DRAFT - ALAC Statement on the ICANN FY13 Budget Framework

ALAC welcomes the improvement in the FY13 Operating plan and budget framework development, especially its timing, allowing its publication for comments sufficiently early to gives the community enough time to comment on it and provide their inputs.

ALAC also appreciates very much the framework presentation done by the CFO himself, which allowed a good dialog with the community. We fully support the process of early engagement and agree that it will enhance accountability and transparency.

Nevertheless, the FY13 operational plan and budget framework is presented at too high a level, similarly as FY12 was done, and doesn't go into sufficient detail at this stage. The ALAC notes that the FY11 framework provided more information which was useful for analysis.

As presented, the current document can be commented on in a general manner only. The ALAC recommends that the format return to a full text format (with at least as much detail as the FY11 document and preferably more) rather than another power-point presentation for the upcoming years' operational plan and budget framework. Only then would it be possible to analyse the framework against the public interest.

We appreciate that without consideration of the new gTLD program, the expenses for the FY13 will exceed the revenues by $113,000 (0.15%) only, which means that the deficit decreased significantly compared to the FY12's one.

ALAC notices with regret that the funds allocated to the community additional requests for activities and services have been reduced for FY13 by around 20% over FY12, while one of the ICANN priorities for FY13 is to effectively support SO/AC increasing activities. ALAC was instead expecting a growth in these funds to allow our community to implement its projects for a better participation of the Internet end-users.

ALAC wishes that for its additional request for activities and services, the finance ICANN Staff interacts with the applicants before submitting the final budget to the board for adoption.

The ALAC re-iterates that several of the ALAC requests are considered crucial for the At-Large work and development, and that most of them have been submitted for the previous fiscal years.

Looking at the IDN Variant Management, the ALAC expresses its concern that the Framework shows a massive surge in the predicted Cost of the related further studies and implementation phase. The already done IDN Variants studies were undertook by 6 groups composed of voluntary community members. We find the $2.8m overestimated. We are also concerned about the reduced levels of transparency associated with contracting out services that might be better served by staff. External growth based on consultants needs to be kept in check and under control especially given the anticipated deficit situation.

Finally, ALAC welcomes the provision made for intercessional meetings to be held by the non-contract community members. Even if we find the amount allocated to this item rudimentary, and that it should be increased, we believe that the intercessional meetings match perfectly with our need for regional gatherings out of ICANN meetings for in-reach, outreach and learning purposes that we expressed several times over the few previous years.