Implementation Status: Generic Names Supporting Organization-Governmental Advisory Committee Facilitated Dialogue on International Governmental Organization and Red Cross Protection

WHAT CAN I EXPECT AT ICANN58 IN RELATION TO THIS TOPIC?

The Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) and the Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) are expected to engage in two sessions designed as facilitated dialogues, to try to resolve the outstanding differences regarding the protection of names and acronyms of Red Cross and International Governmental Organizations (IGOs) in the domain name space. These sessions are open to observers, and will be held on Saturday, 11 March (Day 1) at 07:30-09:30 and Sunday, 12 March (Day 2) at 18:30-20:30.

WHAT IS THIS ABOUT?

This section of the Policy Briefing should be read together with the following section on Implementation Status for the Protection of IGO-International Non-Governmental Organization (INGO) Identifiers in All generic top-level domains (gTLDs) Policy Recommendations.

The Protection of IGO-INGO Identifiers in All gTLDs Policy Development Process (PDP) was completed in November 2013. Although all the PDP Working Group (WG) recommendations were accepted by the GNSO Council, the ICANN Board to date has approved only those recommendations that are consistent with the GAC advice received on the subject.

The remaining recommendations are still under Board consideration. These remaining recommendations concern Red Cross National Society names, international Red Cross movement names and acronyms, and IGO acronyms. The GNSO-GAC facilitated dialogue sessions at ICANN58 are intended to try to reconcile the inconsistencies between GAC advice and GNSO policy on the remaining recommendations, to develop solutions acceptable to both the GAC and the GNSO regarding appropriate protections at the second level of the domain name system (DNS) for these various organizational identifiers.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The ICANN Bylaws contain specific provisions that outline specific steps to be taken by the Board in cases where it disagrees either with GAC advice or GNSO PDP recommendations. In this case, the Board elected not to trigger either of these processes when it adopted only those GNSO PDP recommendations that were consistent with GAC advice in April 2014, and it requested additional time to consider the remaining, inconsistent recommendations.

The Protection of IGO-INGO Identifiers in All gTLDs was launched by the GNSO Council in November 2012 to consider what the appropriate form and scope of protections would be, at both the top and second level of the DNS, for the Red Cross, the International Olympic Committee (IOC), and IGOs and INGOs other than the Red Cross and IOC. All these organizations perform important public interest or humanitarian work and have reported that cyber-squatting and related abuse of domain names identical or confusingly similar to their names and acronyms could significantly impact their missions and resources. The PDP outcomes that were adopted by the GNSO Council and approved by the Board included consensus recommendations that a limited list of Red Cross, IOC, IGO and INGO identifiers be reserved. For the Red Cross, these are "Red Cross", "Red Crescent", "Red Crystal", and "Red Lion and Sun" at the top and second level. For IGOs, only their full organizational names will be reserved at the second level. The appropriate DNS protections for many of the other identifiers that are associated with the Red Cross and IGOs – i.e. Red Cross National Society names, the names and acronyms of the international Red Cross movement, and IGO acronyms – have yet to be finalized.

WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATUS OF THIS PROJECT?

Following a suggestion made by the ICANN Board at ICANN57 in November 2016, the GAC and GNSO agreed to conduct a dialogue facilitated by former Board member Bruce Tonkin, to attempt to resolve the outstanding differences. This dialogue will be based on a set of agreed documents – comprising a Problem Statement for each topic (Red Cross and IGOs) and a Briefing Paper that outlines the applicable international and/or national law, existing ICANN mechanisms that can be leveraged, the differences that remain between the GAC advice and GNSO recommendations, and the scope of ICANN's mission. A mailing list has been created for the participants, and the GAC and GNSO have nominated their representatives who will take part in the dialogue sessions. For transparency purposes, the discussions will be open to all to observe, recorded and transcribed.

WHAT ARE THE EXPECTED NEXT STEPS?

Following the conclusion of the facilitated discussions, which may extend beyond ICANN58, the proposed outcomes (if any) will need to be sent back to the GAC and the GNSO, for each to consider and possibly approve, in accordance with their internal processes. The Board is then expected to take action in accordance with the ICANN Bylaws on the final results of this reconciliation process.

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

You may follow the progress of the discussions by reviewing the background information on this project, observing the discussions (including on the **email list** set up for this purpose), and looking out for any Public Comment forums that may be launched as part of the final reconciliation process.

MORE INFORMATION

- Facilitated Dialogue Workspace: **community.icann.org/x/eoPRAw**

- Protection of IGO-INGO Identifiers in All gTLDs PDP Webpage: **gnso.icann.org/en/group-activities/active/igo-ingo**

- ICANN Board resolution of April 2014 adopting the PDP recommendations consistent with GAC advice and requesting time for remaining recommendations: **icann.org/en/groups/board/documents/resolutions-30apr14**

- GAC webpage listing GAC Communique advice relating to IGO protections: **gacweb.icann.org/display/GACADV/IGO+Names+and+Acronyms**

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