
ICANN Transcription

IDNs EPDP

Thursday, 05 May 2022 at 13:30 UTC

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DEVAN REED:

Good morning, good afternoon, and good evening. Welcome to the IDNs EPDP call taking place on Thursday, the 5th of May 2022 at 13:30 UTC.

In the interest of time, there will be no roll call. Attendance will be taken by the Zoom Room. If you're only on the telephone, could you please let yourselves be known now? We do have apologies from Sarah Wyld and Donna Austin.

All members and participants will be promoted to panelists for today's call. Members and participants, when using the chat, please select everyone in order for everyone to see the chat. Observers will remain as an attendee and will have view only chat access.

Statements of Interest must be kept up to date. If anyone has any updates to share, please raise your hand or speak up now. If you

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need assistance updating your Statements of Interest, please e-mail the GNSO secretariat. All documentation and information can be found on the IDNs EPDP wiki space. Recordings will be posted on the public wiki space shortly after the end of the call.

Please remember to state your name before speaking for the transcript. As a reminder, those who take part in the ICANN multistakeholder process are to comply with the Expected Standards of Behavior. Thank you. Over to Justine. Please begin.

JUSTINE CHEW:

Thank you for that, Devan. This is Justine speaking and I have the pleasure of chairing today's call. Donna is indisposed. So we will try and make use of our 90 minutes today, or perhaps less if we are efficient. Okay. So we're done roll call with no Sol updates.

In terms of the chair updates, well, a few things that we need to just inform people here today, which is the SSAC has issued SAC120, I believe it is, and a copy was sent to Donna. We plan to circulate it to the EPDP mail list, if that hasn't been done already. Okay, already circulated. Thank you, Ariel. Sorry, I'm not updating my e-mails. So we can have a look at that and we'll consider if we need to do another conversation with the selected members of SSAC, individuals from SSAC who produced the SAC120. But essentially, from what I understand is it just reiterates the early inputs that we received from SSAC some time ago. So at this point in time, I'm not sure whether we need to have another conversation with SSAC but we will look into that. Dennis, I see your hand up.

DENNIS TAN TANAKA: Thank you, Justine. I just wanted to confirm what you just said. SAC120 reaffirms or at least put in writing what we heard from SSAC members that joined us a few weeks back. Earlier this week, also within the ccNSO PDP4, we discussed SAC120. And Jacques, who is a member of the ccPDP4, he confirmed that it's basically a reaffirmation confirmation where they already say in writing, but of course, they're open to have a conversation with anything, whether there are any other follow-up questions or what have you. Thank you.

JUSTINE CHEW: Yes, thank you for that affirmation, Dennis. I appreciate it. So, as we announce this now, Ariel has already circulated that document to the mail list so if anybody has any comments or wish to raise questions, I suggest you pop an e-mail in reply to Ariel to the list.

Okay. Next, also we have is the outreach letter to the Chinese, Japanese, Korean GPs has gone out. So we hope to get a reply from all three GPs as soon as possible. And once we get that, we will let the EPDP team know.

The next administrative matter is we plan to circulate the draft text for the charter questions A7 part one, A9, and A10. I guess we can do it after the call or tomorrow, and then we will, as usual, set a two-week period for people to comment or make any suggested amendments to the draft text. At the end of the two weeks, we will see whether there's any substantive proposed amendments that

we need to discuss. If there is, then we will bring it back to the EPDP at a future call.

The last administrative matter that I want to just briefly talk about is the call for volunteers for the small team to look at the string similarity issues from last week. I believe in last week's call, we concluded that small team or small group should be set up to look into the ramifications of Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3 issues for the string similarity evaluation. For now, as far as I know—Ariel, how many people have we had volunteered so far?

ARIEL LIANG:

Thanks, Justine. I believe there are three so far. I think GNSO Secretariat team, they keep tabs on the volunteers. So yeah, we have three, but I think so far, we haven't heard any Chinese speaking volunteers yet. It will be helpful, in my opinion. But so far, we've got three volunteers.

JUSTINE CHEW:

Okay. Three volunteers. The call is open until tomorrow, I believe. But I would strongly encourage folks here, members here, to volunteer for the small group, especially if you are a Chinese speaker or a Chinese writer, it would be very helpful to have someone who speaks and writes Chinese in the small group to deal with string similarity. So perhaps, Ariel, you or staff could just do a last call reminder to the list after the call since we're expecting to close it by tomorrow. Okay. Thank you for that, Ariel.

All right. So chair's update is done. So let's move on to agenda item number two which is to continue the discussion on charter

question E5. I believe Ariel will take us through E5, and we will have a presentation from Pitinan at the end of slide 5, I believe it is. Over to you, Ariel.

ARIEL LIANG:

Thank you, Justine. So just a refresher on E5, we discussed that in the previous meeting. Just to reiterate, the question asked whether the reserved strings and strings ineligible for delegation should be updated to include any possible variant labels. Then I want you to note that when the charter question was drafted, it wasn't a very clear. There was some question as to why we're also considering the strings ineligible for delegation. Staff went back to the staff paper on variant management, and indeed, in the staff paper, it was mentioned that the reserved names and strings ineligible for delegation should be revisited to include any possible variant labels. So that was a kind of pointer with proposal from the staff paper to take a look at these two categories of strings. So that's why we have this charter question.

Then also the staff paper mentioned that additional consideration around manageability and usability should be also taken into account because some large number of allocatable variant labels may be generated, too, for the reserved strings and strings ineligible for delegation. So staff paper did recognize that the usability/manageability issues need to take into account when considering this question.

