
LOS ANGELES – At-Large IDN Policy Working Group
Wednesday, October 15, 2014 – 11:30 to 12:30
ICANN – Los Angeles, USA

RINALIA ABDUL RAHIM: Morning everyone and welcome to the at large IDN working group meeting. We have four agenda items today and to run us through, I'll just hand it over to my community-chair Edmon Chung. Edmon.

EDMON CHUNG: Thank you Rinalia for a very short introduction. The main two items that is current on the policy discussions here is the universal acceptance of IDNTLDs and of course, the on-going project for the roots-own label generation rules project. If it's okay, I'll keep referring it to LGR from now. It's basically the IDN variant issue. I'll talk a little bit more on each of them as we go through but, through those and then some merging issues and then a change in community-chair. My co-chair has been promoted which is a good thing.

RINALIA ABDUL RAHIM: Elected.

EDMON CHUNG: Yes, elected to the board and will be leaving us but obviously, she'll continue to pay attention to what's happening here. Any other items people want to bring up before I proceed? Thank you for [Sumad] and others from the ICANN team to join us. I see that Ed Lewis, you're online on the Adobe chat. I wonder if you're able to speak to us as well

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because, the first item (Thank you Gisella for checking first) is on universal acceptance of IDN TLDs. Shortly before this meeting, I sent a note to the working group with a slightly more fleshed out agenda. I'm trying to get that myself. On that particular topic, just as a very general description of it, what it means is that certain top level of domains especially, IDN top level of domains and IDNs (internationalized domain names) in general, certain applications, browsers, email clients, email servers systems are unable to handle IDN in general and some other TLDs. That's the overall issue. We had a pretty lengthy presentation last time in London. I won't repeat all the issues there but I just sent a link to the Adobe chat room which is the presentation that was back in London last time. For those interested, you can check that about the background. So, I won't go deeply into that.

I'll jump right into the discussion of the few things. A joint report was developed by the joint IDN working group between the CCNSO and GNSO. There was a final report on the issue of universal acceptance that is passed. The ICANN board early this year (actually around January or February this year) was passed by the board. The board has not had the time to consider it yet but, after a number urgency from myself and from the community, it seems like they hear us and Rom and others on the board have in earlier interactions here indicated that they will take on considering the report and making response in that. That being said, the staff team has already started working on a universal acceptance project roadmap and the GIG report was referenced. So, it's not like that there's no activity at all. I think this is a very important issue and a very important issue for ALAC as well. This touches very much on consumer trust of the DNS overall especially on IDNs and IDNTLDs.

Francisco will help us cover that. Perhaps you can give us a little bit of an update on the universal acceptance project roadmap and then we'll go into discussion about what is next from the community.

FRANCISCO ARIAS:

Thank you, Edmon. This is Francisco Arias, director of technical services within the global divisions at ICANN. My team is working on the universal acceptance initiative. We have a session this afternoon at 4:30 in which we are going to cover the topic in more detail but, a brief update on where we are now.

The first thing we started to do is define what the problem is we are trying to solve here. When talking with the people a few months ago, they had different ideas of what universal acceptance meant. So, we developed a roadmap that is very short high level document describing what the objective is. After going through public comment on the first wrap of the roadmap, we got to the conclusion that there are three things that community would like of the universal acceptance topic to cover.

First is the acceptance or the support for all TLDs in applications and services in the internet. This is both Askey and Dance TLDs. The second topic that the community wanted the universal acceptance initiative to cover is the support for IDNs in applications and services (IDNs at all levels and not just the TLD level). The last item that was requested by the community that part of this initiative is support for internationalized email which a new protocol that was developed by the idea a couple

years ago that has not yet gained too much deployment within the big providers. I guess the first one that we know of was Gmail that announced its support; I should say partial support for internationalized email just this summer. They are to have such a big announcement for support of these technologies.

Now that we have this roadmap that is published in the universal acceptance section of the ICANN website, we have a new section in the website with the materials and we intend to add more as we have them available. The next set of actions is we are doing it in parallel. On one side, we are working on developing a communications plan that will help us define the details of the strategy to reach out to the various groups of stake-holders we identified in the roadmap with input from the community, obviously the subaward venders which are probably the most interested stake holder, they are together to attention to help to solve this issue.

