

# **EXHIBIT A**



## Geographic Names Panel Clarifying Questions

Application ID: 1-1243-89583  
String: AFRICA  
Applicant: UniForum SA/ZACR

### Clarifying Question 1:

Question 21b of the AGB states, "If [the application is for] a geographic name, attach documentation of support or non-objection from all relevant governments or public authorities." Section 2.2.1.4.3 (*Documentation Requirements*) of the AGB states that each letter of support or non-objection for a Geographic Name applicant must meet the following criteria:

1. Must clearly express the government's or public authority's support for or non-objection to the applicant's application
2. Demonstrate the government's or public authority's understanding of the string being requested
3. Demonstrate the government's or public authority's understanding of the string's intended use
4. Should demonstrate the government's or public authority's understanding that the string is being sought through the gTLD application process and that the applicant is willing to accept the conditions under which the string will be available.

Your application for .AFRICA includes a letter from the African Union dated 4 April 2012, subject "Letter of Appointment". The letter is signed by Dr Elham M A Ibrahim, Commissioner Infrastructure and Energy and bears the seal of the African Union Commission. However, the letter does not meet criteria 1, 2, 3 and 4 above.

Please provide an updated letter of support from the Commissioner, Infrastructure and Energy of the African Union, or another signatory duly authorised on behalf of the African Union Commission, that:

1. Clearly expresses the government's or public authority's support for or non-objection to the applicant's application
2. Demonstrates the government's or public authority's understanding of the string being requested
3. Demonstrates the government's or public authority's understanding of the string's intended use
4. Demonstrates the government's or public authority's understanding



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that the string is being sought through the gTLD application process and that the applicant is willing to accept the conditions under which the string will be available.

For criterion number 4, “the applicant...[willingness] to accept the conditions under which the string will be available” can be satisfied by meeting the requirement of the first part of the criteria: “demonstrate the government’s or public authority’s understanding that the string is being sought through the gTLD application process.”

This letter of support is due to ICANN by end of the initial evaluation period, August 31, 2013.

# **EXHIBIT B**





Ref.: CIE/L/20/237.13

Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2013

Mr. Fadi Chehade,  
President and CEO  
Internet Corporation  
For Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN)  
Tel: +1 310 301 5800  
Fax: +1 310 823 8649  
Email: [Chehade@icann.org](mailto:Chehade@icann.org)

**Subject: Letter for support for the .Africa (dotAfrica) TLD application, (ID 1-1243-89583) submitted by the UniForum SA (NPC) t/a Registry.Africa.**

Dear Mr. President and CEO,

This letter serves to confirm that the African Union Commission (AUC) fully supports and endorses the application for the .Africa (dotAfrica) TLD string (Application ID 1-1243-89583) submitted to ICANN by UniForum SA (NPC) trading as Registry .Africa in the New gTLD Program. Furthermore as the relevant government authority for the purpose of the above application, the AUC hereby confirms that it represents the interests and support of 54 African governments

As you may be aware, the AUC is comprised of various Portfolios, namely Peace and Security; Political Affairs; Infrastructure and Energy; Social Affairs; Trade and Industry; Rural Economy and Agriculture; Human Resources, Science and Technology; and Economic Affairs.

As the Commissioner, I confirm that I have the authority of the African Union Commission and African member states to be writing to you on this matter. The African Union Commission is the Secretariat of the African Union entrusted with executive functions. The AUC represents the African Union and protects its interest under the auspices of the Assembly of the Heads of States and Government.

In terms of the .Africa (dotAfrica) TLD, the AUC operates under a specific mandate from African Member States as outlined in the Abuja Declaration (Third Conference of African Ministers in Charge of Communications and Information Technologies, held in Abuja, Nigeria in August 2010).

In terms of the above ministerial declaration the AUC has been requested to "set up the structure and modalities for the Implementation of the dotAfrica project". This has in turn commenced an extensive and on-going governmental engagement process by the AUC concerning the .Africa (dotAfrica) TLD, as is evidenced by, amongst others:

- The individual government letters of support and endorsement for the AUC initiated application process; and

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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, P.O. Box: 3243, Tel.: (251-11) 5182402 Fax: (251-11) 5182400 Web: [www.au.int](http://www.au.int)

- The overwhelming government support and participation in the GAC (Government Advisory Committee) processes concerning Early Warnings and Advice.

The primary objective of the .Africa (dotAfrica) gTLD string is: “to establish a world class domain name registry operation for the .Africa Top Level Domain (TLD) by engaging and utilising African technology, know-how and funding; for the benefit and pride of Africans; in partnership with African governments and other ICT stakeholder groups.”

Our collective mission is to establish the .Africa (dotAfrica) TLD as a proud identifier of Africa’s online identity fairly reflecting the continent’s rich cultural, social and economic diversity and potential. In essence we will strive to develop and position the .Africa (dotAfrica) TLD as the preferred option for individuals and business either based in Africa or with strong associations with the continent and its people.

The .Africa (dotAfrica) TLD represents a unique opportunity for Africa to develop and enhance its domain name and Internet eco-systems and communities by collaborating with each other to:

- Identify, engage and develop African-based specialist skills and resources
- Share knowledge and develop DNS thought-leadership; and
- Implement world class registry standards and contribute towards their continued development.

The AUC has worked closely with the applicant, UniForum SA t/a Registry.Africa), concerning the preparation and lodgment of the TLD application and will continue to do so throughout the launch and regular administration of the .Africa (dotAfrica) TLD.

The AUC supports this application, and in doing so, understands that in the event that the application is successful, UniForum SA (NPC) trading as Registry .Africa will be required to enter into a Registry Agreement with ICANN. In doing so, they will be required to pay fees to ICANN and comply with consensus policies developed through the ICANN multi-stakeholder policy processes.

The AUC further understands that, in the event of a dispute between the African Union Commission and applicant, ICANN will comply with a legally binding order from a court in the jurisdiction of the AUC.

The AUC understands that the Geographic Names Panel (GNP) engaged by ICANN, will, among others, conduct a due diligence on the authenticity of this documentation. I would request that if any additional information is required during this process, the GNP to contact my office in the first instance.

Thank you for the opportunity to support this application.