This is a recap of our discussion previously about reserved names. So as a refresher, the reserved names are in section 2.2.1.2.1 in the 2012 AGB. The purpose of these reserved names

is to maintain the exclusive rights to the names of ICANN, its bodies, or essential related functions of ICANN and IANA. So, the reserved names that we're talking about include ICANN, ALAC, GNSO, this type of names. And these reserved names are included in the string similarity review.

So in terms of recent development, the recently completed SubPro PDP has considered reserved names and affirmed the list should be the same. The one addition is the PTI, which is a something related to the function of ICANN and the IANA to the next version of AGB. So the list of reserved names added one is PTI. And if you want to look at the details, there's a Google Doc link. Maybe one of my colleagues can put that in the chat so you can see all of the reserved names there, including the SubPro recommendation.

In terms of the discussion of the reserved names, the principal question being asked is, is there a need to update the reserved names to include any possible variant labels? So various opinions were expressed in the previous meeting, and this is an attempt to summarize some of the opinions to talk about the first type of opinion for supporting and including variants. Some of the proponents believe that it is a more conservative approach to preserve the automaticity of variants by including them for the reserved names. Then some believe that as long as those variants have the reserved names are blocked then their number doesn't really matter. So they are more concerned about blocking the variant of reserved names than worrying about the number, maybe a number of variants may be generated for these reserved

names. So these are some of the opinions. We're supporting inclusion of variants.

There's also opinions for opposing the inclusion of variants for the reserved names. This includes the reserved names, all of them except for the 11 IDN test strings or ASCII labels. So their variants are blocked based on the RZ-LGR script proposal. So they're basically all blocked except for the test strings and IDNs. Then among the blocked variants, they can be tens or thousands of hundreds is extraordinary large number of variants for the blocked ones. My colleague, Pitinan, will be able to present the data she collected to show you how the variant labels will look like for these reserved names, and some of the numbers are indeed quite large. Because reserved names are included in the string similarity review, and if we include the variants of them, they will be also be part of the string similarity review and may add unnecessary work or burden to the evaluation process.

If we talk about the 11 test strings in IDNs, in the AGB there's actually a blank restriction against using translation of test, for example, which are both reserved names in any language as gTLD. So, if ICANN would like to generate variant label of test in certain language, it can be generated on demand for testing purpose only. So, due to the purpose of using this to reserved names, there may not be a need to generate variant labels for them.

Lastly, adding variants would increase the complexity of string similarity review as well as other steps in the application process. So, we're not just talking about the string similarity review step. So if we do include reserved names, there may be other implications

to other steps in the process as well. Also, in the future rounds, the variants have reserved name may need to be considered as well. So the pool just gets larger.

So these are some of the opinions for not supporting the inclusion of variants for reserved names. Justine, I wonder, should I stop here and we can see whether we let you have the group discuss this particular category of strings before we move on to the strings ineligible for delegation, and then I can also turn over the floor to Pitinan so she can show the team the data she collected.

JUSTINE CHEW:

Yes. Thanks, Ariel. I think it's good to pause here. Just to ask the people on the call if they have any questions or clarification that they wanted to make at this point in time. Just before we have Pitinan show us her analysis, I see Jeff's hand up. Jeff, go ahead, please.

JEFF NEUMAN:

I was just going to suggest to go straight to the analysis because seeing these things in front of us is actually much more helpful than describing the issue. I do have comments but I want to wait until after you show the examples.

JUSTINE CHEW:

Okay. Thank you very much for that. So if anyone else has any burning questions, let's go to Pitinan. Thank you, Pitinan, for joining us today and having your analysis explained to us.

PITINAN KOOARMORNPATANA: Thank you, Justine. Let me share my screen. Okay. So we did the analysis for the reserved name. Actually, we did two sets, the reserved name and the 11 labels for test. So what we did is we run these labels through the Root Zone LGR 5 and calculate the variant labels. Just to note, some of the names actually has a hyphen, which is not allowed in the TLD so we kind of removed the hyphens out before we did the calculation. So four of them have been removed the hyphen before calculation.

So with this, we run the labels via the RZ-LGR. Column C is the total number of variants generated. Now is order from the top, the top number of variants to the list. And then column D, E, F is the breakdown of this. Column D is the allocatable, Column E is the blocked variants, and F is actually the small number of them that are invalid labels, which I can show the example later.

So if they are generating too many variants, we did not list them out because it's too large. But when it's start to get below 1000, we list them out, each calculation, so we can see the behavior of it. So let's take one example, a local here that generate 599 variant labels. So the whole set is 600 including the original itself. None of them is allocatable and they are blocked or invalid. So let me go there.

Okay. So this is the list of possible variants for local. The first one is the original labels, the second one start to permute some of the code points with the variant. For this one, let's see. So the last characters being replaced by one of the variants of the L shape, and then so on. So, all these permutations generate the variants.

Let me show that invalid. Some of them will return invalid because it's not past the IDNA2008. So they basically cannot generate the A labels. And for this case, this happened because the permutation makes it contain the code point from Hebrew. So the labels now contain two originals, the right to left and left to right writing system, which is not allowed by the RFC. So this one return invalid. The second letter here, the old with the small thing that's on the left, this is Hebrew. So that's some examples. So let me go back. Then, moving forward. Then we have all the Latin sets actually don't have any allocatable, and they have blocked variant or invalid.

