TIJANI BEN JEMAA: Absolutely. Yes. Please.

YESIM NAZLAR: Okay. Thank you very much, Tijani. Let's please start the recording as well as the interpretations officially now.

Good morning, good afternoon, and good evening to everyone. Welcome to the eighth webinar of the 2018 At-Large Capacity Building Program on the topic of Universal Acceptance taking place on Monday, 19th of November, 2018 at 13:00 UTC.

Our presenters for this webinar are Hadia Elminiawi and Edmon Chung. We will not be doing a roll call as it's a webinar. We have French, Spanish and English interpretations for this webinar, and I would like to remind everyone to state their names before speaking for the interpreters to identify you on the other language channels, please, and it's also important for our transcription purposes as well. And another]reminder to speak at a reasonable speed to allow accurate interpretation.

And the final reminder will be to keep your lines muted as well as your AC-room microphones when not speaking. And thank you very much everyone for joining, and now I would like to leave the floor over to Tijani Ben Jemaa. Thanks very much.

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: Thank you very much, Yesim. Hello, everyone. Good morning, good afternoon, and good evening. This is another webinar that the Capacity Building Working Group of At-Large is organizing for this year, 2018. As you know, we organize each year a series of webinars, about 12 each year. And this year, we are about to finish the year with the remaining webinars.

And today's webinar is about Universal Acceptance, which is one of the, let's say, most interesting topics for the end users since most of the end users are not aware about it and perhaps do not think about it. So it is good for our community to know about Universal Acceptance, what is done, what should be done, and why we need the Universal Acceptance.

Our speakers, as Yesim said this in a few minutes, that our speakers are Hadia Elminiawi and Edmon Chung. But before I give them the floor, I will give the floor again to the staff for some housekeeping announcements.

YESIM NAZLAR: Thank you very much, Tijani. So I will be trying to run through the housekeeping slides as quickly as possible.

So we will have the question and answer pod on the very left-hand side of your screen, as you see it right now on the screens as well. So if you have any questions for the presenters, please do type them there and we'll be directing your questions to the presenters and we'll also have a pop quiz section as well as a user experience section. So at the end of the presentations, we'll have a couple of pop quiz questions for you to

answer just to measure the knowledge of the presentation that has been done, and lastly, but not least, we'll have the evaluation part. We'll have a seven-question survey, and please do try to stay around to answer those questions as well.

So this is all from my side. Back to you, Tijani. Thank you very much.

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: Thank you very much. Thank you, Yesim. And now to our speakers, and I think Hadia will start. So Hadia, please. You have the floor. Hadia?

HADIA ELMINIAWI: Hello everyone. Happy to be with you today. I hope I will not be too boring, and I'm definitely [inaudible].

So [I'll start with] a brief introduction about the Domain Name System, Internationalized Domain Names and the new gTLDs. I shall talk about the definition for business innovation, and then I'll start talking about Universal Acceptance and give some examples of users' experiences. And finally, I will talk about who should care about Universal Acceptance and why it matters, the target audience of the Universal Acceptance assets and some examples of recommended actions.

So DNS and the ASCII format. The DNS was originally created to support domain names written in Latin script using the American Standard Code for Information Interchange, ASCII, format.

ASCII is used to represent the Latin script in computers. Therefore, despite that the content of a webpage could be in a non-Latin script that

is in any language, not necessarily based on Latin characters, the domain name had to be in Latin script. However, this changed.

But let me first talk about the Internationalized Domain Names. In 1996, an article in the MIT Sloan Management Review, under the title "The Internet and the International Market," addressed the challenges for international marketers from various aspects, among which were the language and culture barriers.

The article said, "The web promises to reinforce the trend toward English as the lingua franca of commerce." Of course, that statement is not quite true now. This more than 20 years old article was shared to several translation companies opening on the Internet and mentioned a Japanese company approaching an Internet-based mall of catalogs to translate many of its catalogs to Japanese, as well as an online service based in Sardinia expanding its customer base by focusing on local content and local languages.

It is evident that the marketers using the Internet in its very early stages discovered the importance of using their local languages to grow and reach their targeted markets, and the same now applies to all the services provided through the Internet, whether by government, NGOs, businesses or educational institutes and organizations.

In addition, Internet users are content creators as well, as much as they are content consumers, and IDS encourages this where not only the content is in the local language but also the domain name itself.

The technical standards for Internationalized Domain Names were developed since the mid-90s when algorithm code, Punycode, was used

to convert Unicode to ASCII, allowing the domain names to be represented in non-Latin-based scripts. And since the 2000s, IDNs at the second level were made available.

In 2003, ICANN endorsed the technical standard required for the global implementation of IDNs. The technical standards were developed by ICANN and IDN registries. In 2010, the first IDN ccTLDs were inserted in the DNS Root Zone. So actually, the technical standards were there from long ago. It's not new.

New gTLDs. In the early 2000s, seven new gTLDs were launched in addition to the eight legacy gTLDs, and in 2004, ICANN added eight more gTLDs. Currently, we have more than 1,200 [inaudible] gTLDs.

So to relate this to business innovation, let me start by mentioning what Socrates once said. The beginning of wisdom is in the definition of terms. So let us define business innovation. A research published by MIT Sloan Management concludes that business innovation is about new values and is not about [inaudible]. Innovations or creations that bring limited value to the users eventually fade out and die.

IDNs and new gTLDs are both not new creations. They have been existing for a very long time. But their value –

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: Hadia?

HADIA ELMINIAWI: Yeah.

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: Can you please speak closer to the microphone?

HADIA ELMINIAWI: Okay, I'll do that. Like this?

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: Okay, thank you.

HADIA ELMINIAWI: IDNs and new gTLDs are both not new creations, but their value lies in that cater to having a global and inclusive Internet that defines new opportunities which enhance existing products and services. IDNs add to the Internet new users who access domain names in their own languages to benefit from products and services offered by businesses, governments, NGOs, educational and research institutes and organizations.

