

Minutes of the GNSO Council Meeting 11 March 2026

GNSO Council meeting on Wednesday, 11 March 2026 at 13:15 local time (07:45 UTC):
<https://tinyurl.com/rmxrkwwz> 12:45 Los Angeles; 03:45 Washington DC; 07:45 London; 08:45 Paris;
10:45 Moscow; 18:45 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 (in case of connectivity issues, proxy to Jennifer Chung), 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 (in case of connectivity issues, proxy to Susan Payne), Susan Payne, Susan Mohr (in case of connectivity issues, to Osvaldo Novoa)

Non-Commercial Stakeholder Group (NCSG): Farzaneh Badii (in case of connectivity issues, proxy to proxy Tapani Tarvainen) , Bruna Martins dos Santos (in case of connectivity issues, proxy to Benjamin Akinmoyeje) , Julf Helsingius (in case of connectivity issues Temporary Alternate to Pedro de Perdigão Lana), Peter Akinremi (in case of connectivity issues, Temporary Alternate to Rafik Dammak), Tapani Tarvainen, Benjamin Akinmoyeje

Nominating Committee Appointee (NCA): Christian Dawson

GNSO Council Liaisons/Observers:

Justine Chew: ALAC Liaison

Sebastien Ducos: GNSO liaison to the GAC

Antonia Chu: ccNSO observer

ICANN Staff:

Steve Chan – Vice President, Policy Development Support & GNSO Relations

Julie Hedlund - Policy Development Support Director (GNSO) (apology)

Caitlin Tubergen - Director, Policy Development Support (GNSO)

Saewon Lee - Policy Development Support Manager (GNSO)

Feodora Hamza - Policy Development Support Manager (GNSO) (apology)

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 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 15 January 2026 were posted on 31 January 2026.

[Minutes](#) of the GNSO Council Meeting on 12 February 2026 were posted on 03 March 2026.

Susan Payne, GNSO Chair, welcomed Councilors and queried for any updated SOIs.

Tapani Tarvainen, NCSG, updated his SOI of a title change from acting director to Vice President.

Justine Chew, ALAC Liaison, noted her selection by ALAC for Board Seat 15.

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](#).

Jennifer Chung, GNSO Vice-Chair, updated Council that the first four working sessions and noted the post ICANN 85 WG meeting will begin on Monday, 23, February.

Christian Dawson, NCA NCPH, updated on the LD PDP about the Public Comment from ICANN org, but updated Council that a path forward will be sought on this issue.

Item 3: Consent Agenda

- Confirm DNS Abuse Mitigation PDP 1 Working Group Chair: Paul McGrady

Peter Akinremi, GNSO Vice-Chair, introduced Paul McGrady as chair for DNSAM PDP 1 and moved to a vote.

All Councilors present voted in favor of the motion.

[Vote Results](#)

Bruna Martins dos Santos, NCSG, read the following [statement](#) for the record.

Susan Payne, GNSO Chair, noted the statement and some lessons learned for the process.

Item 4: COUNCIL UPDATE - Celebrating GNSO Accomplishments since ICANN84

4.1 - Introduction of Topic (Susan Payne, GNSO Chair)

4.2 - Council Discussion

4.3 - Next Steps

Susan Payne, GNSO Chair, highlighted the accomplishments of the GNSO Council since ICANN 84 as outlined on [slide 2](#).

Item 5: Council Discussion - Update on Proposed Process to Un-Adopt Approved GNSO Policy Recommendations

5.1 - Introduction of Topic (Jennifer Chung, GNSO Council Vice-Chair)

Two documents regarding the proposed GNSO Process for the ICANN Board to Reverse Adoption of GNSO Policy Recs:

(i) the [draft updated PDP manual \[docs.google.com\]](#)

(ii) the [draft updated GGP manual \[docs.google.com\]](#)

5.2 - Council Discussion

5.3 - Next Steps

Jennifer Chung, GNSO Vice-Chair, gave an overview and background on the topic of the general agreement on an approach for the ICANN Board to reverse its adoption of a GNSO recommendation. She noted the [public comment](#) that closed recently and this was also discussed during the Council-Board bilateral. She referenced [slide 4](#) on the themes from the Public Comment and highlighted each of the themes systematically. She then went through the redlines of the [draft updated PDP manual](#).

Vivek Goyal, BC, queried about the difference between should and must on the topic of ICANN Board Reversal of Adoption.

