YESIM SAGLAM: Good morning, good afternoon, good evening to everyone. Welcome to the AFRALO universal acceptance session taking place on Tuesday of May 2022 at 13:30 UTC. In the interest of time, we will not do a roll call, but all the attendees' names will be noticed on the Wiki agenda page after this session.

We have English and French interpretation providers on today's call. A kind of reminder to please speak clearly and slowly to allow for accurate interpretation, and also, please state your names every time you speak, not only for the transcription purposes, but also to allow the interpreters to identify you on the other language channel.

Thank you all very much for joining. Now I would like to leave the floor to Seun Ojedeji, the chair of AFRALO for opening remarks and then to Pierre Dandjinou. Over to you, Seun, thanks so much.

SEUN OJDEJI Hello, everyone. Thank you. Before I hand over to my colleague, Aziz, who will be doing the opening remarks, can I ask that—I actually shared the Zoom link on the list. That happened to be my own Zoom link. So, I see a couple of Seun Ojdeji on the call even though I only have one account. So I would like to request that if you have that name, please update your name, your Zoom name please so that it will actually reflect as the right person.

So with this, I would like to hand this over to Aziz who is actually going to do the opening remark, because he may not be on the call

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Note: The following is the output resulting from transcribing an audio file into a word/text document. Although the transcription is largely accurate, in some cases may be incomplete or inaccurate due to inaudible passages and grammatical corrections. It is posted as an aid to the original audio file, but should not be treated as an authoritative record.

throughout. The agenda is actually to be swapped. Item one should be swapped to item eight, and vice versa. So I will do the closing. Over to you, Aziz. Thank you.

AZIZ HILALI: Thank you, Seun. So welcome to this first AFRALO universal acceptance training session. Thank you to all those who registered for this universal acceptance training session. As you know, ICANN has been working on this issue for several years. New users are and will increasingly be people who only speak their mother language, the alphabet of which is not necessarily that of Latin characters.

These next users are generally from developing country fluent only in their native languages. So they should not be excluded from the full Internet experience simply because they can't use a domain name or email addresses in the language and script of the their [choice.]

In fact, statistics show only about 36% of the world's population uses Latin alphabet. The main intention of universal acceptance is to adapt the Internet to these new users to build their own online spaces and identities. So, it is also necessary to adapt the Internet not only to domain names, but also for content to have new content with the new cultures in their own languages.

So [a tradition,] the IDN, internationalized domain names policy has been one of ICANN's main challenges, testing its [inaudible] international approach. IDN have been ratified by ICANN after many years of work to develop and make [and enable] the specific technology necessary of their operation. So the DNS has therefore changed

considerably since then. I believe such developments will make everyone's life easier and accelerate the development of the Internet in the world.

Moreover, several countries have only opened their national extension in IDN, in particular in the Arabic region. So populations who only must have their own languages can now write URL in their browser with their own alphabets and thus benefit from the use of the Internet for the developments.

So I was talking about IDN policy. That has been one of ICANN challenge. Currently, several countries have already opened their national extension. And as I say, particularly in Arabic country. The most striking example is Asia online population, which now account for more than half of the world's users. I often tell my students, imagine if the Internet was invented by Chinese. We would have had to learn the characters to browse the Internet or even send an email.

So many new expression have therefore emerged with several different scripts and have more than two or three characters. Today, there are more than 1200 active generic top-level domains. There are also over 60 IDN countries called the ccTLD, top-level domain countries and regions in different scripts, in Cyrillic, in Arabic and Chinese and so on.

Another one that we have to discuss is, should we not overlook [inaudible] about technical issue, Internet application and system must [inaudible] top-level domain uniformly, including new gTLD and IDN of top-level domain. Specifically, they must accept, validate, store, process and display all domain names.

I will finish here and to ask you to excuse me because I have another meeting in 10 minutes. I have to leave, so I will hope variable good success for decision. It's very important, myself—[and I registered a session] about [inaudible] and I think it's very important to go to the website of ICANN Academy and follow these courses because it is important for all of African colleagues, because it is important to have other languages in Internet, not only on domain names, but also about our cultures and about our contents in Internet. Thank you very much, and I give the floor to Seun. Thank you, and apologies if I cannot be with you all the session.

SEUN OJEDEJI: Thank you, Aziz, and of course, it's good to have you. Welcome. As Aziz said, this is something that is going to be an ongoing effort. And this is the first of the sessions [inaudible] to GSE team and At-Large staff for their support.

Without wasting much time, going forward, I'll call on Pierre who has been the vice president of GSE for Africa and of course, was actually supporting AFRALO significantly in the various activities and programs that we're doing. Pierre, welcome. You have the floor.

PIERRE DANDJINOU: Thank you very much.

SEUN OJEDEJI: Am I still connected?

YESIM SAGLAM: Hi Seun. I can hear you.-I'm not able to hear Pierre. Silvia and Yaovi, if you agree, maybe we can swiftly move on to our next agenda item for the interest of time and start our presentation.

YAOVI ATOHOUN: We can move to the next agenda item if we lost Pierre's connection. Thank you.

YESIM SAGLAM: Okay, perfect. Thanks so much. And Pitinan, I'm going to stop sharing and leave the floor over to you then.

PIERRE DANDJINOU   Hello.

SEUN OJEDEJI: Pierre is back.