That being said, it is the experiences of the Internet users that determine the value of IDNs and new gTLDS. Internet users are the customers who are going to use the IDNs and gTLDs and determine its worth.

So let's jump into Universal Acceptance. What's Universal Acceptance? What do we mean by Universal Acceptance? Well, there are two sides to that. There is the technical side and there is the human side.

From the technical aspect, Universal Acceptance is a technical compliance process by which all domain names and e-mail addresses can be used by Internet-enabled applications, services, devices and systems. It is the concept that all domain names and e-mail addresses are treated equally by technical systems. And I note here that Universal Acceptance is not a DNS problem. The DNS understands and correctly resolves non-Latin-based domain names. New applications seek to be filled and all applications and software must be updated.

From the human side, Universal Acceptance requires as well universal awareness where registrants or potential registrants are aware of the existence of the Internationalized Domain Names and new gTLDs and the choices and benefits that they bring. Measuring Universal Acceptance's success has to be against both the Universal Acceptance and the awareness of the registrants of the existence of the IDNs and new gTLDs and the opportunities that they bring to their Internet usage, businesses and services.

From the technical point of view, there is a criteria defined for Universal Acceptance. There are five steps. The first is acceptance, and acceptance means applications and services allow domain names and e-mail addresses to be entered into a user interface or retrieved from other applications and services via API. The second is validation. It is intended to make sure that information provided by the user is valid or not valid. It ensures the syntax correctness.

Storage. Storage occurs when an e-mail address or domain names is stored as a string of characters in a database or file used by an online application or online service.

Processing, which means using domain names or e-mail addresses in an application or service to perform an activity. The activity might include searching or sorting or transformation into another format.

Displaying. Displaying occurs when the information associated with the e-mail address or domain name is displayed to the user.

Let's see. We did talk about the importance of user experiences, and actually, this is what matters and gives the value to the IDNs and gTLDS. So user experiences are usually not that positive. Valid e-mails could fail to send or receive. Domain names could be treated as a search in the address bar, could be mistaken as a search, treated as a search instead of a domain name. Online applications and services also could not accept the domain names or e-mail addresses, problems with linkification, which is the action when a software application determines if a string should create a hyperlink to a valid Internet address or an e-mail address and execute it.

So users' experiences have not been that positive, and this is one crucial element to why IDNs and some gTLDS, new gTLDs are not performing well. And by not performing well, I mean the number of registrations are not as expected or how we think it should be.

I will move quickly to refer here to mobile applications. So there is nothing special about mobile applications, but mobiles are actually special when it comes to talking about Africa. So according to the GSM Association, Africa is expected to have 500 million cell phone subscribers by 2020 and remains the fastest-growing mobile market in the world.

[inaudible] around 270 million people in the region now access the Internet through mobile devices, which makes the mobile a crucial tool for digital inclusion.

Using a mobile device, you might type in a new gTLD in a mobile device application browser. You might type in a new gTLD that is rejected by the browser and treated as a search rather than a domain name. However, the same domain name when typed in a desktop browser, it is accepted and resolves. So experiences vary and are not consistent. And though as I said, mobile applications are not special, but they are special and important to Internet users in Africa.

Who should care about Universal Acceptance, and why does it matter to whoever should care? According to the Internet Trends Report 2018, the number of Internet users now is at 3.6 billion, which is more than half of the world's population. Gaining new users is essential for the domain name industry, so industry leaders should care about that.

Businesses need to be optimized for new user growth in order not to miss on big opportunities. Businesses also should care about that. Governments can serve their people more effectively if they are able to address them online in their local languages. So governments can reach people, provide services more effectively if IDNs are adopted. IDNs will resolve issues with misspelling and provide meaningful domain names to users. And finally, IT people and application developers. Those are the people who are going to actually implement the required work.

So in the Universal Acceptance effort, who should we target? Who should we regard as most important to take this forward?

Well, Chief Information Officers, those are the ones responsible for the organization's IT strategic plan. It is important that they understand the importance of UA and adopt its implementation. Application and software developers, definitely. Those are the doers. And the whole IT community.

So some examples of actions from different involved players would be Chief Information Officers raise awareness about the importance of Universal Acceptance to an organization. Make Universal Acceptance part of your strategic plan. If your infrastructure does not support the Internet evolving infrastructure, you're missing on opportunities for greater outreach with your products and services. In addition, you'll be left behind while the Internet companies evolve.

Internet users, reach out to that market. [If they] are not Universal Acceptance-ready, let them know the problem. And finally, software developers. [Contact others to your assistance.] Determine which parts of it are Universal Acceptance ready and which are not. [Inaudible] and bring your systems to compliance.

So that's it from me today, and I'm happy to receive any questions, or if you would like to have Edmon's presentation first and then we both take questions. It's up to you.

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: Thank you so much, Hadia. Thank you for this presentation, and we will go to Edmon first and he will make his presentation, and we will have a Q&A part of this webinar. So now to Edmon.

EDMON CHUNG: Thank you, Tijani, and thank you for having me on, actually. Always excited to talk about IDNs, Internationalized Domain Names and Universal Acceptance and very excited to talk to At-Large. And I think that this is, I want to – hopefully by the end of this session, we'll make those who haven't really been exposed to this a champion for IDNs and Universal Acceptance. And I think the ALAC and the ALSes can really play a role here.

So thank you, Hadia, for really laying the groundwork. I guess I'll talk a little bit about the actual usage and adoption out in the wild a little bit and also come back to build on a little bit about what the Universal Acceptance Steering Group is doing and the work forward, and hopefully end with how ALSes and the At-Large really can put some weight behind this project.

So in terms of building actually on what Hadia mentioned, there really should be a great demand for Internationalized Domain Names and their usage for the next billion or the last billion users on the Internet. However, that hasn't really been the case. If you look at the growth, if you will, or the non-growth of IDN registrations in new gTLDs, over the last couple of years, we've seen a very flat situation in some of the bigger TLDs , especially from China for Chinese TLDs. It's very flat. There are some drops as well and there is some rally back.

