Minutes of the GNSO Council Meeting 10 September 2026

GNSO Council meeting on Thursday, 10 September 2026 at 05:00 UTC: https://tinyurl.com/3hv65vsy
(Wednesday) 22:00 Los Angeles; (Thursday) 01:00 Washington DC; 06:00 London; 07:00 Paris; 08:00 Moscow; 15:00 Melbourne 08:00 Moscow; 15:00 Melbourne

List of attendees:
Nominating Committee Appointee (NCA): – Non-Voting – Anne Aikman Scalese
Contracted Parties House
Registrar Stakeholder Group: Hong-Fu Meng, Ashley Heineman, Volker Greimann
gTLD Registries Stakeholder Group: Nacho Amadoz, Samantha Demetriou, Jennifer Chung
Nominating Committee Appointee (NCA): Gaurav Vedi
Non-Contracted Parties House
Commercial Stakeholder Group (CSG): Lawrence Olawale-Roberts, Vivek Goyal, Osvaldo Novoa, Damon Ashcraft, Susan Payne, Susan Mohr
Non-Commercial Stakeholder Group (NCSG): Farzaneh Badii, Bruna Martins dos Santos (joined after vote), Julf Helsingius, Peter Akinremi, Benjamin Akinmoyeje, Tapani Tarvainen (apology, proxy to Julf Helsingius)
Nominating Committee Appointee (NCA): Christian Dawson
GNSO Council Liaisons/Observers:
Greg Shatan: ALAC Liaison (First meeting)
Sebastien Ducos: GNSO liaison to the GAC
Antonia Chu: ccNSO observer

Guests: Michael Bauland, Chair of the Latin Script Diacritics PDP

ICANN Staff:
Steve Chan – Vice President, Policy Development Support & GNSO Relations (apology)
Caitlin Tubergen - Senior Director, GNSO Policy Development Support
Saewon Lee - Policy Development Support Manager (GNSO)
Feodora Hamza - Policy Development Support Manager (GNSO)
John Emery - Policy Development Support Senior Specialist (GNSO)
Andrew Chen - Policy Development Support Senior Specialist (GNSO)
Terri Agnew - Policy Operations Senior Specialist (GNSO)
Julie Bisland - Policy Operations Analyst (GNSO) (apology)
Devan Reed - Policy Operations Senior Coordinator (GNSO/Programs and Operations) (apology)

Zoom Recording
Transcript

Item 1: Administrative Matters
1.1 - Roll Call
1.2 - Updates to Statements of Interest
1.3 - Review / Amend Agenda
1.4 - Note the status of minutes for the previous Council meetings per the GNSO Operating Procedures:
Minutes of the GNSO Council Meeting on 09 July 2026 were posted on 23 July 2026
Minutes of the GNSO Council Meeting on 13 August 2026 were posted on 27 August 2026

Item 2: Opening Remarks / Review of Projects & Action List
2.1 - Review focus areas and provide updates on specific key themes / topics, to include review of Projects List and Action Item List.

Item 3: Consent Agenda
- Approval of 2026 - 2027 Customer Standing Committee Slate

Peter Akinremi, GNSO Vice-Chair, noted that this was sent to the Council for the CSC slate to review and approve.

Terri Agnew, ICANN org, moved to a vote from the consent agenda.

Vote Results

Terri Agnew, ICANN org, announced that with no abstentions and no objections, the motion passes.

Action Items:
- GNSO Secretariat to notify ICANN Org staff supporting the CSC no later than 24 September 2026 that the GNSO Council has approved the 2026 CSC slate of members and liaisons. [COMPLETED]

Item 4: Council Discussion - ICANN87 Joint GAC/GNSO Meeting Agenda

4.1 - Introduction of Topic (Sebastien Ducos, GNSO Liaison to the GAC)
4.2 - Council Discussion
4.3 - Next Steps

- Topic 1: DNS Abuse
- Topic 2: 15-Day Verification/Accuracy
- Topic 3: SSAD
- Topic 4: Priorities for 2027 (ADR) and Prioritization

Susan Payne, GNSO Chair, introduced the proposed agenda for the joint GAC-GNSO Council meeting at ICANN87. She noted four proposed topics listed above.

Sebastian Ducos, GNSO Liaison to the GAC, reported that GNSO and GAC topic leads met on 2 September to review the proposed topics. On DNS Abuse, he noted that the GAC expressed interest in participating in the chartering of the next PDP. He reiterated that chartering and management of a GNSO PDP are GNSO Council responsibilities, while relevant draft materials can be circulated more broadly so interested community groups are informed and can provide input through the appropriate channels. He noted that the GAC also wants to discuss moving verification earlier in the registration lifecycle. A focused discussion between Councilors and the GAC is expected before ICANN87, likely in late September or early October, so the GAC can clarify its request and contracted parties can explain the practical and policy implications. He added that the specific SSAD discussion in Bali may depend on work occurring immediately before ICANN87 and that the GAC also wants to understand how the GNSO establishes priorities while sharing its own priorities for 2027.

