Minutes of the GNSO Council Meeting 13 August 2026

GNSO Council meeting on Thursday, 13 August 2026 at 21:00 UTC: https://tinyurl.com/mr4xv5pf
14:00 Los Angeles; 17:00 Washington DC; 22:00 London; 23:00 Paris; (Friday) 00:00 Moscow; 07:00 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 (apology, proxy to Jennifer Chung), Samantha Demetriou, Jennifer Chung
Nominating Committee Appointee (NCA): Gaurav Vedi
Non-Contracted Parties House
Commercial Stakeholder Group (CSG): Lawrence Olawale-Roberts, Vivek Goyal (apology, proxy to Lawrence Olawale-Roberts , Osvaldo Novoa, Damon Ashcraft, Susan Payne, Susan Mohr (apology, proxy to Osvaldo Novoa)
Non-Commercial Stakeholder Group (NCSG): Farzaneh Badii, Bruna Martins dos Santos, Julf Helsingius, Peter Akinremi, 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

Guests: None

ICANN Staff:
Steve Chan – Vice President, Policy Development Support & GNSO Relations
Caitlin Tubergen - Senior Director, GNSO Policy Development Support
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)
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

All Councilors, wished Terri Agnew a very Happy Birthday.

Susan Payne, GNSO Chair, announced that this meeting will be Justine Chew's final meeting as ALAC liaison as she moves to the ICANN Board and that an agenda item on that topic has been added to AOB.

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: Council Discussion - DNS Abuse Mitigation PDP2 Draft Charter Update
3.1 - Introduction of Topic (Jennifer Chung, GNSO Council Vice-Chair)
3.2 - Council Discussion
3.3 - Next Steps

Jennifer Chung, GNSO Vice-Chair, noted that DNS Abuse Mitigation PDP 1 would likely enter Public Comment the following week. She reminded Council that the updated PDP 2 draft Charter was discussed in July and revised to reflect lessons learned from PDP 1. The draft was circulated in a Google Doc following the July meeting for feedback from SG/Cs. A call for volunteers for a Charter Drafting Team had also been circulated; ten Councilors had volunteered and additional volunteers were still welcome.

Lawrence Olawale-Roberts, BC, stated that the BC was not comfortable using the updated draft as the basis for the Charter Drafting Team and preferred that the effort reference the initial draft contained in the Final Issue Report. He noted that the shift from safeguards focused on APIs to broader safeguards for access to domain name registrations at scale could expand the scope to reseller systems, bulk registrations, white-label platforms, plugins, and other automated provisioning mechanisms. He also highlighted that the nine questions in the initial draft had been reduced to seven, raised questions about guardrails for participants and alternates under the Representative model, and questioned whether four RrSG seats would provide disproportionate representation compared with other groups.

Jennifer Chung, GNSO Vice-Chair, requested that the BC provide its input in writing for the benefit of Council and the Charter Drafting Team, even if in the form of general comments rather than redlines.

Farzaneh Badii, NCSG, raised broader lessons from PDP 1 and noted that efficiency should not be the only measure of the PDP process. She said Council should consider whether issues were characterized as out of scope even when the Charter asked the Working Group to address them. She cited the question of registrant remedies as an example and emphasized that future PDPs should address questions included in their Charters, while the Charter itself should not determine the policy outcome. She noted that the NCSG had not yet completed its review of the PDP 2 draft and supported convening a Charter Drafting Team for a more detailed discussion.

Jennifer Chung, GNSO Vice-Chair, reiterated that registrant remedies had been identified as a gap in the Final Issue Report and Small Team report and had not been dropped. She noted that remedies would likely be considered in the second-step prioritization of remaining DNS Abuse gaps. She explained that the revised PDP 2 draft was intended to remove redundant language, use more technologically agnostic terminology rather than focusing only on APIs, and incorporate lessons from PDP 1.