The other thing that we're doing in parallel is we continue to engage with subaward venders particularly with the browsers. You may have seen that Google, for example in the Chrome browser, they did adjustments and now they released a [skettle] allows for recognition of new TLDs within six weeks approximately from one merchant to another, they recognize the new TLD. We generated a report that we update at certain times a day that includes the TLDs as they sign an agreement unless they are relating in the root. This is to help the certification authorities and the browsers to be able to recognize these new TLDs. This is also now feed into the publicly place that [ASELOM] maintains and that most of the browsers use to recognize among other

things to recognize new TLDs. In the same menu, [inaudible] problem mechanics in which they recognize new TLDs. We haven't had to look with other browsers with we are in contact with.

The other thing that we are doing is since we are planning to launch this communications campaign with the two different stake-holders in particularly to the {inaudible} and internet service providers. The one thing we realize is we need to lead by example. We are going to ask subaward venders to update their support of a universal acceptance but, first we start by doing that ourselves. We're signed this exercise within ICANN and we're asking the contracted parties, the Ras and Rys to join that afford and update their systems to support a universal acceptance, support all TLDs and support IDNs, internationalized email. So, we have been making these presentations to Ras and Rys and we have had some interesting interactions with them.

What we have done so far is we are working on a template for contract [Inaudible] (that's for anyone that we contract to do work for ICANN) and in that, just as we had before an IBC section, we plan to add universal acceptance section saying that a subaward that's available for ICANN has to support these three things, TLDs, IDNs and internationalized email. We hope to have that ready soon that will allow us to have that support for upcoming applications. We're also have been talking with Ashwin, our ICANN CIO and he direct me to work with one of his direct-reports on developing a plan to update the Arabic system applications so we in ICANN also implement that support on those ARADIC applications system.

I think those are the main points in regards to the universal acceptance initiative.

EDMON CHUNG: Thank you, Francisco. Any questions? Okay, Dev.

DEV ANAND TEELUCKSINGH: Thank you, Dev Anand Teelucksingh speaking. A question, what about things such as email within ICANN? Can ICANN accept IDNs, emails from IDN domains and so forth and exchange emails. I'm just wondering because you talk about browsers but maybe I missed it, I didn't hear about email clients.

FRANCISCO ARIAS: The internationalized email is the third element of universal acceptance. It's support for all TLDs, support for IDNs and support for internationalized email. Internationalized email, I have to be honest here, that's the most challenging by far of the three technologies. There is almost no support for these. I think will take several years before we see some serious support for this technology. Here is where we need the help from the community to request these from their different providers so they fill the need, they fill the demand and they then have a business case to do this. That's why we're asking the RASUS and RASERS to offer this support in their systems so that their providers fill the demand for this technology so that they work on this.

EDMON CHUNG: Thank you Francisco. Satisfy?

SATISH BABU: Thank you. Forgive this ignorant kind of a question. Is there an underlining standard that the softer vendors can adopt so that there is no variation between them for at least for the internationalized emails?

EDMON CHUNG: So, the short answer is yes. Of course, the standards are published as RC at this point for the protocol. There are still some discussions about maturing them so potentially, as we go into broader implementation, there may be some adjustments but, the short answer therefore is yes. There is a baseline standard that is published as RFCs. I probably should have said that before I opened the questions but, it's very encouraging to hear the work at ICANN and I guess from the community we've been urging for some time and it's very encouraging the development and the communications plan, the work within the ICANN systems and connecting with the registries and registrars, really getting our own act together that has to be the first thing to do.

One of the things about universal acceptance is personally I have been working on a different stages on the issue and it's often more extensive it was once thought by both the technical team and technical leads. They originally start to think that it's, "Oh okay, we fix here and there." Actually, the more it's kind of like "going down the rabbit hole" issue. What is going to be very useful maybe better documenting the process? As ICANN is doing its own implementation, you mentioned a few points and areas of coordination from policy all the way to technology. Are

there plans for documenting the process? And if not, that is probably a good idea.

FRANCISCO ARIAS: Thank you for the suggestion Edmon. We are just starting that afford so I think it's the right time for this. Thank you.

