

DEVAN REED:

Good morning, good afternoon, and good evening. Welcome to the Latin Script Diacritics PDP call taking place on Wednesday, 24 September 2025, at 13:15 UTC.

We have no apologies today. 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 need assistance updating your Statements of Interest, please e-mail the GNSO secretariat. All documentation and information can be found on the Latin Script Diacritics Wiki space. Recordings will be posted shortly after the end of the call.

Please remember to state your name before speaking for the transcript, and please note all chat sessions are being archived. As a reminder, participation in ICANN, including this session, is governed by the ICANN Expected Standards of Behavior and the ICANN Community Anti-Harassment Policy. And with this, I turn it back over to Michael.

MICHAEL BAULAND:

Thanks, Devan, for the introduction. Welcome, everybody, to Meeting #20. Next slide, please.

So, for the agenda today, we'll recap last meeting, discuss some open items from there, then we will provide some update on the timeline of the PDP, where we stand right now, what this would most likely mean for the future tasks, and then we will continue to review the draft Preliminary Recs with the comments you provided. Next slide, please.

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*Note: The following is the output resulting from transcribing an audio file into a word/text document. Although the transcription is largely accurate, in some cases may be incomplete or inaccurate due to inaudible passages and grammatical corrections. It is posted as an aid to the original audio file, but should not be treated as an authoritative record.*

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The outcome, as we usually put on this place, is that we revisit the Preliminary Recs and we determine some positions on multiple issues raised in the comments. Next slide, please.

We had a few action items. Action item one was working group to determine the correct wording for the Preliminary Recommendation 7. We will get back to that in more detail on the next slide. Then the action item two was to clean up and update the Preliminary Recommendation doc based on the discussions we had. And there are two items we would like to put a spotlight on here later on slide eight and nine, namely the IG11 rewrite based on the discussion we had and the footnote for PR14 with regards to established institutions. And then there was the action item three, the GDS liaison to check in on PR13 and the term “discount” in relation to implementation for the EPDP-IDNs. We will get back to that later. And action item four was for the group to share edge cases via the mailing list for the stress test. So far, we have not received any, but there’s still time, so we would like to remind everybody to think of cases that might occur in our context TLD that might be applied for or any usage within the TLD registrations of domain same entity principle, and stuff like that. And if you think of any edge cases you would like to use for a stress test, then please do provide them in the mailing list. We will gather them, and then take a look at them once we have finished the Preliminary Recommendations. Next slide, please.

We’ll get to action item two now. No, one, sorry. Maybe the three options for our Preliminary Recommendation 7. Just to repeat shortly what the IDN EPDP’s corresponding recommendation is, it says, “In addition to explaining the mission and purpose of the applied-for

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primary gTLD string or existing gTLD, the applicant seeking one or more gTLD variant labels will describe the justification of such need. And the justification given by the applicant shall, at minimum, provide the following information,” which I will not repeat now. Those are just several information data that has to be provided.

We have three options here where we at first tended to go for Option 2 or 3, but then Amadeu mentioned a good argument that possibly Option 1, namely, as-is would be the better solution. So, Option 1 as-is would read like, “In addition to explaining the mission and purpose of the applied-for ASCII gTLD string and the existing gTLD, the applicant seeking one or more Latin diacritic gTLD labels will describe the justification of such need in line with Final Recommendation 3.5 of the IDN EPDP Phase 1 Final Report.” And then it goes on with the justification details.

The reason this was up for discussion was that it was wondered whether it’s actually needed to also apply those reasoning for the already existing TLD. And shouldn’t it suffice to just put the reasoning why you need this and the mission and purpose for the ones you want to add, the new ones you want to register. But Amadeu, if I remember correctly, mentioned that in case you want to add a TLD to your already existing TLD, this might change the mission and purpose of the already existing TLD, and therefore it should also be the case that you not just provide the information for the new gTLDs, but also for the existing TLD, if that should exist.

I thought this sounded quite reasonable. You also provided some information that the existing TLD could be an ASCII one, and the new

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one would be an IDN. And you could change the mission and purpose of the existing one to also just allow ASCII registrations under that so to not add more confusion there. And if we stay with that reasoning, we would go for Option 1, leave it as it is, to be in line with the IDN EPDP. Any thoughts? Yes, Amadeu?