**Dr. Elham M.A. IBRAHIM (Mrs)**  
Commissioner  
Infrastructure and Energy

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# **EXHIBIT C**





28 MARS 2012

(Courtesy Translation)

To : Mr. Rod BECKSTROM  
CEO of ICANN  
Marina Del Rey, CA, USA

**Subject:** ICANN / allocation of the new gTLD extension dotAfrica.

I have the honor to inform you that the Kingdom of Morocco has taken note of the launch process for new gTLD extensions by the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) and commends its efforts for the success of this new initiative that shall expand the scope of the Internet for the promotion of economy, trade and culture in the world.

In this context, the allocation of dotAfrica represents an opportunity for the African continent to have a new gTLD extension, to serve as a tool for developing the industry of domain names in Africa, promoting economic, commercial and cultural interests among African governments with the participation of communities of Internet users in Africa.

The Kingdom of Morocco attaches great importance to the establishment of good governance of the Internet in Africa, based on the principles of transparency, neutrality, and solidarity, away from any political bidding or instrumentalization against the interests of the African member states of the United Nations Organization.

The Kingdom of Morocco is willing to contribute to the success of the new gTLD extension "dotAfrica", provided that the rules and procedures for registering domain names under the new extension subscribe to the principles defended by ICANN, and respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the African member states of the United Nations Organization, in accordance with the relevant GAC communiqués.

In this context, the Kingdom of Morocco supports the establishment of a steering committee, whose methods of operation and decision making should be based on collegiality and consensus. Further, the responsibilities of the steering committee shall include the establishment of a "Terms of use" of this domain name, provided that this Committee shall include representatives from Morocco.

Considering the above, and after examining the support request by the company UNIFORM ZACR, consistent with the principles mentioned above, the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco supports the application of this company concerning the gTLD "dotAfrica".

Best regards.

Le Directeur de l'Economie  
Numérique

Signé : Boubker Seddik BADR

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# **EXHIBIT D**





Ref.: CIE/L/02/360.15.15

Date: 29 September 2015

**Attention: Geographic Names Panel (GNP)****ICANN, New gTLD Application Program**

12025 Waterfront Drive, Suite 300

Los Angeles, CA 90094-2536

USA

[newgtld@icann.org](mailto:newgtld@icann.org)

**Subject: Clarification of the position of the African Union Commission (AUC) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) on the matter concerning the application of the dotAFRICA (.AFRICA) Top Level Domain and how this relates to support from relevant governments in terms of the new gTLD Applicant Guidebook.**

Dear Sirs,

The African Heads of States, through the Oliver Tambo Declaration of 5<sup>th</sup> November 2009, expressed the need to prioritise the delegation of a new continental geographic Top Level Domain Name, dotAFRICA (.Africa).

In addition, African ICT Ministers issued a directive to the African Union Commission (AUC), contained in the Third Ordinary Session Abuja Declaration 2010, to '*set up the structures and modalities for the implementation of the DotAfrica (.AFRICA) Project*'.

In order to fulfil this mandate by African governments, the AUC in an open and transparent process, on 12 May 2011, called for all interested parties to submit 'Expression(s) of Interest' (EOI) to manage the .Africa TLD. This process was then followed by a call for proposals (RFP), which culminated in the appointment of UniForum SA (now referred to as the ZA Central Registry 'ZACR') as the successful applicant to carry the endorsement and support of the AUC during the new gTLD process to apply for the dotAFRICA (.Africa) TLD.

To be clear, the application submitted by ZA Central Registry (ZACR) trading as Registry. Africa [1-1243-89583] is the only application officially endorsed and supported by the AUC and hence African member states. The AUC officially endorsed the ZACR application in our letter dated 4 April 2012, which was followed by our letter of support dated 2 July 2013.


We have also written to ICANN on numerous occasions confirming our official position on this matter. Our position has also regularly been communicated to our colleagues within the Government Advisory Committee (GAC), which ultimately resulted in 17 (seventeen) Early Warning notices and Consensus GAC Advice being issued against a competing application submitted by DotConnectAfrica Trust (DCA) [application ID: 1-1165-42560].



As you are aware, according to the Applicant Guidebook, the process of submitting applications to ICANN for geographic TLDs requires written support from over 60% of the relevant governments and/or governmental authorities. The purpose of this letter is to clarify the issue of government support for the dotAFRICA (.Africa) TLD application in terms of ICANN new gTLD application process. This is particularly relevant in your evaluation of the DCA application and whether it meets the minimum requirements for government support.

1. Any reliance by DCA in its application [application ID: 1-1165-42560], proclaiming support or endorsement by the AUC, must be dismissed. The AUC does not support the DCA application and, if any such support was initially provided, it has subsequently been withdrawn with the full knowledge of DCA even prior to the commencement of ICANN's new gTLD application process. My office stands ready to engage with the GNP to clarify and affirm this position if this is required.
2. Any reliance by DCA in its application [application ID: 1-1165-42560], proclaiming support or endorsement by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), must be dismissed. The UNECA, by its own acknowledgement, does not have the mandate or authority to represent the support of African governments on this matter. Please refer to the attached letter from the UNECA, signed by Ms. Sandra Baffoe-Bonnie (Secretary of the Commission and Legal Advisor) confirming this position.
3. Any reliance by DCA in its application [application ID: 1-1165-42560], proclaiming support or endorsement from any individual African member state, must be treated with utmost caution and sensitivity. Member states are signatories to the Oliver Tambo Declaration and the ICTs Ministers Abuja Declaration and as such they support the position of the AUC on this matter as outlined above. We urge the GNP to carefully test the veracity and relevance of any such letter of support from an African member state before placing reliance thereon. My office stands ready to assist the GNP to clarify and affirm the validity and relevance of any such letter with the applicable member state.
4. To further amplify the position of African member states, as represented by the AUC, on the matter of the dotAFRICA (.Africa) TLD, I attach the latest Declaration issued by African ICT Ministers in Addis Ababa during September 2015.

Please accept, Dear Sirs, the assurance of my highest consideration

  
**Dr. Elham M.A. IBRAHIM (Mrs)**  
Commissioner for  
Infrastructure and Energy



# **EXHIBIT E**



## GAC Early Warning – Submittal Africa-AUC-42560

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<b>Application ID:</b>	1-1165-42560
<b>Entity/Applicant Name:</b>	Dot Connect Africa
<b>String:</b>	dotAfrica
<b>Early Warning Issue Date:</b>	20 November 2012

### Early Warning Description – This will be posted publicly:

The African Union Commission wishes to express its objection to the application submitted by Dot Connect Africa (DCA) for the .Africa geographic Top Level Domain.

