
DEVAN REED:

Good morning, good afternoon, and good evening. This is Devan Reed for the recording. Welcome to the Latin Script Diacritics PDP Call, taking place on Wednesday, the 1st of October, 2025 at 13:15 UTC. We have no apologies listed 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 email the GNSO Secretariat.

All documentation and information can be found in 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 Community Anti-Harassment Policy. Thank you, and back over to the chair.

MICHAEL BAULAND:

Thanks, Devan, and hello, everybody, to our meeting number 21. Next slide, please. So for the agenda today, as usual, we will do the recap of the previous meeting. We continue our review of the preliminary rec draft and then have some preparation of the ICANN meeting, following by the Next Steps and AOB. Next slide, please.

So for the last meeting, as usual, we revisited the Preliminary Recommendation talks and determined positions on multiple issues raised in the comments. Nothing new here as key outcomes. Next slide, please.

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.

Action Items. We updated the PR doc based on our discussion, in particular IG11 and the PR14 footnote for the new AGB draft, and we had PR28 to keep category one safeguards was the decision, and we will continue with the PR32 on the next slide.

Action Item two, we will ask you to continue or start to review the rationales that have been added already and that will continue to be added as we go along. And finally, it's about the edge cases, the example cases where we would like to do some stress testing. If you have any suggestions, just share them on the mailing list. We will also provide some example examples at the end of this meeting. So, next slide, please.

With that, let's quickly get back to the IG11. There was the comment by Sarmad that even though we want to use the already described research from the IDN-EPDP, this doesn't necessarily mean that there will be changes to that research. There might, but we don't know. So, that's why we reworded our sentence to be, this should not be treated as a separate research effort, but rather, if necessary, conducted together with the EPDP IDN's research on variants per implementation guidance 3.9.

I think this covers all of the comments. Anybody still having issues or things that should be changed or improved? Seeing and hearing none, I think this is a way we will go forward with this IG11. For the Preliminary Recommendation 14, we also did some small changes in the sense that we are not referring a specific round here. We just say according to the Applicant Guidebook for the New gTLD Program Next Round and have a

link there to the Applicant Guidebook as it is. Any questions, comments, suggestions regarding this one?

Also hearing, seeing none, this is also good to go and we can continue with the next item. Next slide, please. That's about the Preliminary Recommendation 32 about the backward compatibility should there be any new Root Zone LGRs. We discussed this last week and there was a suggestion by Sarmad that possibly we don't even need the recommendation at all because everything that is set in the IDN-EPDP is sufficient for our case. What we did now is we have basically two options here.

The first option is to discard this Preliminary Recommendation 32 as it's already covered by IDN-EPDP or we have a slight revision of the language that has been in place for the IDN-EPDP. I will read the whole recommendation for your convenience. Consistent with final recommendation 8.7 from the EPDP-IDNs Phase 1 Final Report for all future versions of the Root Zone LGR Generation Panels, GPs and integration panel IP should follow the stability principle in the LGR procedure and make best efforts to retain full backward compatibility with delegated gTLDs, their delegated and allocated variant labels, if any.

Up to now, this was the wording from the IDN-EPDP and we suggest to also add here and their delegated and allocated ASCII Latin Diacritic gTLD set labels, if any, and then continue with the original wording of the IDN-EPDP. The LGR procedures must be updated to specify the exceptional circumstances to the extent known to the GPs and IP that

could result in a proposed update to the Root Zone LGR not being able to retain full backward compatibility.

So, the suggestion here is essentially use almost the exact wording from the IDN-EPDP and just add our cases in addition to the variant cases and their delegated and allocated ASCII Latin Diacritic gTLD labels, if any. Any thoughts, suggestions, whether we should go with option two and do the adjustment or whether we say, well, it's basically anyway already covered in the IDN-EPDP and we don't have to say anything. Thoughts, opinions? Bill, please go ahead.

BILL JOURIS:

Yeah, this is Bill Jouris for the record. Even if we think that it was covered in the EPDP, I don't think it hurts anything to repeat it, especially since there may be people reading our document who haven't chosen to slog through the whole EPDP. So I would say, leave it regardless.

MICHAEL BAULAND:

Okay, thanks. Sarmad, please.

SARMAD HUSSAIN:

Thank you. This is Sarmad. I was going to say something similar to Bill that having this, I guess, a bit of more cautionary approach does not hurt. But I think it may be, so just by saying that allocated, delegated and allocated ASCII slash Latin Diacritic gTLD set labels, does that automatically, would the GPs automatically understand that this is about the cases of ASCII Latin Diacritic gTLDs, which are in some ways

grouped together through this policy versus any pair of ASCII Latin diacritics?