EDMON CHUNG: With that, any more clarification? I'm not moving away from this particular topic. I want to move into a discussion on how perhaps the community can work together to support that work but before that, any more clarification, question on? Jean-Jacques Subrenat.

JEAN-JACQUES SUBRENAT: Thank you Edmon, this is Jean-Jacques Subrenat. Just to complete the discussion you just had now, wouldn't this become an action item about documenting.

EDMON CHUNG: Right, so that moves into the discussion on what we should do in the community. The first question whether there needs to be an action item for us to remind you or you've heard us and you would take that into consideration. A larger question I want to ask is to think about (I actually asked this question back in London as well) is it the right time for the community again from a bottom-up perspective to work together and form perhaps a cross-community working group to support the staff work on this. If we think this is the case, then perhaps this is the right place to get it started. It would be great to get these GNSO and CCNSO

and other ACs as well. I have had the opportunity to speak to some of the GAC members and they think it's a very important issue for them as well. So, I think this maybe a good timing for something like this to happen and that group could then also work with ICANN to better document not only the ICANN implementation but also hopefully, (if Go Daddy decides to be willing to do it) also document into some kind of best-practices which we could then take to the broader technical community as we advocate universal acceptance. Any thoughts? Satish.

SATISH BABU:

I would like to draw your attention to the part of the conditions of the ALAC statement, point number four says, "The ALAC recommends the creation of an immediate cross-community mechanism that not only provides first edition for stake-holding tractions but also allows for augmentation retention of issues as it is learning, acting as knowledge-based for all aspects of universal acceptance.' I think this is pretty much in line with what we just said.

EDMON CHUNG:

Thank you, yes. I think that's a direction that we need to go and that will quip both the community and ICANN as we outreach to the broader internet technical community, I think. This is a question to staff, is the timing okay? Should we wait for a while for more to try to convene this group and how do you see the potential interaction if a group is being formed?

FRANCISCO ARIAS: On working in this project, one of the things that we quickly realized is that it would be far too ambitious for ICANN to think that we can solve the problem by ourselves. This is such a big problem; we need the coordination with all the parties interested in their community to make this happen. So we will be more than happy to work with any organization and we have been in contact with all organizations like the DNA, APTLD and all the others that are interested in this topic. We would be more than happy to coordinate efforts in regards to universal acceptance.

EDMON CHUNG: Thank you Francisco. Any comments? Rinalia.

RINALIA ABDUL RAHIM: Thank you. What I'm hearing is general agreement that a cross-community working group is a good mechanism for the community to take this issue forward. Acknowledging what Francisco just said, there are a lot of assets and resources in terms of people and network within the community that could support staff effort and also to help them coordinate further. I only see value adding at this point in time. The only question that I have in terms of, if we initiate this, do we bring it back to the ALAC? There's also a question for Olivier Crépin-Leblond who currently chairs the ALAC itself and how do we move it forward because it's coming up from the at large IDN working group?

EDMON CHUNG: Adding to that question really, how should we initiate that and then initiate a cross-community working group because ALAC on its own,

nobody on its own would be able to this but cross-community, how do you see that?

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND: Thank you very much Edmon. The process is as follows; the working group would make a request to the ALAC for creating a cross-community working group or at least proposing that a cross-community working group be built. The ALAC chair would get in touch with the other chairs of supporting organizations and advisory committees. There's a specific list that is in place and propose the creation of a cross-community working group. That's one way. The other way is for the working group members or the chair of the working group to go and engage with other like-minded members in other supporting organizations and advisory committees come together and send a joint letter or a joint request for this working group to be created. The concern with the cross-community working groups is that there's a lot of red-tape that is associated with them. It might take a few months for a charter to be drafted and all this. So, if you have work that needs to be dealt with very quickly, I would suggest going the informal route and then basically saying, "Look, we are already working together informally. Let's get what we're doing to be part of a cross-community working group." These are the two ways; the first way, as I said, going via the SONEC chairs might take a while because there are so many other things that are taking place at ICANN. They might say, "That's another headache. We don't have time for that." The second way might give it more weight.

