

Statement of the African ICANN community

The Members of the African Community, consisting of the AFRALO and the AfrICANN, attending the 38th ICANN meeting in Brussels, jointly discussed the possible support to be given to the new African gTLD applicants that need assistance in applying for and operating the gTLDs as per the resolution 20 of the ICANN Board Meeting held in Nairobi. As members of the community,

- We welcome the Board resolution 20 related to the support for Applicants requesting assistance in applying for and operating new gTLDs.
- We express our gratitude to the Board members for their consideration of the community concerns about the cost of applying for new gTLDs that might hinder applicants requiring assistance, especially those from developing countries.
- We strongly believe that applicants from developing countries, where the market is not wide enough for a reasonable profit making industry, are eligible for support.
- It is a fact that Civil society, NGOs and non for profit organizations in Africa have a deep impact in society since they work at the grass-root level. We deem that they are the most in need of such support.
- New gTLDs in Africa will promote geographic, cultural, linguistic, and more generally community based applications. We believe that support is of utmost importance for new Applicants.
- Support to applicants will be an incitement for new aspirants to come forward and apply for new gTLDs. Therefore we urge that support to new applicants be prioritised.
- We believe that the support to be provided to applicants of new gTLDs include, but are not limited to the following:

- Financial, by reducing the application and the on-going fees
 - Linguistic, by translating all the application documents (especially the DAG) in the necessary languages (6 UN languages).
 - Legal, by assisting the applicant in preparing his/her application properly.
 - Technical, by:
 - Helping the applicant to define the right platform, and to explore the possibility of sharing one platform with other registries
 - Addressing the issue of infrastructure problems in some developing countries (such as IPV6)
- We strongly support that cost reduction is the key element in fulfilling the goals of ICANN Board's Resolution 20 within the principle of the recovery of the application and on-going costs.
 - Cost reduction will be an incitement for new aspirants to come forward and apply for new gTLDs in Africa. Therefore we demand that the following be entertained to achieve cost reduction:
 - Waiving the cost of Program Development (\$26k).
 - Waiving the Risk/Contingency cost (\$60k).
 - Lowering the application cost (\$100k)
 - Waiving the Registry fixed fees due to ICANN (\$25k per calendar year), and charge the Registry-Level Transaction Fee only (\$0.25 per domain name registration or renewal).
 - We propose that the reduced cost be paid incrementally, which will give the applicant more time to raise money, and investors will be more encouraged to fund an application that passes the initial evaluation.
 - We believe that one way to encourage African communities to apply for new gTLDs is to present a business model to them which will be self sustainable taking into consideration the realities of the African region. We demand

ICANN to come forward with a business model for gTLDs applicants in Africa.

- Since Africa is lagging behind in terms of the digital revolution, we strongly urge that ICANN practise a policy of positive discrimination towards Africa. One way of achieving this positive discrimination is to provide supplementary support and cost reduction for gTLDs applications from African regions. ICANN can thus help to bridge the digital divide.