Jennifer Chung, GNSO Vice-Chair, summarized other comments already received, including editorial updates and links, the addition of Human Rights Impact Assessment language from PDP 1, consistent use of terms such as customer, account holder and registrant, more neutral language regarding whether new Consensus Policy requirements are needed, and questions around the meaning of registrations "at scale" or in bulk.

Anne Aikman Scalese, NCA Non-Voting, asked for clarification on whether impacts and remedies for registrants would be addressed through a separate DNS Abuse work effort.

Jennifer Chung, GNSO Vice-Chair, confirmed that remedies were a separately identified gap that would likely be considered after the remaining issues were prioritized.

Jennifer Chung, GNSO Vice-Chair, noted that the GAC would not participate directly in the Charter Drafting Team, but GAC input could be conveyed through Sebastian Ducos, GNSO Liaison to the GAC. She similarly encouraged the ALAC and ccNSO liaisons to convey input from their communities. She clarified that the drafting effort itself would consist of Councilors and liaisons.

Christian Dawson, NCA NCPH, observed that the draft Charter was unusually prescriptive because it appeared in several places to begin from the premise that new binding requirements should result, rather than only asking whether policy intervention was warranted. He acknowledged the work already undertaken by the Small Team and Council to narrow the problem and said he was comfortable proceeding, but emphasized that Council should recognize this as an extraordinary approach rather than a normal starting point for PDP Charters.

Jennifer Chung, GNSO Vice-Chair, agreed that the approach was also reflected in PDP 1 and suggested that Council consider whether this more focused and prescriptive chartering approach should continue for the remaining DNS Abuse mitigation work.

Ashley Heineman, RrSG, asked whether the RrSG should continue commenting on the current draft or wait for another version, given the discussion about returning to or comparing against the initial draft.

Farzaneh Badii, NCSG, reiterated that experiences in PDP 1 demonstrated the importance of being clear that a Charter frames the questions for a Working Group but does not itself set the policy. She added that the eventual PDP Chair should have a strong understanding of this distinction and of the GNSO policy process.

John Emery, ICANN org, suggested that, rather than producing a complicated redline between the two versions, the current draft could remain the working document while the BC and other participants identify provisions from the original draft that they want to restore. He noted that staff could provide the original draft alongside the current version.

Lawrence Olawale-Roberts, BC, responded that the material changes between the two drafts made it difficult for the BC to comment only against the updated version. He reiterated that the BC wanted the nine questions from the initial draft brought back into consideration and preferred that the initial draft be the reference point for further work.

Farzaneh Badii, NCSG, disagreed with returning to the initial draft as the starting point, noting that the updated draft reflected subsequent discussions and lessons learned. She suggested that participants identify specific language or concepts from the earlier draft that they wanted the drafting team to restore.

Jennifer Chung, GNSO Vice-Chair, noted that the reduction from nine questions to seven was intended to remove questions that were redundant, but confirmed that the drafting team could reconsider the questions. She also noted that the earlier draft and relevant redlines could be circulated for reference.

Justine Chew, ALAC Liaison, supported continuing from the current draft rather than using a heavily marked-up redline. She suggested reviewing the current and earlier drafts side by side and bringing forward any language from the earlier draft that the drafting team considered useful.

Steve Chan, ICANN org, provided context for staff's proposed changes. He explained that the original Charter questions were drafted in a way that could be read as presuming the answers. Staff deliberately made the questions more open so that the Working Group would have the agency to answer them rather than having outcomes prescribed in the Charter.

Sam Demetriou, RySG, agreed that Charters should generally ask questions without assuming their outcome and noted that the RySG directionally preferred the updated draft, while believing that additional redundancies could still be removed. She suggested that the Charter Drafting Team review both versions, focus first on the purpose and objectives of the policy effort, and then workshop the questions rather than beginning with line-by-line wordsmithing.

Jennifer Chung, GNSO Vice-Chair, summarized that Council would proceed with a Charter Drafting Team and that SG/Cs that had not yet submitted feedback could still do so. Staff would poll volunteers for meeting times, with the drafting effort expected to begin the week of 24 August, when PDP 1 was expected to be in Public Comment.