EDMON CHUNG:

Thank you Olivier Crépin-Leblond. So, we have a proliferation of these cross-community initiatives. I very much agree with the lay of the land but I do think that perhaps we can try and do it in parallel. I think eventually if it's formally developed, one of the key stake-holder groups that I think this activity would get really good use for is from the GAC. I think if governments pay attention to this, just like if ICANN as they do their requirements for suppliers add this as one of their requirements. IPV6 it was one of the best things when governments require their contractors to be IPV6 ready, the same can be implemented for universal acceptance. That would really push it much further than this community alone can. My general perception about engaging GAC in that way is that it's probably, they have their own processes and it might better to have a formal kind of path as well. That doesn't bar us from speaking to individual GAC members and getting their interests and getting things started. Olivier.

OLIVIER CREPIN-LEBLOND:

With all the protocols that are involved in GAC, if you just go to the GAC chair and ask for the GAC chair to take a position forward. Even as the chair of the ALAC, if I go to the GAC chair and say, "Our community is interested in a cross-community working group on this topic," the GAC has more than 100 countries in front of them. He has no idea whether there is interest or not in that topic except if it is a topic that they've already discussed and I believe that IDNs are not a topic that's being widely discussed in some of the recent GAC meetings. Having those member countries that are interested in taking part into such a group and go over to the GAC chair and in parallel if you want with you express their interest in the topic is definitely going to speed things up.

EDMON CHUNG:

Thank you Olivier Crépin-Leblond. Looking at the time, we probably need to move to the next topic. I wanted to take an action item on this but I'll leave it to the end of the next steps. It seems like there is a pretty good idea of what the direction might be. We should try to form a scope and start writing up some of this and socializing it with other SOs and ACs.

That brings me to next topic which the LGR, the label generation rules project which is really the IDN variant TLD project. I've not asked for any particular update presentation from staff. We just had a session earlier today at the tent but I guess I'll hand it off first to Sarmad Hussain. If you wanted to highlight some of the status here and then we'll jump right into discussing what from the community any further steps.

SARMAD HUSSAIN:

Thank you Edmon this is Sarmad Hussain from ICANN staff. After giving a quick overview, I'll focus on a couple of items which are specifically of interest especially in the context of community involvement and I want to highlight those and I will also take any questions. As far as the IDN TLD program is concerned, one of the main things we are actually doing is a going through a slight rebranding process of the project. We are not calling it IDN Variance Program anymore. There are a couple of motivations behind that. One of the main motivations behind that is that the work which we are undertaking through this program is equally applicable to script which may not have variance. So, zero variant is also a legitimate case to take care of. One of the focus areas we have is

actually a new communication plan which is trying to reorient it as an IDN TLD program rather than an IDN variant program for that reason.

In the program, we have multiple projects going on. Historically, over the last three to four years, this problem was investigated by the community and based on the issues report which was done; the community defined a specific process going forward. The specific process required community groups to come together for each script and devise proposals which would be given two independent panels of experts called integration panel which ICANN is commentating. The integration panel would work on the individual proposal and integrate them into a single larger set which is referred to as the LGR or label generation rules set for the root zone. The process has been put into place since mid-last year. Integration panel was set up. Call for duration panels has gone out and integration panel has homework as specified by the procedure laid out for them and define what is called the maximum starting repertoire which the first part of it was released in June of this year which contained 22 scripts. They are working on six remaining scripts which they think should be included in MSR as well which will be released end of this year. So, end of this year, MSR will be completed. As a starting point for generation panels, the community-based panels to start their work.

In parallel, generation panels are also coming together and I'd like to spend a little more time on sharing a bit more detail about each script community is. These are detailed. We've not shared across in the previous presentations but I think it's relevant to bring it up in the context of ALAC. As far as the generation panel work is concerned, we

have two generation panels which are already formally seated and working. The first panel to get formalized was Arabic earlier this year and recently in September, the Chinese generation panel has also been formally seated. Both generation panels are continuing their work aiming to finalize their proposals and submit to into integration panels to ICANN towards the beginning of next year.

In addition to that, Korean generation panel has been active. They have a structure meaning; they have a chair they have elected and membership sufficient to go forward and currently they are working on the proposal to submit. Before they do the proposal, their discussion has been on whether to include or not include Hans script within their proposal. That's a question their currently debating before moving on into a formal proposal development process.

