Mr. Akram Atallah

Interim President and CEO; President, Global Domains Division

ICANN

Dear Akram,

On behalf of the GNSO Council, we would like to thank you for your recent blog post (“Conduct at ICANN Meetings”)[[1]](#footnote-1). Members of the Council, and all of the GNSO Stakeholder Groups and Constituencies, share the goal of ensuring that all members of the community can participate in and contribute to ICANN, in an environment where harassment and discrimination are not tolerated.

Without passing judgment on any specific incident, we are encouraged by the commitment from Staff and the Board to engage the community on this subject. In support of this, volunteers on the Council have prepared a draft “Key considerations for an ICANN Conference Harassment Policy”, which we attach to this note. Several questions remain open, however, including:

* Whether this Policy would enhance, or be distinct from, the existing Expected Standards of Behavior;
* Whether a conference harassment policy is too limited in scope, as harassment by definition is a sustained activitiy and could continue long past face to face meetings;
* How to ensure that any definitions or standards that are incorporated into a Policy account for cultural diversity in ICANN’s global environment while providing sufficient clarity and guidance;
* Whether complaints would be reported to ICANN Staff, or the Office of the Ombudsman, or some other entity or group;
* How the policy will be enforced; and
* Other topics and questions that will arise from this work.

We expect that members of the GNSO community will be engaged in this effort, and note that some have already undertaken work in their own groups (e.g. the “Statement from NCUC Executive Committee”[[2]](#footnote-2)).  We recommend that these materials be considered in any community undertaking to develop new policy or standards addressing this issue.

Thank you

Donna Austin, GNSO Vice-Chair

James Bladel, GNSO Chair

Heather Forrest, GNSO Vice-Chair

1. <https://www.icann.org/news/blog/conduct-at-icann-meetings>. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <http://lists.ncuc.org/pipermail/ncuc-discuss/2016-March/018488.html>. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)