Susan Payne, GNSO Chair, noted that “may” or “should” do not have the same obligation. She is unsure if that was what the Public Comment feedback was. Unsure if the language can force the Board to follow the process.

Caitlin Tubergen, ICANN org, the comment from the RrSG was to change the wording from may to should. While this process cannot bind the Board to act, switching from may to should notes that it is a stronger language than it was, but still remains non-binding.

Damon Ashcraft, IPC, IPC submitted a public comment that was strongly against these changes. He noted appreciation for the redlines and queried what the next steps would be.

Caitlin Tubergen, ICANN org, next steps are to have an initial discussion likely during the next Council meeting based on the public comment. There could be initial feedback if for the suggested staff edits and if they were highly objectionable and why that would be helpful for moving forward.

Anne Aikman Scalese, NCA Non-Voting, raised a question about the phase of implementation where this action could be taken. Looking at the line “where that recommendation has not yet concluded its implementation...” at the end of the 3rd paragraph “this action should not be available in instances where the GNSO policy recommendation has already been implemented and is in force.” She is not sure if those phases are completely determinable and might give some more thought to.

Jennifer Chung, GNSO Vice-Chair, asked for clarification on who is unable to determine where the policy recommendation cycle is at, i.e. Council? Board? Staff? Or is it that the text is not clear in the red line and what the recommended course of action for the Board would be?

Anne Aikman Scalese, NCA Non-Voting, answered it is the former. When asked about policy recommendations and its implementation, are the redlines asking about a set of policy recommendations or one particular policy recommendation. Implementation can be long and drawn out and it is something that jumped out that may require a bit more thought. One could be in the middle of implementation and have the Board reverse the work that has been done. There is something about that phrase that is unclear.

Jennifer Chung, GNSO Vice-Chair, thanked Anne and added that this needs to be articulated clearly for Councilors to digest and bring back to their groups prior to further reactions.

Peter Akinremi, GNSO Vice-Chair, noted that looking at some of the language this is guidance and non-binding for what the process should be for the reversal of adoptions for a recommendation. When it should read limited and extraordinary circumstances it should be limited. The language is subject to Board interpretation.

Jennifer Chung, GNSO Vice-Chair, looks forward to the suggested language. There was a procedural gap, it is important to articulate this process does not mean we are encouraging this use, but Council is discouraging this, but trying to account for the procedural gap.

Sam Demetriou, RySG, responded to Anne's question about what phase this process would kick in. From the last sentence in the 3rd paragraph "should not be available in instances where the GNSO policy recommendation has already been implemented and is in force. That is referring to when the recommendation becomes a consensus policy. There is generally a way to determine that and it is documented as consensus policy. In the event that a consensus policy needs to be change, the Board does not un adopt the previous policy recommendation, there would need to be a new PDP to revise the policy. Typically it is pretty clear when a policy has not been implemented because there is no consensus policy. To Anne's point the gap between finalized policy recommendation and fully implemented scorecards are helpful and Council will need to coordinate with ICANN staff on to see progress of implementation.

Ashley Heineman, RrSG, emphasized a finer point on that from a registrar perspective. It is not from the implementation process, it is when things are published and are held accountable to it per contract requirements that means systems have been adjusted and CPs have already gone to considerable expense. So, it can be very difficult to pull back at that point and that is the RrSG interpretation of that.

Anne Aikman Scalese, NCA Non-Voting, highlighted the language is that it has not concluded its implementation. For example SubPro reversal as long as it took in the IRT. It is a tremendous amount of work done and if the Board then comes back later and reverses policy recommendation, she finds that phrase troubling.

Jennifer Chung, GNSO Vice-Chair, all trying to avoid the gap between the policy recommendation, implementation, and final implementation.

Susan Payne, GNSO Chair, responded that SubPro for drafting an applicant guidebook effort was more of an exception than the norm for a policy process. The context is the second paragraph should happen in a dialogue between Board and Council, it would be the "only" or "best" option. It would not be a unilateral decision and not think that is a reasonable path. The safeguard envisaged by Anne would be safeguarded by paragraph 2.

Justine Chew, ALAC Liaison, there is no mention or understanding of the impact of the Board taking such action. She queried if there should be some language in paragraph two. Because it talks about intention, detail, rationale, and why a reversal, which is all fine. But, it does not suggest what we should look at in terms of impact on this decision.

Jennifer Chung, GNSO Vice-Chair, closed the discussion and noted all Councilors had an action item to discuss the redlines with their respective groups for the April Council meeting.