We do see, however, quite interesting development if you look at the slide on the bottom right. That's the Russian or Cyrillic Top-Level Domain. They're seeing some steady growth, but if you look at the last

part, it's also tapering off a little bit. And I think that really owes a lot to Universal Acceptance and I'll come back to that. But if you look at the statistics though, if you dig deeper, hopefully there is a silver lining, if you will.

This is dot-china and their statistics. It's showing about 0.5 million all through last year, and you're seeing the last couple of statistic numbers, it's coming back on an uptick. And I think that is partially an indication of the adoption starting to be interesting. And I'll go that in a minute.

But in terms of numbers, if you get a sense around this, the world now has about 300 million domain names registered totally, about a little more than 20 million new gTLDs registered, but just a little bit more than 8 million IDN domains registered, and that represents only about less than 3% of the total domain names registered worldwide. So on the one hand, you can say that, hey, there's no market. On the other hand, there's tons of potential. Which one is it, is something that is important to think about and how we turn this, I guess, latent demand in our minds into real demand is something that we really should think about.

One thing, as I mentioned, in terms of silver lining though is the usage in IDNs in certain niche areas is actually increasing and there is a good kind of statistics for that as well. Earlier in the year, Japan, dot-jp, has actually reported at a conference that they're seeing multipled increase in access or resolution rates for IDNs for last year. They're seeing 30 times, so 3000% increase in resolution rates for IDNs. And of course, that still represents only a percent or so of the resolutions, so growing from less than 0.5% to 3%, that's still a very small part, but I think the

increase is definitely encouraging and also showing some sign of interest.

And one of the interesting things that I want to let people know is that a lot of the increase is actually driven by search. We often think about search being kind of a non-domain name usage. But actually, a lot of the domain names registered are actually used for enhancing search engine optimization. And one thing that is interesting about IDNs is that some communities are finding it useful to utilize native language domain names, IDNs, as search engine optimization tools, especially in Japan, as dot-asia has seen.

And what that really means is that yes, maybe the actual type-in rate of IDNs from end users is not very high because people are not really aware of the technology and they don't really know that IDNs and native language domain names work just yet.

However, when users actually search, they use their own language. An Arabic user will hardly search in Arabic. A Chinese user in China, a Japanese user in Japan, when they put in the search engine and they look for something, it's going to be in their own language, and having an IDN enhances that. Part of the market is starting to leverage this, and that's partially why Japan, and actually around Europe as well, we're seeing increased resolution rates for IDNs.

And another thing that we are actually seeing for dot-asia and some other places is IDNs redirecting into microsites. In our industry, a lot of people tend to think that domain names are simply used for creating new websites and that's the legitimate or good use of domains. But

actually, as the technology progresses, in the last couple of years, we're actually seeing a lot of really meaningful redirections. So domain names are actually used for navigation on the Internet, right? If we think about what IDNs helped and what multilingualism for the domain name system really means is to help people navigate the Internet, and redirection really helps that.

And here's an example. This is a very famous crab that's right now in season in China and Hong Kong right now which really, most people wouldn't know the English name for. And the Chinese name is well-known and that's a Chinese name that redirects to a Facebook page where you can buy the crab online. So these are the kind of things that we are seeing that we think are encouraging.

When you think about the usage of search, it also relates to the future. As Hadia mentioned, the future is going to be mobile-driven. And one thing about the mobile Internet and the mobile phone is that voice activation or voice input is becoming increasingly mature and prevalent. And when you think about it, maybe you would type in an English domain name as a Chinese user or a Japanese user, but it's hardly imaginable that you would be speaking to your phone in English. It would be kind of weird to think of it that way. And that's why it's really important for local businesses who are known by their local language names to be able to utilize this technology.

In terms of the Top-Level Domains, I started with gTLDs. I also talked about ccTLDs. This is where in the ICANN world, we have kind of two worlds. We have the gTLDs in the GNSO and the ccTLDs in the ccNSO.

This is an opportunity for us to work together because we have a common goal to make these domain names work.

And this brings me to what Universal Acceptance is and the challenge there, and why perhaps some of the domain names are not as prevalent as it really should be, especially for IDNs in the local language domains. It's because some of the applications, actually many of the applications out there are still not fully accepting different domain names and especially IDNs and Internationalized Domain Names and e-mail addresses using Internationalized Domain Names.

And I want to emphasize here about e-mail, and I think Hadia touched on it as well. E-mail is now standardized to use IDNs and also for the username part, the mailbox. You can also use your own native language with your own native language name as the mailbox name, so you can basically have NativeLanguage@NativeLanguage.NativeLanguage e-mail addresses.

And another thing about e-mail addresses that is important is that besides, and actually beyond just simply sending an e-mail, which some people would argue young people today don't even use e-mail that much, but e-mail address remains the key identifier for many of the sign-ups. Even if you don't use e-mail to send a message back and forth, you would use e-mails to sign up for Facebook, to sign up for different accounts, and that is very important for two things. One, the e-mail address itself is an identity for any person online, and to be able to reflect your offline identity online is something that is important for users.

The other thing that is important is that these e-mail addresses are not only used for e-mails. It needs to be accepted by other systems to be login usernames and also identifiers as well. So updating IDNs, updating the Internationalized Domain Names as well as internationalized e-mail addresses is not just about the mail server, but actually, also about these applications and all these communication applications that utilize e-mail addresses, not for sending e-mails but actually for account names.

