

“UA Day”

Proposal from UASG

Proposal for a “UA Day”

- During the UA Sessions in ICANN73, UASG had proposed an annual **UA Day** (the name is tentative)
- The concept is based on UNESCO ‘s International Mother Language Day:
 - Celebrated annually on 21 Feb
 - Originally proposed by Bangladesh, and approved by UNESCO in 1999
 - The vision of the initiative includes:
 - Promote cultural and linguistic diversity for sustainable societies;
 - Preserve the differences in cultures and languages that foster tolerance and respect for others; and
 - Ensure multilingual and multicultural societies thrive through their languages which transmit and preserve traditional knowledge and cultures in a sustainable way.

"Technology can provide new tools for protecting linguistic diversity. [...] Put simply, they make local dialects a shared heritage. However, because the Internet poses a risk of linguistic uniformization, we must also be aware that technological progress will serve plurilingualism only as long as we make the effort to ensure that it does".

— Audrey Azoulay, Director-General of UNESCO, on the occasion of International Mother Language Day

The UA Proposal

- UASG proposes to identify a date in February (starting with Feb 2023) which will be celebrated annually, in order to highlight the importance of Universal Acceptance of Domain Names and Email Addresses, both for operational reasons as well as a fundamental step towards the multilingual Internet
- UASG requests early support from other AC/SOs, especially ALAC and GAC, for this initiative so that they can plan activities
- In the ICANN73 session, GAC has promised support. On behalf of ALAC, I have offered conditional support (after consultations with CPWG)

“UA Day” Activities for At-Large

- A coordinated, global series of activities that would involve:
 - RALOS, ALSes, individual members, ALS members
 - Linguistic and script communities
 - UASG, UA Ambassadors, UA Local Initiatives
 - Governments, Technical Community, Business
 - ICANN Org, Internet Society, UN IGF
 - Unicode Consortium, WHATWG and other standards organizations, UNESCO
- Activities could include informational webinars, technical consultations, gathering of end-user perceptions, assistive technology demonstrations and more (TBD)
- Since the focus is on languages/scripts, these events may at be national/subnational level, but regional events (eg., LAC, Francophone Africa) and global events also feasible

Expected Outcomes

- Enhanced global-local focus on IDNs and Universal Acceptance
- Commitments made by Governments and Tech Companies to support closing of UA Gaps
- Language/script communities made aware of the importance of IDNs and UA
- ALAC and At-Large made more visible to local communities
- Ability for the ICANN community to assess interest in IDNs and UA within language communities
- Possible positive influence on the next round of IDN gTLDs

Thank you

Questions?