Farzaneh Badii, NCSG, supported making the bilateral a two-way conversation rather than only responding to GAC requests. She suggested that the GNSO ask the GAC how transparency, remedies, and data protection should be considered in connection with DNS Abuse, verification/accuracy, and law-enforcement-related disclosure issues. She also noted that the GAC can advise the GNSO on priorities, but does not determine the GNSO Council's priorities.

Sebastian Ducos, GNSO Liaison to the GAC, welcomed written questions from Councilors and asked that they be provided quickly so they can be shared with the GAC in advance. He reiterated that the priorities discussion is intended as an exchange and not an exercise in adopting the GAC's priorities, and noted that the Council has a responsibility to manage PDP workload, timing, and community resources.

Vivek Goyal, BC, asked what the GAC expected from the verification/accuracy discussion given that Council had not yet initiated work on that request. He suggested explaining that changes generally need to proceed through the applicable contractual or community policy process and cannot simply be directed by a request to the Board.

Sebastian Ducos, GNSO Liaison to the GAC, responded that the GAC is seeking earlier verification after registration but has not identified a specific GNSO process for achieving that objective. He said the focused pre-ICANN87 discussion should help clarify precisely what the GAC is seeking and what implementation would entail.

Peter Akinremi, GNSO Vice-Chair, asked whether the topic-lead discussions had addressed the need to avoid surprise questions during the bilateral and whether the GAC had shared its own priorities in advance.

Sebastien Ducos, GNSO Liaison to the GAC, responded that the GAC priorities most relevant to the GNSO are largely reflected in the proposed bilateral topics. He added that the meeting could also be an opportunity to explain the broader scope and complexity of the GNSO Council's work and why policy development requires time for community participation and deliberation.

Ashley Heineman, RrSG, emphasized the need for precise talking points on the verification/accuracy topic as early as possible. She recalled that the registrars received detailed questions shortly before the ICANN86 bilateral, which made it difficult to prepare substantive responses. She requested clearer expectations and timing so the next discussion can be constructive.

Sebastien Ducos, GNSO Liaison to the GAC, noted that the same request for greater specificity had been raised with the GAC topic leads. He committed to work with John Emery and GAC support staff to review prior GAC statements and communications and provide Council with the relevant points before the focused pre-ICANN87 discussion.

Susan Payne, GNSO Chair, closed the discussion by asking Councilors to place proposed questions or talking points on the Council mailing list so they are not lost and can be developed into a balanced exchange with the GAC rather than a one-way request for GNSO input.

Action Items:

- Councilors with potential questions for GAC should send them to Council list and Seb as soon as possible.
- Seb and Staff to coordinate the 15-Day Verification/Accuracy discussion prior to ICANN87
    - Staff and Seb to research the GAC communiqués and advice indicating their position on this topic. [COMPLETED]

Item 5: Council Discussion - Latin Script Diacritics Policy Development Process (LD PDP) Final Report

5.1 - Introduction of Topic (Michael Bauland, Chair of the Latin Script Diacritics PDP)
5.2 - Council Discussion
5.3 - Next Steps

Susan Payne, GNSO Chair, noted that the Latin Script Diacritics PDP was initiated in November 2024 and that its Final Report was delivered to Council on 31 August 2026, several months ahead of the anticipated schedule. She thanked the Working Group and invited Michael Bauland to provide a high-level overview, noting that Council is expected to consider the Final Report for a vote in October.

Michael Bauland, Chair of the Latin Script Diacritics PDP, went through the following slides highlighting its Final Report.

Michael Bauland, Chair of the Latin Script Diacritics PDP, thanked ICANN org staff for their work on this topic. He also thanked the Working Group for their time and dedication to the topic and achieving the Final Report.

Farzaneh Badii, NCSG, asked for clarification on how the conservatism principle was applied after Public Comment, including at the second level, and how that work related to the Human Rights Impact Assessment.

Michael Bauland, Latin Script Diacritics PDP Chair, responded that conservatism had informed the Working Group throughout the PDP, but the Working Group conducted a systematic review of the recommendations against that principle after Public Comment. He explained that the group sought the minimum requirements needed to enable the exception without introducing user confusion or technical instability, while also broadening some provisions where a more restrictive approach would exclude important linguistic cases.