We heard in the morning from the Japanese community where Japanese chair had announced the Japanese panel has also been formed within Japan. It's not started formally communicating with ICANN at this time but they said that they would follow up very soon. There are seven members in that panel and they've already had three meetings starting from August in Japan. They're working on a proposal that they intend to get an ICANN contact very soon. We will also follow up with them.

Beyond that, we actually have been reaching out actively to communities because, at this time, the focus of the program is to get as many community panels together as possible so that we can start the work and get the LGR together as soon and as quickly as possible. The

Neobrahmi script panel has already been working. They've been busy doing work at second level as was shared in an earlier presentation today by Nisha Dahya for many of the language and script of India, for their own IDN TLD. They said that they're learning for the second level work they've done towards top level. Obviously, top level having more constraints which they are cognizant about and they aim to perhaps develop a panel and submit a proposal towards mid-November. Nisha had shared earlier in the day today.

We also reached out to Cyrillic and Latin communities before coming to ICANN meeting in LA and we've had two informal meetings, one for each panel at ICANN LA where a call for interest and participation was sent on VIP Lists and other lists that are relevant and people got together on Monday for Latin script. There were some initial discussions on what the challenges of Latin scripts are. I think the starting point is to determine what the leadership for these panels is. So, Latin script meeting was held. We have now some follow-up steps which we will undertake, the initial one being getting these people on an email list to start the discussion. We had already successful Cyrillic generation panel meeting yesterday. We had people presenting seven different countries and languages attend that meeting. There were about 20-25 participants and they have already selected a chair. That's moving forward as well.

We've made some initial inroads into single script in Sri Lanka, Myanmar. We've identified a group to start the work. ThaiBondIn, we've made some initial contacts in and Homan, we've made some initial

contacts in Cambodia. So, we are moving ahead but these later panels are more informal stages than others are.

I will also take one more minute and point towards the end of the project which we are now embarking on which is the label generation rule set builder. It's a tool we're developing because the submission for generation panels is in very complex formats which are the specifications for LGR. What we are doing is developing requirements to eventually build an open-source tool which will enable community to have a simpler user-interface to input data to develop and LGR automatically without too many errors and facilitate the process. We are documenting the requirements and we will actually be releasing the requirements for this tool publicly for feedback, for public comment in the coming week. We would request ALAC at large communities to actually get involved both for volunteering for these panels and also to please provide us feedback from the perspective of generation panels as well as community on the kind of requirements you need for this tool which is coming out. Give us feedback for on the requirements and we'll incorporate that feedback as we go into the development of this tool. Thank you.

EDMON CHUNG:

Thank you Sarmad Hussain. Again, very, very encouraging development. I think as Chinese, Japanese, Korean, CJK, it seems Arabic, the Sino-Asian languages are also starting to show some movement, Indic languages and Latin, Greek and Cyrillic. That's very exciting. Two main points, I wanted to bring up and perhaps open some discussion. The first one is the outreach efforts; are there any kinds of blind-spots that perhaps the

ALAC community can help which some of the outreach? The second item, I think it's even more important and hopefully, other can join in is as we build all these groups, they seem to be in a good way mushrooming, do we have enough administrative support to support these groups because that's also very important. The GNSO and the ALAC we have very good staff support and I'm curious what the makeup in the IDN group, does it from ALAC or GNSO? I think the administrative work would increase quite significantly. Sarmad and then Jean-Jacques Subrenat.

SARMAD HUSSAIN:

As far as the first question is concerned which communities we need to reach out to where we do not have reach so far, specifically we would like people from Lao, Etopia, Georgian, Tana which is Maldives, Thai and in the list we also have Hebrew and Arminian but we already have been able to reach out to these communities at ICANN 51. I can provide this list to you offline as well so that if there is specific interest, I will be able to hear people who can contribute; I think that would be great to start out.

That was the first, as far as the second question is concerned, we do realize that as we grown in our process to give support to many of these groups, the administrative requirements will increase. We're already discussing that within our management structure. I think at this time it is still under control and what we've actually decided is to take it for next three to four months and we will revisit the situation after about three to four months and see where we are. Based on that, we will seek

out what other possibilities there are as far as additional support is concerned.