AMADEU ABRIL:

I think that is a comment from Bill that was just read to me before I said also in the chat, just saying that the scope is to avoid confusion is enough. The problem is that the question of mission and purpose is not that simple or that vague. You need to explain what the TLD is intended for even if it's very generic. But then you also need to provide in that same 218 question in 2012, but it could be changed now, but the idea will be the same. You also need to provide how will we launch? For which kind of registrants? If there is any kind of restriction was applied, how do restrictions would apply?

So, imagine, for instance, that the TLD that was a Brand TLD just for the company, now take L'Oreal wants to add testimonials or licensees as registrants, then they would have incompatible mission and purposes between one and the other. Or think about TLDs that were approved in the 2000 round. The mission and purpose question didn't exist as such. So I think that, look, what's not important is to have a mission and purpose for the old TLDs if they exist, but you have a coherent mission and purpose for the whole set. Thanks.

MICHAEL BAULAND:

Okay. Thanks, Amadeu. I see Bill's hand. Please, Bill.

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BILL JOURIS: I don't have a problem with asking for mission and purpose for the ASCII gTLD, which is the anchor for the whole set. Once we have that, I don't see any reason to go on about the mission and purpose for the Latin diacritics is to avoid confusion. That's why this working group exists is to deal with that potential confusion. So, I think we're changing something that is totally unnecessary. Thank you.

MICHAEL BAULAND: Okay. Thanks. But part of this mission and purpose explanations are, for example, to provide a description of the steps that the applicant will take to minimize the operational and management complexities of variant gTLDs and variant domain names that impact registrars we set up and registrants. So this is from the IDN EPDP. I think it makes sense to also have a corresponding one, in our case, to describe how to minimize operational management complexity for the LD domains. Bill, please?

BILL JOURIS: I'm fine with that, but that isn't mission and purpose. That's the mechanics of implementation. So, yeah, that's a valid point, but I don't think it's related to mission and purpose. I think that's the mechanics of implementation. Thank you.

AMADEU ABRIL: Yes, we'll do some of that again, but this is part of the second—

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MICHAEL BAULAND: One second, Amadeu. One second. Satish first, and then you can go.

SATISH BABU: Thanks, Michael. I think, in most cases, it will strengthen the overall adding purpose and mission to a set, rather than to just one. It would add to the overall logic of the whole set, and thereby strengthen the case, I feel. But I do have a problem with the word “will,” the fifth line. Will is neither here nor there. It is not strong enough, in my opinion, if you really want to insist, then it should be made a stronger word.

And finally, we are saying that the applicant will describe the justification of such need. Not sure to whom the applicant is going to describe the justification. And if it sounds unconvincing, what is going to happen? I have no idea. So I’m not sure whether we really have to specify that, but I’m just mentioning it. Thank you.

MICHAEL BAULAND: Thanks, Satish. I’ll respond to that after. Amadeu, please.

AMADEU ABRIL: Okay. How you really said that, I think that we don’t need to understand that. Mission and purpose is just a sentence. And indeed, the mission and purpose is for the set to avoid confusion. But then, still you need to explain why you want that TLD, to whom it’s intended, in which way, how it will work. And indeed, you cannot escape in this specific set to explain how you will try to minimize the risk of having two TLDs that

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are, in principle, confusingly similar, how you will handle second-level domains, etc., etc., the same registrar principle, you will need to explain that. And this can not only apply to the new TLDs. If there is a pre-existing TLD, it should apply there, perhaps not in the exact same way. But you cannot say we forget what already exists, and we are the new ones. We describe we will do for the new ones, because perhaps the old one also needs some adjustments in purpose. And even things like there are TLDs that were intended only for companies and not for individuals, and they change, I don't see the point of simply saying we only care about the new ones when we are building a set with the old one.

MICHAEL BAULAND: Okay. Thanks, Amadeu. Before I respond to Satish, I just want to ask whether Ariel wants to respond to Satish, or is it a new point?

ARIEL LIANG: This is a response to Satish's question about justification. I'm happy to defer that to until we're finished with Bill's points.

MICHAEL BAULAND: No, go ahead, please.

ARIEL LIANG: You want me to go ahead? Okay. Sorry. So, regarding the justification for the IDN EPDP Phase 1 recommendation, the implementation approach for this is that there will be something called variant string evaluation as part of the application evaluation phase of the program,

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and it is envisioned that there will be a panel that review the relevant responses to those justification-related questions. Then basically the applicant needs to explain why they need those variant strings and justify the need for that, and there's a panel to evaluate their responses. So, if, for example, the Latin diacritic recommendation is going to use similar wording, then what I could right now envision is there will be some things similar in terms of evaluating this result, and maybe there will be a panel to look at the responses and the justification provided by the applicant. So just to provide a bit background on this.