So those also need to be updated for Universal Acceptance, and that's where, actually, really a lot of the challenge comes in is a lot of the application providers are not already well-aware that your database that is storing a number of e-mail addresses actually now has to be updated to support EAI, E-mail Address Internationalization and what we call Universal Acceptance. Hadia has already mentioned about what Universal Acceptance means, it means really to accept, validate, store, process and display domain names and e-mail addresses in the newer formats, in IDNs, in what is called EAI, E-mail Address Internationalization and the longer, new Top-Level Domains, dot-asia, dot-photography, dot-museum, all these domains, some of the databases think that all the world knows is three-letter Top-Level Domains, dot-com, or two-letter Top-Level Domains. But actually, it could be many characters, and that needs to be updated.

So I won't go into details because Hadia has already mentioned this, but I want to talk a little bit about what UASG is focusing on. So UASG, ourselves, actually, I serve as the Vice Chair on the UASG, the Universal Acceptance Steering Group.

What we are is a volunteer group that is supported by ICANN. It's not really an ICANN Working Group, although we do meet at ICANN and a lot of the active participants do come from ICANN because, of course, we need the ICANN community behind this effort for us to get to the world to have all these databases and applications updated.

But our focus is going to be on three areas. For the UASG, the specific advocacy focus is going to be on three areas.

One, the doers, the developers, the people who can actually make this work. They actually have to go in and change the code. And then the second tier is people who can direct this to happen, the CIOs, the IT managers, whether you're from a company and the government or other areas. And then finally, the influencers, whether that be the CEOs, the Board members, government policies, consultants, and what is called KOLs, Key Opinion Leaders online. That's an area that we are focusing on. So these three types of people are the ones that the UASG is trying to reach out to.

And in terms of priority, we talk about Universal Acceptance, but we spend a little bit more effort on EAI, E-mail Address Internationalization. And the reason for that is because if you solve the problem for EAI, if you solve the problem that your databases are aware of e-mail addresses in different languages, then most likely, you would have updated your system to allow domain names in different languages and domain names in different lengths of Top-Level Domains as well, because then you would have known that the whole infrastructure of the DNS, the whole infrastructure of the Internet has actually evolved.

[Another couple of area] is really the developers, as mentioned, and some of the key stakeholders as mentioned. We are also spending a lot of effort in terms of social media outreach and we are experimenting with LinkedIn, we are experimenting with Facebook and how we can actually reach people. But one of the areas that has been very important – and I see that a few of our UA ambassadors, which are ambassadors for Universal Acceptance, are online with us here today as well – is actually to be present at various events and to be present where people are discussing the development of the Internet. And those are the priorities for the UASG.

I'll come back to the stakeholder a little bit when I talk about for myself and dot-asia, how we are actually working together with the Universal Acceptance Steering Group in a bit.

But here is a little bit of a sense of what we have been doing in the last couple of years. The UASG has been in operation for about three and a half years at this point. We're going into another year, but in the last couple of years, a number of media analysts we have reached, we have really reached out to many different mainstream media on one hand, and also as mentioned, through social media from LinkedIn to Twitter to Facebook and also through many associations. And we are looking to expand on this.

In terms of associations, we're focusing on IT associations around the world. Every country would have their own IT, information technology-related associations, and we're looking to reach out to them. I'll come back to this as well, but this is an area we want to really engage with ALSes and the At-Large people around the world where you really know

better who the IT associations are and who the influencers are so that we can reach out to them and to make a difference so that they know, they can tell the world about these new Top-Level Domains, about these new domain names that are going to help the next billion to come online.

So in the last couple of years, well actually, in the first couple of years that UASG has been in existence, we spent a lot of effort to create a set of materials. Hadia mentioned that the technical standards for IDN was set in early 2000s and updated in 2008 to the current and final version, and EAI, the E-mail Address Internationalization was also standardized earlier.

But what was needed is also implementation details, implementation information about how to move from non-UA aware to UA aware, to fully UA and Universal Acceptance ready. And this is what the UASG has been doing the first few years, is to develop and refine these documentation so that when a developer actually looks at it, it can actually start implementation and start creating the roadmap.

I'll come back to an interesting case study, actually, with ICANN itself, but I'll talk a little bit about the going forward. In terms of the UASG, it's starting, as I mentioned, in the last few years, we have really refined the set of documents for developers, for influencers and for executives to decide how to go about implementing UA awareness, and we are going forward to promote that and to really give and create awareness to different people so that they know that the material is there and they can put a road map for implementation together.

So now let me turn to an interesting case study that ICANN itself, ICANN IT did. And this is something, and if you come to ICANN meetings in the future, this is a highlight for the UASG, UA-related events every time at ICANN, at least for me, is ICANN IT will report on their progress in terms of becoming fully UA-ready. One interesting thing to note is that when ICANN IT itself first started down the UA, Universal Acceptance, path, they thought that they would be done in a few months, let's say a year. They will be completely UA compliant. It's a very simple fix.

What they immediately found out a few months from then is that, yes, the fix itself is actually quite easy for each particular point. However, as you can probably imagine, every single piece of software almost touches on domain names. If it's an application on the Internet, it somehow touches domain names and every database has a little bit of linkage to e-mail addresses. So that means that even though it is a small change for each particular part, there are lots of places that need to be changed.

There are lots of places that may need to be updated, and not only that, some software is off the shelf. Some software is customized service, customized systems that are made in-house. Some is customized by consultants, and they are different and they have different time schedules to be updated. And therefore, just by ICANN itself, it may not be possible to immediately update everything and make everything compliant.

What ICANN finally realized, and this is also what the UASG is promoting now, is that it's more important to really identify a roadmap. You may not be able to complete the entire cycle of Universal Acceptance

readiness in a very defined timeline. However, it's time really to set out a roadmap. The standards are there. The tools are there. The materials are there. What we want to advocate is to set out a roadmap.

And this is something also in the latest ICANN meeting in Barcelona, the ICANN IT also shared a very important tip, is that this is a project that's not like a big project that you open up and then you do it for a year and then you're done. It's actually more like a maintenance or hygiene project that every new project that comes down the pipe, you need to make sure that it is UA ready in the next version, in the next iteration of that particular library, of that particular system, of that particular database. It should then be UA ready, and then you also will get to a point where you're fully UA ready.