I think what we want to do is more clearly specify this case where there are an ASCII and a diacritized version, which is through this policy, administratively allocated to the same entity. And so, if this comes clearly through this language, that's fine. Otherwise, it may be useful to point that out more explicitly. Thank you.

MICHAEL BAULAND:

Okay, thanks. Before I go to Ariel, from my point of view, it should be okay, because previously we defined what an ASCII Latin Diacritic gTLD set is. So it's a well-defined phrase in our context, but certainly it wouldn't hurt to emphasize this in the rationale. But I would be wary in putting more words here in the Rec, but let's hear Ariel, please.

ARIEL LIANG:

Thanks, Michael. This is probably just for my own clarity. So, when we talk about full backward compatibility for delegated and allocated ASCII and Latin Diacritic gTLD set labels, do we mean if they were deemed as non-variants or if they deemed as variants but not allocatable, and then we just say GP don't change that designation even for future updates?

I just don't really understand exactly what full backward compatibility means in the context of ASCII and Latin Diacritic Labels. Are we just saying for GP, like for your Latin Script the LGR, whatever you have designated their relationship was before, don't change that. Regardless, even if they're allocated, delegated to the same entity, but whatever

you put in the LGR, don't change the designation. Don't make them into variants all of a sudden or something. I just try to understand what full backward compatibility means exactly in this context. Yes, thank you.

MICHAEL BAULAND:

So from my view, I think we shouldn't say do not make them variants because there might be good reasons for creating a new variant relationship within the Latin LGR between two letters. What we just require that even if you make them variants, and if they are variants, it's most likely blocked variants because almost all variants in the Latin Script are blocked variants, that even if you make them variants and they are blocked variants, we have to retain full backward compatibility.

So we have to make sure that the already allocated ASCII Latin, the accredited gTLD set is not affected by this. So, they have some, what's the new word? It used to be grandfathering, but that's not allowed anymore. I forgot the new word, sorry. Somebody can help me in the chat. If I remember the new, exempted. Thanks.

So, we have to make sure that any existing TLD sets are exempted from those Root Zone LGR changes. So, even if those are made variants and blocked variants, which would mean that the Latin ASCII TLD set could not exist anymore, a new one would definitely not be allowed to be created, but we have to retain backward compatibility in the sense that the existing one has to remain active under the same rules under which it had been created before the Root Zone LGR change. Does that make sense, Ariel?

ARIEL LIANG:

Yes, your explanation makes a lot of sense. And I just wonder, but please shoot me down if that's a bad suggestion, but I think it might be helpful to just say it out loud in the recommendation itself, like instead of using backward compatibility, these kind of terms, maybe just say these allocated, delegated ASCII Diacritic set, they are exempt from the future changes of the LGR and they need to remain delegated, allocated going forward, regardless of the changes.

I wonder whether to say this directly will be easier to understand, especially for future like Public Comment and also Board's deliberation of these recommendations, it may be easier for these parties to understand what the working group trying to say, instead of trying to interpret this or vary the explanation in the rationale. But tell me if this is a bad idea and I don't want to create extra work, but just from my understanding, I feel like the backward compatibility make a lot of sense for variants, but then for this particular case, it may not be as easily understood as the variant context. So, yeah.

MICHAEL BAULAND:

It's a valid and good point. For one, I will follow to Sarmad after that, but I'm just a bit wary again, kind of making this rec more complex and more cumbersome because already with the variant, we just said, we want to retain full backward compatibility and there are similar cases could exist that already allocated variants suddenly become block variants in a new LGR version. And the consequence would essentially be the same as it would be for our case. So, maybe it makes sense to explain this a more in the rationale, but Sarmad, please.

SARMAD HUSSAIN:

Right. So first, I think this is already providing a framework for variants and non-variants within the Root Zone LGR from the IDN-EPDP recommendation. I would suggest using similar language for the reason that if you use a different language, we may perhaps end up providing a less conservative or a more conservative treatment to this case. But perhaps we should suggest keeping or addressing this case at equal footing as the other cases. So, using the same language actually helps. And so, at least what I would suggest is that we keep the same language.

The other thing is that I think the way this recommendation was worded was that this is something with GPs and IPs really need to look at case to case basis. And in some cases, they may want to keep the backward compatibility. But the recommendation, if you read the second part, also allows for them in some cases to not keep it.

So making things very strict as, for example, requiring backward compatibility under all conditions in this case may, for example, diverge from that particular recommendation. And we, I guess, just let GPs and IP take care of this on case-to-case basis. Thank you.

MICHAEL BAULAND:

Thanks. Good point. And I tend to agree to have the same consistent language which we try to do with most of our recommendations should make everything hopefully consistent with the IDN-EPDP and thereby cause less confusability and less thought about whether we are now trying to do something different, which we are not. So yeah, sounds

good to me. And Ariel seems to be persuaded by Sarmad. Thanks, Sarmad.

