



AT-LARGE SUMMIT –
WORKING GROUP 4

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**COMPILATION OF PREVIOUS STATEMENTS OF
ALAC ON TRANSPARENCY & ACCOUNTABILITY**

Introductory Note
By the Staff of ICANN

This document is a compilation of statements made by the ALAC which incorporated elements related to transparency and accountability in ICANN.

[End of Introductory Note]

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1.0 TRANSPARENCY

1.1 Transparency and GNSO Stakeholder Groups

[From: "ALAC Statement on Stakeholder Group Openness, 24 September 2008"](#) (under the heading "Stakeholder Group Openness")

"The ALAC notes with pleasure that at its meeting of August 28, 2008, the Board clarified and reaffirmed the requirement that Constituencies within the restructured GNSO meet and continue to meet principles of representativeness, openness, transparency and fairness.

"Given that within the restructured GNSO, a principal entity will be the Stakeholders Group, and that it is at this level that Council seats will be allocated amongst its Constituencies, it is critical that the mechanism for such allocation be completely transparent.

"Accordingly, the ALAC recommends that when the Bylaws are amended to include references to Stakeholder Groups, that they too are obliged to adhere to similar principles of representativeness, openness, transparency and fairness.

1.2 Transparency and Participation in IDN Policy

[From: ALAC Advisory to Board on Draft IDN Fast Track Implementation Plan, 3 February 2009](#)

The At-Large community is inspired that the long-awaited fast-track IDN ccTLDs will finally be implemented in a foreseeable future. ALAC has been very active in each step of fast-track policy development independently or within the cross-constituency IDNC. With respect to the newly released Implementation Plan, we have the following comments:

I. Expedition and Transparency

"The salient purpose of the fast-track implementation is to meet the pressing needs of the IDN users communities. For this purpose, we do hope the process shall be sufficiently fast and transparent. From the published Plan, we cannot see a very clear implementation time line. Based on the ICANN Strategic Plan (2009-2012) published on 20 October 2008 and discussion on the Public Forum on 3 November 2008, it seems that the fast-track process will not be done at the root level until mid-2009. It is still unclear when the application round will be launched. The user communities hope that such critical information can be available as soon as possible.

1.2 Transparency and Translation/Transcription

[From: "At-Large Committee Advisory Statement to the ICANN Board on the Draft Operating Plan FY 2008-2009, May 5, 2008"](#)

[AL.ALAC/BUD.SC/0308/1/2](#)

(Page 5 under the heading "Transcription and Translation")

“Our community has been calling for ICANN to become a truly multilingual organization for years now. We appreciate and applaud the increased budget commitment, draft translation framework, and other moves in this direction but we wish to remind you that ICANN has a very, very long way to go to reach the mission that the translation program proposes.

“In our opinion, this area of work is of absolutely central importance to the organization’s credibility, as we do not believe that any consultation or policy development process conducted entirely in English is globally legitimate. This is especially true with subjects like IDNs that – incredibly – continue to be largely English-only, with multilingual documents provided only in some cases, often far later than the original English versions, and only as an afterthought.

“Ensuring that the work of ICANN becomes truly multilingual is a core, critical objective. It must not be sidelined, or de-emphasized by other objectives like new gTLDs. As it becomes more multilingual, ICANN should continue to work closely with other international organizations such as UNESCO. The BBC is also a good source of inspiration for effective multilingual communications which ICANN should look at.”

2.0 ACCOUNTABILITY

2.1 Accountability and Oversight in the Structure of the GNSO

From: [“At-Large Advisory Committee Statement to the ICANN Board on the Board Governance Committee’s Recommendations for Improvements to the Generic Names Supporting Organization”, May 5, 2008 AL.ALAC/GNIM.WG/01.01](#)

(Page 3 under the heading “Oversight and the Management of the Implementation Process”)

“We do not believe that a ‘top down’ implementation management process is reasonable. The community, not an ‘Implementation Consulting Group’ which is actually the Board Governance Committee’s GNSO Review Working Group, should be responsible for managing the political changes and working hand in glove with the staff in the implementation of the administrative and operational improvements to the staff required to support them.”