To completely change everything in one go is going to be very difficult because of the interconnectedness of systems that you maintain, you control, as well as off-the-shelf products that you don't control. So this is something that we think in the last little while, that UASG has really refined a model for different companies to use and we are looking to advocate and let the world know about.

At ICANN, actually for IDNs, there is also some other challenges. UA is one big part of it, but there are also other smaller items in terms of – I shouldn't say smaller items, but other items like IDN variants, like IDN implementation. However, a lot of these are being worked on. I'm looking at the time and I'm kind of running out of time, so I will not go into them in detail. And if you are interested in the different projects, you can ask in the Q&A.

But what I want to point out is that various projects in terms of specific policies to support the adoption of IDNs and E-mail Address Internationalization is in place, and many of them have been at a point of maturity that it can be implemented. And that is why UA is especially relevant right now.

So now I go to a little bit of our work. dot-asia, which I work for, has recently started working together with Universal Acceptance Steering Group. We have actually contributed quite a bit in the past, but we are starting just this year to formalize the relationship to serve as a bit of a secretariat, but also to look at specific what we call technical marketing piece of the Universal Acceptance Steering Group and focusing on three areas, really, but I will highlight two.

One is governments. What we found in our work is that governments, although they can't change all the software out there, they can be a very strong influencer. And why is that? It's because if you think about it, when governments do IT procurement, they put out tenders. When they put out tenders, many different IT systems integrators and providers and vendors go to bid for the tenders. If those tenders include provisions that ask providers whether they are UA ready, whether they are Universal Acceptance ready, whether they can accept IDNs, whether they can accept EAI, E-mail Address Internationalization, then suddenly, many of the vendors would be aware, many of the system integrators would know. So this is a big area that we will be focusing on.

Another one is, as I mentioned, IT associations around the world. IT associations' members are all the developers, all the people who really

spend effort to create these applications, create this software that we use, and those need to be updated.

There is also another area that we are quite interested. Although it's not fully in the project completely, it is part of the UA interest, and I think for At-Large and for this group, it is very interesting. Those are academia and universities. Think about it. The new crop of developers coming out of universities, we want them to know that IDNs are there. We want them to know that e-mail addresses can be in their native language. We want them to feel that those technologies and IDNs are not second-class citizens, so we need to give them the information from the Computer Science 101. And that's an area that we hope to engage you and universities around the world to do as well.

Ultimately, as part of our work, actually we also identified a number of things to connect with the government and to universities who are all very focused on actually sustainable development goals. I think that is something that the At-Large and many of our ALSes and user groups care about. It's part of the human rights push, but also more importantly, sustainable development of the network itself.

We have actually identified a number of points in the STGs that relates to Universal Acceptance and relates to IDNs, especially infrastructure development and how it relates to heritage and social development.

One of the things that we really want to talk about is going to the future with a sustainable future in mind to change the narrative. Governments around the world often just talk about connectivity or they talk about an open Internet. But what does that really mean? It has to mean open

standards are readily adopted and evolving standards are being upgraded.

The Internet has seen multiple standards being upgraded and has been less behind. Universal Acceptance is one of them. If you think about IPv6, if you think about DNSSEC, UA, Universal Acceptance, is one among those web accessibility for the visually challenged or otherwise challenged accessibility. Those are things that the Internet really needs to be updated, and that ties back into the new gTLD concept for enhancing consumer choice, enhancing trust, enhancing competition in the network. And that's really what Universal Acceptance is about. It's not just about using a few more domains or using new gTLDs for commercial purposes. It creates an enhanced network. It allows the Internet to grow. It allows the Internet to really evolve.

So I'll end here with three areas that I think ALSes and the At-Large can really make a difference. Of course, as Hadia mentioned, to join and participate at the UASG. And then the other part is very important. You can help us initiate local outreach projects, reaching to the local governments, the local universities, the local influencers, telling them about why your local language makes sense.

And I want to emphasize here something. For example, in Thailand or in China, solving the issue for the local language, solving the issue for using Thai language e-mail addresses also means that you solve the issue for using Indic language e-mail addresses, Indic language domain names because the UA system allows for Unicode to be used and allows for multiple languages to actually be used. So when you upgrade your

software for the local usage, you actually upgrade the system for global usage as well, and I think that is extremely important.

And finally, the UASG also needs help. It's not just volunteer help. I know that for ALSes, that's important. We need translation help. We need help measuring how well UA readiness is with local systems, and we often put out help wanted notices. You can bid for those projects as well. We've gotten some funding from ICANN, not a lot, but we almost never finish spending them, so we have additional resources to help, to get you to help us outreach to the local communities. So we need your help both to initiate local outreach and also to help us work on some of the projects that we're working on. With that, thank you.

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: Thank you very much, Edmon. Thank you for this very good presentation, and I am sure there is a lot of questions that you will have in the Q&A session. And there is already some of them on the chat. But before that, I will give the floor to Yesim for the pop quiz questions. Yesim, please.

YESIM NAZLAR: Thanks very much, Tijani. Before I start, can we please mute that line? Thank you. Okay, not muted yet. Waiting to be muted.

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: Okay. Go ahead.

YESIM NAZLAR: Thank you. Currently, we have three questions received from Alfredo Calderon. I'll start with the first question. Where can we find tools to identify if a website is compliant with Universal Acceptance? This is the first question.

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: Now we can display it. It wasn't displayed. No, it is not displayed on the screen.

YESIM NAZLAR: No, it's not, because it was directly put on the Q&A pod, which the presenters as well as the hosts have accessibility.

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: But Yesim, how people will answer these questions?

YESIM NAZLAR: If you're asking about the presenters, I've already shared this, all these three questions with them.

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: No, I am asking about people attending. How will they answer those questions if they don't have a place where they put their –

YESIM NAZLAR: Sorry, there is a misunderstanding. I thought now is the Q&A part, not the pop quiz part. Would you like me to move on to the pop quiz part?