So with that, any other suggestions whether we want to do option one, discard, or option two, keep the new one with the slide additions? So far, I heard from Bill and Sarmad, and I think Ariel, that they are in favor of option two. Anybody who's not in favor or is in favor of option one, or something entirely different, or anybody else agreeing with option two?

So hearing no objections, but also no further approval. But since there were a few voices in favor of option two, and I think that's also the best way forward, and no objections here, I think we can go with option two. Thanks.

So, one last comment. There was one comment, I think it was by Bill, about the Generation Panels and whether they still exist or not exist. I think that's basically out of scope for us. Whether a generation panel continues to exist from previous occasions, or whether they have to be created anew, and in what way they are created, that's all irrelevant for our recommendation. We just state that once, and if such a LGR change is required, and a generation panel would be required to do the LGR change, then that generation panel would have to take care of this situation. Bill, please.

BILL JOURIS:

You just knew I'd be back on this. I would say in that case, rather than say the Latin generation panel, we should say a Latin generation panel,

to make clear that there's more than one, potentially. Just as a matter of clarity there. Thank you.

MICHAEL BAULAND: Fine with me. Although, do we talk about the Latin generation panel here, actually? Yes, at the moment. Sarmad, please.

SARMAD HUSSAIN: Right. So I think probably calling out a specific generation panel may not be needed here. And also, how a generation panel is maintained is already, I think, specified in the Roots Zone LGR procedure. So, I think that I understand what Bill's concern is, but I think that's covered in the Roots Zone LGR procedure already. Thank you.

MICHAEL BAULAND: Okay. Thanks, Sarmad, for the clarification. So, Bill, please.

BILL JOURIS: Again, as I suggested on a previous one, I think it's worthwhile to try and include, at least in a footnote, information on something like that for those who either might not have already read the other document, or who just may have forgotten, or may not even know that there is such another document, just to give some kind of link to whatever other document we feel covers that point. Thank you.

MICHAEL BAULAND: Sarmad?

SARMAD HUSSAIN: Yeah, I think that is a fair point. We could in the rationale or somewhere else, add a reference to the Roots Zone LGR procedure. Thank you.

MICHAEL BAULAND: Okay, thank you. And I see everyone agreed we can do that. So yeah, we will adjust that and put it in the rationale or a footnote to reference the policies regarding those changes. Thanks. So with that, unless there are any other comments, questions regarding this, I think we can continue to the next slide, please.

And that's getting us back to the Preliminary Recommendation slides. Sorry, I have a smaller window displayed today, since I'm not at home, but in the office, I have to look a bit closer. That might look weird.

So the next point is regarding this Preliminary Recommendation 5, where we say, whether we, there was a question by Bill, whether we, let's read it quickly. It's not that long. So consistent with final Rec 8.10 from the EPDP, again, Phase 1 Final Report, an ASCII gTLD that is removed from the Root Zone, either voluntarily or involuntarily, will result in the ASCII Latin Diacritic gTLD set no longer meeting requirements as described in Preliminary Recommendation one.

The gTLD registry operator may retain a single IDN gTLD and shall no longer be considered an ASCII Latin Diacritic gTLD set. And the question by Bill was whether we have to provide any guidance if, in case there

are multiple diacritics, whether they can choose one or if there was any mechanism that chooses one.

In my personal opinion, I don't think we need guidance. It's up to the registry operator to decide, but of course, we can add some rationale here, explaining or stating that there is no preference policy-wise, but the registry operator is free to decide, for example, whatever TLD has more registrations or whatever they think which TLD makes more sense in that context. Bill, please.

BILL JOURIS:

The problem with that approach is that we then end up with a lack of consistency across registry operators. Some places may take the first one in the list of the sets. Some people may, as you suggest, take which one has the most. Some may just choose randomly, and I think it's worth at least suggesting what and some may ask whoever the registrant was, which one do you want to keep? And I think it's worth at least offering a suggestion. I prefer actually a mandate, but a suggestion at least on what we think makes the most sense. Thank you.

MICHAEL BAULAND:

For one, I think it's difficult to make a suggestion because what makes more sense might be very different for different gTLD operators. And regarding the consistency, actually, I don't see a problem here at all, because let's be honest, how many TLD sets will we have? In total, I don't think that many, and how many of those TLDs will have multiple Diacritic TLDs? I think that's even less than the whole set. And how

many of those will then actually stop working and have to dissolve these?

So, I think if even one case will turn up within the next 10, 20 years, I would be surprised. So, consistency, I personally don't think it's a big issue in this case. And as I said, it's difficult to suggest something without knowing the use case of the registry, what they want to do with those TLDs, how they are using them. And also, there's no ordering. So even if there were two cases and one takes out TLD1 and the other TLD2, I don't see any way this could be considered inconsistent, because it's a set, basically. And a set is without order. But happy to hear other opinions.