2.2 Accountability and Compliance

From: [ALAC Advisory to Board on Draft IDN Fast Track Implementation Plan, 3 February 2009](#) (under the heading “Compliance of Community Services”)

“The ccTLD Community has been emphasizing that serving the local Internet community is an important feature that makes the ccTLDs different from gTLDs. The user community notes from the Implementation Plan that the support from the relevant script community for the IDN table is required for evaluation among the other documentation of endorsement. The IANA Procedure for Delegation or Redelegation of ccTLDs also clearly requires that a relevant ccTLD delegation or redelegation request show how it will serve the local interest in the country. In the case of an IDN ccTLD, the local interest would be more specific.

“Apparently, the ccTLDs need the support of the local user community for the fast-track application and implementation. And, vice versa. It is in the mutual interest of both the IDN ccTLD registry community and the local IDN user community to keep a very close,

cooperative and supportive relationship. Presently, some ccTLD registries have already been supportive to the local user organizations in various ways. The outstanding examples are healthy interaction and collaboration between the ccTLDs (such as .br and .au) and local ALSes on policy consultations and community services. The launch of IDN ccTLDs opens up new opportunities for both communities. If we take translation as an example, we can see the great potential coming up. IDN ccTLDs demonstrate the registries have the relevant capacity to provide services in local scripts. Then, it would be reasonable for the local user community to rely on the registries to translate the ICANN policies and other documents into the local languages.

“Enhancement of public participation is one of the goals of the ICANN's s Strategic Plan and mandate of the new Public Participation Committee. However, the ICANN centralized funding model for public participation is becoming a bottleneck. In contrast, the localized distributive funding model through IDN ccTLDs would improve efficiency through linking up ICANN with its different constituencies and ensure the sustainability of the resources. With respect to ICANN, the clauses on community services should be incorporated and enforced in the IDN ccTLD delegation agreements. Also, ICANN should take the IDN ccTLD's community services or contribution as a valid contribution to ICANN as stated in the Implementation Plan so that all the stakeholders would have an incentive to develop the system. We also hope that the community-based gTLDs could take the similar path to consolidate the connection with the user community.”

2.3 Accountability and Decision-Making in the GNSO

From: ["At-Large Advisory Committee Statement to the ICANN Board on the Board Governance Committee's Recommendations for Improvements to the Generic Names Supporting Organization", May 5, 2008 AL.ALAC/GNIM.WG/01.01](#)
(Page 3 under the heading "Decision-Making Changes to the Makeup of the Council and Constituencies")

“We are aware that there is a considerable debate about this area of the recommendations amongst many parts of the ICANN community. We would like to make the following points:

- The recommendation that the GNSO's makeup should focus almost exclusively on contracted parties and registrants is wrong. Individual Internet users make up the vast majority of the users of the Domain Name system. What happens to the names and numbers systems is of great importance to the public. Therefore, the interests of the Internet using public must be a key element in an improved GNSO. The current proposals completely miss this.
- The definition of ‘contracted parties’ is much too narrow. We have been concerned for a long time with the fact that alongside the directly contracted parties – registries and registrars – there are literally thousands, if not tens of thousands – of parties which are directly related to those parties. Groups such as subsidiaries of registrars and registries who own domain portfolios, and domain name resellers are examples of those with a direct relationship to the contracted parties. These interests must be included, we believe, alongside the ‘directly contracted’ parties.
- Finally, there should be no ‘rush’ to make the political changes. It is important that the ultimate division of decision-making power should be determined between the parties and not initially by the Board or any external party. A top down imposition of changes is not congruent with the ethos of ICANN – nor is it necessary. It is of course

necessary to start with a proposal or two – which the current report does admirably. It is now for the community to come up with a final solution – which might take the form of an evolutionary approach if that’s what is acceptable to everyone. There are a large number of very useful proposals for improvement in the report. Whilst the community debates this particular question the rest of the work can get underway.”