MICHAEL BAULAND:

Thanks, Ariel. And to add on to this, to Satish, taking another look at the Implementation Guidance 8, this also explains a bit more in detail what it means they will describe the justification. There it is explained that they will have to answer those questions and that this will be evaluated, and you have to pass all of these. And for that reason, we thought—I understand Bill's comments, but they also apply in a similar way to the IDN EPDP, you could also just say to avoid confusion. And the decision was to provide some more information, some additional justification, as stated here. And for that reason, we thought that it makes sense to have the same requirements in our case too.

Any other comments? From these three options, I think we agreed that Option 1 seemed to be the correct one, as Amadeu argued. The only open point would be whether this is needed at all, as asked by Bill. Is there any other opinion whether we need this at all? Hearing none so far. I only hear Bill's disagreement regarding this, and the rest of voices I heard is in favor of this. So, I think we should go with Option 1. If Bill is



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really unhappy with this, we can still have this once we do the voting and check there and have a minority opinion. Okay. So I guess we'll take Option 1 for the time being, and then continue to the next slide, please.

Here we have the updated language for one on the Implementation Guidance 11. Adding language about an unnecessary separate report from EPP IDNs. So it says, "ICANN Org should conduct research in order to identify whether any additional criteria or tests should be used as part of the application process to evaluate the technical and operational capability of an applicant to manage the ASCII Latin diacritic gTLD set at the registry level."

Last week, we discussed that instead of having our own report, I think the suggestion was by Sarmad to kind of use the already this side of process of the IDN EPDP and combine this research, and therefore we would just add the following sentence. "This would not be a separate research, but may be conducted as an extension of the research requested in the EPDP IDN for variants per Implementation Guidance 3.9." And then continue, "Similar to EPDP IDNs, ICANN Org must offer the community an opportunity to provide input on the scope," and so on and so on. Any comments regarding using the same process and not creating a separate research here? Sarmad, please.

SARMAD HUSSAIN:

Just thinking out loud that the extension, if you can have some wording which says that any needed extension or anything which makes that extension a little optional based on requirement rather than requiring

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an extension because these may be very similar mechanisms. See if that kind of editing can be done in the language. Thank you.

MICHAEL BAULAND: Okay. Say, instead of requiring an extension and thereby change the process, it might also suffice to just use exactly the same process. Is that what you mean?

SARMAD HUSSAIN: Yeah. So, something like saying instead of as an extension, saying as any needed extension of research requested. So, something which makes that extension optional and only we add if needed. Thanks.

MICHAEL BAULAND: Thanks. Good point. I think this extension was not meant in the way that any additional criteria, tests, or whatever, but just that the whole research process should be extended to not just look at the variant cases, but also at the LD cases. But I understand your concern, and I guess we can come up with some wording in the background that covers the concern that we don't want to prescribe how that research is done, and whether any changes actually need to be done. We just want to extend the research to also encompass our case. Does that make sense, Sarmad?

SARMAD HUSSAIN: Yes, that's what I was suggesting. Thank you, Michael.

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MICHAEL BAULAND: Okay, great. Any other opinions/agreements. Do we agree with Sarmad? Anil also agrees, Satish. It sounds like that's a good approach with a comment from Samad and we can work that out in the background, and then we decide to not have a dedicated own research, but it was the one that's there for the IDN EPDP. Thanks.

Then to Preliminary Recommendation 14, there was a comment to provide additional details and criteria on the expression established institution. And for that, we decided to add a footnote. And the footnote, as of now, reads as following: "As per EPP IDNs, according to the 2012 Applicant Guidebook, several factors may be considered in whether an entity qualified as an established institution. These factors include, but are not limited to, the level of global recognition of the institution, the length of time the institution has been in existence and public history evidence of its existence such as the presence of a formal charter or national or international registration or validation by a government, inter-governmental organization, or treaty. Importantly, the institution must not have been established solely in conjunction with the gTLD application process."

Question to—I'm not sure who made that comment. I think it was Anil, but I'm not 100% sure. Do you think this works? Ariel first, please.

ARIEL LIANG: Thank you. I apologize. I should probably have raised this earlier. Maybe instead of referencing the 2012 round AGB, it's preferable to reference the next round AGB because there is language regarding what

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established institution means in the latest AGB. I think at the point when this PDP wraps up and have the recommendations finalized, the AGB should be adopted by then, that's the thinking. So maybe it's the best to reference the latest language instead of the 2012 round language. And I can double-check internally just to see whether that language still is unstable, where it's already stabilized. Then I'm happy to provide an update to the group what the language looks like in the latest version.