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: I am asking you for the pop quiz, please. Pop quiz questions.

YESIM NAZLAR: Okay, sorry, apologies for that. Meanwhile, I've just dropped from AC and so trying to get back on the AC as well as I see my screen, I'll be able to move to the pop quiz part. Apologies for the delay. It will take a couple of seconds. And yes, I'm back.

Okay, so let's first start with our first pop quiz question. What is Universal Acceptance? A) It is to promote new gTLDs, B) The concept that all domain names should be treated equally, C) It is to support web accessibility, D) It's an ICANN Working Group. Please cast your votes now.

And Edmon, would you like to share the correct answer with us?

EDMON CHUNG: Certainly. So I think everyone got it right. It's the concept that all domain names, actually all domain names and e-mail addresses be treated equally by systems. And it is not just related to new gTLDs, though there is some relation. It is not related at all to web accessibility, although they have similar challenges. And it's not an ICANN Working Group.

YESIM NAZLAR:	Thank you very much, Edmon. Our second pop quiz question is, Is IDN supported for e-mail? If it's yes, or is it B) no, please cast your votes now.
	And the correct answer is, Edmon?
EDMON CHUNG:	Thank you. Simple as well. Yes, it is. In terms of protocol, it is, of course. But for Universal Acceptance, we really need to have e-mail providers get the system upgraded and up to speed so that it also accepts IDNs.
YESIM NAZLAR:	Thank you very much, Edmon. I'm moving on to our third pop quiz question now. Why is Universal Acceptance relevant to At-Large and ALSes? A) It is related to consumer trust of new gTLDs, B) It is relevant for the sustainable development goals, C) Local initiatives and advocacy work is needed for Universal Acceptance, and D) All of the above. And I will again refer back to Edmon for the correct answer, please.
EDMON CHUNG:	Thank you. This is interesting to see the answers coming in. Some think it's C. Many think it's D. For me, it's D. It's all of the above. Of course, local initiatives are especially important and relevant. However, because I truly believe that Universal Acceptance is a matter of consumer trust for new gTLDs, it is an area that At-Large is especially keen about as well.

YESIM NAZLAR: Thank you very much, Edmon. And now moving on to our fourth pop quiz question. How should we measure the success of Universal Acceptance? A) Through technical acceptance, B) People's acceptance, and C) Both of them. And the correct answer would be?

HADIA ELMINIAWI: So the correct answer, of course, is both, because definitely, we need to have a system technically ready, but if the system is technically ready and the people are not aware, you are in the same situation, so people's acceptance and technical acceptance.

YESIM NAZLAR: Thank you very much, Hadia. I'm moving on to our fifth question. But just a kind reminder for you to speak closer to the microphone please. Our fifth question is: Who should care about Universal Acceptance? A) industry leaders, B) businesses, C) governments, D) IT people and applications, and software developers, E) all of the above. And the correct answer is, Hadia?

HADIA ELMINIAWI: It's all of the above. So all of the above should care about Universal Acceptance, and we should take care that this is different than who do we target in our efforts for Universal Acceptance. This is who should care and it's all those people. Thank you.

YESIM NAZLAR: Thank you very much, Hadia. Moving on to the sixth pop quiz question. Universal Acceptance is only about IDNs. Is this true or is this false? And who would like to answer this question?

HADIA ELMINIAWI: Okay, so it's false, because it's not only about IDNs. What about the new gTLDs? So it's definitely not only about IDNs.

YESIM NAZLAR: Thank you very much, Hadia. The seventh question is, who is the target audience for the Universal Acceptance effort? Is it A) registrants? Is it B) developers? Is it C) Facebook users? Or D) newspaper publishers? And the correct answer would be, please?

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: Edmon or Hadia.

HADIA ELMINIAWI: Okay, so it's the developers. Those are the doers, and we're talking here about Universal Acceptance readiness and not about the awareness part.

YESIM NAZLAR: Thank you very much, Hadia, and I'm now reading the last pop quiz question. Which big e-mail provides and accepts all valid e-mail addresses? Is it Gmail? Is it Tencent? Is it Yahoo or Yandex? And the correct answer is?

HADIA ELMINIAWI: The correct answer is Gmail.

YESIM NAZLAR: Thank you very much, Hadia, and this was the end of our pop quiz section. Over to Tijani.

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: Thank you very much, Yesim, and Edmon and Hadia. Now going to the Q&A, and I am waiting for your questions, [it is for you.] Is everything clear for you? It is not for me. I will start asking questions, waiting for yours.

No, but before we had three questions on the chat, so Yesim, can you please read them one by one?

YESIM NAZLAR: Yes. Sure, Tijani. Thank you very much.

All of the three questions I have received are from Alfredo Calderon. The first question is, where can we find tools to identify if a website is compliant with Universal Acceptance? And shall I read the others or once the first question is answered?

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: One by one.

HADIA ELMINIAWI: So I will answer and then let Edmon continue my answer. So there is a Universal Acceptance Steering Group which is a community-based team working to share the vision of a Universal Acceptance, and the website is UASG.tech. Type it in, and there you can find many resources and information that you can use.

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: Edmon?

EDMON CHUNG: I can add to that. If you're on the website, you can click to "documents" and under "documents," there are two particular documents that would be of relevance. One is most relevant, is UASG017. It's Evaluation of Websites to Acceptance of a Variety of E-mail Addresses. That looks at whether a platform or a website is UA-ready, especially whether they take in e-mail addresses, and of course, that includes domain names in IDNs or the long TLDs. And inside that document is also the methodology so you can take a look at it.

There is another document that is called the Universal Acceptance of Popular Browsers, so that's not complete, not directly related, but it actually talks about the browsers part.

And the last one I want to bring your attention to is on the website, if you go to the menu, you can see "Test Your E-mail" and if you click on "Test Your E-mail," there is actually a form that you can put your own e-mail address in and it will tell you whether your e-mail provider is UA ready.

