Enhancing Public Access to Legal Information: A Proposal for a New Official Legal Information Generic Top-Level Domain (.OfficialLaws New gTLD)

I've written the following article that contains my comprehensive proposal for the creation of a new .OfficialLaws regulated official legal information gTLD by the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN):

Leesi Ebenezer Mitee, "Enhancing Public Access to Legal Information: A Proposal for a New Official Legal Information Generic Top-Level Domain" (2017) 23(2) European Journal of Current Legal Issues (EJOCLI) available at <http://webjcli.org/article/view/562/753>. Its abstract appears below.

Abstract: This article examines the use of a new legal information generic Top-Level Domain (gTLD) as a viable tool for easy identification of official legal information websites (OLIW) and enhancing global public access to their resources. This intervention is necessary because of the existence of unofficial legal information websites with issues of reliability and the overdependence on Internet search engines (despite their limitations) as the only means of finding and accessing OLIW. The existing findability difficulties create technical unavailability of available online legal information. This article proffers a workable solution to these problems through its proposal for the creation of regulated official legal information gTLD by ICANN. It develops a Legal Information Domain Name System (LIDNS) exclusively for the OLIW of governments and intergovernmental organisations (IGOs) based on the proposed gTLD. The LIDNS extends the ramification of Internet governance within the ICANN framework in respect of official legal information as a universal public brand. The article argues that the gTLD will facilitate easy identification of official sources of online legal information to avoid the risk of relying on unreliable legal resources, enable direct access to OLIW without the laborious use of Internet search engines, and enhance their findability even when the search option is used. It concludes that the resultant improved access to the available official online legal information will promote the people's right of free public access to legal information globally. This will help people to know the laws they are bound to obey (ignorance of which is no excuse), enhance justice under the right to a fair trial, and facilitate national and transnational legal research. It will also promote transparency and accountability in governance and engender the holistic actualisation of the environmental, economic, and social components of sustainable development, among other benefits.

Keywords: Right of public access to legal information; Official legal information generic Top-Level Domain gTLD; Legal information domain name system LIDNS; United Nations World Legal Information Organization UNWLIO; Public access to law as a human right; Huricompatisation; Legal informatics; Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers ICANN; Internet governance; Free access to law movement; Legal information institutes; .officiallaws gTLD

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