Let me show some of the ones that have the allocatable. So in this Han script—I have Jeff's hand. Would you like to raise your question now? Please go ahead.

JEFF NEUMAN:

Yeah. I'm a little confused because some of those variants, don't they mix scripts up together? In other words, since you're not allowed to mix scripts in a top-level domain, how are they variants? Because you're taking part Latin, part Hebrew, all kind of mushed together, I just don't understand how anyone could even apply for something like that because you're not allowed to mix the scripts.

PITINAN KOOARMORNPATANA: Right. It actually cannot. But the definition in the RZ-LGR, the permutation will generate this as the blocked variant. But

yeah, the invalid and the variant is something that is not allocatable.

JEFF NEUMAN: But all the ones that aren't invalid that are blocked are—again, they seem like they're different scripts.

PITINAN KOOARMORNPATANA: Right.

JEFF NEUMAN: Or mixed scripts, sorry.

PITINAN KOOARMORNPATANA: Right. Yeah. Some of them are mix between Latin and Cyrillic, for example. So these are generated by the cross script variant definition. By the IDNA2008 standard, actually, it's not disallowed by the standard itself. It's from the IDN implementation guidelines that not allow the mix of the scripts so we generate. So the rules, these are in this way, to generate this permutation first but mark them as blocked.

JEFF NEUMAN: Okay. This is such a difficult issue. What I'm trying to say is that no one could even apply whether it's blocked or not, no one could even apply for those strings because they mix the scripts. So we're blocking a whole bunch of variants, which is fine, that people couldn't even apply for even if they wanted to. I assume

where you have variants that are in the exact same script, I think that's the number that's kind of relevant for me.

PITINAN KOOARMORNPATANA: Sure. I understand. Some of them might have in some other labels. So we can figure it out, but maybe not the RZ-LGR itself. But yes, the subset of the blocked will be the one that, for example, come from all our code points are in one script. I see Edmon's hand.

JUSTINE CHEW: Yeah. Just before we go to Edmon—I see some people posting on the chat—I would encourage you to verbalize your comments so that we can at least hear it and try and understand it and perhaps have a discussion about it. Okay. So, Edmon, please go ahead.

EDMON CHUNG: Edmon here and speaking personally. I think what Jeff phrased is quite pertinent to the discussion, and that's the point, we probably need to discuss a little more. And yes, Jeff, I guess that's how the IDN variant process works. For different scripts, it generates a whole bunch of variants that are not necessarily even allowed and so on. And especially for the Latin ones, it's very much focused on visual similarity regardless of a few of the scripts that share a common original historical source and so on. And yeah, the point is that the mechanism generates a whole bunch of strings. Those strings are most likely not going to be interesting for anyone. It provides a kind of protection. It's not intended to make it commercially "greedy" as in covering a lot of things so that other

people don't want it, can't step on your turf. Therefore, a lot of times, when we discuss this, we need to bring that mentality into the discussion as well. Variants are not intended to kind of mark off a space. It's intended for protection for edge cases. And therefore, when we think about conservative approach, we should think about this is the type of things that we're dealing with as well. So yeah, I just think what Jeff brought up is quite pertinent to this discussion.

JUSTINE CHEW: Jeff?

JEFF NEUMAN: Thanks, Edmon. To add to that, if we're thinking about adding variant labels to the reserved name list, we only need to add to the reserved name list those strings that could actually be applied for. If there are variants that mix more than one script, we don't need to add those to the reserved list because no one can apply for them anyway. So that's what I'm trying to say. So maybe it's not hundreds of thousands of names. Maybe it's a much, much smaller subset that we need to add to the reserved name list because again those are the only ones that could really be applied for. That's what we need to worry about.

If we don't need to worry about strings that mix scripts, or as Edmon said, strings that have hyphens in it, we don't need to add them to the reserved name list because no one could apply for them anyway. Then to add to that, if there's going to be a visual similarity test anyway, which we're going to have if we have

another round because that's been upheld by SubPro and all that, then the question is, which of these strings do we really need to add even if they're in the same script, which do we really need to add because it's going to wash out during the string similarity review anyway?

I'm just trying to reduce the number of labels add to the reserved name list if those labels aren't—I'm using the term valid in a different way here, it's probably a better word because it's not valid or invalid based on the definition in the IDN world, but valid or invalid as a string to applied-for as a TLD. Perhaps we think of another term instead of valid so we don't confuse those concepts. But I hope that makes sense.

JUSTINE CHEW:

Yes. Thanks, Jeff. I also want to sort of remind folks that reserved names list means that those labels can't be applied for. But don't forget that whatever is in the reserved names list is also used for string similarity evaluation. So that is another aspect of consideration that folks might want to take into consideration. I'm not saying we should go one way or the other, but I'm just asking people to consider that aspect of it as well. Pitinan, please go ahead.

PITINAN KOOARMORNPATANA: Thank you. I just wanted to show this example case. So in ASO Latin, they will have the whole label in Cyrillic. So 0404 starting in Cyrillic. So this is some example there. I believe that there will be a similar case for the whole label from Greek and the

whole label from Armenian, if I'm not wrong. So this, in a way, is a subset of this sheet, which if required, we can find out as well. Thank you.

JUSTINE CHEW: Jeff, did you have another question?