The African Union Commission (AUC) has the mandate of African governments to ‘establish dotAfrica as a continental (geographic) To-Level Domain for use by organisations, businesses and individuals with guidance from African Internet Agencies’ and ‘to set up the structures and modalities for the implementation of dotAfrica project’ as provided for in the Abuja Declaration. In keeping with this mandate and following an open and transparent Request for Proposal process, UniForum SA, trading as the ZA Central Registry, was appointed as the registry operator to manage and administer the dotAfrica gTLD on behalf of the African Community for the benefit of the African region.

The application fails to meet the minimum requirements prescribed by ICANN in the gTLD Applicant Guidebook concerning geographic names.

- It is a geographic string application that does not have the requisite minimum support from African governments.
- DCA's application constitutes an unwarranted intrusion and interference on the African Union Commission's (AUC) mandate from African governments to establish the structures and modalities for the Implementation of the dotAfrica (.Africa) project; and
- Its application does not adequately and substantively differentiate itself from the AUC's officially endorsed application for the dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic string and as such will likely result in public confusion with ensuing adverse affects on the goodwill and effectiveness of the African TLD space.
- Post-amendment, DCA's applied for string is identical to the dotAfrica (.Africa) application officially endorsed by the African Union Commission (AUC) and the 39 individual African governments that have submitted letters of support per the Applicants' Guide Book (Ref # 1-1234-89583).

### Reason/Rationale for the Warning – This will be posted publicly:

- **DCA’s Application lacks the requisite Government Support**
  - Paragraph 2.2.1.4.2 (section 2-16) of the Applicants’ Guidebook prescribes that certain applied-for-strings may qualify as “Geographic Names” and must therefore be accompanied by documentation of support or non-objection from the relevant governments or public authorities. In particular, the guidebook requires at least 60% of the relevant national governments in a region to provide documentation in support of new applications for geographic strings and there must be no more than one written statement of objection.
  - Africa is a clearly designated geographic region as defined in the UNESCO “Composition of macro geographical (continental) regions, geographical sub-regions, and selected economic and other groupings” list. In this regard the designation of the official AUC endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) TLD string application as a geographic name is therefore technically and procedurally correct. The AUC is confident that the "geographic evaluation process" that this application is subject to provides sufficient checks and balances for the protection of interests and rights of African governments and the pan-African community.
  - The issue as to whether DCA’s application for the .dotAfrica string (1-1165-42560) will constitute a geographic name as outlined in the Applicant’s Guidebook is uncertain, notwithstanding the fact that the applicant itself has designated the application as a “geographic name”.
  - According to the Applicant’s Guidebook (section 2-17) *“Strings that include but do not match a Geographic Name will not be considered geographic names as defined in section 2.2.1.4.2 and therefore will not require documentation of government support in the evaluation process.”*
  - DCA’s amended application is identical to the AUC-endorsed application and must be regarded as a geographic name for purposes of evaluation. It must consequently be subjected to the criteria and rules applicable to the evaluation of geographic names, including government support.
  - In particular we contend that the DCA’s amended .Africa application does not sufficiently differentiate it from the AUC’s endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic string application and will therefore confuse the public.
  - Being a Union of 54 (fifty four) African states and specifically being mandated by these states to *“Set up the structure and modalities for the Implementation of the dotAfrica (.Africa) project”* the AUC is in an authoritative position to declare African government support or opposition to any “Africa” geographic string application.
  - In contrast to the DCA application, the AUC’s officially endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application (1-1234-89583) has the support of over 39 (thirty nine) individual national governments in Africa, which exceeds the minimum governmental support prescribed by ICANN for new geographic strings.
- **Unwarranted Interference and Intrusion**
  - DCA’s application constitutes an unwarranted intrusion and interference with the mandate given to the AUC by African Head of States and African Ministers responsible for Communication and Information Technologies. In this regard the AUC has been mandated to establish dotAfrica (.Africa) as a continental Top-Level Domain for use by organisations, businesses and individuals with guidance from African Internet Agencies and in doing so to set up the structures and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica (.Africa) project. DCA’s persistent interference in this process is likely

## GAC Early Warning – Submittal Africa-AUC-42560

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to have substantive political, economic and social repercussions in Africa.

### 3. Confusing Similarity

- DCA's applied for string (.Africa) is identical to the dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application as officially endorsed by the AUC. Should DCA's application be allowed to proceed, it is likely to deceive and/or confuse the public into believing that the AUC is associated with, or endorses their application, which we clearly do not.
- In particular, we contend that the amended DCA's .Africa application does not sufficiently differentiate it from the AUC's endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application and will therefore confuse and deceive the public.

**Possible Remediation steps for Applicant – This will be posted publicly:**

**Further Notes from GAC Member(s) (Optional) – This will be posted publicly:**

### INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

#### **About GAC Early Warning**

The GAC Early Warning is a notice only. It is not a formal objection, nor does it directly lead to a process that can result in rejection of the application. However, a GAC Early Warning should be taken seriously as it raises the likelihood that the application could be the subject of GAC Advice on New gTLDs or of a formal objection at a later stage in the process. Refer to section 1.1.2.4 of the Applicant Guidebook (<http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/agb>) for more information on GAC Early Warning.

#### **Instructions if you receive the Early Warning**

**ICANN strongly encourages you work with relevant parties as soon as possible to address the concerns voiced in the GAC Early Warning.**

#### **Asking questions about your GAC Early Warning**

If you have questions or need clarification about your GAC Early Warning, please contact [gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org](mailto:gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org). As highlighted above, ICANN strongly encourages you to contact [gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org](mailto:gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org) as soon as practicable regarding the issues identified in the Early Warning.

#### **Continuing with your application**

If you choose to continue with the application, then the “Applicant’s Response” section below should be completed. In this section, you should notify the GAC of intended actions, including the expected completion date. This completed form should then be sent to [gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org](mailto:gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org). If your remediation steps involve submitting requests for changes to your application, see the change request process at <http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/customer-service/change-requests>.

In the absence of a response, ICANN will continue to process the application as submitted.

#### **Withdrawing your application**

If you choose to withdraw your application within the 21-day window to be eligible for a refund of 80% of the evaluation fee (USD 148,000), please follow the withdrawal process published at <http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/customer-service/withdrawal-refund>. Note that an application can still be withdrawn after the 21-day time period; however, the available refund amount is reduced. See section 1.5 of the Applicant Guidebook.

