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AL/ALAC/ST/0712/1
ORIGINAL: English
DATE: 25 Jul 2012
STATUS: Final

AT-LARGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

ALAC Statement on the Preliminary GNSO Issue Report on the Protection of International Organization Names in New gTLDs

Introduction

By the Staff of ICANN

Alan Greenberg, ALAC Liaison to the GNSO and At-Large member from the North-American Regional At-Large Organization (NARALO), composed an initial draft of this Statement after discussion of the topic within At-Large.

On 11 July 2012, this Statement was posted on the [At-Large Preliminary GNSO Issue Report on the Protection of International Organization Names in New gTLDs Workspace](#).

On that same day, Olivier Crépin-Leblond, Chair of the ALAC, requested ICANN Policy Staff in support of ALAC to send a call for comments on the draft Statement to all At-Large members via the ALAC-Announce Mailing List.

On 24 July 2012, this Statement was discussed in the [ALAC Monthly Teleconference](#).

During this meeting, this Statement was discussed by all present At-Large members, as well as those participating via Remote Participation.

The Chair of the ALAC then requested that ratification be held on the Statement.

Staff then confirmed that the vote resulted in the ALAC endorsing the Statement with 10 votes in favor, 0 votes against, and 0 abstentions.

The Chair then requested that the Statement be transmitted to the Public Comment process, copying the ICANN Staff member responsible for this Public Comment topic.

[End of Introduction]

The original version of this document is the English text available at <http://www.atlarge.icann.org/correspondence>. Where a difference of interpretation exists or is perceived to exist between a non-English edition of this document and the original text, the original shall prevail.

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The ALAC believes that IGOs should receive protection for their internationally recognized names comparable to the protection available to trademark owners.

Regarding protection at the top level, the ALAC does not see any great need given the various comment and objection mechanisms available. Moreover, the ALAC strongly advocates that in future TLD rounds, all new TLDs (and not only Community-based TLDs) be contractually required to adhere to the general use of the proposed TLD outlined in their application (with provision for amendment in an open and transparent way).

At the second level, the ALAC is particularly sympathetic to granting additional protection to reduce the possibility of domain names aimed at defrauding unsuspecting consumers or being used in phishing or similar illicit activities. The ALAC concern is largely focused on organizations with a charitable profile such as the Red Cross or UNICEF. The ALAC would be similarly sympathetic to extending such protection to other charities, although how this would be implemented is unclear. Moreover, the ALAC can see the benefit of extending such second level protection to include protections wider than just exact matches of the protected strings for the above organizations. The ALAC is mindful of the potential difficulty of implementing such protections and would work diligently with any group formed to address the issue.

That notwithstanding, the ALAC is also concerned with such protection impacting fair use of names (i.e. although it may be an extreme example, red-cross.sucks).

Lastly, although this Issue Report was triggered due the GAC request to protect the Red Cross and Olympic names, followed by a request from 26 IGOs, it is troubling that the Preliminary Issue Report estimates that there may be over 5,000 IGOs and 35,000 other non-profits which might be considered for eligibility to additional protections. ICANN and certainly the GNSO do not have the resources or ability to even list such groups, never mind judge eligibility.