JEFF NEUMAN: Yeah. On that point, I agree that that should not be able to be applied-for, but wouldn't that also come out on a string similarity review? So that if someone tried to apply for that in Cyrillic, they would do the string similarity review, and oh, wait, that's similar to the string that's already reserved. So no, we can't have that applied-for. I guess I'm just trying reduce the reserved names list. We don't have to add them because they're going to come out on the string similarity anyway. Then let's not make the reserved names list so big. But if there are variants that may not—and I don't know if there would be—if there are variants of a reserved string that really may not be picked up in a string similarity review, those are the ones I think we need to worry about or think about as to what to do with them. If they don't look like it at all or if it's not going to come up on string similarity, then we need to think, okay, well, it means the same thing. It's a variant so should we add that to the reserved names list, I guess?

JUSTINE CHEW: That's an interesting question, Jeff. I'd like to hear a bit more from other people on the call. I see Hadia's hand up, and then Edmon. So, Hadia, please go ahead.

HADIA ELMINIAWI: Thank you. I tend to agree with Jeff. I don't really understand where the problem is. So if actually this will come up during the review similarity process, why are we very concerned about it now? I don't really get where the problem is. Thank you.

JUSTINE CHEW: Edmon?

EDMON CHUNG: Thank you. I guess you can think about it that way and you can think about the reverse as well. If we just say that all the reserved names and its variants are also reserved a lot, then it would end up with the same scenario. And we also don't need to list all of them because the algorithm for the LGR is already there, people can generate it or use the tool to generate all of them.

Actually, logically speaking, I agree with Jeff in that most cases, especially Latin ones, they're generally geared towards visually similar and it would be caught in those situations as well. So either way we go about it in that, we end up with almost a similar situation. So it really it's just a matter of how we describe this. So what principle we're taking? Are we saying that these are the reserved names, it's still the Latin ones, and all variants are included, or we take the original list, and then add a few ones that we think, "Oh, maybe these ones we should add to it because they come to be variants." That, to me, sounds a bit more arbitrary than just talk about it in principle and saying this is the list, these are the LGRs, and you can generate the variants. All the variants

are included and reserved and blocked by the same token. So that's sort of what I'm thinking. But I also want to add that because it ends up being almost the same, I don't really have a very strong opinion on it. Thank you.

JUSTINE CHEW: Satish, you're next.

SATISH BABU: Thanks, Justine. I tend to agree with all the views presented here in terms of reducing the numbers involved. Now, given the fact that the IDN implementation guidelines say that a single label cannot have multiple scripts mixed. It appears to me that this problem is only for the language is mentioned that is Latin, Greek, Armenian, and Cyrillic. So the rest of it is actually not really relevant to us. So if the algorithm can be modified slightly to kind of restrict ourselves to whole labels of the same script then the numbers come down significantly. Thanks.

JUSTINE CHEW: Jeff?

JEFF NEUMAN: Yeah. Thanks. What I would really love to see is an example where a variant, if there is one, would not come up on a string similarity review because those are the ones I think we need to worry about. Because those are the ones where again we kind of get to the issue we've been discussing the last few weeks, right?

What if someone applies for a string that's visually similar to a variant of a reserved name but the reserved name is not similar to the original reserved name. Sorry. That's a lot. I'm visualizing in my head here. But in other words, if we can find something on that list that are on any of these lists where the two strings don't really look the same, then we can take that and say, "Well, what if someone applies for a string that may look like the variant?" may mean completely different things. And then should we really block that because it looks the same as a variant of a reserved name? That's, I think, the kind of examples where it becomes harder.

JUSTINE CHEW:

Okay. I'm going to throw that question to Pitinan, and maybe Sarmad might want to chime in as you come across such examples.

JEFF NEUMAN:

Justine, Michael has a good example in the chat. So let's say there's a company called BAC. BAC may be visually similar to that variant of SSAC but should we block BAC because SSAC is reserved and a variant of that looks like a BAC? I think the answer should be no. But that's a great example, Michael. Thank you. That's, I think, what we're looking for. That's why I disagreed with the discussions from the last couple of weeks. Because if we do a visual, if we do a string similarity review against variants that looked nothing like or very little like the original string, then we're blocking some very legitimate strings for no reason. So I think that's the perfect example of why I was not in favor of string similarity against all variants.

JUSTINE CHEW: Sarmad?

SARMAD HUSSAIN: Thank you. I think at the end of the day, we are talking about two different phenomena here. One is the variants and one is string similarity. Both of these phenomena can actually occur with the actual applied-for strings as well as reserved names and all these other categories, which, I guess, should not be, for example, applied-for TLDs. I guess a question would be that or I think when we're looking at the staff report as well, what was being suggested was a sort of a coherent analysis or in a way dealing with all the possible TLD strings coherently across all the different categories rather than, I guess, other options. What is being discussed is that for an applied-for string, there are different rules, and then for possibly reserved TLD labels, there are different rules. That is also something the group may want to consider. Again, what is suggested is a coherent treatment across all categories for the potential TLD labels, reserved or applied-for. Thank you.

JUSTINE CHEW: Thank you, Sarmad. Edmon, I see you had a point about the BAC example. Would you like to verbalize or get in the queue to verbalize what you mean? Jeff, if you don't mind, I'd like to give the floor to Michael first and then come back to you. Is that all right? Thank you.

MICHAEL BAULAND: Thanks. I agree that we wouldn't want to block BAC just because the esset version of SSAC is a variant. But similar to what Edmon suggested, we could just state that all blocked labels plus their variants will be blocked, but string similarity review would only be done with labels actually on the block list, and not with labels that are merely variants of the block list. That would be my suggestion. Thanks.

JUSTINE CHEW: Jeff, please go ahead.