PIERRE DANDJINOU: Sorry. I don't know what happened. Good morning, good afternoon, good evening to everyone. I know we are running out of time. So I'm not going to be long anyway. That was a good introduction by my good friend from AFRALO. And of course, as far as we are concerned at GSE Africa, I can only say thank you to AFRALO for initiating this sort of

session. It's quite important that everyone be, how should I say, sensitized as far as universal acceptance- is concerned.

It's about being able to include more and more scripts on the web, and thereby making it so that more and more population will be online, I will say.

So developing those different scripts for the language is quite important, and that what's going to happen, in fact, the next billion of users on the Internet. And it also is about your identity on the web. So it's important that we understand we should be developing those scripts.

And the initiative is good, because it's about addressing the issue also from the users' perspective. We are doing different workshop in Africa, but much more on the technical side of the whole thing. So now you are addressing the sensitization and awareness building aspects. I'd like to commend you. And of course, my team here, the GSE, that really support what we're doing, that really complements our engagement strategy on the ground.

So with that, I just wish you a very good session. And again, thank you for initiating this and I'd like to hand it over to the coordinator or Seun, please. So thanks again for coming to this call.

YESIM SAGLAM: So I think we're good to move on to the next agenda item. So I would like to leave the floor over to you, Pitinan, and apologies for the delay. Thanks.

PITINAN KOOARMORNPATANA: No problem. Thank you. So very honored to be here. Thank you for doing this. And just to introduce myself, I am Pitinan Kooarmonpatana, the IDN program senior manager at ICANN. So I would like to share just the overview, introduction of the IDNs today. And just to make things more exciting, we will have a pre-test, a small quiz and then a post-test as well. So for the pre-test, you cannot back out now, I'll hand it over to Yesim to run the poll for the pre-test. Over to you. Thank you.

YESIM SAGLAM: Thank you so much. Just quickly pulling up the quiz for the IDN. Okay, so I believe that everyone is able to see the questions. So we do have five questions. And I'm going to read the questions and give it a few minutes so people can complete the poll, and then we'll keep moving to the next question.

So let me start with the first question. Which of the below is a valid string for top-level? Is it A? Is it B? Or is it C? A [inaudible] and the last option is D, all of the above. Waiting a few minutes. Actually won't spend much time. Very conscious of the time.

As people are responding, I'm going to move on to the second question. Which of the below is or are IDN strings? Is it a? I'm sorry, it's written in Arabic, which I'm not able to read. Is it B, .africa? C, .cafe, or D, both A and C?

And slowly moving on to the third question, what are variant labels? A, variant labels are labels considered the same in some measure by a

given community of Internet users. B, variant labels are only labels considered visually same. C, variant labels are only labels considered semantically same, and D, none of the above.

And I'm moving on to the fourth question, how to enable IDNs? A, develop the label generation rules for the root zone by various script communities and policies development by the ICANN community, B, the implementation of universal acceptance by technical provider stakeholders, C, adoption by the end users, D, all of the above.

And question number five is a short answer so you will be able to type your answers. And the question is, why does IDN matter to you? Please type your answers there. And the other four questions are actually short answer. And Pitinan, please let me know when you would like me to end the poll.

PITINAN KOOARMORNPATANA: Okay, let's see, we have about 17 responding for the first one. So maybe give it half of a minute, and then we can close the poll. The other questions coming along. Very good. This is just a pre-test. So hope you can find more answers during the presentation as well. Don't worry. All right, I think he don't have more answers, we can close the poll.

YESIM SAGLAM: Sure, let me end the poll. Would you like me to share the results now or after your presentation?

PITINAN KOOARMORNPATANA: Maybe after my presentation is okay. Thank you.

YESIM SAGLAM: Of course. Over to you.

PITINAN KOOARMORNPATANA: Thank you. So yep, so that's the warmup a little bit. And then let's dive into the introduction to IDNs. So on the screen, this is the usual domain names that we use. So basically, we call it ASCII domain names. And that's the normal A to Z that we use or we can call English domain name per se.

Just very roughly to the structure of the domain names, we call it [inaudible] level. So it's from the top-level or the most upright and then the second level is the one next to it on the left and then third level and so on. So that's the structure.

And so let's look at the topmost first, number one here. So is the top-level. So by the standard, actually, the letters that are allowed to be used in the top-level is only the letter itself, so no numbers and no hyphens. And this is because if it's the number, like [inaudible] the beginning, it could get confused with the IP address or the Internet Protocol address. So by the protocol on the top-level is only the letter is allowed. So for Are the ASCII or the English domain names, then we have just A to Z here.

But then for the second level or the third level, is actually allowed the letters and also the digits. So zero to nine also allowed, and then the

hyphen. So we can see something like this example, cafe-123. So that's the difference between the top and the second.

And then however, as Aziz also introduced very well, we really need to include all the other people who not really use the Latin scripts across the globe. And so, as we can see here, there are actually many more scripts used in the world.

And as quoted here by Tim Berners Lee, the inventor of world wide web, basically, the web is not designed to connect just the machine, is supposed to connect the people as well. So, if the technical can connect, but the people cannot use, it actually missed the point. And also, as quoted here, language is also very important part to build connection, both online the same way as the offline.

Imagine, if you are traveling to someplace where you cannot read the road signs, it's very hard to navigate to places, like suddenly you'd be in the middle of Japan or China and all the road signs are something not similar, is easily get lost. So in the same way, on the Internet space, if you can have some sign that you understand, it will be less chance to get you to the wrong place.

Then let's focus on the Africa region. So, this is not the exhaustive list, of course, just some of the initial languages we did research. So basically, there are many languages use the ASCII character, which is just a simple A to Z. So we have like English [inaudible] and so on, like mainly used by that.