**For questions please contact: [gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org](mailto:gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org)**

**Applicant Response:**

## GAC Early Warning – Submittal Africa-BJ-42560

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<b>Application ID:</b>	Ref# 1-1165-42560
<b>Entity/Applicant Name:</b>	DotConnectAfrica (DCA)
<b>String:</b>	.Africa
<b>Early Warning Issue Date:</b>	20 November 2012

### Early Warning Description – This will be posted publicly:

#### GAC Member(s) to indicate a description of the Early Warning being filed

The Government of Bénin wishes to express objection to the application submitted by DotConnectAfrica (DCA) for the .Africa geographic Top Level Domain.

The African Union Commission (AUC) is a Union of 54 (fifty four) African states and [has the mandate](#) of African governments for "establishment of dot Africa as a continental Top-Level Domain for use by organizations, businesses and individuals with guidance from African Internet Agencies" and "set up the structure and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica project" as provided for in the [2010 Abuja Declaration](#). In keeping with this mandate and following an open and transparent Request for Proposal process, UniForum SA, trading as the ZA Central Registry, was appointed the registry operator to manage and administer the dotAfrica gTLD on behalf of the African Community and for the benefit of the African region.

The DotConnectAfrica application as revised,

- Does not meet the requirements concerning geographic names as described in the new gTLD Applicant Guidebook, since it does not satisfy the required minimum support of concerned (African) governments;
- Constitutes an unwarranted intrusion and interference on the African Union Commission's (AUC) mandate from African governments to establish the structures and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica (.Africa) project; and
- Is identical to the dotAfrica (.Africa) application officially endorsed by the African Union Commission (AUC) and the 39 individual African governments who have submitted letters of support per the Applicants' Guide Book (**Ref # 1-1243-89583**).

### Reason/Rationale for the Warning – This will be posted publicly:

### **GAC Member(s) to indicate the reason and rationale for the Early Warning being filed.**

The African Union (AU) and several African countries have supported and endorsed the application by UniForum (**Ref # 1-1243-89583**), which was selected through a transparent process conducted by the African Union Commission, as directed by the AU CITMC (Communications and Information Technology Ministerial Conference). The African Union has taken steps to ensure that UniForum will operate .Africa for the public good of the people of Africa, and will put in place sufficient checks and balances for the protection of interests and rights of African governments and the pan-African community.

The Government of Bénin therefore hereby records its objection to the DotConnectAfrica application which is competing with the UniForum application that has the support and endorsement of the African Union and an overwhelming number of African governments.

#### **1. DCA's Application lacks the requisite Government Support**

- Paragraph 2.2.1.4.2 of the Applicants' Guidebook prescribes that certain applied-for-strings may qualify as "Geographic Names" and must therefore be accompanied by documentation of support or non-objection from the relevant governments or public authorities. In particular, the guidebook requires at least 60% of the relevant national governments in a region to provide documentation in support of new applications for geographic strings and there must be no more than one written statement of objection.
- Africa is a clearly designated geographic region as defined in the UNESCO "Composition of macro geographical (continental) regions, geographical sub-regions, and selected economic and other groupings" list. In this regard the designation of the official AUC endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) TLD string application as a geographic name is therefore technically and procedurally correct. The "geographic evaluation process" that this application is subject to, provides sufficient checks and balances for the protection of interests and rights of African governments and the pan-African community.
- The issue as to whether DCA's application for the .dotAfrica string (**1-1165-42560**) will constitute a geographic name as outlined in the Applicant's Guidebook is uncertain, notwithstanding the fact that the applicant itself has designated the application as a "geographic name".
- According to the Applicant's Guidebook (section 2-18) "*Strings that include but do not match a Geographic Name will not be considered geographic names as defined in section 2.2.1.4.2 and therefore will not require documentation of government support in the evaluation process*", which used to be the case of DCA's application before being amended. Now, after amendment, it is identical to the AUC-endorsed application and must be regarded as a geographic name for purposes of evaluation. Consequently, it must be subject to the criteria and rules applicable to the evaluation of geographic names, including government support.
- In contrast to the DCA application, the AUC's officially endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application (**1-1243-89583**) has the support of over 39 (thirty nine) individual national governments in Africa, which exceeds the minimum governmental support prescribed by ICANN for new geographic strings.

#### **2. Unwarranted Interference and Intrusion**

- DCA's application constitutes an unwarranted intrusion and interference with the mandate given to the AUC by African Head of States and African Ministers responsible for Communication and

## GAC Early Warning – Submittal Africa-BJ-42560

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Information Technologies. In this regard the AUC has been mandated to establish dotAfrica (.Africa) as a continental Top-Level Domain for use by organisations, businesses and individuals with guidance from African Internet Agencies; and in doing so to set up the structures and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica (.Africa) project. DCA's persistent interference in this process is likely to have substantive political, economic and social repercussions in Africa.

### 3. Confusing Similarity

- DCA's applied for string (.Africa) is identical to the dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application as officially endorsed by the AUC. Should DCA's application be allowed to proceed, it is likely to deceive and/or confuse the public into believing that the AUC is associated with, or endorses their application, which is clearly not the case.
- In particular, it is contended that the amended DCA's .Africa application does not sufficiently differentiate itself from the AUC's endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application and will therefore confuse and deceive the public.

### Possible Remediation steps for Applicant – This will be posted publicly:

#### GAC Member(s) to identify possible remediation steps to be taken by the applicant

- The applicant should withdraw the application based on the information provided above.
- The applicant should engage in a discussion with the AUC to agree on how the applicant's experience in the Internet field can be utilized to further benefit the African continent in ways that will not conflict with positions taken by the African Governments.

### Further Notes from GAC Member(s) (Optional) – This will be posted publicly:



## **INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS**

### **About GAC Early Warning**

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### **Instructions if you receive the Early Warning**

**ICANN strongly encourages you work with relevant parties as soon as possible to address the concerns voiced in the GAC Early Warning.**

#### **Asking questions about your GAC Early Warning**

If you have questions or need clarification about your GAC Early Warning, please contact [gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org](mailto:gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org). As highlighted above, ICANN strongly encourages you to contact [gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org](mailto:gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org) as soon as practicable regarding the issues identified in the Early Warning.

#### **Continuing with your application**

If you choose to continue with the application, then the “Applicant’s Response” section below should be completed. In this section, you should notify the GAC of intended actions, including the expected completion date. This completed form should then be sent to [gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org](mailto:gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org). If your remediation steps involve submitting requests for changes to your application, see the change request process at <http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/customer-service/change-requests>.

In the absence of a response, ICANN will continue to process the application as submitted.