Bill agrees, at least, to disagree. Yeah, but if we say the one with the most domain names, that might be an issue for some registries, because it may have currently more domain names, but the way they are using it, it's better for them to move those existing domain names to the other TLD and use it there.

So, without knowing the actual way those registries are using the TLDs, I think it's problematic to force something on them without a real need to force it. But if anyone else, except Bill and myself, has an opinion, happy to hear. Sarmad, please.

SARMAD HUSSAIN:

Thank you. So, I think in the case of primary and variants, what happens is that if the primary goes away, the variants also go away. And the reason for that is because variants are actually defined through the primary.

In this case, this is kept slightly different, because in some ways, these are not variants of each other, but they are being arbitrarily grouped together due to Diacritics and String similarity. So, when the quote unquote primary or the ASCII version actually goes away, there is, of course, what is being suggested is that arbitrarily one of them should be kept. And I think Bill also has a reasonable argument that suppose there are two Diacritic, diacritized TLDs, let's say one has 100,000 registrations and the other one has 100 registrations. This would take up an extreme.

And for whatever reason, the question is that should that decision be arbitrary or there should be some, I guess, some way to look at the side as well, the registrants kind of perspective in this decision, because they are getting impacted potentially.

So for example, middle ground could be that there may be actually some mechanism where there needs to be some proposal or which could be evaluated to determine the case being made by the gTLD operator. And there can be business considerations. But then there may need to be some level of transitional kind of arrangements or something. So, I'm just thinking whether there can be a middle ground instead of these two options. Thank you.

MICHAEL BAULAND:

Thanks. Let's see. Amadeu and Sebastien. Amadeu, please.

AMADEU ABRIL:

Thanks. Just, first of all, I was losing some math on my audio. It was just me or a general question, but the story may contradict him in things that he was not saying. Okay. Now, regarding the suggestion, I don't know how, I mean, I prefer to say I would not make any suggestion on how to prioritize that. And then I would say that perhaps we need to add something that sounds like a suggestion.

First, we cannot establish any criteria. Most number of domains makes little sense. First of all, you may easily find that all of them have the same number of domains. Come on, they're a set and they are still low variance. And most likely they will get in the domains in all the three TLDs even for the same price, even as attributes of the same object in many cases. But this doesn't mean that all of them are used in the same way.

You may have versions of one TLD and another that exist but are not at all used by the registrant. How do you check that one by one? Then you can have the registry itself creating domains in one of them just for the sake of making that more relevant somehow and more attractive. But in fact, they are like fake domains that are just, let's say, marketing from the registry itself. What else we could say? Linguistic accuracy. No, I mean, come on.

In most cases, this will not be a sentence or a word. We know that. So, whether this accent belongs in that language or not may be a question for endless discussion. I think that the only question here, and this is not just for this, but for any change in the root or any change in even who's the registry operator, ICANN need to set into account the interests of the internet users and especially the registrants.

So, I cannot believe that a registry would say, I have 3,000 here, zero there, I keep the one with zero. Now, if they are so foolish to do that, probably ICANN has an argument to say, we as ICANN have a duty regarding, with regard, sorry, the interests of the registrants and internet users. And what you say is silly. So, think it twice. But I cannot see how we can make any precise proposal on which one goes and which one doesn't go. Because even counting domains, I repeat, it's not valid, because it doesn't mean at all real use. Thanks.

MICHAEL BAULAND:

Okay, thanks. So, Sebastien, okay, he was going to agree with Amadeu. So would it be a possibility to add a sentence or a part of a sentence here to say the gTLD registry operator may retain a single IDN gTLD and shall no longer be considered as the Latin Diacritic gTLD set? And then write something like the choice of the gTLD to be kept should be done with due diligence with all parties, registries, registrars, registrants into consideration, something like that.

So I think that makes sense. But it would not mean we prescribe a certain, why is the telephone ringing here? I don't know, I'm in an empty office. I don't know why the phone is ringing, sorry. Any thoughts about that? Ariel, please.

ARIEL LIANG:

Thank you, Michael. This is, again, for my personal clarity, understanding the consequence of a gTLD registry operator that is no longer considered an ASCII Latin Diacritic gTLD set registry operator. So, from an implementation perspective, what does that mean exactly? For

example, how does that reflect in the, I don't even know, like, exactly what that means, like, what is the consequence of that, basically? Like, does that have any impact on the registry annual fee paid by the registry operator? Or what are the practical implications of that? I guess that's the part I wasn't completely sure I understand.