But we also have the languages that use by Latin script, which means it's not just the A to Z, it may be A and then A with some diacritic like a with

acute, or maybe when we say Café is E with the accent on the top. So these are also the languages, is even though it use Latin script, it will need to have some extra character than ASCII. So it's become the IDN.

And then we also have some languages use the Ethiopic scripts here. And also some languages use the Arabic script. So also, like all these three scripts are mainly related to the region.

Then let's look at the status of what is the status of IDN around the globe to date. So on the top-level, we have two main categories. First is the country code top-level domain, which is the top-level domain for countries or territories. And right now, we have the fast track process, where the countries can request for the strings to be at the top-level.

For Africa, a few countries already delegate the ccTLD IDNs. As you see here, most of them are in Arabic script. And some other script if they have more than one official language, official script that use for example, you can see India here, they have actually 22 official languages across the countries. And for that 22 languages, it's written by 15 official scripts. So for India itself, they have 15 IDN label, something like that. This is the ccTLD space, we have 62 labels now.

Then the other category is the generic TLD which is register from the previous round of the new gTLDs in 2012. So these are some of the examples, is [inaudible] now in IDN. And as you can see here.

Now moving to the second level, so that's the top-level and then under those, there are this summary of the registration. This is the information from actually last year. About 1.6 million registration in total, and is divided into this percentage, many of them are in Chinese. And about a

quarter of them in Latin, which mean the A to Z plus the extra characters or extra diacritics. And then the Japanese and Korean are also quite a good portion, and then Cyrillic, Thai and Arabic.

Now let's take a look at how to implement or make the IDN possible. So similarly, go back to the previous example. Instead of we present everything in English or in ASCII code, wow we can use other scripts as well.

As you can see here, this is Thai script. I'm based out of Bangkok, Thailand. So this is what I understand. So it's a café-123.thai. So on the top-level, still apply the same rules because it's the same DNS. So on the top-level, you can also use only the letter the same. And for the second level, right, you can use LDH, letter, digits, and hyphens.

So if you can see here, actually, these three characters after the hyphen is the digits. So basically, if you are not the script user, is already quite hard to identify which one is the digits in each script. So that's why ICANN really work with the script communities to identify first what are the sets of the characters that can be used on the root zone and what are the characters that can be used on the other level.

Then I have actually a small game to see how various of the script of the world is and just to see how will we recognize them. So I have this six choice, Arabic, Korean, Armenian, Malayalam, Georgian, and oriya. And six domain names here. So let's see. I'll go one by one, you can type or guess the answer in the chat.

First question. Let's guess which one is Arabic script. That might be too easy. Okay, I see a lot of six. Yep, that's correct. All right. Let's move on

to Armenian. Which number is Armenian? Okay, I see some of number two. Some of number five. All right, let's see the answer. Number one. I see [inaudible] you're correct. Yes. Very good.

All right. Next one. Georgian. I see some five. I see number three. Okay. The answer is three. All right, then Korean next. Which one is Korean? I'm not sure if Korean TV or movie [inaudible] there. Seems like a lot of you can recognize. Yes, number four is Korean. And then I think last one, Malayalam, so the other one will be Oriya. Which one is Malayalam? This is the script used in India or in south of Asia. Malayalam is number five and then Oriya is number two.

So yes, this is actually quite interesting. All right, thank you so much for playing the game. And so actually this is to demonstrate there is no way that a single person or organization or expert can know all the scripts and also how to use them properly. So we actually work closely with script communities to define the rules, how to use the IDN in that script properly.

So first thing that we have to define is what are the codepoints or the characters to be used. Okay. And then let's move on to the next area as well that when we come to IDNs, we need to take a consideration that is called variant. So the variant label is basically something that can be considered as the same. But the tricky part is there is no clear or finite definition of what is the same, it really depends on the community to community. And it's usually defined for two main purpose, by the security purpose or usability purpose.

Let's go by the first example, the security purpose first. So for the one here in the blue text, the .epic on the top, this is all from Latin codepoint. So the computer behind will see the Unicode codepoint 0065 0070 and so on. While this label on the right, that looks like epic as well, but is the different characters from the Cyrillic codepoints. So the right here, they are Cyrillic scripts, and behind that, the codepoint are 04350, 0440, and so on.

So basically, to the human eyes, these are the same thing, and we can easily understand that most of them might be the same thing without expecting anything. But behind that, the machine or computer actually knows that they are different. And in this case, the variant needs to be defined.

So the Latin community and the Cyrillic community come together and define that, okay, your E and my—these characters look the same. So they should have set some variant relationships. So in this case, when the definition is defined, when one version is already registered or delegated, another one should be blocked so the end user won't get [inaudible] problem or the confusion problem.

The other purpose is the usability. So in some script communities, the same is actually for usability, for example, the Arabic and Chinese. So for Chinese, they have like two versions of the same thing, they have simplified Chinese and the traditional Chinese. So if you ask the Chinese readers, they will understand that these two actually are the same, and is meaning the same, is pronounced the same. So if you are a brand owner, and you have a Chinese name in a simplified version, you might

want to have the traditional version available as well so you can be serving your customer across the world, for example.

And then for the Arabic, because Arabic script is used in quite a number of languages a lot across the globe, in some of the characters, Arabic can have some variation, but it might be the same thing as well. So this is something Arabic script community has defined that these are the same and this is for usability.