MICHAEL BAULAND:

Okay. Thanks. Good point, Ariel. Please do check that, and we can change that to the latest version. I see Anil and Satish agreeing this would then solve the comment provided with regards to Preliminary Recommendation 14, and we can leave this established institution in the main Rec and not provide details in the Rec, but have a footnote with more information there.

So, any other comments regarding this Rec 14 or the footnote? Seeing none, then we can go to the next agenda item, the updated timeline. Next slide, please.

SAEWON LEE:

Hi, Michael. Sorry, I didn't raise my hand. This is Saewon Lee from staff. I'm just wondering if you'd like to go back to item three now, or would you like to do this in the document?

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MICHAEL BAULAND: No, we can do it now. That's okay. Any feedback on that term? I think Ariel was going to find out something or look into this. Were you able to find something?

ARIEL LIANG: Yes. Thank you, Michael. It's really not a finding. It's more like confirmation from Org side that there's no issue or misunderstanding with regard to the word "discount" from the IDN EPDP recommendation. And the Board already adopted that recommendation, so basically if the group decides to continue using the word discount, I think it shouldn't cause any concerns. And another note is that the recommendation has been adopted, but it has not been implemented yet because it concerns some future rounds after the immediate next round. So we don't know exactly how it is going to look like in terms of implementation, so it's in a pending status. But at least the Board has adopted so we have to implement it somehow. That's basically an update is that if the group decides to use discount, it shouldn't be an issue.

MICHAEL BAULAND: Okay. Thanks. So, maybe get back to Amadeu, I think you raised the potential issue with the word discount. So, after hearing this, are you fine with keeping it with discount? Oh, Bill, was it? Sorry. Saewon just put Bill there. Really? I thought it was Amadeu coming back from the Spanish meaning language discount.

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BILL JOURIS: I was the one saying that discount is fine. Mine is essentially the same thing. I'm totally fine with it.

MICHAEL BAULAND: Okay. Amadeu, do you see a problem with discount or can we leave it at that?

AMADEU ABRIL: No. I just asked the English speakers whether they had a problem with that. If there is no problem, there is no problem.

MICHAEL BAULAND: Okay, great. Since Ariel confirmed that it's fine with the IDN EPDP the language and with ICANN, I think we should just stay with that and be consistent there. Thanks, everybody and Ariel, for checking in.

With that, I think we can go to the timeline. Where are we now? We are in September and almost in October next week. We are currently still deliberating the charter questions, checking on the comments you provided. We plan to draft the initial report before the ICANN meeting, or at the latest, at the ICANN meeting. We'll just need a few more comments to look at. This would mean that we could probably start the Initial Report Public Comment period in November after the ICANN meeting. That would then need to go until January 26. After that, we need to, of course, incorporate any comments, change those charter questions accordingly—not charter question, but our Preliminary Recommendations might make them to final recommendation. We

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estimate that then we will be able to submit this final report to the GNSO Council in August 26.

Just to compare this to the project plan that was approved by the GNSO Council, there we said that we will be able to provide the initial report by February 26. The Public Comment would start in February and go through April. With that, we are about three months ahead of schedule. We've been quite fast. The submission of the final report was then estimated to be in November 26. This began roughly three months earlier in August 26. That's the estimated timeline update based on the progress we have achieved so far.

The bad news is now on the next slide, namely that this means that we will have problems incorporating our PDP into the next round. Namely, the ICANN Board adoption of the AGB is estimated to be at ICANN84 in October, next month, and the final opportunity for the AGB update would then be in December 25, and the launch of the next round is in April 26. But with our Public Comment still for the initial report going on until January, there's no way we can have our PDP requirements in the AGB for the next round.

AMADEU ABRIL:

Well, there is a solution. We deny the AGB. Sorry about that. Joke.

MICHAEL BAULAND:

Saewon said the Public Comment needs to be out for 40 days. Even if we are faster with the review, if we save a month or two here, we're

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still half a year late or even more to be able to get that into the AGB for the next round. Anil, please.

ANIL KUMAR JAIN:

Thank you, Michael. Although we are on schedule as initially we planned, but if we want to include over recommendations in the new gTLD round, I suggest, in case all members agree and the staff and leadership also agree, that maybe we may increase over meetings from one day per week to two days per week. That may speed up the things. And if you remember, Michael, we had the similar strategy which we adopted in IDN EPDP also to speed up the things. This is just a suggestion. Thank you.

