Minutes of the GNSO Council Meeting Part 2 – 21 October 2026

GNSO Council meeting on 21 October 2026 at 15:30 WITA (07:30 UTC): https://tinyurl.com/2w59nefb
12:30 Los Angeles; 03:30 Washington DC; 08:30 London; 08:30 Paris; 10:30 Moscow; 18:30 Melbourne

Attendance

List of attendees:
Nominating Committee Appointee (NCA): – Non-Voting – Alan Woods
Contracted Parties House
Registrar Stakeholder Group: Hong-Fu Meng, Ashley Heineman, Volker Greimann
gTLD Registries Stakeholder Group: Ajith Francis, Samantha Demetriou, Jennifer Chung
Nominating Committee Appointee (NCA): Gaurav Vedi
Non-Contracted Parties House
Commercial Stakeholder Group (CSG): Lawrence Olawale-Roberts, Vivek Goyal, Nitin Walia, Damon Ashcraft, Hector Ariel Manoff, Susan Mohr
Non-Commercial Stakeholder Group (NCSG): Farzaneh Badii,Christabel Mebaghandu, Juan Manuel Rojas, Peter Akinremi (in case of connectivity issues, proxy to Tapani Tarvainen), Benjamin Akinmoyeje, Tapani Tarvainen
Nominating Committee Appointee (NCA): Christian Dawson
GNSO Council Liaisons/Observers:
Greg Shatan: 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 (apology)
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)

Zoom Recording
Transcript

Item 1: Seating of the 2026-2027 Council

1.1 - Roll Call
1.2 - Updates to Statements of Interest

INCOMING COUNCILORS & LIAISONS:
Ajith Francis: SOI Registries Stakeholder Group (RySG)
Alan Woods: SOI Nominating Committee Non-voting Appointee
Christabel Mebaghandu: SOI Non-Commercial Stakeholder Group (NCSG)
Hector Ariel Manoff: SOI Intellectual Property Interests Constituency (IPC)
Juan Manuel Rojas: SOI Non-Commercial Stakeholder Group (NCSG)
Nitin Walia SOI: Internet Service Providers and Connectivity Providers Constituency (ISPCP)

Susan Payne, GNSO Outgoing Chair, welcomed the incoming Councilors and invited them to introduce themselves.

Alan Woods, NCA Non-Voting, thanked the Council and noted that he hoped to serve as a voice across the Council rather than for only one House. He looked forward to working with the Council during his term.

Nitin Walia, CSG ISPCP, introduced himself as the incoming ISPCP Councilor, succeeding Osvaldo Novoa, and looked forward to working with the Council.

Ajith Francis, RySG, looked forward to working with the Council and thanked Susan Payne for her work as GNSO Chair.

Hector Ariel Manoff, IPC, introduced himself as the incoming IPC Councilor and noted that he was honored to serve on the Council.

Christabel Mebaghandu, NCSG, introduced herself as an incoming NCSG Councilor and looked forward to working collaboratively and productively with the Council.

Item 2: Election of the Chair

Susan Payne, GNSO Outgoing Chair, noted that Vivek Goyal had withdrawn his candidacy and thanked him for his approach. Samantha Demetriou was therefore the sole candidate for GNSO Chair. She recalled that the GNSO Operating Procedures require a 60% vote of each House and that the ballot must also include a “none of the above” option.

Terri Agnew, ICANN org, conducted the vote. There were no abstentions and no votes for "none of the above." Councilors voted in favor of Samantha Demetriou.

Vote Results: Samantha Demetriou was elected GNSO Chair for the 2026-2027 term.

Samantha Demetriou, GNSO Chair, thanked Councilors for their trust and stated that she looked forward to working with the Council.

Action Items: GNSO Secretariat to notify relevant ICANN SO/AC SG/C's and ICANN org of election results. [COMPLETED]

Item 3: Selection of GNSO Council Vice Chair 2026-2027

Samantha Demetriou, GNSO Chair, noted that no Vice-Chair nominations had been submitted before the meeting and invited each House to identify its Vice-Chair. She reminded Councilors that a Vice-Chair may not be from the same Stakeholder Group as the Chair.

Contracted Party House - Ashley Heineman, RrSG
Non-Contracted Party House - Pending

The CPH nominated Ashley Heineman to serve as its Vice-Chair. The NCPH indicated that it required additional time to complete its internal process and identify its nominee. The CSG indicated interest in Vivek Goyal, subject to the NCPH process and concurrence of the NCSG.

Action Items: GNSO Secretariat to notify relevant ICANN SO/AC SG/C's and ICANN org of election results. [COMPLETED]

Item 4: Any Other Business

Susan Payne, GNSO Outgoing Chair, announced that, due to changes at her company, ICANN87 would be her final ICANN meeting and she would be stepping down from the GNSO Council. She thanked Councilors and noted that it had been an honor and privilege to serve on the Council.

Samantha Demetriou, GNSO Chair, thanked Susan Payne for her contributions to the Council and noted that she would be greatly missed.

Farzaneh Badii, NCSG, NCSG noted that it would need to consult internally before agreeing to an NCPH Vice-Chair candidate and that its process could require additional time.

Meeting adjourned at 15:43 WITA.