All right, so this is the variant. So the second part, actually, when we work with the community, the second thing in the rules. So the first thing was the set of codepoints to use. The second rule is what are the variants for those codepoints. And that has to be defined.

Then definition of those will be encoded in some machine readable format called label generation rules or the LGR. So LGR usually have three sections. First, it will list all the codepoints. And then secondly, it will list the definition of variants. And then actually, some of the scripts like the complex scripts for Asia, they also have the rules for putting the [inaudible] on the correct position but might not be relevant to Africa region.

So once we have the rules, label generation rules, the communities that we are working with as the ICANN community project now, we call it the root zone label generation rules. So we started from the rule of how to use the scripts in the top-level domain properly and the rules will be something like a recipe or like the formula how to use the script properly.

Each LGR will be installed into a tool. For example, here we have Ethiopic, Arabic, Thai and so on. So the rules defined by each script community will be installed in the tool, then the tool can understand and process the label.

For example, if you fit in some labels here, it can first validate the label whether this is a valid or invalid. And if it is a valid label, it also generate the variant labels of that and the tool can also check whether if these newly applied labels have a crash with the existing label or the variant of the existing label. So, this is how the rule would work.

How we work with the communities actually is a twostep process. First for each script, they will form something called generation panel. So we have generation panel for Chinese, for Japanese, Ethiopic, Latin, and for Arabic and so on.

Each community will develop the rules for their script, and then will submit to the integration panel which is the panel who comprise of the Unicode expert, DNS expert and also linguist, just to make sure that all the scripts can be integrated properly into the single source for root zone. And then for when each script finish and integrated, it will be added into the rule for the root zone.

This project has been started since 2014 and actually account for almost more than 10,000 hours of calls across all the panels of scripts, about 270 members for all these generation panels working on this. Right now, we have 26 scripts already integrated into the root zone, actually is being in the public comment for now. For this 26 script, this will cover

about 386 languages across the globe. And come from 17 generation panels.

All right, and then the current status of this, I think this is the last section of my presentation. So the current status of the root zone LGR. While the community working on the rules for their own script, parallely, the ICANN Org also developing the recommendation to manage the IDN variant TLDs. And this has been presented to the Board and the Board adopted in 2019. This recommendation is now being submitted to GNSO and ccNSO for taking into consideration when they developed the policies.

Also, in next year, the following year, in 2020, the Board resolved the technical utilization studies, which is developed by the community how to use the root zone LGR. And this has been also communicated to GNSO and ccNSO to put this into the policy development.

And also early in 2021, GNSO published the report for the new gTLD subsequent procedures or the next round of the gTLDs. In this report, it also used the root zone LGR and potentially will be the source for validating the labels. So if the next round come around, the applied for string for the TLDs must be validated by the root zone LGR first.

Lastly, right now the root zone LGR come to version five, is now integrated 26 scripts listed here. So all the related script to the Africa region, Arabic, Ethiopic, Latin already in here. And it would be interesting if you have time to visit the page and take a look on how the rules on Latin or Ethiopic or Arabic or other script that is of interest has been defined and provide your feedback.

And then my last slide is on what's next. So as mentioned, public comment is going on, it's actually closing tomorrow. So it's quite immediate. But there's still some time if you're interested to see. So please do take a look.

And then also, the GNSO and ccNSO have policy working groups going on for IDN. So if you're interested for those, I would encourage you to follow their work. And also, for the next round, this is potentially the root zone LGR will be the source of rules to verify the labels. And so if the script already integrated into the root zone LGR, then you can do that in the root zone.

And the last point, and actually a good segue to the next section as well, right now, when the IDN is ready, is more like the technical of it is already defined. But then you will need the technical communities and also the end user to adopt this. So basically, that's the universal acceptance work, which will make sure that all types of domain names are acceptable in DNS system and websites and so on.

So that's the last slide of my section. And if you have any question or any comments, please feel free to contact us at idnprogram@icann.org. All right. I think that's all. So I will hand it over back to Yesim. I think we have also the post test. The question is the same as the pre-test, and hopefully, you found some answer in the presentation. Thank you.

YESIM SAGLAM: Pitinan, would you like me to share results from the pre-test?

PITINAN KOOARMORNPATANA: Okay, we can do that first. Yes please.

YESIM SAGLAM: And if you would like to actually just tell the correct answers, maybe.

PITINAN KOOARMORNPATANA: Okay. All right. Yes, so maybe I'll tell indirectly, because we might do it again. So number one, the [inaudible] for the top-level. So if you recall, the top-level has some restrictions of something that cannot be used there. So I think I will tell the answer after the post test.

YESIM SAGLAM: Sorry, Pitinan. I believe there is a misunderstanding, because we currently have only one quiz for your section. So I thought that it was going to be you were going to be announcing the correct answers after your presentation to see how many people were able to choose the correct answers, and how many not.

PITINAN KOOARMORNPATANA: Okay. All right, that's fine as well, because I think if we do the post test, I hope all of you will get all the things correct. Okay, so let me just give the answer for all this. Coming from number one, which of the below is the valid string? So basically, the top-level, it doesn't allow digits. So the numbers 123 are not allowed. It's supposed to be C? [So I think it's not that.] Many of you already know the answer. But of course, if you're not in the technical, is easily missed.

All right, number two, which of the below is IDN? So basically, A is from Arabic script. So it's quite obvious, B is .Africa. So that is actually all ASCII. So for this one, not IDNs. But numbers C, yes, that E have some accent there. So that is the IDN. So the correct answer is D, both A and C.