MICHAEL BAULAND:

Thanks, Anil. It's generally a good suggestion, but I'm afraid it won't help us in this case because we only have two or three meetings left until we are ready with our Preliminary Recommendations. Even if we were to do all the meetings next week, this would maybe save us one month. It would probably mean we could start the Public Comment in late October instead of November, but it would still go into December.

I mean, I would love to and I tried several approaches. I had several discussions in the background with different ICANN team, ICANN Org, but it seems that this is unfortunately not a possibility. Even in the beginning where we rose our hopes, it's likely that we will make it, it was always mentioned by ICANN that there is a chance that it's possible to include this, but it's a very, very slim chance. And it seems like that we did not achieve that very slim chance, which is not saying that we



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didn't do a good job or that we were too slow. I mean, it also doesn't make sense to rush through the topics and not discuss anything and just decide something by way of someone saying, "That's the case. Please, do no objections," then, "Let's finish it." It's really necessary to have those discussions and to find a solution that's good for the future. Because we're not just making rules here for the next round, we are making rules for eternity, so to say. This is going to be around forever. For that, I really would have loved to have that available in the next round. But on the cost of having a bad policy, I don't think that's a good turnout. Amadeu, do you want to say something?

DEVAN REED:

Amadeu, if you're speaking, we're not able to hear you.

AMADEU ABRIL:

Sorry. I was playing with the mute and it was in the reverse mode. I don't know whether this is acceptable or not, or this could work. These are questions for the staff and I don't expect an answer now, except that perhaps a no. But I think that submitting the application is submitting an application and the Applicant Guidebook will provide the rules for nearly everything except this specific aspect. This specific aspect is something about evaluating this set of TLDs that are pseudo variants. Second, there is an open question, which is the price. The price probably would be set for the variant TLDs in time. I don't know. Let's hope. But the question is is it possible that we allow applications? These applications are sent to the end of the queue for evaluation, because they need something like an extended evaluation because a piece of the

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evaluation is not yet ready. But I repeat, 90% of the application is there. There's only a concrete aspect that's not completely finalized. And indeed, the parties will understand that they may submit an application based on the expectation that this will work, and it won't work on the expectation that they will get a rebate later, a discount, sorry, but they don't get the discount or things like that. But this could still work for some applicants. I mean, those that are really interested in having a set with pseudo variants. And if not, the worst thing that could happen with them is that the application remains in limbo. But how? Their application from 2012 that were terminated two weeks ago.

MICHAEL BAULAND:

Thanks for the question, Amadeu. Do you want to respond to that, Sebastien, or is it a different point?

SEBASTIEN DUCOS:

I don't know if it's a response but I was thinking something similar to Amadeu in the sense that we will have completed our work way before the application window opens. We will have made our recommendations. Even if everything is in the AGB, it'll be public record and they'll be everything. I know that as long as we don't jeopardize delay or otherwise, slow down the next round, the GNSO and the rest of the community are very open to this happening faster rather than later. So, I don't know how technically administratively needs to be done but I know that there's a lot of goodwill in the community for these applications to be accepted and processed even if it's slightly off the normal beat and track.

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Now, this is definitely not a PP just for .quebec, obviously. I think that clients like governments, if they're involved, might need something, a lot more ground behind this to risk an application. But this is not gTLDs or normal government application. This is IDN and diacritics. I'm sure that there'll be a population out there willing to take the risk either of having their application rejected altogether and get some partial refund, or having delays because not everything was squared but still ready to take the risk. And again, community-wise, my feeling is that everybody is not particularly positive about it, but definitely not negative. It's not something anybody is politically going to try to slow down if we offer something that might not be completely or even track.

MICHAEL BAULAND:

Thanks, Sebastien. I was just going to ask whether someone from ICANN could provide some input answer to those comments, and I already see Steve's hand. Thanks, Steve. Hopefully, it's about that. Go ahead, please.

STEVE CHAN:

Thanks, Michael. Steve from staff. I definitely invite Ariel to add on to this, who is part of the next round team. It sounds simple to allow for perhaps an application for an LD set to be applied for, and then essentially just put in limbo, but it's not quite that simple, unfortunately. The reason is that every single string that is applied for gets integrated into the string similarity process. The strings are subject to a number of external elements that might impact the application. And these are run-on cycles in the program.

