

Minutes of Meeting

MEAC-SWG Call 16 – Thursday 4 May 2017

The sixteenth call for the MEAC-SWG took place on Thursday 4 May 2017 at 10.00 – 11.00 UTC. The call had 10 members and observers of the MEAC-SWG, and 2 ICANN staff members.

On the call we had Walid Al-Saqaf (Chair), Ahlam Abu-Jadallah, Ahmed Bakhat Masood, Michael Oghia, Nadira Alaraj, Sogand Ghorbani, Amal Ramzi, Wafa Dahmani, Zied Bouzeri, and Zakir Syed. And from ICANN Staff, we had Baher Esmat and Fahd Batayneh.

We had noted apologies from Manal Ismail, Hadia El Miniawi, and Manahil Ahmed Khan.

The agenda for the call covered the following topics:

- Welcome and Overview of Agenda;
- Overview of the Published Quarterly Report;
- Open Discussion on the Quarterly Report, and General Progress of Implementation Plan;
- Proposals for MEAC-SWG Charter Amendments; and
- AoB.

Welcome and Overview of Agenda

The Chair welcomed attendees to the call, and appreciated the amount of efforts being injected by everyone to ensure the progress of the MEAC Strategy, and the benefit it is giving to the regional community.

Overview of the Published Quarterly Report

ICANN Staff shared the achievements of the period of 1 January 2017 until 30 March 2017 under each of the 3 focus areas of the strategy.

Under focus area 1 on “**Support a Secure, Stable, and Resilient DNS Infrastructure in the MEAC Region**”, there was a lot of demand for DNSSEC workshops and roundtables. The partnership between ICANN and the MENOG roadshows is moving along nicely with several workshops and roundtables held or taking place. The KSK Rollover continues to be a key topic where ICANN staff is talking about it at relevant events. The work of the TF-AIDN continues to make echo’s with how effective and beneficial it is to Arabic Script IDNs. And finally, future technical capacity needs are being assessed, along with a possible future train-the-trainer DNSSEC workshop in the pipelines.

Under focus area 2 on “**Promote a Healthy and Competitive Domain Name Marketplace in the MEAC Region**”, the DNS Entrepreneurship Center (DNS-EC) continues to work for the benefit of the DNS industry in both the Middle East and Africa with a couple of agreements and workshops taking place. A Turkey DNS Forum was held in February, and the Middle East DNS Forum will take place later in May. A media roundtable was held on the margins of the Turkey DNS Forum, and another will be held during

the ME DNS Forum. A couple of business/marketing workshops and gatherings were held. Feedback is currently being gathered from the regional DNS community on their business-related training needs for FY18. And finally, ICANN Staff attended; and continue to attend, a good number of regional events to promote ICANN and its work.

Under focus area 3 on “**Clarify ICANN's Role in an Evolving Internet Ecosystem through Engagement with the MEAC Community**”, ICANN continues to work closely with the REN in Tunisia; CCK, on the academic engagement program. ICANN Staff are seeking other academic engagement efforts like the one in Tunisia to be replicated in other countries around the region. As part of the planning for FY18, ICANN Staff are exploring more ways to engage with Civil Society, and this was brought to the SWG in an email thread. Closely working with ALSs by exploring their CB and workshops held in FY17, and how they would like ICANN to help for similar CB and workshop activities in FY18. And as part of its efforts to engage in countries that need more engagement (like Yemen, Palestine, Afghanistan, and others), ICANN Staff paid a physical visit to the West Bank, and participated/supported remotely both the Afghanistan IGF and Afghanistan SIG. ICANN staff are exploring further ways to engage in such countries via ALSs and other means.

The slides accompanied to his webinar provide more details on the different activities held.

Open Discussion on the Quarterly Report, and General Progress of Implementation Plan

The Chair and those on the call appreciated the update, and the efforts injected by ICANN Staff. There was a question on how is ICANN looking and engaging more extensively with troubled countries or countries that need more engagement. ICANN Staff mentioned the feedback currently being sorted from Middle Eastern ALSs on their capacity building and training needs for FY18. The Middle East has 19 ALSs with 10 falling under AFRALO and 9 under APRALO. ICANN Staff also stressed that in doing this exercise with the regional ALSs, they are in close collaboration with the At-Large Support Staff to ensure being aligned, not to duplicate efforts, and utilize resources effectively. Of course, this is not the only means ICANN Staff are exploring to engage in such countries, but this is one of areas being explored. More areas will be explored as we move.

There was a question on inactive ALSs, and ICANN Staff responded that there is an internal process within each RALO on how to work on this. ICANN Staff mentioned that within the AFRALO and LACRALO there are processes to deal with inactive ALSs, and that this is best dealt with the At-Large ICANN Staff members.

Proposals for MEAC-SWG Charter Amendments

The Chair suggested amending the MEAC Strategy Charter to onboard “members” and not just “observers”. There were no objections to this.

Any Other Business (AoB)

Michael Oghia brought up the idea of supporting 2 SWG members/observers to attend ICANN 60 in Abu Dhabi via a special fund. And while ICANN Staff do not oppose it, they suggested that there were many other funding mechanisms in place for SWG members/observers to benefit from (fellowship program, NextGen, and SO/AC support). ICANN Staff did also stress that in making such special funding requests internally, there must be a strong justification for it. As a way forward, ICANN Staff suggested waiting for

the results of the different funding programs to draw a list of SWG members/observers who will be in Abu Dhabi, and then decide on a way forward for this request.

The call was adjourned.