

AFRICAN UNION

الاتحاد الأفريقي



UNION AFRICAINE

UNIÃO AFRICANA

Addis Ababa, ETHIOPIA

P. O. Box 3243

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Ref. No. *BDep/A12/3090/20*

10th July, 2020

Dear Mr. Botterman,

**REQUEST FOR RELEASE OF "AU" ACRONYM FROM THE
ICANN IGO RESERVED NAME LIST**

AU, symbolic of the African Union was placed on the IGO List of Names and Acronyms maintained at <http://www.icann.org/en/resources/registries/reserved> following policy recommendations emanating from the GNSO (Generic Names Supporting Organization), and adopted by the ICANN Board on 30 April 2014.

The **rationale** for its inclusion on the IGO List of Names and Acronyms was to protect it from third parties who wanted to assume registry management responsibility for this and other labels during the 2012 gTLD application round.

Unfortunately inclusion of the AU label within the IGO List had the unintended consequence of preventing any third party, including the African Union, from registering the acronym as a domain name (au.africa), yet there is an urgent need to change the African Union digital identifier on the internet from au.int to the .africa domain name.

The Thirty-Sixth Ordinary Session of the African Union Executive Council, held from 6th to 7th February 2020 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, endorsed the outcomes of the meeting of the African Union Ministers in charge of Communications and Information and Communication Technology which includes a directive to the African Union Commission to speed up the transfer of the AU website from au.int to au.africa and the mail services from africa-union.org to au.africa.

**MR. MARTEN BOTTERMAN
CHAIRMAN, ICANN BOARD**

e-mail: marten.botterman@board.icann.org

In view of the above, the African Union Commission would like to request for the release of the "AU" acronym from the ICANN IGO reserved name list. We have it on good authority that the release of the "au" acronym from the IGO List will not directly or indirectly cause conflict or confusion with the domain name ecosystem.

I look forward to your early action on this request and to our continued collaboration on internet issues in Africa.

Please accept, Mr. Botterman, the assurance of my highest consideration.

Sincerely,


KWESI QUARTEY
DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON



cc: Mr. Goran Marby
CEO and President
ICANN

e-mail: goran.marby@icann.org