Okay, and then the question number three, what are the variant labels? So the answer is A, labels that consider the same information by the given community. So it's not only visual or only symmetrical on the meanings. It depends on the communities what they are.

Moving on on number four, how to enable IDNs. Yep, so most of you get it right, all of the above. So the rules need to be developed by the script community, then the technical community also needs to enable the system to accept this. And finally, the end user has to adopt this as well.

Okay, and then number five, we have short answer, but I don't see it here. But hopefully, we can get a result later for our information. Okay, I think that's it. Thank you so much. And I hand it over to the next section. Thank you.

YESIM SAGLAM: Thanks so much, Pitinan. So I'm now going to pull up Seda Akbulut's slide deck and kindly handing the floor to my colleague, Seda Akbulut. Over to you.

SEDA AKBULUT: Thank you, Yesim. And thank you, Pitinan, for the great presentation. It was always interesting to see the IDN. And it's really amazing to see

how the community can collaborate together and produce so much things and adding new scripts to the domain name system.

So hello, and welcome, everybody. Thank you for your interest in universal acceptance. It's a great honor and pleasure for me to be with you today. My name is Seda Akbulut and I work as a universal acceptance program manager at ICANN.

Universal acceptance is actually for everyone, anyone who's listening to us today, we will spread the UA word together. This is not for a specific country or a region. It's for the whole world. And I'd like to thank you, AFRALO team, to take an important step for the leadership and support in UA in Africa region. Next slide, please.

This year, in the beginning of this year, actually I can Africa top-level domain association AFTLD and the universal Acceptance Steering Group have partnered together to host a UA training series for the African region, in which we touched base on the techniques of UA email address configuration, and then programming in Java that supports UA. And the third one was a dialogue about how the Africa community can work together to address universal acceptance. All the recordings of these sessions are available on ICANN Regional Training website, I will share this slide with you and it'll probably posted on the AFRALO page and you can check the link from there.

And there has been also significant demand for the universal acceptance training in many of our sessions. And we have responded by developing some training materials, instructing trainers and organizing some training sessions. And so if you're interested in universal

acceptance and take it to the next stage, you might be also interested in volunteering, working as a trainer. And in that case, please contact us at info@uasg.tech.

And I know that many of you have taken also the introduction to university acceptance course at ICANN Learn. we have received some notifications. So thanks for that, AFRALO team. This is a free course anyone can take at ICANN Learn, it provides the basics of UA and participants who complete this course are granted also certificates of completion.

Now I'm going to park here and I'd like to see how many of you could participate to the introduction to UA course. If you can perhaps on the reaction section mark a green checkmark, we can see perhaps how many of you have taken the course. Then we will have some quiz about this.

I see a few people. Right. Yesim, can we start the quiz

YESIM SAGLAM: Sure, Seda, I'm going to just pull up the poll right now. Okay, I believe everyone is able to see the questions. And once again, I'm going to read them slowly, one by one. And please do answer the questions, we do have four questions in total for the section.

So the first question is, which of the following statements are true? A, universal acceptance is the state in which all valid domain names and email addresses are accepted, validated, stored, processed and displayed correctly and consistently. B, to achieve universal acceptance,

Internet applications and systems must treat all top-level domains in a consistent manner, including new generic TLDs and all internationalized domain names. C, all.

And quickly moving to the second question, which of the below [inaudible] represents a new long top-level domain name and an internationalized email address? Is it A? Is it B? Is it C? Or D is none of the above.

And moving to the third question, is .ieee a valid top-level domain? It's a short question. Yes and no answers.

And the last question is, what are the key principles of universal acceptance? A, validate, process, store, display. B, accept, validate, display. C, accept, validate, process, store, display. So maybe we can wait for a few seconds and then end the poll as we're conscious of the time. Okay, shall I end the poll?

SEDA AKBULUT: Yes, and you can also share the results.

YESIM SAGLAM: Sure, let's share the results. And if you could please give us the correct answers.

SEDA AKBULUT: So I will not actually give the answer for the question one and four, because we will have a similar question in the end. And it looks like

there's quite good results here. And let's take a look at the second question. Which of the below pairs represent a new long top-level domain name and an internationalized email address? So example.engineering got the highest score, which is the correct answer. And the other email address is an email address internationalization that has some non-ASCII characters inside.

Question two is mostly responded correctly. And the Question three is .ieee is a correct, valid top-level domain name. And most of you have said yes, and yes, it's the correct answer. And to check the validity of a domain name, you can also—I will share in the chat. You can also see the list of root zone database where you can find the delegated top-level domains there. So .eiii was a valid domain name.

Okay, so we can move to the next slide. Thank you for the good answers. So that's very promising for the second round. Right. So what is universal acceptance? It is the concept that all domain names and email addresses should be treated equally. And that means that they work in all software applications.

And what do we mean with all domain names and email addresses? So we have given here three examples. And first of them is the IDNs, internationalized domain names, that represent the domain names in different scripts other than ASCII.

And in the second example, you see the new gTLDs that are introduced to domain names system after 2012 and that represent global communities online in character strings of varying length, like .Africa, .engineering as such.

And also, UA covers email addresses as well. And mostly EAI is the most important thing here to become UA ready and EAI ready. EAI represent email addresses that are embedded IDNs, new gTLDs or email addresses that have native scripts.

So when we achieve universal acceptance in all software applications, UA will have a big impact in promoting consumer choice, improving competition, and obviously providing broader access to the end users. And UA provides the gateway to the next billion Internet users. Like Aziz mentioned in the beginning, there are billions of users that we expect to become online.