JEFF NEUMAN: Yeah. I think that's fine, Michael. I think that's a great suggestion. But I also think that should apply not just to reserved but to existing strings and applied-for strings the same type of thing. This is what we were talking about the last couple of weeks, right? If someone has not applied for a specific variant of a string, so they just apply for a string and they say they want two of the five variants, and then they end up getting them. Let's just say they end up getting them. In the next round, when someone applies for a string, then I think the string similarity should overview, should only be done on the actual strings that are delegated, not on the potential variants that could be delegated.

Sarmad, you were talking about how this is different. It's different but the string similarity is the exact same. In other words, the string similarity review that's done on reserved strings is the exact same string similarity that's done on existing TLDs or other applications. The impact of being found to be similar is different

but the string similarity test is exactly the same. This is the whole point of why—I know people may think that “Jeff here, he’s at it again,” but this is exactly the same reason why I think that yes, you do string similarity review on existing TLDs and the strings that are applied for but not on the variants of strings that have been applied for or reserved or existing TLDs. Sorry, not existing TLDs because they’re existing, but not of the variants of those existing TLDs. I think this is a principle that can apply in all of the different contexts, which again is why the conservative approach to me the last several weeks just never made sense. Thanks.

JUSTINE CHEW:

Thank you, Jeff. But we did agree that we would have tried to get some examples in selected scripts to deal with the question of the Level 1, Level 2, Level 3 string similarity. So I take your point that’s related to what we’re discussing now but I also don’t want to predetermine the outcome from that exercise that we are venturing into.

Pitinan, you had your hand up before, now it’s down, so I don’t know whether you want to make another intervention or not.

PITINAN KOOARMORNPATANA: Just to note that actually for the other scripts, like Arabic—in that case, all the blocked will be from the same script and that may have a different perspective as well, but we can go back to that after. Thank you.

JUSTINE CHEW:

Okay. That is interesting. That, as you say, offers a different perspective from the one that where we looked at the example of cross scripts. So I'm going to ask just an indication from staff whether we have ventured out of the charter question in any way, and also whether it's worth asking Pitinan to pull up some other examples or to give an indication of how rampant these sort of exceptions might be and whether we need to consider them as a true universal approach or exceptional approach. Ariel, please go ahead.

ARIEL LIANG:

Thanks, Justine. Looking at the question again, should the reserved names be updated to include any possible variant labels? I guess the question is asking, should the list of reserved names be updated so that the variants of reserved names are also considered in the string similarity review? Because as previously stated, all the reserved names are part of the string similarity review. So if the list is updated, then the variant labels have the reserve names will be part of the string similarity review, too. So that's the question. And then based on the discussion so far, what staff heard is that there seems to be an opinion that the variant labels have a reserved name or a different category. They do not necessarily needed to be added to the list of reserved names for the string similarity review purpose, they just simply need to be blocked. Is this the correct understanding of that, or there's more nuance? The team is actually going for extending the list of reserved names by adding their variant labels, if not all, at least some of the variant labels. We just want you to get clarification of the direction the team is going.

JUSTINE CHEW: That's a good question because I was trying to work that out myself. Because I think we had at least five people I think who gave me the impression that they were venturing towards not adding to the list of reserved names, but then the conversation ventured into potential examples where we may have to consider putting them into the reserved names list. So I would like to ask the group here. What is your take on the question that Ariel posed? Don't all jump into the queue. Yes, Jeff?

JEFF NEUMAN: I think my answer would be no. They shouldn't be added, because at the end of the day, the reserved strings are reserved for a particular purpose. And if there's an application for something that looks the same, that'll come up on the string similarity review. And if there's a variant that doesn't look like the string that's reserved, then I just don't think that there's a basis to have that reserved. That's not what the reserved list was intended for.

There were so many discussions, years worth of discussions on what strings should be in the reserved list and what shouldn't. I think to add additional strings to that list is not something that should be taken lightly. Again, if there's an application for a string that looks like a reserved name that wouldn't pass the string similarity review anyway, and if there's a variant of a reserved name that doesn't look anything like the name that's reserved, then who cares if someone applies for something that looks like it? So the easiest thing is to just not increase. The trend has been to

decrease the amount of reserved names over the years, not to increase it. Thanks.

JUSTINE CHEW: I will stand guided by that. I'm not sure if there's any way of verifying your last statement but we'll leave it as that at the moment.

JEFF NEUMAN: Sorry, Justine, just to verify that, you can look at the first set of reserved names that were reserved in the 2000 agreement. You'll see there's a ton more strings except for the recent addition of the Red Cross names. But if you take the Red Cross and Olympic stuff out, you will see that the tendency to limit the reserved names, you'll see that from history. Thanks.

JUSTINE CHEW: Yes, but I believe the Olympic stuff is on the strings ineligible for delegation, not reserved. I could be wrong but I thought that's the case. Anyway, Anil, please go ahead.

ANIL JAIN: Thank you, Justine. I want to touch upon only one portion of the reserved name that is blocked. Now, in case there is any possibility of reevaluation of the blocked string or its variant, then it is good to include in the string similarity evaluation also. But in case there is no possibility of reversing the status of blocked variant, then the suggestion that we should just block it and we

should not include them in the confusing similarity. This is my view. Thank you.

JUSTINE CHEW: Thank you, Anil. Michael?