MICHAEL BAULAND:

Good, thanks. I think it just means that the application or the contract, which is about a set, will be changed to an application. It's a contract just for a single gTLD, just as we have funds at the moment to just any IDN single gTLD contract. And the fees would just be the same as for a standard single gTLD fees. Sarmad, please.

SARMAD HUSSAIN:

Yeah, I'm also thinking about what would happen to the TLDs which are removed. Would they go, for example, in the EBERO process? And which means that for some point, they will actually coexist, but under a different manager or an operator. And what if new registrations under the one remaining TLD start somehow the newer registrations are done, which are similar to the other registrations. If those TLDs continue to exist under EBERO, for example, and that creates potential similarity issues and user confusion by keeping the single IDN TLD.

MICHAEL BAULAND:

I don't think it should go to EBERO. As we said, we have the same entity requirement for that set. And either the whole set is moved to an EBERO provider. I think we mentioned that already at some earlier

occurrence on none of the TLDs. So, it's not possible to separate those TLDs because that would actually cause user confusion. But that's the same as for variants.

In a variant set, one or several TLDs get dropped. They also just don't exist anymore and they don't go to an EBERO case. They are just lost. So, I would say in our context, the same happens as if you would drop a variant from a variant TLD set. And those TLDs would basically be available again. But if anybody would apply for them, it would be rejected due to confusing similarity with the existing one. Ariel, please.

ARIEL LIANG:

Thank you, Michael. So, the fee question is just part of the questions I have about the practical implication of this. For example, there are other implications. Like we said, for the specialized application types, the ASCII Latin Diacritic set, they need to be bound by the same restrictions. For example, if it's a dotBrand TLD for the ASCII, then the IDN must be dotBrand as well.

So, there are a bunch of this kind of related recommendations to make sure it's the same entity, not just regarding the RO, but also a lot of other things. Like same requirements, same restrictions, same contractual obligations, blah, blah, blah.

So I just wonder whether we should clarify exactly when this ASCII label is being removed or ASCII gTLD is removed, this is no longer considered a set. What that means exactly from all these different perspectives? And I think Bill get what I was saying, like, need to think a little bit more about this.

And also, this doesn't seem to be very consistent with the EPDP Phase 1 recommendation, because the 8.10 says if we remove the primary label, then the variant has to be removed as well. But here we're not saying we're removing the Latin Diacritic label if the ASCII label is removed.

So I don't think consistent is the right word here. It's not really consistent. I think it's a little quite different, to be honest. So, I just felt this recommendation needs some fine tuning and clarification, especially from that practical consequence consideration.

MICHAEL BAULAND:

Thanks, Ariel. While those are interesting and valid points, I think we're moving away from the original question, whether the remaining TLD should be defined in some way. But of course, if we now want to change the whole recommendation and not allow single TLD to be retained, that would make the original question moot. But the reason we, in the past, decided that we don't have to follow the IDN-EPDP in this context is that contrary to IDN-EPDP, our TLDs, as someone mentioned earlier, are not related in any sense regarding the Root Zone LGR or something like that. They could all exist on their own.

There's no reason why they couldn't exist on their own. It's just that there's one reason that's a computability reason, and that's the only reason. But with the variant, we have that the variants actually are dependent on the primary domain name because it defines the disposition value of the variant set. And therefore, the variants are a part of the primary, so to say. And that's why we have a different status here, which gives us freedom to not require the registry to remove all of

them, but give them the possibility, which is also more user-friendly for the registrars and registrants, to keep at least one. I see a hand from Sarmad and Bill.

SARMAD HUSSAIN: Sorry, quick question. So, when this set is formed, is this limited to only diacritized versions which are considered similar by the String Similarity Panel or any diacritized version, whether similar or not, with the same ASCII can be added to the set?

MICHAEL BAULAND: We decided to not require confusing similarity because we don't know that beforehand, and we want the applicants to have a 100% clear decision at the time of the application and not waiting on the outcome of the String Similarity Review Panel. And the assumption was that everything within that context is similar enough to be potentially confusingly similar.

SARMAD HUSSAIN: Right. So, I would like to come back to that based on this, if you allow. So, then I think then there is another challenge in letting all of them go except one. There, then it is possible that one of the ones which are dropped are not similar to the one which is retained. And so, somebody else can actually come and apply for it later. And they can actually get it because it's not similar.

And so, we will have the same TLD now, same two TLDs which were governed by the same operator now, and in some ways, "bundled

together” in a very secure kind of way. And people or registrants are used to that kind of, I guess, pairing or bundling of registrations at top level and second level. And then suddenly after some years, one of them goes away and then comes back to another registrant, sorry, another registry operator, and then they start registering the same kind of domain names, but now those domain names are registered to different people.