Action Item: All Councilors to discuss the redlines with their respective groups to have a discussion during the April Council meeting.

Item 6: Council Update - Next Steps for SSAD Recommendations (10 minutes)

6.1 - Introduction of Topic (Susan Payne, GNSO Chair)

6.2 - Council Discussion

6.3 - Next Steps

Susan Payne, GNSO Chair, gave an update as a heads up for the session running tomorrow on how the Council has gotten to this point. Council aligned on the RDRS SC that the preferred path for dealing with the set of 18 recommendations for the board to not adopt the recommendations as a package and that triggers a process in Annex A of the Bylaws to develop supplemental recommendations that would take into account the lessons learned from RDRS Pilot and SC on reflecting the existing recommendation language and what types of amendments might be appropriate. Board members during the February meeting from the relevant caucus noted that this seemed practical and the Board would work to non-adopt during Mumbai. The Board confirmed that this morning for the Board meeting tomorrow. It means that the recommendations will not be thrown away, they were the result of work and compromise from the community. The Council thinks the path is the right one to allow modifications for the spirit of the original recommendations, but addressing concerns on implementability, cost, etc. In preparation for the resolution, there will be a discussion item on this tomorrow morning at 9am to talk more about the process.

Volker Greimann, RrSG, there are no objections to the proposed process in this case. But if we go back on the original recommendations, ignoring the request that the recommendations be seen as a package may endanger future compromise recommendations. This can be a precedent setting.

Susan Payne, GNSO Chair, moved on noting that this was an opportunity to tee up the session for the following day.

Item 7: Recap of Outcomes from the GNSO Strategic Planning Session (20 minutes)

7.1 - Introduction of Topic (Susan Payne, GNSO Chair)

7.2 - Council Discussion

7.3 - Next Steps

Susan Payne, GNSO Chair, introduced the topic of the SPS and thanked Councilors for active participation in the process with great willingness. Staff will be circulating a detailed write up of the SPS and will have an opportunity to review that and ensure it reflects the agreements from the meeting.

Caitlin Tubergen, ICANN org, went through the [slides](#). She then went through the recap of what was heard as agreement on the Board Readiness recommendations. Everyone will have an opportunity to adjust these if it does not reflect what happened at SPS.

Susan Payne, GNSO Chair, noted the ICANN org level for Chair training before the Seville meeting and to check emails about that. Having the right skills for chairing is essential and it has been noted by the community and acted upon by org.

Steve Chan, ICANN org, noted that Councilors should read the SPS report carefully that once this is confirmed it triggers the next steps for beginning to act on action items.

Jennifer Chung, GNSO Vice-Chair, added that during the Board bilateral. Greg expressed interest for the next steps on Board readiness. Once that is established from the SPS that should be communicated to the Board.

Caitlin Tubergen, ICANN org, replied that the SPS report that will show next steps and action items along with a full recap of the recommendations discussed and Council reactions to that will be sent to the Board for its information.

Action Items:

- Staff to circulate a detailed write-up of the SPS, which includes key outcomes and action items.
- Councilors to review this document and confirm it aligns with what was discussed

Item 8: Proposed GNSO Prioritization Methodology

8.1 - Introduction of Topic (Jennifer Chung, GNSO Council Vice-Chair)

8.2 - Council Discussion

8.3 - Next Steps

Jennifer Chung, GNSO Vice-Chair, noted that some strawperson documents have been circulated for discussion to enhance prioritization. This draft of potential models is only an [outline](#) to discuss to come to some kind of methodology. At the SPS Council talked about tools like the ADR, but it itself is not a prioritization mechanism. There have been a number of discussions about enhancing Council's ability to prioritize upcoming work where there is adequate community and staff resources available to initiate new work. It is also important to not lose sight of the work that Council has already committed to before identifying next projects. Now Council is looking to have or create a prioritization tool and the outline is a first draft circulated to Council list. The caveat is that these are not the only options, this is intended to guide the selection process so please have some initial reactions and then hopefully determine what options best meets the needs and requirements for prioritization that Council ends up with.

Tapani Tarvainen, NCSG, discussed how all the systems are problematic. In history all the systems are bad and some are worse than others, but this can lead to both gaming the systems and surprise outcomes. He is skeptical of any system, but it should be easy to see what has happened, even if it is advisory it should not be seen as neutral. He has some ideas that he would like to write up later but one can never have a single round of voting, because that will always break.