#### **Withdrawing your application**

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**For questions please contact: [gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org](mailto:gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org)**

**Applicant Response:**

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## GAC Early Warning – Submittal Africa-BF-42560

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<b>Application ID:</b>	Ref# 1-1165-42560
<b>Entity/Applicant Name:</b>	DotConnectAfrica (DCA)
<b>String:</b>	.Africa
<b>Early Warning Issue Date:</b>	20 November 2012

### Early Warning Description – This will be posted publicly:

#### GAC Member(s) to indicate a description of the Early Warning being filed

The Government of **BURKINA FASO** wishes to express objection to the application submitted by DotConnectAfrica (DCA) for the .Africa geographic Top Level Domain.

The African Union Commission (AUC) is a Union of 54 (fifty four) African states and [has the mandate](#) of African governments for "establishment of dot Africa as a continental Top-Level Domain for use by organizations, businesses and individuals with guidance from African Internet Agencies" and "set up the structure and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica project" as provided for in the [2010 Abuja Declaration](#). In keeping with this mandate and following an open and transparent Request for Proposal process, UniForum SA, trading as the ZA Central Registry, was appointed the registry operator to manage and administer the dotAfrica gTLD on behalf of the African Community and for the benefit of the African region.

The DotConnectAfrica application as revised,

- Does not meet the requirements concerning geographic names as described in the new gTLD Applicant Guidebook, since it does not satisfy the required minimum support of concerned (African) governments;
- Constitutes an unwarranted intrusion and interference on the African Union Commission's (AUC) mandate from African governments to establish the structures and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica (.Africa) project; and
- Is identical to the dotAfrica (.Africa) application officially endorsed by the African Union Commission (AUC) and the 39 individual African governments who have submitted letters of support per the Applicants' Guide Book (**Ref # 1-1243-89583**).

### Reason/Rationale for the Warning – This will be posted publicly:

### **GAC Member(s) to indicate the reason and rationale for the Early Warning being filed.**

The African Union (AU) and several African countries have supported and endorsed the application by UniForum (**Ref # 1-1243-89583**), which was selected through a transparent process conducted by the African Union Commission, as directed by the AU CITMC (Communications and Information Technology Ministerial Conference). The African Union has taken steps to ensure that UniForum will operate .Africa for the public good of the people of Africa, and will put in place sufficient checks and balances for the protection of interests and rights of African governments and the pan-African community.

The Government of Egypt therefore hereby records its objection to the DotConnectAfrica application which is competing with the UniForum application that has the support and endorsement of the African Union and an overwhelming number of African governments.

#### **1. DCA's Application lacks the requisite Government Support**

- Paragraph 2.2.1.4.2 of the Applicants' Guidebook prescribes that certain applied-for-strings may qualify as "Geographic Names" and must therefore be accompanied by documentation of support or non-objection from the relevant governments or public authorities. In particular, the guidebook requires at least 60% of the relevant national governments in a region to provide documentation in support of new applications for geographic strings and there must be no more than one written statement of objection.
- Africa is a clearly designated geographic region as defined in the UNESCO "Composition of macro geographical (continental) regions, geographical sub-regions, and selected economic and other groupings" list. In this regard the designation of the official AUC endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) TLD string application as a geographic name is therefore technically and procedurally correct. The "geographic evaluation process" that this application is subject to, provides sufficient checks and balances for the protection of interests and rights of African governments and the pan-African community.
- The issue as to whether DCA's application for the .dotAfrica string (**1-1165-42560**) will constitute a geographic name as outlined in the Applicant's Guidebook is uncertain, notwithstanding the fact that the applicant itself has designated the application as a "geographic name".
- According to the Applicant's Guidebook (section 2-18) "*Strings that include but do not match a Geographic Name will not be considered geographic names as defined in section 2.2.1.4.2 and therefore will not require documentation of government support in the evaluation process*", which used to be the case of DCA's application before being amended. Now, after amendment, it is identical to the AUC-endorsed application and must be regarded as a geographic name for purposes of evaluation. Consequently, it must be subject to the criteria and rules applicable to the evaluation of geographic names, including government support.
- In contrast to the DCA application, the AUC's officially endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application (**1-1243-89583**) has the support of over 39 (thirty nine) individual national governments in Africa, which exceeds the minimum governmental support prescribed by ICANN for new geographic strings.

#### **2. Unwarranted Interference and Intrusion**

- DCA's application constitutes an unwarranted intrusion and interference with the mandate given to the AUC by African Head of States and African Ministers responsible for Communication and

Information Technologies. In this regard the AUC has been mandated to establish dotAfrica (.Africa) as a continental Top-Level Domain for use by organisations, businesses and individuals with guidance from African Internet Agencies; and in doing so to set up the structures and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica (.Africa) project. DCA's persistent interference in this process is likely to have substantive political, economic and social repercussions in Africa.

**3. Confusing Similarity**

- DCA's applied for string (.Africa) is identical to the dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application as officially endorsed by the AUC. Should DCA's application be allowed to proceed, it is likely to deceive and/or confuse the public into believing that the AUC is associated with, or endorses their application, which is clearly not the case.
- In particular, it is contended that the amended DCA's .Africa application does not sufficiently differentiate itself from the AUC's endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application and will therefore confuse and deceive the public.

**Possible Remediation steps for Applicant – This will be posted publicly:**

**GAC Member(s) to identify possible remediation steps to be taken by the applicant**

- The applicant should withdraw the application based on the information provided above.
- The applicant should engage in a discussion with the AUC to agree on how the applicant's experience in the Internet field can be utilized to further benefit the African continent in ways that will not conflict with positions taken by the African Governments.

**Further Notes from GAC Member(s) (Optional) – This will be posted publicly:**

## **INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS**

### **About GAC Early Warning**

The GAC Early Warning is a notice only. It is not a formal objection, nor does it directly lead to a process that can result in rejection of the application. However, a GAC Early Warning should be taken seriously as it raises the likelihood that the application could be the subject of GAC Advice on New gTLDs or of a formal objection at a later stage in the process. Refer to section 1.1.2.4 of the Applicant Guidebook (<http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/agb>) for more information on GAC Early Warning.

### **Instructions if you receive the Early Warning**

**ICANN strongly encourages you work with relevant parties as soon as possible to address the concerns voiced in the GAC Early Warning.**

#### **Asking questions about your GAC Early Warning**

If you have questions or need clarification about your GAC Early Warning, please contact [gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org](mailto:gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org). As highlighted above, ICANN strongly encourages you to contact [gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org](mailto:gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org) as soon as practicable regarding the issues identified in the Early Warning.