And so that can also potentially cause potential user confusability because historically there has been sort of a user expectation that they were actually managed by the same people or same registrants at the second level. So, there's also potentially that issue. In I think in the ccTLD space, for example, there is some time given before a same string actually can be re-registered. But in this case, there is actually no time which is sort of stipulated for that string. And that can potentially cause this confusion. Thank you.

MICHAEL BAULAND:

Thanks, Sarmad. Before I go to Amad, do you want to quickly respond to that? I agree that that might be an issue and we might need to have a new recommendation that ensures not making those dropped TLDs available for some time. But this is not related to retaining a single TLD. The same problem would also occur if we say you're not allowed to retain a single and we drop all of them. Then also two applicants could apply for those TLDs you mentioned and have two separate TLDs running.

So, this is independent from the question if we allow to retain one single TLD and what that would be. But I think it might make sense to block such a TLD from registration in the future. Amadeu, please. Sorry for keeping you waiting. If you're talking, Amadeu, you're still on mute. Can't hear you a moment. You're not hearing anything?

DEVAN REED:

Amadeu, your line is muted on Zoom.

AMADEU ABRIL:

Can you hear me now? I was making a very nice speech in the meantime. I was saying that I need to comment first two ideological biases I have. The first one, I don't think that TLDs should be retired for any reason. When I was in the ICANN Board, I was always voting against any such proposal.

Now, provided that there are registrants, there are third party registrants that use those domains. So, I don't see why we should even consider the possibility that one of these TLDs, the ASCII one for instance, is voluntarily retired. Now, mandatorily retired for any change of policy for things, I am also against that, but we cannot control that. But if this happens, as we were saying, we are in a very difficult situation. If there are registrants, we cannot just kill it. We must send, according to the rest of the rules, to EBERO and from somebody else. So, we have to do that. We should send the whole package there.

So, I don't see any reason why, after approving them and having them and having registrants there, another question is they are still empty.

Okay, then we don't care. But if they are already with third party registrants there, we cannot kill any of them. We need to send to EBERO and we cannot separate them. In order to separate them for different registries afterwards, we will need a PDP that will be much longer than this one to change lots of things.

Second thing, I understand what Sarmad says, but my second ideological bias is I cannot imagine two TLDs, one in pure ASCII, the other one with deliquity, with the same letters, which are not confusingly similar. Indeed, the standard for confusingly similar may change. We had experiences of how strange it was and perhaps how strange it will be. But from any point of view, confusingly similar analysis in training or whatever you want, you will never consider that they are not confusingly similar.

So, having said that, I understand what Sarmad says, and indeed, we need to have a requirement. If this happens for any reason that should not be voluntarily by the registry that has applied for the set, but should be mandatory for any reason, later on, we don't end up with the registries being managed and separate, even if they are not confusingly similar.

Two things that I personally deny should happen, but if this happens, we should prevent this from undoing the set later on, because then the confusion will be even worse than what we are trying to prevent.

BILL JOURIS:

Michael, now you're muted.

MICHAEL BAULAND: Sorry, didn't know I was muted. One question, too. ICANN staff, maybe. What is the current policy regarding dropping a standalone TLD voluntarily? Is that allowed? Is that possible? Anyone who knows this? Sarmad, please.

SARMAD HUSSAIN: I think it's not totally arbitrary. I think this is something which is, I think, discussed between the registry operator and ICANN. I may be wrong, but there needs to be some kind of transition plan or something to I guess, see what is going to happen to the registrations. We can check and come back to you, but I think it's not, like, very arbitrary right now. Thanks.

MICHAEL BAULAND: Okay, thanks. Sarmad. Sorry, Amadeu.

AMADEU ABRIL: There are provisions in the agreement for that, and it clearly says that it will be sent to EBERO unless there are no registrations, third-party registrations.

MICHAEL BAULAND: Okay, if that's the case, if you can't voluntarily drop a TLD, but it would automatically go to EBERO, then maybe we indeed have to change our preliminary recommendations.

AMADEU ABRIL: It will go to EBERO if there are registrations. I mean, domain names by third parties. You know, the exception being many brand TLDs that can be dropped without going to EBERO because the only registrations are by the registry itself.

MICHAEL BAULAND: Yeah, understood. So then possibly, we have to redo preliminary recommendations 35 because in that sense we shouldn't also allow dropping TLDs with registrations voluntarily because we cannot move it to an EBERO case without all the other TLDs in the set also moving to the same EBERO case. So, just dropping one is then possibly, it's maybe not a possibility at all, and we have to change it that if one wants to drop one, they have to drop all. So, in that context, all of them could then go to EBERO. Ariel, please.

ARIEL LIANG: Thank you, Michael. And so, if you are going to update the language of this Rec, maybe also helpful to call out Preliminary Recommendation 38 because that's the one that talks about a label that's dropped due to a breach of contract, then all of them has to be removed. So, there are some kinds of interrelations with this recommendation. Maybe you need to have some kind of footnote to carve out some exceptional cases, because you have the word involuntary in recommendation 35, and that's one type of involuntary situation, like dropped because of breach of contract.