And in the next slide, I request you to pay attention to the specific slide because it gives the scope of universal acceptance. UA is limited with the domain names and email addresses that are used in software applications. It's not related about the contents on websites. It's typically about the transactions or processing of the domain names and email addresses themselves in software applications.

So because of the changing domain name landscape, many systems unfortunately do not recognize or process these new domain names and email addresses, especially because there are more than three characters in the top-level domain or have different scripts.

So we have given here three types of domain names as we categorize them under new short top-level domain names that represent the domain names that have three or less characters in the top-level domain. And then new long top-level domain names that have more than three characters after the dot, and then internationalized domain

names where we have at least one non-ASCII character in a domain name.

So those are the things that we should address in universal acceptance and to become UA ready, these type of domain names need to be processed correctly and equally by all software applications.

And we also mentioned that email addresses are within the scope of universal acceptance. And we have given here five different categories. And one of them is ASCII type of email addresses where we have used here long top-level domain. And the other one is an IDN domain name email address, and where the mailbox parts, the part that comes before the at have some non-ASCII characters in a domain name. These are also all valid email address.

And in the last example, you see an Arabic email address. This one is also different from the right to left, left right sense of kind of script. So apart from having different scripts, also in this kind of cases, it could be from right to left as well. That creates some challenges for some software applications.

So all these are valid domain names and valid email addresses. And they need to be processed and accepted by all applications. And we have five key principles to become UA ready. And that means if you want to test your system or make sure that if a system is the UA ready, then you need to make sure that these type of domain names have to be accepted, validated, processed, stored and displayed correctly and consistently by all Internet enabled applications. And for all domain names and email addresses. So that's the scope of the universal

acceptance. So it addresses technically IDNs, new short and new long TLDs and EAI.

And what do we mean exactly about accepting, validating? What are the differences in these kinds of principles? So imagine, I have an email address in Arabic script and I'd like to report something to government's website, or maybe I would like to buy an airline ticket.

And when I type in my email address on a website or on a webform, just by typing in, it might give some errors if it's not UA ready saying that this is not a valid email address, so it's not accepting just by typing.

And when you submit it, it can still also give some errors. If it's not passing to the next stage, that means that it's not also validating. And it should also process all the email addresses and domain names like ranking them in a correct way, like other domain names, and it should store for future use, and especially for IDNs and EAI, it should also display in the original script. So we can move to the next slide.

So how can we address this, what we do about this? So to address and promote universal acceptance of all valid domain names and email addresses, we work mainly at three dimensions. First, raise awareness within stakeholders. Universal Acceptance Steering Group, UASG, was organized as a community initiative, and it was founded in 2015. Since then, the group consists of volunteers. And the group is also financially supported by ICANN.

And through their multiple working groups like tech, EAI, comms and measurement working groups, they are conducting several projects, outreach to stakeholders, and develop universal acceptance resources,

including training materials. And also, they have, under the local initiatives and UA ambassadors, tasked in several countries and regions which are also very important and very key in achieving UA adoption all around the world.

Secondly, UA program at ICANN, we focus on UA projects, outreach and training in general. And recently, our focus actually shifted from identifying the UA gaps in systems to the remediation through outreach, training, and to especially engage with the global stakeholders.

And thirdly, we have IDN steering committee of ICANN, where we have several people from various ICANN teams to plan and coordinate cross functional work on IDN and UA programs. And next, please.

So why is UA important? So I'd like to explain how UA can benefit you with some data driven information in the next slide. So the majority of the world at the moment doesn't speak English. This is something you already know. Like 36% of the world population uses the Latin script. And the other portion of the world, there are billions of people who prefer to read and write in different scripts. And we estimated that more than 4.5 billion active users and at least 1 billion more are expected to come I'm online in 2023.

And if your systems are not UA ready, that means you're losing a customer. In that case, it would be good that you go back and whatever your organization has, try out email address being accepted, or a domain name being accepted in that expect so you don't lose customers just because they use different type of email address or domain names.

In the next slide, you will see also the increase over the years in the number of Internet users. So you can see it's actually now about almost 5 billion people in this year. And I also would like to cover something about Africa in the next slide. So we know that one of the main challenges in Africa is, unfortunately, the Internet connection, and the population is huge. It's about 1.2 billion, roughly, and around 77% of this population do not use the Internet. Rough estimates, of course. And these are your numbers. And surveys say there are potential of over hundreds of million people to come online in Africa. And English may not be their first choice, it could be French, Ethiopic, Arabic, mostly, I guess, and could be even Chinese if an Internet user is visiting your website who is Chinese.

So imagine the unconnected people and how much we are missing the population and we are missing millions of people who don't use the Internet the way they want, or they should do. So by the time they become online, it's a good time to make our systems UA ready.

So I'd like to also touch base on some other benefits in the next slide. One of the benefits is the business opportunities. Obviously, UA provides business opportunities. So many businesses are leaving money on the table by not just updating their systems to become UA ready, which has the potential to unlock billions in revenue.

The study that we made in 2017 says 9.8 billion is the rough estimate opportunity for the UA ready organizations, which is a very conservative estimate. It's known that the opportunity is much bigger.

So businesses that support customers with UA ready systems will have the first mover advantage and the potential to capture the new increasing revenue streams. And to reach everyone on the Internet, we need to invest in updating our systems. And this investment is usually is asked how much it costs to make our systems. Yeah, of course, it depends what we have already. But this investment is far outweighed by the return on our investments.