Action Items:

- Staff to circulate a doodle poll to the DNS Abuse Mitigation PDP 2 Charter drafting team
- Charter drafting team to complete doodle poll by 21 August 2026 for weekly meetings beginning the week of 24 August 2026
- Councilors to convey any input to the Draft Charter Google doc or on Council list by 21 August 2026
- Staff to circulate a redline of the original PDP2 Draft Charter from the Final Issue Report

Item 4: Review of GNSO Liaison to the GAC and Liaison Update
4.1 - Introduction of Topic (Susan Payne, GNSO Chair)
4.2 - Council Discussion
4.3 - Next Steps

Susan Payne, GNSO Chair, introduced the biennial review of the GNSO Liaison to the GAC role. She noted that the liaison role began as a pilot in approximately 2015–2016 to encourage earlier GAC engagement in GNSO policy development and had since become a permanent part of the GNSO-GAC relationship. Sebastian Ducos was appointed to the role on 08 August 2024 for a two-year term, with eligibility to serve a second consecutive term. His current term ends at ICANN87.

Susan Payne, GNSO Chair, explained that the role description requires Council to review the liaison role and the liaison's performance every two years before considering reconfirmation. The review also seeks input from the GAC and/or GAC Secretariat. Council expected to receive that feedback shortly and planned to discuss the review and a possible second term at the September Council meeting. Councilors were asked to review the liaison role description in advance.

Sebastian Ducos, GNSO Liaison to the GAC, reflected on his first two-year term. He said his predecessor had established a strong relationship based largely on direct liaison-to-liaison interaction. During his term, he attempted to broaden the model by encouraging direct engagement between GNSO and GAC topic leads. He said this worked particularly well for Internet governance/WSIS and DNS Abuse, but there had been less sustained engagement on some other topics, including Human Rights.

Sebastian Ducos, GNSO Liaison to the GAC, said the experience reinforced the importance of a regular cadence of liaison meetings, including monthly calls, particularly where topic-lead interaction was not occurring. He viewed increased GAC participation in GNSO PDPs and other work as positive because it provided earlier engagement and allowed GAC participants to understand why policy decisions were made before outputs were finalized.

Sebastian Ducos, GNSO Liaison to the GAC, noted that turnover within the GAC can make sustained engagement difficult and suggested concentrating engagement with experienced GAC members who understand ICANN and the GNSO process, while continuing education about how the GNSO operates. He said this could help address perceptions that the GNSO was moving too slowly or operating inefficiently without full appreciation of the multistakeholder process.

Sebastian Ducos, GNSO Liaison to the GAC, reported that the GAC had expressed interest in having a voice in chartering efforts. He said GAC views should be heard early, but emphasized that chartering remains a Council responsibility. He did not view the liaison as the person who should advocate a GAC position before Council; if Council wanted the liaison role to include that responsibility, the role description would need to be reconsidered.

Sebastian Ducos, GNSO Liaison to the GAC, also described efforts following ICANN86 to re-establish a regular calendar and cadence of liaison meetings with staff support. He wanted GNSO and GAC topic leads to engage earlier, identify questions well before ICANN meetings, socialize them within their respective communities, and provide Council at least one regular meeting cycle to discuss issues before an ICANN meeting. He cited the discussion on the registrant verification timeline at ICANN86 as an example where questions arrived too late for Council to consult its groups adequately.

Sebastian Ducos, GNSO Liaison to the GAC, noted upcoming changes within the GAC, including Ian Sheldon stepping into the GAC Chair role and changes among GAC support staff. He considered this a useful opportunity to revisit the working relationship and said he would seek additional input ahead of the September Council meeting.

Christian Dawson, NCA NCPH, highlighted the need for both formal and informal communication mechanisms. He noted that the GAC Communiqué and Council's review of it provide an established formal channel and suggested a structured conversation with the GAC about whether that process is effective and where it may not be meeting communication needs.