Volker Greimann, RrSG, asked why the Working Group selected a ten-year cool-off period when a TLD leaves a set and whether differences from the IDN EPDP framework produced lessons that could inform future IDN policy work.

Michael Bauland, Latin Script Diacritics PDP Chair, explained that the ten-year period was based on a ccPDP4 precedent and provided a conservative period before a former set relationship would be unlikely to create continuing user confusion. He added that the Working Group stayed as close as possible to the IDN EPDP framework, but some adjustments were necessary because the ASCII and

Latin-diacritic TLDs are specifically not variants. From a technical perspective, the intended operational behavior is nevertheless designed to be very similar to IDN variant sets once delegated.

Susan Payne, GNSO Chair, thanked Michael, the Working Group, the Vice-Chair, and the Council liaisons for the work. She asked Councilors to review the Final Report, consult participants from their SGs/Cs, and raise any questions in preparation for an anticipated Council vote in October.

Action Items:

- Councilors to review the Latin Script Diacritics PDP Final Report for a vote at the GNSO Council meeting during ICANN87.

Item 6: Council Discussion - Prioritization Exercise scoring process review
6.1 - Introduction of Topic (Susan Payne, GNSO Chair)
6.2 - Council Discussion
6.3 - Next Steps

Susan Payne, GNSO Chair, went through the slides and recalled that Council has been discussing how to prioritize its workload for several months and agreed at ICANN86 to test a more structured prioritization exercise. She emphasized that the scoring is intended to support, not replace, Council discussion and decision-making. The pilot assessed five factors: importance, community demand, complexity, resource requirements, and likelihood of delivering a useful outcome. Aggregated results and summary level findings were shared in advance of this meeting. She highlighted that NCSG used zero scores for complexity, resources, and deliverability where it did not believe it had enough information, and invited discussion of how the different scoring approaches affected the results and what Council could learn from the pilot.

Feodora Hamza, ICANN org, went through the slides. She explained that a high score was intended to indicate a favorable assessment for each criterion, including manageable complexity and resource needs and a strong likelihood of timely delivery. She noted that some submissions used scores outside the intended 1-to-5 scale or may have interpreted individual criteria differently. Staff therefore presented both weighted and unweighted views and cautioned that the patterns and accompanying comments were more important than the numbers alone. She reported that the unweighted results showed an upper tier consisting of DNS Abuse and the Transfer Dispute Resolution Policy (TDRP). DNS Abuse scored particularly strongly on importance and community demand, while TDRP showed a more balanced combination of priority and readiness. RPMs Phase 2, Expiration Policies, and new gTLD work showed greater divergence or questions about scope, timing, and resource readiness. In the weighted view, TDRP moved above DNS Abuse, while the broader signals remained similar. She noted that priority does not necessarily mean launching a PDP immediately. Comments on DNS Abuse differed on whether remaining gaps should be prioritized now or after current work is completed. For Expiration Policies, some groups favored first testing whether a policy problem exists or whether implementation or operational improvements could address concerns. For RPMs Phase 2, the feedback focused on preparation, scope, and resources rather than whether the topic is important.

Susan Payne, GNSO Chair, proposed moving from numerical scoring toward three possible next-step categories: items ready to initiate or advance in the near term; items requiring preparation, scoping, or resource planning; and items to monitor and revisit in a future planning cycle. She noted that leadership and staff would use the discussion to develop a more concrete proposal for continued discussion in October and during the Council working sessions at ICANN87.

Damon Ashcraft, IPC, supported the pilot and noted that the IPC largely aligned with the weighted results. He identified DNS Abuse and transfer-related work as the IPC's strongest near-term priorities, while noting that the IPC had also ranked Expiration Policies highly.

Vivek Goyal, BC, stated that the exercise provides a transparent way to explain how Council evaluates priorities. He reiterated the BC's strong support for DNS Abuse and explained that the BC also ranked RPMs Phase 2 highly because the UDRP has not been reviewed since its introduction and has been deferred repeatedly. He noted that each group should score from its own perspective and that aggregation can help reveal the broader community view.

Farzaneh Badii, NCSG, raised concerns that NCSG did not have sufficient information to score complexity, financial/resource needs, and deliverability, and therefore entered zeros after being told scores were required. She also noted that NCSG had wanted Council to consider additional topics concerning registrant remedies and transparency but the exercise did not provide a way to add those topics. She questioned whether constituency-level submissions within the CSG could give that house disproportionate weight.

Susan Payne, GNSO Chair, responded that the scoring is only one stage and one data point in the overall prioritization process, with the Council discussion intended to consider issues that the numbers alone do not capture. She explained that staff produced a weighted view specifically to account for differences in how groups, including the three CSG constituencies, submitted their scores.