MICHAEL BAULAND: Thanks. Basically, it's the same view as Anil. I'd say that we leave the list as it is, not put any labels on to that list, but state somewhere written that all variants of those labels will also be automatically blocked. The example is exactly what I put before that we really do want to have the label esst AC blocked even if it's not similar and maybe possibly what not be caught in the string similarity review team and check because there might still be old browsers somewhere that if you type that label that they will format that using it not to sound three instead of it not IDNA2008. And in that case, they would transform the esst to double S and then cause real problem. Thanks.

JUSTINE CHEW: Okay. Thank you, Michael. Again, I seem to be hearing some different approaches, on the one hand, not to add to the list of reserved names, but to call out exceptions like the one that Michael has raised. So I just want to ask staff if we have enough clarity, or have you gained enough clarity to get a sense of where the group is going?

ARIEL LIANG: Please correct me if we got it wrong. What we heard so far is there is agreement of not updating the reserved name list. And then there's also agreement that the variant labels of the reserved names will all be blocked but they will not be considered in the string similarity review. So no impact to the string similarity review for these variant labels but they'll all be blocked. That's what we heard so far, at least from the members that expressed opinions. But happy to be corrected if we didn't get it right.

JUSTINE CHEW: Okay. I'd like to try and wrap up the discussion on E5. So if anybody has any concerns or different opinion as to what Ariel understood, can you make your intervention now or put something in the chat? Okay. So seeing no other further hands up or any points in the chat, I think we're good with E5. So can we move on to the next charter question?

ARIEL LIANG: Sorry, Justine. The goal was that E5 part one. There's a part two of that.

JUSTINE CHEW: Oh, sorry. Okay. The strings ineligible for delegation. Okay. Yes. Thank you. Go ahead. Go ahead.

ARIEL LIANG: Okay, thank you. So as a refresher, this is the second category of strings being considered in this charter question. The purpose for

these strings is to provide special protections at the top level for the names and acronyms of IGOs and INGOs receiving protection under treaties and statues under multiple jurisdictions. These names specifically include the Red Cross, Red Crescent Movement, and International Olympic Committee. Also another important point is that these strings are not included in a string similarity review. So they are just to provide special protection to these organizations. The reason development regarding these strings took place in another PDP protection of IGO and INGO identifiers in all gTLDs. So the outcome of that PDP is that in the next version of AGB, the PDP recommends including more specifically a list of names as ineligible for delegation, and also specify the languages related to these strings. So first category is the Red Cross, Red Crescent, Red Lion, and some Red Crystal. Their UN six language versions are also included as ineligible for delegation. So these are the English, French, Spanish, Russian, Chinese, Arabic, I believe. So these are the first category, and then second category is the Olympiad names, and then that also include the six UN languages plus German plus Greek and Korean versions of these strings. And then the third category, it's the full name of Intergovernmental Organizations. So when staff presented this topic, there's a webpage that shows what those international organizations are. It's a pretty long list and it needs to be the full name of these organizations as well and it needs to be exact match. Then up to two languages of these names are included in the ineligible for delegation. Then the fourth category is International Non-Governmental Organizations. That also needs to be the full name of these organizations and exact match. Then in terms of languages, English only.

So in terms of details, I guess maybe Emily could put the link in the chat. It's the reserved names list referencing Specification 5 of the Registry Agreement that provides the specifics of these names except for the INGOs, International Non-Governmental Organizations. So in the future, they will be protected at the top Level 2. There's also an exceptional procedure that will allow a party to apply for their own strings. So that's some of the recommendations developed from the IGO/INGO PDP.

This is a summary of a discussion when the group talks about this category of strings. The principal question being asked is, is extending preventative protection for variants of these strings within the scope of the IDN EPDP? Again, various opinions were expressed. The opinions for supporting extending the preventative protection for these strings by including the variants is that some believe that variants of these strings need to be blocked to further protect these strings. And if not blocked or protected, the first come first serve rule may not allow those IGOs and INGOs to access their variants should they wish to apply in the future. So these are the opinions for supporting extending the list by including variants.

Then the opinions for not extending preventative protection for variants of these strings include a lot of points, actually. One point is that it may be very unlikely for someone to accidentally apply for a variant of a protected string. Because as mentioned before, the full name and exact match of these organizations are required. So a variant of that will likely be a very long string. It's probably very unlikely someone just accidentally apply for that without the actual intention of applying. As mentioned earlier, when you look at the

reserved name variant list, some of them have tens or hundreds of thousands because the string itself has multiple characters and letters. If we try to generate the variant labels of these strings ineligible for delegation and the full name of the organization is required, then those variants will likely be extraordinarily large in terms of their numbers, it can be millions very likely, and that will add unnecessary burden to the evaluation process. So I just want to mention that even though those were not considered as part of the string similarity review, but they have implications to other steps in the evaluation process as well. So that's something to keep in mind.

Then another key point mentioned for not supporting including these variants is that these strings ineligible for delegation should have a different treatment compared to the reserved names because they are pretty distinct. Because first, the preventative protection that provided for them is for finite and specific list of strings limited to exact match. And that's based on internationally recognized treaties such as Geneva Convention, Article 6ter of the Paris Convention, etc. So their origins are very much unique and based on treaties and that's very significant in terms of their origin.

Also, the topic for the string ineligible for delegation is quite sensitive and has been deliberated over the years. So if the group decides to extend preventative protection for the variant of these strings, it may be circumvent the careful work already being done by the IGO/INGO PDP, and it may extend the rights beyond those that are expressly identified in those internationally recognized treaties.

