FINAL

Internet Governance Forum

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Talking points in response to:

- What is ICANN doing in the international arena?

- What are the latest developments?

- What is the importance of the ICANN multi-stakeholder model
  and public-private partnerships?

1   What is ICANN doing in the international arena?

Since the domain name system's beginnings in the early 1980s, cooperation
and consensus building through a multi-stakeholder model have successfully
guided the Internet's rapid evolution and innovation while maintaining its
global interoperability.

ICANN's responsibilities are global. As an essential part of its work, ICANN
continues to develop and improve processes and procedures to encourage

enhanced transparency, accountability, security, and stability in the adoption of policies related to its function.

Maintaining this global approach — based on the 35 years of the experience and values of technologists that created the Internet of today so as to ensure redundancy and resiliency — will deliver the best results for all users of the Internet.

As an internationally organized, multi-stakeholder non-profit organization, ICANN reflects these values of coordination, cooperation and collaboration. The multi-stakeholder model has long since proved that all stakeholders benefit from cooperation and coordination in policy-making.

What the Internet will look like in the future is for the innovators to determine, and for us, as respective stakeholders, to continue to enable.

2   What are the latest developments?

The Internet and the applications we run on it are a converging environment. With this ever more complex environment comes the need to manage the associated challenges through solutions that reflect the values that enabled the medium to develop as it has.

Two recent initiatives will change the Internet in ways even we cannot anticipate. We do know they will offer more and greater benefits to people around world, and will stimulate the domain name marketplace to grow well beyond what we now know. They are — IDNs and new gTLDs.

Internationalized Domain Names

The entire global Internet community eagerly anticipates the development and implementation of internationalized domain names, or IDNs. I'd like to give you a brief overview of where IDNs stand.

First, the IDN protocol being finalised by the IETF and others will define the characters that can be used to register domain names. It will be the basis for a vast and extensible set of characters that can be deployed safely across the Internet. Hundreds of thousands of characters could be included in this set — every character written in every language script in the world.

Last month, ICANN began the next phase of technical testing steps to enable the implementation with the release of a facility to evaluate 11 top-level domains with internationalized labels live in the DNS.

Users can go to the test wiki pages and make their own temporary pages from example.test, using their name in their language.

The response has been enormous.

- After the first week, a total of 128, 267 page requests were made. Divided among the IDNwikis this is:

  Chinese/Chinese: 37.56%

  Cyrillic/Russian: 28.05%

  IDN Main gateway: 15.48%

  Arabic/Arabic: 4.67%

  Arabic/Persian: 2.93%

  Tamil/Tamil: 2.20%

Hebrew/Yiddish: 2.03%

Devanagari/Hindi: 1.03%

Kanji, Hiragana, Katakana/Japanese: 1.78%

Greek/Greek: 1,73%

Hangul/Korean: 1.64%

These domains are for technical testing only — but they are a significant step towards full implementation of IDN top-level domains.

At ICANN's meetings in Puerto Rico and Los Angeles this year, ICANN's Governmental Advisory Committee and Country Code Names Supporting Organization discussed an interim approach to IDN ccTLDs. It would be associated with the ISO 3166-1 two-letter country codes. The GAC and ccNSO discussed ways to gain experience with mechanisms for selection and authorization of such top-level domains that can inform a policy development process aimed at creating an overall long-term policy.

The ICANN Board will request the ICANN community to continue working collaboratively, consider the technical limitations and requirements, and explore both an interim and an overall approach to IDN ccTLDs. ICANN's supporting organisations and advisory committees will recommend a course of action to the Board in due course.

This collaborative effort is a practical illustration of governments, country code operators, technical experts, and ICANN Board members working together cooperatively to address a complex but important technical challenge for the global Internet.

The input and participation by governments and country code operators in all regions is critical in this process. All of our work together for IDN deployment is intended to maintain global addressing uniqueness together with continued interoperability of the domain name system — unique domain names with the same functionality regardless of the geographic point of access.

However, the implementation and deployment of IDNs will not take place in a vacuum. Several related technologies and policies that are intended to ensure the continuing stability and interoperability of the Internet are being reviewed and tested even now. As always, we strive for increased participation by all Internet sectors and stakeholders.

New gTLDs

The new gTLDs are all about choice:

- Choice for all in selecting market niches and identities.

- Choice for business owners in associating their domain name with the best top level domain.

- Choice for end users in searching for knowledge, products, services, social networks, communications, and exchange of information.

- Perhaps most important, choice for multicultural, multilingual content and access across the globe.

ICANN is developing a new application and approval process that aims at streamlining gTLD applications and minimizing the time to approval and launch. This streamlined process will allow applicants to see the steps in the

approval process and the status of their applications. The system will be standardized for all future applications and approvals.

These and other initiatives will improve openness, accessibility, diversity, and demonstrate that the Internet stakeholders — including the stakeholders in this audience — are working hard to make the Internet truly global.

3 What is the importance of the ICANN multi-stakeholder model and public-private partnerships?

The ICANN multi-stakeholder model has received considerable attention. First, as a possible means to include more stakeholders in the policy-making process. And second, as a means to develop and implement policy.

The WSIS soon realized that civil society, business, and the technical community had to be brought in to represent those involved in all aspects of the Internet.

The International Telecommunication Union is looking at adopting a broader, more representative array of stakeholders to develop its policies.

The United Nations is considering how to bring civil society more formally into its community of representatives. Former U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Anan has said the UN cannot expect to succeed without involving civil society in its processes.

ICANN welcomes the opportunity to continue to participate in the IGF, and hopes the forum will continue to be a platform focused on access, security, diversity, and openness.

This needs the continuing efforts of all stakeholders, from governments, the business and private sectors, academia, and civil society to preserve and strengthen this model. By doing so, we can ensure the resiliency and utility of the Internet — and guarantee the continuation of a secure, stable, and globally interoperable Internet.