#### **Continuing with your application**

If you choose to continue with the application, then the “Applicant’s Response” section below should be completed. In this section, you should notify the GAC of intended actions, including the expected completion date. This completed form should then be sent to [gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org](mailto:gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org). If your remediation steps involve submitting requests for changes to your application, see the change request process at <http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/customer-service/change-requests>.

In the absence of a response, ICANN will continue to process the application as submitted.

#### **Withdrawing your application**

If you choose to withdraw your application within the 21-day window to be eligible for a refund of 80% of the evaluation fee (USD 148,000), please follow the withdrawal process published at <http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/customer-service/withdrawal-refund>. Note that an application can still be withdrawn after the 21-day time period; however, the available refund amount is reduced. See section 1.5 of the Applicant Guidebook.

**For questions please contact: [gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org](mailto:gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org)**

**Applicant Response:**

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## GAC Early Warning – Submittal Africa-CM-42560

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<b>Application ID:</b>	Ref# 1-1165-42560
<b>Entity/Applicant Name:</b>	DotConnectAfrica (DCA)
<b>String:</b>	.Africa
<b>Early Warning Issue Date:</b>	20 November 2012

### Early Warning Description – This will be posted publicly:

#### GAC Member(s) to indicate a description of the Early Warning being filed

The Government of Cameroon wishes to express objection to the application submitted by DotConnectAfrica (DCA) for the .Africa geographic Top Level Domain.

The African Union Commission (AUC) is a Union of 54 (fifty four) African states and [has the mandate](#) of African governments for "establishment of dot Africa as a continental Top-Level Domain for use by organizations, businesses and individuals with guidance from African Internet Agencies" and "set up the structure and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica project" as provided for in the [2010 Abuja Declaration](#). In keeping with this mandate and following an open and transparent Request for Proposal process, UniForum SA, trading as the ZA Central Registry, was appointed the registry operator to manage and administer the dotAfrica gTLD on behalf of the African Community and for the benefit of the African region.

The DotConnectAfrica application as revised,

- Does not meet the requirements concerning geographic names as described in the new gTLD Applicant Guidebook, since it does not satisfy the required minimum support of concerned (African) governments;
- Constitutes an unwarranted intrusion and interference on the African Union Commission's (AUC) mandate from African governments to establish the structures and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica (.Africa) project; and
- Is identical to the dotAfrica (.Africa) application officially endorsed by the African Union Commission (AUC) and the 39 individual African governments who have submitted letters of support per the Applicants' Guide Book (**Ref # 1-1243-89583**).

### Reason/Rationale for the Warning – This will be posted publicly:



### **GAC Member(s) to indicate the reason and rationale for the Early Warning being filed.**

The African Union (AU) and several African countries have supported and endorsed the application by UniForum (**Ref # 1-1243-89583**), which was selected through a transparent process conducted by the African Union Commission, as directed by the AU CITMC (Communications and Information Technology Ministerial Conference). The African Union has taken steps to ensure that UniForum will operate .Africa for the public good of the people of Africa, and will put in place sufficient checks and balances for the protection of interests and rights of African governments and the pan-African community.

The Government of Egypt therefore hereby records its objection to the DotConnectAfrica application which is competing with the UniForum application that has the support and endorsement of the African Union and an overwhelming number of African governments.

#### **1. DCA's Application lacks the requisite Government Support**

- Paragraph 2.2.1.4.2 of the Applicants' Guidebook prescribes that certain applied-for-strings may qualify as "Geographic Names" and must therefore be accompanied by documentation of support or non-objection from the relevant governments or public authorities. In particular, the guidebook requires at least 60% of the relevant national governments in a region to provide documentation in support of new applications for geographic strings and there must be no more than one written statement of objection.
- Africa is a clearly designated geographic region as defined in the UNESCO "Composition of macro geographical (continental) regions, geographical sub-regions, and selected economic and other groupings" list. In this regard the designation of the official AUC endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) TLD string application as a geographic name is therefore technically and procedurally correct. The "geographic evaluation process" that this application is subject to, provides sufficient checks and balances for the protection of interests and rights of African governments and the pan-African community.
- The issue as to whether DCA's application for the .dotAfrica string (**1-1165-42560**) will constitute a geographic name as outlined in the Applicant's Guidebook is uncertain, notwithstanding the fact that the applicant itself has designated the application as a "geographic name".
- According to the Applicant's Guidebook (section 2-18) "*Strings that include but do not match a Geographic Name will not be considered geographic names as defined in section 2.2.1.4.2 and therefore will not require documentation of government support in the evaluation process*", which used to be the case of DCA's application before being amended. Now, after amendment, it is identical to the AUC-endorsed application and must be regarded as a geographic name for purposes of evaluation. Consequently, it must be subject to the criteria and rules applicable to the evaluation of geographic names, including government support.
- In contrast to the DCA application, the AUC's officially endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application (**1-1243-89583**) has the support of over 39 (thirty nine) individual national governments in Africa, which exceeds the minimum governmental support prescribed by ICANN for new geographic strings.

#### **2. Unwarranted Interference and Intrusion**

- DCA's application constitutes an unwarranted intrusion and interference with the mandate given to the AUC by African Head of States and African Ministers responsible for Communication and

## **GAC Early Warning – Submittal Africa-CM-42560**

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Information Technologies. In this regard the AUC has been mandated to establish dotAfrica (.Africa) as a continental Top-Level Domain for use by organisations, businesses and individuals with guidance from African Internet Agencies; and in doing so to set up the structures and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica (.Africa) project. DCA's persistent interference in this process is likely to have substantive political, economic and social repercussions in Africa.

### **3. Confusing Similarity**

- DCA's applied for string (.Africa) is identical to the dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application as officially endorsed by the AUC. Should DCA's application be allowed to proceed, it is likely to deceive and/or confuse the public into believing that the AUC is associated with, or endorses their application, which is clearly not the case.
- In particular, it is contended that the amended DCA's .Africa application does not sufficiently differentiate itself from the AUC's endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application and will therefore confuse and deceive the public.

### **Possible Remediation steps for Applicant – This will be posted publicly:**

#### **GAC Member(s) to identify possible remediation steps to be taken by the applicant**

- The applicant should withdraw the application based on the information provided above.
- The applicant should engage in a discussion with the AUC to agree on how the applicant's experience in the Internet field can be utilized to further benefit the African continent in ways that will not conflict with positions taken by the African Governments.