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: Thank you, Edmon. Second question, please.

YESIM NAZLAR: The second question from Alfredo Calderon is, in the ICANN environment, what is the GAC, Governmental Advisory Committee, doing to increase awareness of Universal Acceptance?

HADIA ELMINIAWI: I will say I don't know and I leave this to Edmon.

EDMON CHUNG: Sure. So I guess the short answer could be nothing. They are not, as the GAC, doing any particular thing. However, many GAC members are doing lots of things for the awareness of UA. Many governments are actually quite eager about this, especially Thailand, India and Egypt and several other places in China. But GAC as a whole, because this is not an ICANN policy issue, GAC as a whole probably hasn't taken this on as a project itself.

We hope that in time, because Universal Acceptance is now going to be put, I think, into the ICANN strategic plan for the next iteration, so with that, we hope that we can have a more regular or GAC-wide participation on this. But that being said, I do want to stress that many of the GAC members do do a lot, especially for the local initiatives that are being started.

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: Thank you, Edmon. Abdalmonem, I saw your hand up and then you lowered your hand. I understand that you had a comment on the first question and now you have, again, your hand up. So please go ahead, Abdalmonem.

ABDALMONEM GALILA: Yes, thank you. Just I want to say some things about how to decide if my website is UA ready or not. There are five characteristics for UA readiness: accept, validate, store, process, display. If your site contains any webform that [inaudible] data from the end user, your form should be compliant with these five criteria. That means if you have a domain field or e-mail address [in the registration field, e-mail field] that should comply with those five criteria for UA readiness, [inaudible].

Also, a [inaudible] case is published by UASG website that you could use as the [inaudible] to test if your webform inside your website is UA readiness completely or not. That's all. Thank you.

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: Thank you Abdalmonem. For the record. Abdalmonem is a Universal Acceptance Ambassador, and I had a question for him and I will ask it at the end.

Now, Yesim, please, the third question.

YESIM NAZLAR: Sure. Thank you, Tijani.

Are Microsoft and Google involved in this initiative of awareness and incorporating IDN in its services?

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: Go ahead.

HADIA ELMINIAWI: Okay, and then I will let Edmon, of course, complete my answer. So both Microsoft and Google cloud-based e-mail services are both able to send and receive from all valid e-mail addresses. So yes, they are actually incorporating and working on the task.

EDMON CHUNG: Adding to that, yeah, so the short answer is yes. Microsoft and Google, but also, we understand that Apple and others, many others, are starting to look into it and hopefully will have more good news to announce.

Specifically about Microsoft and Google, actually, Gmail, as mentioned, has been supporting E-mail Address Internationalization for quite some time now, probably more than two years. Outlook and the client as well as Outlook.com has also been supporting E-mail Address Internationalization for some time.

Last month, Outlook Exchange, the Microsoft Exchange product which is the on-premises e-mail server product is also supporting EAI, Email Address Internationalization.

The last one I want to stress is quite important as well because many of the large companies and also governments still utilize on-premises, which means that their e-mail server is maintained by their own IT department, and the Microsoft product is now EAI ready.

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: Thank you very much. Abdalmonem.

ABDALMONEM GALILA: I am here. I wanted to differentiate the point you said. For e-mail server, there are two failures. The first is that, like Gmail, could accept, send or receive e-mail, send it to an e-mail address internationalization address or receive from a Latin address. [inaudible] The second is that you can create a local mailbox with your own local language, e-mail. For Gmail, you can create an account with username in Arabic for Abdalmonem in Arab. You can do that for Gmail.

For another example for [Oxygen,] you can create your mailbox in your own local language. There is a difference. So we should differentiate between the two phases of UA readiness for the e-mail server. That's all for me. Thank you, Tijani.

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: Thank you, Abdalmonem. Thank you very much. And now I don't see your hand. I don't see that you are asking questions. I would like to thank Alfredo for these three questions, and if you don't have questions, I will start asking my questions.

So you are speaking about UA-ready. Is there any application [inaudible] UA ready? I don't think so, because we still have those LGR going on, we still have scripts coming one by one, so there is not full readiness or full compliance. There is a partial or there is some [inaudible] readiness in my point of view. What do you think about that?

EDMON CHUNG: I guess I'll jump in and try to give a response. So in short, yes, Tijani, you're probably right to think about it that way. However, I want to point out that UA readiness is also, there are two components of it, as Abdalmonem mentioned a little bit, that there is a component – if the system itself, let's say you're a mail server only, then you could be in a situation where you simply accept and can pass through a domain name or e-mail address in the different languages and the new TLDs.

In that case, regardless of the variance and regardless of those items, you could be ready, and even in the future, you would still be ready.

There are, of course, user interfaces that when you talk about variants, that may need to be taken into consideration. However, some of those languages are already ready, including Arabic and some Indic languages and stuff. But as you mentioned, and actually, in my presentation I also mentioned there are a number of ongoing work at ICANN, including

what is called LGR, that is the Label Generation Rulesets, which defines what is called IDN variants.

For those of you who don't understand what IDN variants are, I will use a very bad example, but hopefully it will explain the issue. In English, for example, you have the capital letter A and small letter a, and capital letters versus small letters, and they all are the same in the domain name, so whether you type in a capital letter or a small letter, it goes to the same domain.

For IDNs, however, unfortunately, the system doesn't do what is called case mapping. Or for some cases, for Chinese and Arabic, it's not quite case mapping, it's a language-based issue that needs certain mapping of what is called variants. In those cases, there needs to be policy intervention to map domain names together, and that's what's we call IDN variants. And in those cases, those are some of the variants that are not fully in place yet, and in future for display purposes and to set up hosting and to set up the IDNs, that will still need to be updated. That is correct.

