a coordinated effort.
2. **Request changes to Article 10 ICANN Bylaws**. The Review Team recommends that after consulting the ccTLD community, the ccNSO Council proposes to the ICANN Board an amendment to Article 10 of the ICANN Bylaws to enable the inclusion of IDN ccTLDs in the ccNSO. The changes are those foreseen in the 2013 ccNSO Recommended Policy. The Review Team also noted that the proposed ccNSO membership definition should be updated anyway to address the 2016 change which was already identified by the ccNSO Council.

To ensure the focus will be on the future development of the policy and enable the inclusion of IDN ccTLDs in the ccNSO as soon as feasible, we have already requested the Board that no further steps with respect to the evolution of the Fast Track Process are taken.

In our view it is time to take the next step: Under the current ccNSO Policy Development Process as defined in Annex B of the ICANN Bylaws, there is no mechanism that enables us to formally end a Policy Development Process before completion. To avoid confusion and to mark a formal end to ccNSO PDP 2, we ask the ICANN Board to agree that the recommendations of ccNSO PDP 2 are passed back to the ccNSO by the Board and that no further steps are taken with respect to the proposed overall policy recommended by ccNSO PDP 2. For avoidance of doubt, we believe that up and until a ccNSO Policy that will replace the Fast Track Process has been developed, adopted and implemented, the Fast Track Process should remain available to the community to request IDNccTLD strings.

Once the ccNSO PDP 2 has been passed back, the ccNSO Council will prepare both the launch of ccNSO PDP 4 and the request to change Article 10 of the ICANN Bylaws.

On behalf of the ccNSO Council,

Katrina Sataki, Chair