Bruna Martins dos Santos, NCSG, noted that the exercise did not provide much space to explain the substance behind scores or add other topics. She also raised timing concerns because the current Council cohort and leadership are approaching a transition. She suggested that the incoming Council could be given the tool and methodology rather than being asked simply to adopt the current cohort's prioritization results.

Ashley Heineman, RrSG, said the registrars found the exercise useful for engaging members who do not follow Council work closely, but the scoring methodology was not intuitive and resource readiness was not sufficiently defined. She suggested that staff provide clearer guidance on expected resource needs for each topic and cautioned against treating the results as determinative.

Jennifer Chung, RySG, reported that the registries used several membership calls to work through the exercise and found it useful for understanding the views of members who do not closely follow Council work. She agreed that the scoring, particularly the resource criteria, required explanation and that the Projects List was useful background. She also reminded Council that only three DNS Abuse gaps were prioritized in the Final Issue Report and that additional gaps remain for future consideration.

Damon Ashcraft, IPC, explained that the IPC ranked UDRP review lower because, from the IPC perspective, the current system works well for complainants and registrants and could be complicated to revise. He cautioned against changing a process that is functioning effectively.

Lawrence Olawale-Roberts, BC, highlighted the value of the exercise in engaging stakeholder group and constituency members directly in Council planning. He suggested adding a mechanism that would allow Councilors or groups to propose additional topics before the scoring stage so that important issues not included in the initial list can also be considered.

Volker Greimann, RrSG, cautioned that the process could become a popularity contest and that some topics were too broad to score meaningfully. He cited DNS Abuse as an example of an umbrella topic that could encompass many different kinds of work and suggested that future exercises define more concrete subject matter before prioritization.

Benjamin Akinmoyeje, NCSG, asked why some NCSG feedback appeared not to have been reflected, particularly given that the methodology was still being tested and NCSG's submission followed discussion within the stakeholder group.

Susan Payne, GNSO Chair, reiterated that the spreadsheet captures the submissions and that scoring is only part of the process. She said she would follow up separately with Farzaneh Badii to better understand the concern about weighting. Leadership and staff will reflect on the feedback and bring proposed next steps back for continued discussion, including at ICANN87.

Action Items:

- Council leadership and staff to take this discussion on prioritization and propose next steps for further Council consideration in October during the ICANN87 working sessions.

Item 7: Any other business
7.1 - Review of Reviews - Seek views on composition

Susan Payne, GNSO Chair, noted that the Review of Reviews Cross Community Group had requested input on the number of representatives from each community, including whether the GNSO should have two or three representatives. She asked Councilors to share their views on the mailing list that day so Sophie Hey and Osvaldo Novoa could provide GNSO feedback by the following day.

Anne Aikman Scalese, NCA Non-Voting, noted that the Review of Reviews process had discussed the possibility that the GNSO representatives could be selected through the Standing Selection Committee process.

Susan Payne, GNSO Chair, responded that the GNSO would determine its own selection process and that use of the Standing Selection Committee would be a reasonable possibility.

Action Items:

- Councilors to share views on the appropriate number of GNSO representatives to the Review of Reviews Cross Community Group on the Council mailing list so the GNSO representatives can provide feedback by 11 September 2026. [COMPLETED]

7.2 - Review of GNSO Liaison to the GAC Role

Susan Payne, GNSO Chair, recalled the August discussion of the GNSO Liaison to the GAC role. Sebastien Ducos' current term ends at ICANN87; he is eligible for a second term and has indicated his willingness to continue. She noted that the GAC had provided positive feedback on the role and on working with Sebastien if he is reappointed, and that Council had not received concerns about reappointment.

Susan Payne, GNSO Chair, stated that the current intent is to reappoint Sebastien Ducos at ICANN87 unless Councilors raise strong contrary views in the near term. She thanked him for his work and asked that any concerns be raised on the mailing list.

Action Items: None

7.3 - Accuracy Small Team Educational Materials Review - Slides

Susan Payne, GNSO Chair, flagged the draft educational materials developed following the Accuracy Small Team recommendation. She recalled that the Registrar Stakeholder Group volunteered to develop the materials and that Hong-Fu Meng shared a draft on the Council mailing list on 18 August. Because there was insufficient time for discussion, she asked Councilors to review the materials and provide feedback for consideration at a future meeting.

<u>Action Items:</u>

- Staff to send an email to the Council list with background information on the draft materials [COMPLETED]
- Councilors to review the material sent by Registrars for discussion at a future GNSO Council meeting.

Meeting adjourned at: 7:02 UTC.