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For instance, the objection elements and GAC advice and all these things are on a schedule, essentially, in the program. And if you put the string in limbo, you either have it where it's just not going to be put through those cycles that it needs to be put through or you're having to create a separate cycle for these limbo strings. None of these things make a whole lot of sense to operate if the outcome of this PDP are unclear. Long way of saying that putting something in limbo is not quite so simple because the strings are not evaluated in isolation. There's a number of additional external things that might impact the application. And by that reason, it's really difficult to just have it sit on ice and wait to the end.

I guess just to speak on the subject more generally, from the staff side, we were a little hesitant to even broach the subject of bringing into the next round. Because even if we wrapped up deliberation in say a month and guide everything out in July, it was still a very long shot to get this integrated into the next round. From that perspective, we were a little hesitant because I think it sets unrealistic expectations and get people's hopes up. And from beginning, it was very hard and at this point, we didn't obviously wrap up deliberations in a month. Which is not a problem. As Michael said, we're well ahead of schedule. I think we have a risk of feeling like we failed, but we have not failed, we just haven't met astronomical expectations. Thanks.

MICHAEL BAULAND:

Thanks for clarifying this, Steve. Anil, please.

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ANIL KUMAR JAIN:

Thank you, Michael. Just thinking out of the box. In case we speed up our process and we submit our report ahead of what we are scheduling, and in case the staff and Board agree to put a clause that people who are willing to put a LD application, this will be permitted only after three or four months, whatever time is required to get this particular report approved by the Board through the whole process, I think this is one possibility of including this report in the forthcoming gTLD round also. Just a thinking process. Thank you.

MICHAEL BAULAND:

Thanks, Anil. It's always good to think outside of the box. But I like your idea, what I heard from Steve is that it's not that simple, that we can just put something in there that says you can apply later or it won't be processed later because it seems that all the other applications are dependent on this too. So, it would not just postpone our LD applications, but it seems, if I understood Steve correctly, that this would basically postpone all applications and thereby change kind of the launch of the next round, which is definitely something we don't want to cause.

Oh, the mood is down now. Yeah, I really do understand all the comments and the ideas and thoughts to find a way to make that possible. But from what I heard, it seems like it unfortunately is not.

Claude says, "The impact of this is tremendous for .quebec. We'll have to evaluate our options from now on." Yeah, I understand that. We can still discuss and think of solutions that maybe nobody thought about before. But it's almost impossible. But I won't say 100% impossible

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because I try to never use 100% when I say something about the future. But I think, at this moment, there's nothing we can do right now, just to continue our work. And as said, if you come up with a brilliant idea that nobody, not even the ICANN team, has thought about, then please, yeah, write it to the mailing list and we will possibly check that whether it's a possibility. I'm all in favor to find ways. I mean, we had several ideas how to make this possible. We had several discussions during ICANN meeting. I can still remember Saewon being not so happy that we had yet another idea, and she had to get back to a lot of people to discuss this idea. But yeah, it turned out not to be at the moment.

Yeah, Sebastien, not quite brilliant, almost. I see two new hands. Asteway, please, and then Sebastien.

ASTEWAY SHOAREGA NEGASH: Thank you, Michael. I happen to think inclusion in the Applicant Guidebook is as important as the application itself, because I think we're setting the basic definition of what diacritic label is here, because applicants need to know and understand what they're applying for before they actually go for an application. So, I happen to think workarounds, like delaying the applicants or extending the process a little bit. I don't think these ideas might work for us, in our case. I would rather suggest a team that is very active in this process to keep up the process, to keep up the analysis and deliver the outputs at a fair timeline. And I don't believe this should set us back an inch because there could be intermediate rounds that applications might be considered. And maybe, as Ariel has suggested there, there is probably a case where we might not have to wait until the next application

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round. The application process might change a little bit. So, I don't think we should be set back because of what happens, and I think we should proceed at a normal pace and not be affected by whatever is happening here. Thank you.

MICHAEL BAULAND:

Thanks, Asteway. Great point, yeah. I also believe that doing something that is not described in the AGB will cause legal issues. And I'm not a lawyer, but even if we all know what this is going to be or the community is good willing, if it's not legally written down there, it can cause problems. We just don't know.

So with that, I guess we have a little bit of time left and we can go back to our Preliminary Recommendations. Where were we? The last thing we talked about was the discount topic in PR13, which has been covered by Ariel so we can just leave it there.

