The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers

ICANN

8 August 2008

Janis Karklins
Chairman of the Governmental Advisory Committee
Ambassador of Latvia to France

Via email : janis.karklins@icann.org

Dear Janis

Thank you for your email of 9 July 2008, raising GAC concerns that the recent Board resolution from the ICANN Paris meeting adopting the GNSO policy recommendations for the introduction of new gTLDs appears to disregard the outstanding problem of resolving the different opinions of the GNSO and the GAC as reflected in the GAC's Paris communiqué:

> "During its discussions in Paris however, the GAC expressed concern to the GNSO and the ICANN Board that the GNSO proposals do not include provisions reflecting important elements of the GAC principles, in particular sections 2.2[1], 2.6[2] and 2.7[3]. The GAC feels that these are particularly important provisions that need to be incorporated into any ICANN policy for introducing new gTLDs."

I want to assure you and the GAC that this is not the case. In addition to adopting the GNSO policy recommendations, the Board also resolved to direct staff "… to continue to further develop and complete its detailed implementation plan, continue communication with the community on such work, and provide the Board with a final version of the implementation proposals for the board and community to approve before the new gTLD introduction process is launched." This is consistent with the dialogue between the Board and the GAC during our joint meeting in Paris, where I advised that the areas of concern that the GAC had referred to, namely paragraphs 2.2, 2.6 and 2.7a) and b) of the *GAC principles regarding new gTLDs* (GAC principles) were still being considered by the staff in the development of the implementation plan.

The staff implementation work requires additional development and that development is to be done taking into account the advice of the community, including the GAC principles. A draft version of the implementation plan will be published for comment and discussion among the ICANN community, including the GAC before it is approved by the Board.

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[1] ICANN should avoid country, territory or place names, and country, territory or regional language or people descriptions, unless in agreement with the relevant governments or public authorities.

[2] It is important that the selection process for new gTLDs ensures the security, reliability, global interoperability and stability of the Domain Name System (DNS) and promotes competition, consumer choice, geographical and service-provider diversity.

[3] Applicant registries for new gTLDS should pledge to: a) adopt, before the new gTLD is introduced, appropriate procedures for blocking, at no cost and upon demand of governments, public authorities or IGOs, names with national or geographic significance at the second level of any new gTLD; b) ensure procedures to allow governments, public authorities or IGOs to challenge abuses of names with national or geographic significance at the second level of any new gTLD.

I believe it would be beneficial for staff developing the implementation plan and members of the GAC to have direct dialogue on the outstanding issues identified by the GAC in an effort to clarify and ensure a better understanding of the areas of concern. Some of the GAC language is open to interpretation and in some cases difficult to define, by way of example, you will recall that during the Board's meeting with the GAC in Paris I requested clarification of what the GAC means when it refers to "place names". While the terms "country" and "territory" are reasonably clear, place names raise issues of ubiquity and granularity with which the implementation team is struggling in terms of actually developing advice. I would hope that direct dialogue will result in a common understanding of the issues.

Should the GAC agree to meeting with staff, please make arrangements through Donna Austin, ICANN's Liaison to the GAC.

Sincerely,

Paul Twomey
President & CEO