So in that case, we can't even have a Diacritic gTLD stand alone and continue to exist. They have to be removed as well. So, it will be helpful to make sure these two recommendations are kind of covering each other's spaces so you're not like accidentally miss that situation. So, just to help for the future revision of this recommendation.

MICHAEL BAULAND: Yeah, thanks. Good point. Amadeu, is that a new hand or old hand?

AMADEU ABRIL: Very old hand.

MICHAEL BAULAND: Very old. Dinosaur hand. Okay, so I guess we need to spend a bit more time on that. And I would suggest that we will discuss this with leadership and come back with one or two or three proposals, whatever makes sense to you in the next call and then see whether we can work out the problems that have been highlighted in this discussion. Is that okay for everybody? Anybody not okay?

Okay, so we will take a closer look also with the Rec 38, as Ariel mentioned, and also with the problems of EBERO or not EBERO and then come up with solutions for you next week. Okay, with that, have we finished phase 1, Saewon, or is there another comment regarding Phase 1?

SAEWON LEE:

Phase 1 is done.

MICHAEL BAULAND:

Okay, and with 15 minutes, a bit of time still left. Okay, let's switch to the slides before we start with the Phase 2 comments. We thought that there were quite a lot of issues with what this phase two actually means and what the consequences are. And for that, we thought that it may be helpful to have some examples and some information of what the whole Phase 2, the second level sets are about.

I hope that will make the answering or commenting or understanding the recommendations easier. So for that, we provided an example where we have an ASCII TLD called .atld and an Idtld called Idtld. Of course, Idtld is not Latin Diacritic, it's all ASCII, but just think of it as a Diacritic version of atld.

Potentially, there could be more Diacritic versions, but for simplicity and understanding the concept, it suffices to have just one Diacritic TLD. If we then have one second level registration called example.atld, then there is the similar, the same second level label example.Idtld. And those two domains, example.atld and example.Idtld are not variants of each other because atld and Idtld are not variants. But still, we decided we want to require the same entity principle for those two TLDs, example.atld and example.Idtld, because they are too similar to not be assigned to the same entity.

That's one point. Then on the left side where we have the ASCII TLD, atld, the domain example.atld can have multiple variants. These variants are calculated via the LGR for atld. So, it could be the case that

the LGR for atld generates the domains exampleV1, exampleV2, and exampleV3.atld as variants of the existing example.atld.

If that's the case, then we have that all those four TLDs, example.atld and all variants of example.atld must belong to the same entity. This is nothing we decided, but that's the consequence of the IDN-EPDP, because variants have to belong to the same entity.

Now, the same could happen on the right side where we have the Latin Script TLD, ldtld. That TLD can have an LGR which might be different to the LGR of the atld. It just has to be harmonized, but it may generate a different but consistent set of variants. So, example.ldtld could generate the variant exampleV1, exampleV3, and exampleV4.ldtld. Then again, all those three examples, those three variants together with the main domain name have to belong to the same entity, and that's again because of the IDN-EPDP rules. The variants have to belong to the same entity.

Out of this, it follows that we have a set of domains that all need to belong to the same entity. The main label example.atld and example.ldtld need to belong to the same entity, and the variant of example.atld also must belong to the same entity. So, all eight domains which we see here have to belong to the same entity, but none of those domains are variants across the TLD level.

That's a big difference to the IDN-EPDP case, and that's why we needed to come up with a new expression, a new definition to combine all of these domains into a set, and that's what we call the ASCII/LD domain set. Next slide, please.

This summarizes the situation again for the LD-ASCII domain set. Variants can only exist within one TLD. Between TLDs, there are no variant relationships at all. This will result in crossing the TLD border, and the TLDs are not variants. So, for that reason, `example.atld` and `example.ldtlds` are not variants of each other.

On the other side, on the EPDP IDNs, it's different. The TLDs are variants, and thus, there is a variant relationship across the TLDs, and this can and does cross the TLD border. So, in that sense, `example.tld` and the `example.tldv1`, which is a variant TLD, those domains are variants of each other, and that's not the case in our situation. But still, the ASCII and LD domains still require the same entity, even though not variants of each other.

So, for example, `example.atld` and `example.ldtld`, they have to be variants of each other, but also all other combinations of those domains. So, `examplev1.atld` and `examplev3.ldtld`, those are not variants of each other, but they still have to adhere to the same entity principle.

On the IDN-EPDP, this is much simpler because all of those domains, `example.tld`, `example.tldv1`, and `examplev1.tld`, and `examplev3.tldv1`, all of these are variants of each other. So, we just deal with a single variant set of domains which crosses TLDs, and that's not the case for us.

