Minutes of Meeting

Wednesday 9 November 2016 | ICANN 57 | Hyderabad, India

The Global Stakeholder Engagement Team for the Middle East (GSE ME) held a 90-minute public session at ICANN 57 in Hyderabad, India entitled "Updates from the Middle East".

The objective of the session was to update the regional community and those interested in our regional work on three main topics:

1. The 2016-2019 draft MEAC Strategy;
2. Updates from the DNS Entrepreneurship Center (DNS-EC); and
3. Updates from our regional work.

This report summarizes item 1; i.e. "The 2016-2019 draft MEAC Strategy".

The session attracted close to 30 physical attendees, and 5 remote participants. It took place on Tuesday 8 November at 15.15 – 16.45 India Standard Time. AR/EN/FR real-time interpretation was provided.

The discussion was led by the Chair of the MEAC-SWG on behalf of the SWG. He shared with the attendees' information on the SWG, the flow of work, timelines, the objective of the new strategy and the 3 focus areas, and next steps.

Overall, the draft strategy document and its findings were well-received. Some comments made during the open-floor feedback and Q&A slot included:

- The map needed to be re-considered as it included Armenia (which is not part of the Middle East region as defined by ICANN).
- There was a strong feeling in the room that governments needed to be more engaged by staff, and that in implementing the strategy governments must be intensely engaged with. While the majority of the governments in the region are members of the GAC, most of them are inactive or moderately active.
- There were concerns on the "Mission Statement" of the strategy as it was found to be a grand mission that is not easy to achieve.
- There was a request from the Vice Chair of the APRALO to work closely with the DNS-EC in promoting their work further
- There was a suggestion to include an item that collects data on Universal Acceptance of TLDs readiness in the region to be shared with the community.
- There was a request to do more outreach to rural areas away from main cities.
- There was a suggestion to engage further with the technical community.

The Chair and ICANN Staff responded where possible.

There was a request from Afghanistan to strengthen engagement with countries that are less engaged. We did emphasize our work with such communities through online tools and providing expertise in their

local initiatives, and that ICANN staff are willing to travel to such countries (mainly the troubled ones) once the difficulties ease.