

GAC Liaison's Report

28 July, 2020

Dialogue between At-Large and the GAC continued in the spring and summer of 2020 in spite of COVID-19 restraints and actually developed new, issue-focused forms of cooperation on key topics of interest to both.

On **20 May, 2020**, an important GAC Leadership delegation participated in a **CPWG single-issue call** on registry commitments and the role of GAC advice and GAC early warnings, where the topic leads from both AC's presented the current stage of their deliberations on the topic.

Transcript of the call is available at

<https://community.icann.org/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=134514430&preview=/134514430/136120452/atlarge-cpwg-role-gac-advice-20may20-en.doc>

Due to time constraints, an ALAC-GAC meeting at ICANN68 was replaced by an **ALAC-GAC Leadership call, attended by the leads of relevant topics**, during the week preceding ICANN68, on **17 June 2020**.

On the agenda were Subsequent Procedures, EPDP and DNS Abuse, with a view to developing mutually supporting positions on issues of common end user – government interests.

On SubPro, Justine gave a comprehensive presentation of At-Large views on how to make applicant support and community application processes more effective and meaningful; on issues related to GAC category one safeguards; on some geonames issues, and on the CCT recommendations to be implemented before the next round. The presentation included a number of concrete questions to the GAC about their stand on the issues. The GAC Chair thanked Justine for a thorough and excellent presentation and promised the GAC would try to digest the information shared and to respond to it. On the prerequisites to the next round, she noted that at recommendations related to DNS Abuse were prioritized by the GAC to be dealt with prior to any new rounds, as stated in its Montreal communiqué.

Summary of the Justine's presentation and requested input from the GAC:

<https://community.icann.org/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=137920578&preview=/137920578/138969933/2020-06-17%20ALAC-GAC%20Leadership%20Call%20-%20SubPro%20Summary.pdf>

Under the agenda item on DNS abuse, Joanna and GAC Chair Manal shared information about relevant sessions planned by both AC's at ICANN68.

On EPDP, Alan Greenberg noted that At-Large and the GAC are pretty well in lockstep on issues that are important for both – natural vs. legal, accuracy, e-mail, the evolution mechanism, and GAC Chair Manal confirmed that the GAC shares At-Large's concern on many, if not all EPDP issues.

Transcript of the 17 June call is available at

<https://community.icann.org/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=137920578&preview=/137920578/140248486/atlarge-alac-gac-leadership-17jun20-en.doc>

In addition, on **9 July 2020**, a call of the **Public Safety Working Group (PSWG) of the GAC with the participation of interested At-Large members** at the initiative of the former, originally scheduled for the Cancún meeting and postponed a couple of times, finally took place.

Its agenda covered Access to gTLD registration data (effectiveness of current interim arrangements, including EPDP Phase 1 implementation) and DNS Abuse (implementation of CCT and RDS-WHOIS2 recommendations and enforceability of Public Interest Commitments PIC's). Due to its "informal" nature, it was not recorded so that a transcript is not available.

XXX

The threat of COVID-19 is not over, and nobody knows when full-scale physical meetings of ICANN can be resumed. So far, it has been possible to develop cooperation on issues of interest to both At-Large and the GAC by remote means. If constraints continue, it will be more and more important to keep up a meaningful, results-oriented dialogue on key topics of interest to both AC's, lest the dialogue turns into a formality. GAC itself will be challenged by the absence of face-to-face meetings, which until now have been necessary for adopting GAC Consensus advice.

On the other hand, the pandemic has provided an important lesson to both At-Large and the GAC. Unashamedly quoting myself from the COVID-19/end users session of ICANN68,

At our meetings with the GAC, we used to point out that citizens and internet end users are same people. With pandemic lessons learned, we can now say that during an emergency, people can continue to play their full role as citizens **because** they are internet end users, and good at that. In an emergency like this, resiliency of the fabric of the entire society depends on the Internet. I think – I hope – that the lesson has not been lost on governments or on any other stakeholders.

This is a good starting point for cooperation, also on local/national level, something that has been suggested at our joint meetings.

Yrjö Länsipuro