And there is an example actually in India that we recently heard, that one company who builds applications started saying that now we make UA ready applications. And you know what? They got competitive advantage in getting orders to make software and applications UA ready.

And it's not only business opportunities. In the next slide, I'd also like to mention that it also bring some career opportunities. So students, developers who don't know about UA, they also don't know how to make an application globally competitive.

So a strong understanding of UA is [inaudible] competitive differentiator that every developer should have in their skill sets. And actually becoming proficient in universal acceptance doesn't require learning a new category of coding. It builds upon existing skill sets to expand systems to recognize the domain names and email addresses. And that's all. And you can find some good resources at UASG.tech and icann.org/UA to find out how to make the applications UA ready. Next slide.

So before sharing some information on the universal acceptance status around the world, I'd like to ask whether you plan to test your software applications' UA readiness. Can you use the green mark check whether or not you plan or have you already done some tests before? I see one. Thank you. That's good. Maybe after this presentation, you will have more motivation to make your systems—and in the next slide, I would like to share some helpful information and good resources to look at your systems and to test your own systems, whether they are UA ready or not.

Obviously, UA readiness requires a considerable effort by all of us. So it cannot be done just by one person or one organization or in isolation. So if my email server supports UA, but yours doesn't, the email in local languages will not work. So everyone needs to do something about UA. So we kindly ask you to start with testing your own systems and email addresses.

And you can also see the numbers here, the UASG 004 is the number that we use for the documents in UASG.tech document hub where you can find different sets of data about domain names and email addresses that you can use to test your systems.

And in the second document, UASGS 026, that gives you the framework about how the tests can be conducted. So it simply covers the five principles like accept, validate, process, store and display and much more about that.

Thirdly is the easiest one that you can do it, actually, there is a tool on uasg.tech/eai where you can type in your email address, and you can

test whether it is EAI supporting or not. So that's the easiest way. And I really encourage you to test your email address here, especially for the company email addresses.

And in the next slide, I'd like to take a look at the UA status. This one shows the UA readiness of the top global websites. So we conduct a study every year almost by the UASG to see how much UA ready is the websites.

In the most recent one, we not only test the 2000 websites, but also added a remediation phase by reaching out to the website owners to give them some information about their UA readiness status and how they can make the websites UA ready. So there has been some slight progress over the past year. It's not that significant, but it's still a good progress in almost all type of email address.

In the next slide, we'd also like to share some updates about the EAI readiness of email servers. So we surveyed almost all top-level domain zones. So here you see 1180 top-level domain zones have been surveyed. And that covers almost 210 million second level domain names, in which we found 35 million unique mail servers with almost 2.5 million unique IP addresses.

So what we did was we pinged all the IP addresses we found in these 2.5 million. And then we found out that only 7.24% of them can accept internationalized email addresses, meaning they passed all the tests. But on the other hand, 6% didn't pass the EAI tests. In the first column, you'll see about 33% didn't respond so we couldn't establish any

connection here. This is the status about the EAI readiness of the general mail servers. So next one.

So what's next for UA? On ICANN's site, we do our part in terms of getting UA ready, and raising awareness, and working in collaboration with UASG and the community to identify gaps, remediation of those gaps through outreach and training.

But this is, again, not something that we can do by just ourselves. And of course, we need joint efforts and considerable effort from everyone and from all around the world. So obviously, we need the help from the community. And we expect from the community to raise awareness of universal acceptance issues among relevant stakeholders, developers, managers, governments as such.

And secondly, what you can do is to make your own systems UA ready. And if not that easy, then you can at least demand for UA ready systems, or motivates people to adopt universal acceptance, and help developers by providing some documentation, common standards, technology that they need.

And also, we expect everyone to encourage businesses, and your government, to include universal acceptance in their procurement or tender policies. So imagine that you're buying a software, and that has a bug or a problem. And if you don't demand for UA ready software application, the supply for the UA ready the applications will not grow.

And demand is another key in the vision of universal acceptance. So we need to also demand for it to get more UA ready applications. And such activities can be done individually, but it will be more effectively done in

collaboration with local initiatives and UA ambassadors. So to change something, think about it, and something you can do every day and collaborate with perhaps ambassadors in Africa.

In the next slide, I'd also like to mention the local initiatives that UASG has. So the objective of having local initiative is, of course, to interact with the local stakeholders. They know to whom contact better than us and help promote, help establish connection with the right people. So they're really key resources for us in the region. And they do local community engagement and technical training most in local languages.

So we have local initiatives in China, Thailand, India, and also in seven other countries in the Commonwealth of Independent States. As you can see, we don't have any local initiatives in Africa, and we hope to have one. And if you are interested in starting a local initiative, please feel free to contact us.

But we have three UA ambassadors in Africa, Malick, Mark, and Abdulkarim, in different countries in Africa. So those are also your points of contacts, as well as us. So if you have any questions or need any support, you can always contact them and as well as us. And if you're also interested in taking part in UA efforts, you can also volunteer to be a UA ambassador.

And the last slide is to show other examples how you can get involved in universal acceptance program by emailing us, visiting us on our website and joining—the easiest way is to join the UA discuss list or to join to one of the working groups. I run those sessions. Most of them are

weekly, so I'll be happy to see on those working group meetings. And you can also follow us on social media

So those are the things that I can cover today, and we will have some more quiz questions in the end, and then I'll be more than happy to answer your questions. Yesim, can we run the quiz?

YESIM SAGLAM: Yes, sure. Would you like me to share the results for the previous one, or shall we directly go to the post-presentation quiz questions?