EDMON CHUNG: Thank you Sarmad Hussain. Jean-Jacques Subrenat?

JEAN-JACQUES SUBRENAT: I'd like to underline the importance of what you Edmon had just said about staff support. I think that my very short experience with the CGK, CJK group, what I found was there's really first a linguistic preoccupation and terrific expertise. As a former member of the board, as a member of the ALAC now, what I notice is that there seems to be a misfit between that huge expertise and then simply translating into practical stuff. For instance, I was puzzled that for the two or three sessions I had online, I had teleconferences with the Japanese or Chinese group. It was going all over the place and we didn't know who was taking notes, etc. It's very simple stuff, it just has to be done and it has to be clearly stated right from the onset that does what. For instance, the time zones for the phone calls, things like that. We got things which were noted in Hong Kong time. Not everyone knows what Hong Kong is. Very simple stuff so staff has to give support for that because I think that the people, the chairs, the linguistic chairs, not all of them manages banks, you know?

EDMON CHUNG: Thank you, Jean-Jacques Subrenat for the input. Back to Sarmad Hussain, I'm actually not sure what we need to do but I think the community thinks you probably need a little bit more support as we go

forward. I know ALAC and GNSO's staff is already has their plates full but, if we can draw on some that expertise because a lot of the working groups work very well. Jean-Jacques Subrenat.

JEAN-JACQUES SUBRENAT: I'm sorry; I forgot to use the word "hands on". I think that considering the nature of these discussions what is really useful and what I've found throughout the years in other groups is that the staff should be welcomed to actually deal hands-on with this in the organizational part of each of the meetings, the note taking, the distribution of notes, etc.

EDMON CHUNG: Thank you Jean-Jacques Subrenat. CCNSO is a good model for that. The staff actually helps take the pen on some of the issues. Did I see a hand? No? Rinalia.

RINALIA ABDUL RAHIM: Just to say that I believe Sarmad Hussain and his team are well aware of the support needs of the emerging LGR panels in the different languages, language scripts. Basically, it's an issue of resource allocation, making sure that the resources are available. They have tabled it to the board variance working group. It is something that is being worked on. The emphasis is that there is recognition that the community needs the support and it needs to be available and it has to follow through the process. Thank you.

EDMON CHUNG:

Thank you, Rinalia for the insight from the board. One group is live and that will be very valuable as you transition to the board. With that, we're kind of running out of time. I'll touch a little bit on the emerging issues. There isn't much to talk about at this point. The WhoIS and the contact internationalization process are ongoing. There is a couple of working group that are working on it, not any concrete proposals at this point so, I think we'll come back to that later.

That brings me to two things before we wrap up. One is of course is the selection of the working group community-chair. As mentioned, Rinalia is moving to the board and some next steps. I wanted to touch on the next steps a little bit but, first of all, I hear that the board working group is already looking at these staffing and resource issue. I guess there isn't any next step yet but, I guess if there's anything the community can draw the attention and try to get more resource from you, please let us know. In terms of the language communities, I think we'll try to use our network of ALSs and send it out to the ALSs and ask for whether those language that you mentioned, we'll spread that news for you. In terms of the universal acceptance, I guess this group should try to work on maybe a perimeter of what a working group might look at it and start socializing it with other SOs and ACs.

That brings me to the last item before we close, which is the selection of the working group co-chair and we had a discussion on the mailing list a little bit before that. I think that the Satish was put forward as a candidate and personally, I don't know what seconding process is but I am very supportive of that. Cheryl put forward that nomination. I guess the question is whether there are any discussions or thoughts around

that or others want to weigh in or objections or if Satish you would...there is a discussion. [Sarnish]

[Sarnish]: It's not discussion, it's just we had consensus for Satish's candidacy and we just really recommend his candidacy for this working group and very much support of him.

EDMON CHUNG: Thank you [Sarnish]. With that, I think we can do two things at one time, one to thank Rinalia for your efforts throughout the last few years to co-chair this group and to welcome Satish to be the co-chair with a round of applause. [Applause] With that, it's exactly 12:30. [Applause] I hope no more other issues; I'm not going to take it anyway. Thank you everyone for joining us at the end of this working group session.

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