Jennifer Chung, GNSO Vice-Chair, noted that Tapani told Council during the SPS that he is a mathematician and she emphasized on how much Council will rely on his expertise. She thanked him for reminding that a single round of voting is probably the easiest to "game." She noted that the process should be flexible and easily modified to mitigate bad elements to have experts guide Council a bit more on this. Councilors were invited to pick this apart to come up with some additional language. It is not that Council cannot work without a prioritization mechanism, but having something to complement the ADR will make Council work more efficient and effective.

Sam Demetriou, RySG, offered a thought based on what Tapani laid out, she understands those points. Hopefully this will help mitigate some concerns. Whatever methodology is tested out it is crucial to

remember that it should only be a starting point for discussion. Assigning priority levels would then be brought back for a conversation amongst all Councilors that would then be a consensus building process to see what truly rises to the top. Then it would help amongst everyone's rankings what may rise to the top. It is step 1 in a process for determining what the priorities are. But, it is important to undertake some kind of exercise as there have been some outstanding policy items for potential work that could merit some attention.

Steve Chan, ICANN org, pointed out that there is a section under each topic on how it may work. There is still a variability in that. As Tapani mentioned that perhaps once an option is determined and you collect input from SG/C's it could then be a gamed system. There could be variability in how you deploy each of these options. For instance, if you are worried about impartial data coming back you could try to rely on a more impartial perspective, and staff can potentially be from staff. Another approach (not the right approach only a potential) would be potentially staff and leadership could take a first cut to start a conversation or somewhere in between. There are different ways to control for some of the concerns raised by Tapani.

Bruna Martins dos Santos, NCSG, replied to Sam that ranking options may be a conversation starter, but it could also be the killer of conversation. She noted that it is hard to go against what is on paper. Whenever the Council is trying to change the ranking of something that was appointed by 4 SGs as relevant, but recent developments may need to adapt. So it seems like this is sedimenting conversation and could kill debate, so this is a word of caution. Either way, whatever option there should be two phases of Council debates before and after the final results because it feels like this is killing the consensus process.

Jennifer Chung, GNSO Vice-Chair, reiterated that this should help Council and should not hinder it, it should be a starting point and if it hinders work it should not be something that Council should consider.

Vivek Goyal, BC, agreed with Sam that it should be a starting point. He noted that even at a constituency level it could be so helpful. If you go through this process at the group level it will help think through things more deeply. The first time will be a lot of work, but new items will not be so difficult. It is a great thing and is a good start.

Tapani Tarvainen, NCSG, talked about some possible ways forward to use a spreadsheet to keep changing their rankings iteratively as they see what other colleagues are doing. Sometimes a surprising effect can come from testing this. After you have seen what others have done, would be useful as a discussion tool

Jennifer Chung, GNSO Vice-Chair, thanked Tapani for his suggestions for testing and piloting the program.

Lawrence Olawale-Roberts, BC, queried about issues that do not follow a natural course around prioritization such as a letter from the Board or an issue that needs some kind of urgent action or attention. Is this something that is done periodically before any Council meeting?

Jennifer Chung, GNSO Vice-Chair, there are big pieces of work that Council had to do that did not come in from the ADR, there will often be a very urgent/important topic outside of this mechanism. This is not used very regularly, perhaps at the SPS and another time in the year. Other times things will be airdropped and will react quite swiftly on that.

Steve Chan, ICANN org, added that this can be a useful tool to leverage but would not be prescriptive. If Council has to react immediately there can be resourcing constraints and shifting priorities can impact that. It is a tool to use but is not determinative.

Benjamin Akinmoyeje, NCSG, asked if consensus would come after voting or would it be negotiations while voting?

Jennifer Chung, GNSO Vice-Chair, in this discussion it seems like this is a tool for aiding and would not be voting per se. It would start a discussion. If it deters or contrary to efficiency it would not be used

Sam Demetriou, RySG, gave a +1 if she could describe her ideal vision. A council meeting walking through all topics choosing between. Each would go to a group, would go to a model with value and criteria it would be shared and for everyone to review. In one sheet to be adjusted as needed. Then it becomes a starting point for discussion at SPS to have a good amount of time to go through and explain why ranking was done the way it did, why did A get high and B did not. Promoting discussion rather than delaying or dismissing discussion. From there it would be some process to then agree on three topics of prioritization and go from there.

Jennifer Chung, GNSO Vice-Chair, board does not have one, past Councils have tried, it is difficult.