We have same entity requirements across TLDs without having the benefits, so to say, of a variant relationship. That's a lot, I guess. Any questions regarding this setup or comments? Leaving a bit more time, this is a-- Ariel, please.

ARIEL LIANG:

Thank you, sir, for dominating the hands. I think I just want to understand, again, from my personal perspective, how do you draw the line for the LD/ASCII domain set? So, for the variant, at the second level, we have the IDN tables, so it's easy to figure out variant relationship at the second level, but then for the second level, for the LD-ASCII domain set, how do you decide what needs to comply with the same entity principle, which do not? Because there's-- Well, I don't know how helpful IDN table would be in this context, so I just want to understand how this works.

MICHAEL BAULAND:

Thanks. Before I go to Amadeu, please, I'll respond to Ariel. Could you switch back, please, to the previous slide?

This was actually a long or an extensive discussion to decide what domains require the same entity on the second level, and our decision was that only the exact same label will require the same entity by our principle, so only example.atld and example.ltdld. Only this is, we, as the LD-PDP, require to be the same entity. The variants are a consequence of the IDN-EPDP, which is included in the same entity principle, but it's not what we actively decided.

So, to your question, Ariel, the decision what is, what does require same entity and what not is simply if it's the same label, then it has to be the same entity. Otherwise, we just follow the existing LDR rules with variants, but we do not introduce any same entity requirement apart from those. Does that help?

ARIEL LIANG: Yes, it definitely helps. I think I trust this will be including the rationale to clarify this, so from implementation perspective, there will be no confusion. Thank you.

MICHAEL BAULAND: Okay, thanks. Amadeu, please.

AMADEU ABRIL: I'm a little bit lost, and sorry, it's not your fault, but it's difficult for me to follow all this without seeing and remembering, but I understand what you say, and I understand what I'm doing. In most part, I completely agree, but there is a part, I mean, first, we shouldn't be too much for the work. We are doing similar things in things that are not variants.

Well, we have decided that the very starting point of all this is we treat these as still variants. They are not variants technically, but at the end, variant is a technical concept and a choice, a decision for each code point, but basically not in natural law, which doesn't exist either way, but the choice of a certain panel, and that's good. We have these rules. These are clear. We can apply them.

Now, indeed, atld and ldtld, they are not variants, but we decided for this purpose, we treat them as if they were. They are zero variants. No problem. It's the best solution for the problem we want to solve. There are things that are not variants, but still are confusingly similar.

Where I am lost is that we apply here the logic, and let me say this. Let's say, we are saying in phase A of our system that Quebec and Québec with an accent, or Sao Paolo and São Paolo with a tilde on the first A, are confusingly similar and should not be separated, and then we say, well, at the second level, this confusion does not exist.

So, we can have Sao Paolo .Sao Paolo with or without tilde, and Sao Paolo with tilde, and Sao Paolo or Sao Paolo without tilde by different registrants. I think this is inconsistent. I think this is absurd, and I think that this is not necessary, a necessary corollary of IDN-PDP. IDN-PDP was dealing about IDNs, not about confusingly similar situations where there are no variants.

So, I don't want to hijack the discussion here. I will send an email over the weekend regarding this, but I think that the end result of all this may be absurd, and that will create more confusion than we are trying to solve.

MICHAEL BAULAND:

Yeah, understood. But that's a topic we already discussed quite a while ago, whether we also want to require Diacritic versions at the second level to have the same entity requirements, and while there are arguments to have that requirement, the majority of the group said, we don't want to have that requirement.

That being said, it does not mean registries themselves can't decide to do that. As Claude just mentioned, Quebec would want to do that, but that's because they will have their LGR on the second level in such a way that all diacritics at the second level are variants of each other, and they

are free to do that, and if they do that, then this will be okay. But we as the PDP decided with the majority, we don't want to force that onto registries.

AMADEU ABRIL:

I know, I was in that session, and I've been refraining from commenting on that for weeks, because, well, that's what we decided. Now, this on the table, I just have to say that I totally disagree with that, and I think that the whole result should be worse than not having IDN sets in terms of user confusion. That's it. And I repeat, I will send that to the list. If somebody wants to reconsider, that's it. I know that's decided, so probably it will go in my comments when there are Public Comments as well.

MICHAEL BAULAND:

Okay, thanks. With that, I think we are already at the top of the hour, so we have to stop the discussion here, but definitely interesting discussions, and we will carry on with this example and the possible questions in the next meeting that also gives you some time to look at the example in more detail, get familiar with it, and maybe generate more questions in your head, which you can then voice out to us in the group. So thanks all for taking part in the discussion, and looking forward to seeing you next week. Devan, you may stop the recording now.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]