### **Further Notes from GAC Member(s) (Optional) – This will be posted publicly:**

### INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

#### **About GAC Early Warning**

The GAC Early Warning is a notice only. It is not a formal objection, nor does it directly lead to a process that can result in rejection of the application. However, a GAC Early Warning should be taken seriously as it raises the likelihood that the application could be the subject of GAC Advice on New gTLDs or of a formal objection at a later stage in the process. Refer to section 1.1.2.4 of the Applicant Guidebook (<http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/agb>) for more information on GAC Early Warning.

#### **Instructions if you receive the Early Warning**

**ICANN strongly encourages you work with relevant parties as soon as possible to address the concerns voiced in the GAC Early Warning.**

#### **Asking questions about your GAC Early Warning**

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#### **Continuing with your application**

If you choose to continue with the application, then the “Applicant’s Response” section below should be completed. In this section, you should notify the GAC of intended actions, including the expected completion date. This completed form should then be sent to [gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org](mailto:gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org). If your remediation steps involve submitting requests for changes to your application, see the change request process at <http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/customer-service/change-requests>.

In the absence of a response, ICANN will continue to process the application as submitted.

#### **Withdrawing your application**

If you choose to withdraw your application within the 21-day window to be eligible for a refund of 80% of the evaluation fee (USD 148,000), please follow the withdrawal process published at <http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/customer-service/withdrawal-refund>. Note that an application can still be withdrawn after the 21-day time period; however, the available refund amount is reduced. See section 1.5 of the Applicant Guidebook.

**For questions please contact: [gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org](mailto:gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org)**

**Applicant Response:**

## GAC Early Warning – Submittal Africa-KM-42560

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<b>Application ID:</b>	Ref# 1-1165-42560
<b>Entity/Applicant Name:</b>	DotConnectAfrica (DCA)
<b>String:</b>	.Africa
<b>Early Warning Issue Date:</b>	20 November 2012

### Early Warning Description – This will be posted publicly:

#### GAC Member(s) to indicate a description of the Early Warning being filed

The Government of Comoros wishes to express objection to the application submitted by DotConnectAfrica (DCA) for the .Africa geographic Top Level Domain.

The African Union Commission (AUC) is a Union of 54 (fifty four) African states and [has the mandate](#) of African governments for "establishment of dot Africa as a continental Top-Level Domain for use by organizations, businesses and individuals with guidance from African Internet Agencies" and "set up the structure and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica project" as provided for in the [2010 Abuja Declaration](#). In keeping with this mandate and following an open and transparent Request for Proposal process, UniForum SA, trading as the ZA Central Registry, was appointed the registry operator to manage and administer the dotAfrica gTLD on behalf of the African Community and for the benefit of the African region.

The DotConnectAfrica application as revised,

- Does not meet the requirements concerning geographic names as described in the new gTLD Applicant Guidebook, since it does not satisfy the required minimum support of concerned (African) governments;
- Constitutes an unwarranted intrusion and interference on the African Union Commission's (AUC) mandate from African governments to establish the structures and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica (.Africa) project; and
- Is identical to the dotAfrica (.Africa) application officially endorsed by the African Union Commission (AUC) and the 39 individual African governments who have submitted letters of support per the Applicants' Guide Book (**Ref # 1-1243-89583**).

### Reason/Rationale for the Warning – This will be posted publicly:

### **GAC Member(s) to indicate the reason and rationale for the Early Warning being filed.**

The African Union (AU) and several African countries have supported and endorsed the application by UniForum (**Ref # 1-1243-89583**), which was selected through a transparent process conducted by the African Union Commission, as directed by the AU CITMC (Communications and Information Technology Ministerial Conference). The African Union has taken steps to ensure that UniForum will operate .Africa for the public good of the people of Africa, and will put in place sufficient checks and balances for the protection of interests and rights of African governments and the pan-African community.

The Government of Comoros therefore hereby records its objection to the DotConnectAfrica application which is competing with the UniForum application that has the support and endorsement of the African Union and an overwhelming number of African governments.

#### **1. DCA's Application lacks the requisite Government Support**

- Paragraph 2.2.1.4.2 of the Applicants' Guidebook prescribes that certain applied-for-strings may qualify as "Geographic Names" and must therefore be accompanied by documentation of support or non-objection from the relevant governments or public authorities. In particular, the guidebook requires at least 60% of the relevant national governments in a region to provide documentation in support of new applications for geographic strings and there must be no more than one written statement of objection.
- Africa is a clearly designated geographic region as defined in the UNESCO "Composition of macro geographical (continental) regions, geographical sub-regions, and selected economic and other groupings" list. In this regard the designation of the official AUC endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) TLD string application as a geographic name is therefore technically and procedurally correct. The "geographic evaluation process" that this application is subject to, provides sufficient checks and balances for the protection of interests and rights of African governments and the pan-African community.
- The issue as to whether DCA's application for the .dotAfrica string (**1-1165-42560**) will constitute a geographic name as outlined in the Applicant's Guidebook is uncertain, notwithstanding the fact that the applicant itself has designated the application as a "geographic name".
- According to the Applicant's Guidebook (section 2-18) "*Strings that include but do not match a Geographic Name will not be considered geographic names as defined in section 2.2.1.4.2 and therefore will not require documentation of government support in the evaluation process*", which used to be the case of DCA's application before being amended. Now, after amendment, it is identical to the AUC-endorsed application and must be regarded as a geographic name for purposes of evaluation. Consequently, it must be subject to the criteria and rules applicable to the evaluation of geographic names, including government support.
- In contrast to the DCA application, the AUC's officially endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application (**1-1243-89583**) has the support of over 39 (thirty nine) individual national governments in Africa, which exceeds the minimum governmental support prescribed by ICANN for new geographic strings.

#### **2. Unwarranted Interference and Intrusion**

- DCA's application constitutes an unwarranted intrusion and interference with the mandate

## **GAC Early Warning – Submittal Africa-KM-42560**

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given to the AUC by African Head of States and African Ministers responsible for Communication and Information Technologies. In this regard the AUC has been mandated to establish dotAfrica (.Africa) as a continental Top-Level Domain for use by organisations, businesses and individuals with guidance from African Internet Agencies; and in doing so to set up the structures and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica (.Africa) project. DCA's persistent interference in this process is likely to have substantive political, economic and social repercussions in Africa.