I have one comment I want to make before we start with this is that we have started adding the rationales, the rationale things and so on. The rationales have been missing at first because we wanted to have the Preliminary Recommendations in a more stable wording. But if we go along finalizing those Preliminary Recommendations, staff has already started adding those rationales. We won't go through those here via the meetings, that would take too long, but we still would like to ask you to take a look at those and provide any comments/suggestions via mailing list, and then we can discuss them there. So, the rationales are being added, and as we progress with the Recs, those will be added too.

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With that, I think the next one is Preliminary Recommendation 15, which is highlighted here now. It's regarding the one registry agreement, and there has been some discussions in the background, going back and forth. In the end, it was decided that we could possibly stay with this one recommendation. So if there's no objection from anybody in the group, we will just leave the wording as it is. Okay, seeing none.

There was this comment in PR18 from Bill, I think. If you could bring up that comment, please. It's about the cost and whether this is in conflict with the Preliminary Recommendation 15. Yeah, there it is, 12. I think the numbering changed after we renumbered and put Recommendation x to be Recommendation 1. So what has been 12 is now 13, and Bill suggested that this might be in conflict with Recommendation now 13. Let's just quickly read it so everybody knows what we are talking about.

Preliminary Recommendation 18 says, "Consistent with Final Rec 7.4 of the IDN EPDP Phase 1 Final Report, the registry fixed fee for a gTLD registry operator that operates the delegated gTLD labels that constitute an ASCII latent diacritic gTLD set must be the same as gTLD registry operator of a single gTLD, unless and until the ICANN Board determines otherwise."

I don't think this is a conflict because this Rec 13 is talking about the application process and the fees related to the application process, whereas this 18 is talking about the fees to run the application. Does it make sense, Bill, or did I misunderstood your comment here? Okay. Bill says, "Thanks for the clarification." So I think we can resolve this.

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There's no conflict because they are talking about different fees, the fixed fee with the application and the ongoing fee regarding the operational TLD.

Okay. Next one, I think, up is PR28, if I'm not mistaken. Oh, yeah, right, that one. It's about the different restrictions of TLDs and that the operator will be bound by the same restrictions for all TLDs in the set. And we listed the restrictions in this recommendation refer to the differential treatment and requirement applied to a non-standard types of gTLDs which are Community gTLDs, Brand TLDs, Geographic TLDs, as well as TLDs subject to Category 1 Safeguard.

There was a comment from Ariel stating that this Category 1 Safeguard is not actually TLD type, so to say, and therefore it would be better to remove this. We used it here because it was also in the original IDN EPDP recommendation. I have no problem with removing this. I don't know if Ariel wants to say a few sentences towards this. The idea we have is that if one of the TLDs is subject to Category 1 Safeguards, this means that all of the TLDs in the set would be subject to Category 1 Safeguards, and for that, it makes sense to have it here. But if you see a problem with this, I think we can also remove that.

ARIEL LIANG:

Thank you, Michael. Yes, your understanding is exactly correct. So, basically, the entire set is subject to the same Safeguard Public Interest Commitments. So that's the intent of the EPDP recommendation, I think. And then, at the time that recommendation was discussed, the group had a kind of impression that this type of string is a specialized

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string. And then, based on the AGB drafting process, now that type of string is not considered a specialized application. It's just in the Registry Agreement. The set of strings will be subject to the same set of Safeguard Public Interest Commitments. So, that's just implementation of that.

But if the group decides to be consistent with the EPDP recommendation and continue referring to this type of string subject to Category 1 Safeguards, then I think it shouldn't be an issue, even it's a little different from how the AGB kind of categorize specialized application. I think the intent of the recommendation should be clear to Org. It's just saying the same Safeguard Public Interest Commitments should apply to the Latin and ASCII string sets. So, I think it should be okay, but I just want to kind of clarify what are considered specialized applications.

MICHAEL BAULAND:

Okay. Thanks for that information. So maybe it's a possibility to keep it in here, to be consistent with the IDN EPDP, but put something in the rationale to explain what we mean by this, that they are just subject to those. Would that solve the problem, Ariel?

ARIEL LIANG:

Yes, from my understanding, it should be okay. But, of course, the work team will get together when the initial report is published, and then we'll provide input if needed. But I don't think that's a problem.

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MICHAEL BAULAND:

Okay, great. Thanks. Any other comment regarding this? Anybody wants to take this out, or want to leave it in there, or don't care about that? Seeing no comment. It seems like nobody cares about that, so we just leave it the way it is.