Sebastian Ducos, GNSO Liaison to the GAC, agreed that the formal Communiqué process should remain, but said three formal exchanges per year were not sufficient if the expectation was for faster and more effective interaction. He suggested considering an additional structured mechanism between ICANN meetings while avoiding the burden of a full Communiqué process six times per year.

Lawrence Olawale-Roberts, BC, described the GAC as an important strategic partner and asked Sebastian to identify two or three mechanisms the Council could consider to reduce friction and improve the GNSO-GAC relationship. Sebastian said the answer centered on more communication and direct topic-level engagement, particularly with GAC members able and willing to participate, and he committed to provide a more formal response before the September discussion.

Bruna Martins dos Santos, NCSG, cautioned that broader communication channels can also create opportunities for lobbying around particular interests. She said the liaison role should help Council distinguish between interests, requests, and more formal asks, and that the formality of Communiqués and letters remains important for transparency and impartiality. She added that she did not necessarily see friction between the GAC and GNSO, but rather different interests within two diverse communities that will not always agree.

Susan Payne, GNSO Chair, thanked Sebastian and Councilors for the discussion and reiterated the value of the liaison role in maintaining effective communication with the GAC. She reminded Councilors to review the role description and noted that the GAC feedback would be circulated when received, with the Council to return to the review and possible second term at its September meeting.

Action Items:

- Councilors to review the GNSO Liaison to the GAC role description and responsibilities in preparation for the September Council discussion.
- Staff/Leadership to circulate feedback from the GAC and/or GAC Secretariat on the liaison role when received.

Item 5: Any other business

5.1 - ICANN87 planning and GNSO Draft schedule

Susan Payne, GNSO Chair, reminded Councilors that the pre-ICANN87 GNSO Council webinar will take place on 01 October at 13:00 UTC. Councilors are expected to attend because the webinar provides an opportunity to hear from Working Group Chairs, ask questions about progress, and support Council's management of the PDP process. Councilors unable to attend live should send apologies and review the recording as soon as possible.

Terri Agnew, ICANN org, noted that ICANN87 will take place in Bali, Indonesia, from 17–22 October 2026, with Prep Week on 05–07 October. She reminded participants to register and funded travelers to respond promptly to ICANN Travel communications.

Terri Agnew, ICANN org, reviewed the draft GNSO schedule. She noted four DNS Abuse PDP meetings, three SSAD Supplemental Recommendations Team meetings plus a day-minus-one meeting on 15 October, three GNSO Council working sessions, and work underway to schedule the joint GAC-GNSO Council session. The week would also include the Council's Board bilateral, the GNSO Council meeting in two parts, the seating of incoming Councilors and Chair election, the GNSO Council dinner, the ICANN Public Forum, and the GNSO Council Wrap-Up. She cautioned that room availability could still result in schedule changes or conflicts.

Action Items: All Councilors to register for ICANN87.

5.2 - Farewell and thank you to outgoing ALAC Liaison to the GNSO Council: Justine Chew

Susan Payne, GNSO Chair, noted that this was Justine Chew's final GNSO Council meeting as ALAC Liaison as she prepares to join the ICANN Board at ICANN87. She noted that Greg Shatan will take over the liaison role and thanked Justine for her service since ICANN72 in October 2021. She highlighted

Justine’s willingness to volunteer, her focus on compromise and practical solutions, and her contributions to strengthening the relationship between the GNSO Council and ALAC and to improving Council’s work.

Damon Ashcraft, IPC, echoed the Council’s thanks and praised Justine for her work as liaison and as a colleague, noting that the Board would benefit from her experience and perspective.

Justine Chew, ALAC Liaison, thanked the Council and past Councilors for their friendship and collaboration. She said it had been an honor to serve as the ALAC Liaison to the GNSO Council and that she intended to remain engaged with the GNSO community in her new role.

Susan Payne, GNSO Chair, congratulated Justine on her new role and wished her success on the ICANN Board.

Meeting adjourned at 22:42 UTC