Also, these strings were not part of the string similarity review and SubPro didn't consider these. So if this topic is required for further deliberation, it may need to involve parties outside the IDN EPDP and it may need to involve IGOs/INGOs, governmental organizations, GAC, for example. So, it's probably outside EPDP's remit and may not be in its position to extend these rights. So, these are some of the opinions expressed for not extending the preventative protection for variants of these strings. I will stop here. I see Jeff has his hand up.

JUSTINE CHEW: Yes, please go ahead.

JEFF NEUMAN: Thank you. So on this one, I know it's not a surprise, I would say to not extend the protection for variants for not just the reasons that are on here. But I believe the policy has a process for updating the lists. So to the extent that the Red Cross, Red Crescent, and the IGOs, and INGOs want to extend protections to variants, there is a process for them to do that, make that request of ICANN outside of this. So that is the process that they should follow and we should not be changing that. That's, again, in addition to all the great sub bullets that are there for not extending the preventive protection. So knowing that there's going to be another round coming up, if the Red Cross, Red Crescent has a specific list that they think should be a variant that should be protected, it's their obligation to come forward to ICANN and follow the process that's already in place. Thanks.

JUSTINE CHEW: Thanks, Jeff. I'm loving the queue now. Edmon, go ahead, please.

EDMON CHUNG: Thank you. I think a principal should be thought about as well. We're not extending the protection. We are upholding the variant process such that all strings, variants applied. I think that's where we should think about what's the consistent way to apply variants across all TLD strings, and how do we make it clear and easy for both applicants and future applicants and also TLD operators and users? As much as we can be consistent, I think that's where we should think about. I put it in the chat already. I think it's not so much about pure numbers adding how many number of "protected" strings, but actually are we going about this in a principle for approach to address variants, and how should that be applied for across TLDs or strings that are reserved or blocked or somehow treated and processed in the TLD realm? So yeah, I just want to add that.

JUSTINE CHEW: Thanks, Edmon. Sarmad, go ahead, please.

SARMAD HUSSAIN: Thank you. I think one of the fundamental principles which is also in the SubPro work is that the variant labels and applied-for label and its variant labels are to be allocated to the same entity. If, I guess, this is not extended, there is a possibility that the variant is allocated to a party which is different from, for example, IGO or

INGO, which will, I guess, break that variant principle. So this is similar to what Edmon was saying. But that is, of course, a very significant change. Thank you.

JUSTINE CHEW: Thanks, Sarmad. Michael?

MICHAEL BAULAND: Thanks. I also tend to disagree with Jeff here. We are not adding an additional label to the list. It's just that we are protecting the labels which are already on the list because variants ought to be considered as essentially the same as the label itself. It's not in string similarity or they are similar or could be confused, but variants are the same in some sense, and therefore, I think all the variants of the labels on the list must be blocked too. Otherwise, someone, as Sarmad said, some different party from those IGOs could register such a variant and thereby take the original label which is on the list, so to say, away from that organization. Thanks.

JUSTINE CHEW: Jeff?

JEFF NEUMAN: Just on the last thing that Michael said. Names that are ineligible for delegation are not reserved for the organization. That's specifically what it's not there to do. That's why it's ineligible for all. Again, I feel so uncomfortable about modifying the work that

took years by just going, “Nope, we got to extend it to all the variants.” I can’t remember who our Council liaison is. Before we go any further on this, this is the perfect issue to bring to the Council to give us a thumbs up or thumbs down as to whether this is in our scope. I really do not believe that we should be making the decision of extending this list when it was the subject of very lengthy PDP.

JUSTINE CHEW:

Thanks for that intervention, Jeff. I guess we will take that note back to the leadership and have a chat with [inaudible] as well as our GNSO liaison to this EPDP. I’ve also noted the comments made earlier by people who are in the queue. So we will take all those into consideration. But I think this question that Jeff raised is something possibly that we need to look more deeply at. So unless anyone objects, can we defer this part of the charter question E5 for a subsequent call? Staff, I would ask you to take note of this, the question that Jeff raised about. I’m sure you’ve got it noted.

Okay. So I see an agreement from Satish to defer this particular aspect of E5. Okay. We have about 15 minutes. Okay. Maxim, I’ll take your intervention now.

MAXIM ALZOBA:

I suggest we take as a principle that for avoidance of creating a really, really long and non-readable list, we stick to keeping originals and principles of how to calculate the variants linked to those. Because situation where we create the perfect list of

10,000 records is not going to make any good. It could be kept as an example somewhere but we should stick to originals in the reserved list, etc., and the principles of how to affect its variants. Thanks.

JUSTINE CHEW:

That's an interesting idea. Thank you, Maxim. Okay. I'm noting the time. We have about 13 minutes left, so we can either continue on with the next charter question. I believe there's nothing else that we need to discuss under E5. Do we just want to use up the rest of the 13 minutes just for Ariel to go through the introduction to the objection process? Yes. Okay. Why don't we do that just to use up some time? Ariel, go ahead, please.

ARIEL LIANG:

Thanks, Justine. I hope it's clearing up so we don't need to do this again the next meeting. But happy to run through the background of that and maybe next meeting we can just provide a summary of the background.

So question E2 is asking whether there needs to be any adjustment to the objection process due to the implementation of variant labels. E1 part two ask about the withheld same entity labels role in the objection process. So these two questions can be tackled at the same time.

So just a reminder about the objection process, and you probably saw this flowchart of the application process in 2012 round. This objection process concern was the box that's colored in blue in

this flowchart and it follows the initial evaluation and the GAC advice step. So this is where this objection process takes place.