The next one, with eight minutes left, I think we could possibly get to that still, is the Preliminary Recommendation 32 which says, "Consistent with Final Rec 8.7 from the IDN EPDP Phase 1 Final Report, for all future versions of the Root Zone LGR, Generation Panels and the Integration Panel should follow the stability principle in the LGR procedure and make best efforts to retain a full backward compatibility with delegated gTLDs and the corresponding ASCII or Latin diacritic gTLD labels, if any. The IGR procedure must be updated to specify the exceptional circumstances to the extent known to the GPs and the IP that could result in a proposed update to the Root Zone LGR not being able to retain full backward compatibility."

I think one of the questions here was, what exactly could be changed within the LGR that would cause problems with our policies? One thing that is the case is that the LGR not just defines the characters which are allowed, but it also defines the variant relationships. And it could, in theory, be possible to add variant relationships. And we already know that anything which is a variant is out of scope for our purpose.

So, already now we have in the Latin script LGR the two letters A and Á with accent. They are variants of each other, and they are blocked with variants of each other. Which means that for these two letters, labels were just different with that position cannot exist next to each other. They are variants but they are blocked, so they cannot be allocated,

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both of them. So, what could happen is that, at the moment, we have this E and the É with an accent which are not variants of each other.

So, it's possible to apply for this, for example, Quebec, and have both two allocated next to each other in a Latin diacritic set. But then, at some later point, the LGR would be changed such that these two letters become variants and become blocked variants. As a consequence, that would mean that those two labels could not coexist next to each other, and that's what we want to post here and make clear that if such changes happen in the future, that the Generation Panel that would be responsible for this has to be made aware of this problem, that there are existing cases which would not be possible with a new ruling, and to find a solution that retains full backward compatibility that obviously does not require one of the TLDs to be removed from the root zone once it is there. So, that's the background of this Preliminary Recommendation 32.

With that clarification, are there any further questions, comments regarding this, or can we leave it as it is? Sarmad, please.

SARMAD HUSSAIN:

This is a recommendation which is already in IDN EPDP Phase 2 or, not sure, Phase 1 maybe. Thank you, Saewon. I guess the question is, repeating that recommendation here, is there any additional thing or angle which is actually being added here, or having that recommendation already part of IDN EPDP Phase 1 already covers all the cases, and so this may actually be not needed or redundant. So, I guess my question is, is there anything specific which is added in this

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context? Otherwise, if not, then I guess we already have that recommendation so we may not need it. Thanks.

MICHAEL BAULAND:

Thanks. Good point. One thing could be, it's quite theoretical, but if, for example, the E and the É with accent are made variants of each other, but are allocatable variants, then this change would not really affect the backward compatibility with regards to the IDN EPDP because that could be fine, but in our case, the question is, would that mean that the LD set would have to be transformed into a variant set or could it remain an LD set? So, in that sense, there is not a lot, but there are some peculiarities in our case which are not 100% covered with the IDN EPDP case from my point of view. Sarmad, please?

SARMAD HUSSAIN:

I guess the way this recommendation is written in its current form, it doesn't really focus only on variants, right, and what is a variant and what is not a variant. It is actually generally looking at how the existing gTLDs exist, whether as variants or not as variants, and whether changing anything has impact on those gTLDs as they exist. And so, in some ways, I think the existing language from Phase 1 could cover what you're saying even though it relates to this policy. But I think if the community, the working group, feels that that is not an angle which needs to be clarified, then I suggest let's put in some specific language around that specific area rather than keeping the generic language. Thank you.

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MICHAEL BAULAND: Okay. Thanks, Sarmad. With only one minute left, Ariel, very quick.

ARIEL LIANG: Thank you. I don't think we can finish discussing this recommendation here, but the point I'd like to make is that maybe just put forward a recommendation on what the group intends to achieve, instead of referencing the Generation Panel and RZ-LGR because it doesn't seem very much related. I mean, it is related, but it seems to kind of get a little convoluted, like we're talking about diacritics that are not allocatable variants. And then now there we're bringing this concept of variants. It just seems a little mixed, in my view. So, instead of using a similar language from IDN EPDP Phase 1, maybe it's better just to put recommendation what the group intends to achieve, and use a very direct and simple language to make sure there's no confusion with implementation. Maybe that's a more helpful approach, but that's just from my view. Thank you.

MICHAEL BAULAND: Thanks, Ariel. Good point. Let's continue this next week as we are already at half past. Very quick, to Saewon, she already said next steps is continue to review the PR language and the stress test. I think we skipped the summary by John and he will send it by e-mail. And with that, I think we can stop meeting, and see you all next week. Thanks.

Devan, you're going to stop the recording. Thanks and bye.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]

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