However, I do want to point out also that we talked about IDN variants for many years starting from year 2000 actually when the simplified Chinese and traditional Chinese started the discussion. But there have been breakthroughs. What is called, as Tijani mentioned, the LGRs, the Label Generation Rulesets is actually standard at IETF, the Internet Engineering Task Force, and there's an XML format that allows you to express what the variant relationships for the different characters are going to be, and therefore, that particular standard, if you implement it and your systems are able to read that format, then no matter what the

LGR and what the actual rules ultimately become for Chinese, Japanese, Korean or Arabic, you can be able to readily read it into your system and for your system to decipher which domain names should map together.

That standard is already there. That's why part of what I mentioned early on in my presentation is that the basic blocks are there already. The specifics, yes, there are still some changes. There is still some work to be done. However, for implementation, as mentioned, don't look at it as one project and it will be done for life. It's an iterative project. It's also a project that you need to put in place with a road map, and now is the time to do it. That's the difference.

So Tijani, the short answer is yes, but now is still the time to do it and those are the reasons why.

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: Okay, thank you very much. That means we have still work on the table and it is not finished. Even if we say we are UA ready, it is not yet finished.

Abdalmonem, is it a new hand or an old hand?

ABDALMONEM GALILA: This is a new hand.

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: Okay. Go ahead, please.

ABDALMONEM GALILA: I want to confirm that you are probably right for universal acceptance, but I wanted to say something. If I am a developer and have enough awareness about universal, I will make my API, application programming interface, API, I will make it generic to not lose my audiences.

So everyone's site has audiences. Maybe it will have audiences in Arab, maybe in Chinese, maybe Japanese, so I wanted to not lose all of these audiences, so I will make my library to be generic. [Finally,] believe it, achieve it. So awareness is an important thing for developers. Thank you.

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: Thank you very much, Abdalmonem. We have reached the end of this webinar, but I still, if you have questions, I will take one or two questions. Please don't hesitate. And for Abdalmonem, as an ambassador, I would like to ask you what you are doing as an ambassador for the Universal Acceptance.

ABDALMONEM GALILA: Yes, Tijani. I did here in Egypt, in the past year when I started to be universal ambassador, I contacted Ministry of Communication here in Egypt and have training for three days at a workshop and then an awareness session for the ministry. And also, I did a presentation at Africa Governance Forum. I think you attended it.

Also, I have an [onboarding] training or a workshop at Information Technology Institute. As Edmon said, every country has Information Technology Institute that can help you to start your mission. I started

from the engineers of the future, so I went to this [inaudible] institute and I will have a presentation in another governorate in Egypt called El-Mansoura, [in the registry,] and also, I have another presentation for Information Technology Institute in Egypt after one month [again]. That is what I did.

Also when I go everywhere, I did awareness session before every] universal acceptance, I did awareness session about IDNs and [EAI.] And there is also Dr. Ajay Data from [UASG who helped me a lot] [inaudible] for [EAI] workshops. Thank you.

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: Thank you very much, Abdalmonem. Any questions for our speakers? If you don't have, I will thank them, thank our speakers very, very much for their presentations, for their questions and for their answers to these questions, to these pop quiz questions and to the three questions answered on the chat, also for my question that I asked. Thank you very much, and thank you, Abdalmonem for participating actively in this webinar. Thank you to all our interpreters, our staff, and for all –

YESIM NAZLAR: Tijani?

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: Yes?

YESIM NAZLAR:	Apologies for interrupting, but please don't forget the evaluation part. We have seven questions.

TIJANI BEN JEMAA:	Okay, go ahead. I'm sorry. Go ahead.

YESIM NAZLAR:	Sorry for interrupting.

TIJANI BEN JEMAA:	Go ahead.

YESIM NAZLAR:	We have seven evaluation questions, and please be so kind to answer them right now. Our first question is how was the timing of the webinar, 13:00 UTC? Is it too early, just right, or too late for you? Please cast your votes now.
	And I'm moving on to the second question. The second question is how is the technology used for the webinar? Is it very good, good, sufficient, bad or very bad? Please cast your votes now.
	And moving on to the third question. The third question is, did the speakers demonstrate mastery of the topic? Do you think it's extremely strong, strong, sufficient, weak, or extremely weak? Please cast your votes now and I'll be moving on to the fourth evaluation question now.

Are you satisfied with this webinar? Extremely satisfied, satisfied, moderately satisfied, slightly satisfied, or not satisfied at all. And thank you for your votes, and let's now move on to the next question.

The fifth question is what region do you live in at the moment? Is it Africa? Is it Asia, Australia, and Pacific Islands? Europe? Latin American and the Caribbean Islands? Or is it North America? Please cast your votes now and I will be –

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: Yesim, we lost you.

YESIM NAZLAR: Sorry, just lost my audio on the phone bridge. I hope everyone can hear me now.

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: Now it's okay.

YESIM NAZLAR: Okay, perfect. Thank you.

So I'm moving on to the sixth question. How many years of experience do you have in the ICANN community? Is it less than one? Is it one to three, three to five, five to ten, or more than ten years? Please cast your votes, and I will be moving on to the last question.

The last question is what topics would you like us to cover for the future webinars? Please type your answers in the blank space and don't forget to hit the button next to it to send your answers. And I'll keep this open and give the floor back to Tijani. Thank you, Tijani.

TIJANI BEN JEMAA: Thank you, Yesim. So this question is very important for us as a Working Group because it will give us the topics that you need to be covered, so please type your preferred subjects. And if you don't have sufficient space or if you remember later that you need to give other topics, please send to the staff an e-mail with the list of topics you want and you think that it is important that we address in the Capacity Building Working Group.

Thank you very much, all. I reiterate my thanks to the speakers, to the interpreters and to all of you, and to our staff, of course, our wonderful staff. Thank you all and bye-bye.

YESIM NAZLAR: Thank you all. Thank you for participating. This webinar is now ended. Have a lovely rest of the day, and bye-bye.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Thanks. Bye.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Thank you, everyone. Bye-bye.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]