Just to run through some of the facts of the objection process. What this is, it is a formal objection intended to afford business, individuals, governmental entities, and other communities an opportunity to advance arguments against introducing certain new gTLDs into the domain name system. It's basically for them to raise objection for adding a new string to the root. When it occurs, as I mentioned earlier, the step occurs after the successful completion of the initial evaluation of the applied-for string.

Why this step is needed, because it will allow a full and fair consideration of objections based on certain limited grounds outside ICANN's evaluation of application on their merits. So basically, it's to catch other elements or considerations that the ICANN evaluation they missed. So to basically provide a full and fair consideration of these strings.

Who are the parties that have the standing to file objection? Basically, it varies based on the grounds for objection. But in general, the parties with standing could file formal objection with designated third party dispute resolution providers on specific applications.

Now I will just talk about the grounds for objections. A formal objection can be filed any of the four grounds. The first one is string confusion objection. What it means is the applied-for gTLD string is confusingly similar to an existing TLD or to another applied-for gTLD string in the same round of application. So basically, in the initial evaluation, if the string similarity review

didn't catch these confusingly similar strings, then for the objection process, it provides another opportunity to catch that for the objector to raise that. So the parties that can file such objection are the existing TLD operators or gTLD applicants in the same round. There's a specific dispute resolution provider that handles these objections. If the dispute resolution provider rules in favor of the objector, and the objector is the existing TLD operator, that means the application cannot proceed forward. So the applied-for string will be rejected. And if the objection is successful and also the objection is related to applied-for string that's kind of similar to another applied-for string, then a contention set will be created. So then these two strings will proceed to the contention resolution process. So these are the possible outcomes for string confusion objections. That's the first type.

The second ground for objection is the legal rights objection. So that's related to the applied-for string infringes the existing legal rights of the objector. So the legal rights that we talk about, they're basically trademark-related rights and also that can be registered trademark or non-registered trademark. So, in that sense, international or intergovernmental organizations or UN agencies, they may also be regarded as rights holder as well. So these rights holders have the standing to file such an objection. Then if the objection prevails, then that means the applied-for string cannot proceed and is being rejected as an outcome. And if the objection fails, then that means the application can go forward to the next step of the evaluation. So that's the second ground.

The third ground is the regarding the limited public interest objection. What this means is that the applied-for string

contradicts generally accepted legal norms of morality and public order recognized under principle of international law. Some of the examples include the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Slavery Convention. So if applied-for string contradicts this principle of international law, then it provides a ground for objection. In terms of who can file objections for this type of strings, it can be anyone. Then specifically, there's a role for an independent objector to file objection based on this ground.

The fourth type is the community objections. So what it means is that there's a substantial opposition to the applied-for string that exists from a significant portion of the community that the gTLD string targets. So the party that have standing filed objection based on this ground is established institutions associated with a clearly defined community. Also an independent objector can file objection based on this ground as well.

So these are some of the backgrounds of the objection process. I know it's pretty information heavy. But if we need further clarification of that, we can talk about that in the next meeting or so.

To provide, I guess, a framework for discussion, we want to present some of the information here on the slide. So this process is first mentioned where pain point in the staff paper for variant implementation. So basically, the staff paper, I believe that there's no need to adjust the criteria related to the objection process. So basically, the grounds for objection, as mentioned earlier, because in the staff paper, there's the recommendation for having separate application for each variant labels. So basically, every variant label

will go through the objection process, and therefore, there's no need to adjust those criteria and they will be all subject to the same rules related to objection. So that's what the staff paper said.

Then for our discussion, we just want to clarify that the scope for discussion right now is we only focus on future new gTLD aspects and the objection process in the future rounds. Another point we want to mention is that the SubPro PDP already confirmed the continuation of the criteria for objection, basically the four grounds, and they did propose some recommendations and implementation guidance that is to enhance these criteria but not to change the overall objection process.

Here are the questions that we posed for the group for consideration. First one is: must all requested allocatable variant TLD labels be subject to the objection process? Because as what the EPDP team deliberated earlier, there's a preliminary recommendation of having one application that covers both the primary applied-for gTLD and the allocatable variant label requested by the applicant. So does that mean even the application includes both the primary and the variant labels? All of these labels must subject to the objection process. This is the first question I'd like to ask.

The second question is should the allocatable variant labels not requested by the applicant be subject to the objection process as well? That's to basically interpret question part two of the E1 is what's the role for those withheld same entity label play in objection process? Should they also be subjected to that even they were not requested by an applicant, or they shouldn't? So

that's the second question for your consideration. I will stop here.
We ran out of time, too.

JUSTINE CHEW:

Yes. Thank you, Ariel. One minute left. I just wanted to make a couple of points. One is I think it's important for people to have a look at the materials being presented. I appreciate the fact that most of the time the materials don't go out way in advance, and there are reasons for that which I won't get into. So it's good to put things in front of people's attention. I would ask that if you have any questions per se on what Ariel has presented on contention resolution, please save them for next week. Jeff, I'm not going to take any more hands at this point in time because we're running out of time, I want to let people go. I also want to remind people to consider joining the small group for the string similarity Level 1, Level 2, Level 3 examples, and also to look out for e-mail in the list regarding draft text for A7 part one, A9, and A10. I want to thank you all for staying the full 90 minutes. Please have a good day, evening or night.

DEVAN REED:

Thank you all for joining. Once again, this meeting has adjourned. I'll end the recording and disconnect all remaining lines. Have a wonderful rest of your day.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]