SEDA AKBULUT: We can continue with the second part in the interest of time maybe.

YESIM SAGLAM: Sure. Let me launch the poll the questions. So question number one, how many key principles are there for universal acceptance readiness? Is it three, four or five?

Moving on to the second question, what does universal acceptance address technically? Supporting IDNs, supporting EAI, supporting new and long TLDs, supporting new and short TLDs, and the last option is all of the above.

Moving to the third question, which of the following statements are true? A, universal acceptance is the state in which all valid domain names and email addresses are accepted, validated, stored, processed and displayed correctly and consistently. B, to achieve universal

acceptance, Internet applications and systems must treat all top-level domains in a consistent manner including new generic TLDs and all internationalized domain names. Or is it C, all of them?

Question number four, why does universal acceptance matter? A, supports a diverse multilingual Internet. B, enables greater competition, innovation and consumer choice, C, offers career advantages for developers and system administrators, D, great business opportunities, E, assists governments and policymakers in reaching their citizens, and F, all of the above.

And moving on to the last question. How can you get involved in universal acceptance efforts? A, raise awareness on universal acceptance in your community. B, demand for universal acceptance ready software applications. C, encourage people to adopt universal acceptance. D, motivate government to add universal acceptance readiness requirements in their procurements and tender policies. E, make your systems universal acceptance ready. F, join a universal acceptance working group, become universal acceptance ambassador or set up a local initiative. And G, all of the above.

And Shall we end the poll?

SEDA AKBULUT: Yes, please.

YESIM SAGLAM: Would you like me to share results?

SEDA AKBULUT: I'm excited to see the results. Thank you. So correct answer for the first question was five. So it's C. Most of you have responded. So you mentioned that the key principles are accept, validate, process, store and display, which makes five.

The second question is, what does UA address technically? Most of you have responded right. It's all of the above. And the third one is, which of the following statements are true? Again, you responded all correctly, mostly? So yes, it's both of them, A and B, the answer was C.

And why does the UA matter? So it's actually a tricky question, why does it matter to you or why does it matter to whole Internet ecosystem? But yes, it's all of the above. Thank you. That's a very good score.

And five, how can you get involved in UA efforts? Again, all of the above is the correct answer. Thank you, everyone, for paying attention and taking the UA session very seriously. And I hope that I was really helpful for everyone. And now we can move to the next stage, I guess, Yaovi, if we still have time, of course.

YAOVI ATOHOUN: Thank you so much, Seda. We really thank the interpreters who are still available for us for three more minutes. I can ask my colleagues to display the poll again. Unfortunately, we could not cover all the agenda items. So we'll put them on the second session.

So before I hand over to Seun, colleagues, can we have the poll again? That will help us better organize the second session. This session was very interesting. So we have some questions in French and English. So please, participate in this one.

The first one is, how did you find the presentation discussions? The second one, it is about topics you may want us to cover again during the second workshop. The third one is the duration. And the last question is about the link that was shared during the presentation of Seda that we have a link to check where we are.

So please, we beg you to participate in this evaluation. This will help us to better organize the second workshop. Also, a reminder, if you see the participants in the room, you may see that is not your name, or you [are in bracket], you may see that is not your name. So if it's not your name, it will be difficult for us to know that you are the person participating in this poll.

So what you can do is use the option to rename so that we know that it's you. Because we want to be sure that we have people participating. So please, I don't know how many people have completed the poll. I let my colleagues manage that. And then if you have a high number, my colleagues will give the floor to the chair of AFRALO to end the session. And then he will communicate the date and the time for the next session.

I'm very glad for the session because from the results, I see that really in AFRALO we decided to move on this universal acceptance topic. So

colleagues, can you check about the number of participation? If you see a high number of participation, Yesim, you can give the floor to Seun.

YESIM SAGLAM: Thanks so much, Yaovi? I am thinking maybe I can keep the evaluation survey questions open till the end of the call and just not to lose any time, I can hand the floor to our chair, Seun Ojedeji, for the concluding remarks. Over to you, Seun. Thanks so much.

SEUN OJEDEJI: All right. Thank you very much. And thanks to everyone for joining this call, thanks to our speakers, our interpreters for also making it a date. I really appreciate these efforts. Thank you. It's something that we've been trying to do for a while. And I'm very happy that we got the support from the GSE team and At-Large staff for getting this done.

I hope that this first session of this training was informative to us all. I mean, it is a call to action, really. And I hope that the outcome of this will be that there will be some improvement and action that [we'll go share about.] It would also be good for us to share our experience, especially when we do the second session.

When we're doing the second session, I hope that we'll actually be coming to share our experience on progress we made within our communities with regards to universal acceptance.

More of the details about this next session, I'm sure, will be communicated to us in near future once we also coordinate with our GSE team from the region and of course At-Large staff.

I'd like to commend our social media team, and of course, our outreach and engagement co-chair for all the efforts that they've made into actually publicizing this particular activity, and of course, thanks to all the AFRALO officers as well for their role which they have played in this.

Without taking much of our time, which we have already taken a lot of our time already—but I think it was worth it. Thanks to everybody, and from me, and of course, to all our participants, thank you for joining. Bye for now.

SILVIA VIVANCO: Thank you, everyone. Thank you, Seun. Thank you, Yaovi and each and every one. Bye.

YAOVI ATOHOUN: Thank you so much. Bye.

YESIM SAGLAM: Thank you all for joining. This session is now adjourned. Have a great rest of the day. Bye.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]