Steve Chan, ICANN org, recommended option 1 for a good amount of data rather than a binary black and white like ranked choice voting. That option 1 would be a reasonable way to provide the Council with a decision.

Jennifer Chung, GNSO Vice-Chair, noted from the chat that it could be a hybrid model and not any model listed here.

Action Items:

- Tapani proposed to write up a methodology for prioritization
- Determine which options best meet the Council's needs based on this first [draft text](#), if any.

Item 9: Follow-up on Accuracy Small Team Recommendation

9.1 - Introduction of Topic (Susan Payne, GNSO Chair)

9.2 - Council Discussion

9.3 - Next Steps

Susan Payne, GNSO Chair, gave background on the topic. At the request of the Registrar Stakeholder Group, ICANN org produced a [one-page document](#) to highlight the importance of maintaining accurate registration data for registrants that registrars, registrants, and the community can reference. That was circulated to Council mailing list to gather feedback if this is a useful starting point for implementation of recommendation 3 from the Small Team.

Justine Chew, ALAC Liaison, noted that the only thing not covered was how data was processed.

Damon Ashcraft, IPC, this is helpful based on the recommendations from the Small Team. This does not and cannot prevent bad actors from using garbage data and then committing DNS Abuse. This is an important issue for the IPC and for the community that we continue to work on accuracy.

Caitlin Tubergen, ICANN org, noted a quick clarification that this document was not produced in response to the Small Team. It was independently requested by RrSG, but it does not meet this requirement. What is missing, it can be something not further pursued. Or if IPC would like to build upon it then that could be an option. This is an example of what exists so the group is not starting from scratch. This is solely exemplary to provide additional information.

Jennifer Chung, GNSO Vice-Chair, does this actually respond to what the recommendation is and then Council is supposed to produce educational materials for recommendation 3 from the Small Team on accuracy. This document is an example to produce materials and answer recommendation 3 of the Small Team

Christian Dawson, NCA NCPH, pointed out a domain name is not a digital home it is an identifier that points to a digital home. This is a bit of misinformation in the example.

Sam Demetriou, RySG, answered the question: do we think this is a good starting point? The answer is no. The document is useful but not meeting the recommendation from what the small team is looking for. This is answering a lot of questions about accuracy in general. The Small Team wanted something tailored toward registrants as they fill out the registration data profile and individual fields. It is not fit for purpose.

Farzaneh Badii, NCSG, agreed with Sam on the recommendation from NCSG for a guide to tell them why the data should be accurate while registering a domain name. There can be messaging to tell them why it is important to keep it updated. It is for the registrant and this document is not suitable for that.

Vivek Goyal, BC, are we as a council expected to create this information and check it, what is the purpose of this discussion. If it is not our role, whose job is it to do this?

Susan Payne, GNSO Chair, the recommendation from a Council Small Team is to Council. Now if this is not taking that forward in that way, then Council will look to see how to look that forward. Council may not be that home, but there needs to be a path to take that forward.

Vivek Goyal, BC, asked staff for the next step on implementing this recommendation.

Caitlin Tubergen, ICANN org, that is a council decision. From the Small Team that could then involve interested stakeholders then would approve any documentation provided. Interested stakeholders could take a first cut to enhance what already exists.

Vivek Goyal, BC, replied that the recommendations seem very easy. There are actually no changes in systems at the registrar paper. Council cannot take this challenge on.

Justine Chew, ALAC Liaison, she was hoping to not duplicate the work. If this does not serve the purpose, then it would be an alternative meeting. Maybe the RrSG might want to take a first cut for this recommendation

Ashley Heineman, RrSG, took this as an action item to go to the registrars to see if this is something they can put together for recommendation 3

Action Items:

Registrar Councilors take this back to their group to attempt a first cut at the educational materials from the recommendation 3 Small Team.

Item 10: Open Mic

10.1 - Introduction of Topic - Susan Payne

10.2 - Open Mic

10.1 - GNSO Chair Election Timeline Announcement

Kathy Kleinman, NCSG, shared something about Phase 2 of the UDRP and shared a story about helping the trademark clearinghouse. She advocated for an independent study for Phase 2 of UDRP.

Item 11: Any other business

11.1 - GNSO Chair [Election](#) Timeline Announcement

Terri Agnew, ICANN org, updated the Council on the dates for the GNSO Chair Election [timeline](#).

Meeting Adjourned at 15:11 IST