### **3. Confusing Similarity**

- DCA's applied for string (.Africa) is identical to the dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application as officially endorsed by the AUC. Should DCA's application be allowed to proceed, it is likely to deceive and/or confuse the public into believing that the AUC is associated with, or endorses their application, which is clearly not the case.
- In particular, it is contended that the amended DCA's .Africa application does not sufficiently differentiate itself from the AUC's endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application and will therefore confuse and deceive the public.

### **Possible Remediation steps for Applicant – This will be posted publicly:**

#### **GAC Member(s) to identify possible remediation steps to be taken by the applicant**

- The applicant should withdraw the application based on the information provided above.
- The applicant should engage in a discussion with the AUC to agree on how the applicant's experience in the Internet field can be utilized to further benefit the African continent in ways that will not conflict with positions taken by the African Governments.

### **Further Notes from GAC Member(s) (Optional) – This will be posted publicly:**

### INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

#### **About GAC Early Warning**

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#### **Instructions if you receive the Early Warning**

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#### **Asking questions about your GAC Early Warning**

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#### **Continuing with your application**

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In the absence of a response, ICANN will continue to process the application as submitted.

#### **Withdrawing your application**

If you choose to withdraw your application within the 21-day window to be eligible for a refund of 80% of the evaluation fee (USD 148,000), please follow the withdrawal process published at <http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/customer-service/withdrawal-refund>. Note that an application can still be withdrawn after the 21-day time period; however, the available refund amount is reduced. See section 1.5 of the Applicant Guidebook.

<b>For questions please contact: <a href="mailto:gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org">gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org</a></b>
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**Applicant Response:**

## GAC Early Warning – Submittal Africa-CD-42560

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<b>Application ID:</b>	Ref# 1-1165-42560
<b>Entity/Applicant Name:</b>	DotConnectAfrica (DCA)
<b>String:</b>	.Africa
<b>Early Warning Issue Date:</b>	20 November 2012

### Early Warning Description – This will be posted publicly:

#### GAC Member(s) to indicate a description of the Early Warning being filed

The Government of DR of CONGO wishes to express objection to the application submitted by DotConnectAfrica (DCA) for the .Africa geographic Top Level Domain.

The African Union Commission (AUC) is a Union of 54 (fifty four) African states and [has the mandate](#) of African governments for "establishment of dot Africa as a continental Top-Level Domain for use by organizations, businesses and individuals with guidance from African Internet Agencies" and "set up the structure and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica project" as provided for in the [2010 Abuja Declaration](#). In keeping with this mandate and following an open and transparent Request for Proposal process, UniForum SA, trading as the ZA Central Registry, was appointed the registry operator to manage and administer the dotAfrica gTLD on behalf of the African Community and for the benefit of the African region.

The DotConnectAfrica application as revised,

- Does not meet the requirements concerning geographic names as described in the new gTLD Applicant Guidebook, since it does not satisfy the required minimum support of concerned (African) governments;
- Constitutes an unwarranted intrusion and interference on the African Union Commission's (AUC) mandate from African governments to establish the structures and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica (.Africa) project; and

Is identical to the dotAfrica (.Africa) application officially endorsed by the African Union Commission (AUC) and the 39 individual African governments who have submitted letters of support per the Applicants' Guide Book (Ref # 1-1243-89583).

### Reason/Rationale for the Warning – This will be posted publicly:

### **GAC Member(s) to indicate the reason and rationale for the Early Warning being filed.**

The African Union (AU) and several African countries have supported and endorsed the application by UniForum (**Ref # 1-1243-89583**), which was selected through a transparent process conducted by the African Union Commission, as directed by the AU CITMC (Communications and Information Technology Ministerial Conference). The African Union has taken steps to ensure that UniForum will operate .Africa for the public good of the people of Africa, and will put in place sufficient checks and balances for the protection of interests and rights of African governments and the pan-African community.

The Government of DR of CONGO therefore hereby records its objection to the DotConnectAfrica application which is competing with the UniForum application that has the support and endorsement of the African Union and an overwhelming number – of African governments.

#### **1. DCA's Application lacks the requisite Government Support**

- Paragraph 2.2.1.4.2 of the Applicants' Guidebook prescribes that certain applied-for-strings may qualify as "Geographic Names" and must therefore be accompanied by documentation of support or non-objection from the relevant governments or public authorities. In particular, the guidebook requires at least 60% of the relevant national governments in a region to provide documentation in support of new applications for geographic strings and there must be no more than one written statement of objection.
- Africa is a clearly designated geographic region as defined in the UNESCO "Composition of macro geographical (continental) regions, geographical sub-regions, and selected economic and other groupings" list. In this regard the designation of the official AUC endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) TLD string application as a geographic name is therefore technically and procedurally correct. The "geographic evaluation process" that this application is subject to, provides sufficient checks and balances for the protection of interests and rights of African governments and the pan-African community.
- The issue as to whether DCA's application for the .dotAfrica string (**1-1165-42560**) will constitute a geographic name as outlined in the Applicant's Guidebook is uncertain, notwithstanding the fact that the applicant itself has designated the application as a "geographic name".
- According to the Applicant's Guidebook (section 2-18) "*Strings that include but do not match a Geographic Name will not be considered geographic names as defined in section 2.2.1.4.2 and therefore will not require documentation of government support in the evaluation process*", which used to be the case of DCA's application before being amended. Now, after amendment, it is identical to the AUC-endorsed application and must be regarded as a geographic name for purposes of evaluation. Consequently, it must be subject to the criteria and rules applicable to the evaluation of geographic names, including government support.
- In contrast to the DCA application, the AUC's officially endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application (**1-1243-89583**) has the support of over 39 (thirty nine) individual national governments in Africa, which exceeds the minimum governmental support prescribed by ICANN for new geographic strings.

#### **2. Unwarranted Interference and Intrusion**

- DCA's application constitutes an unwarranted intrusion and interference with the mandate given to the AUC by African Head of States and African Ministers responsible for

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## GAC Early Warning – Submittal Africa-CD-42560

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Communication and Information Technologies. In this regard the AUC has been mandated to establish dotAfrica (.Africa) as a continental Top-Level Domain for use by organisations, businesses and individuals with guidance from African Internet Agencies; and in doing so to set up the structures and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica (.Africa) project. DCA's persistent interference in this process is likely to have substantive political, economic and social repercussions in Africa.

### 3. Confusing Similarity

- DCA's applied for string (.Africa) is identical to the dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application as officially endorsed by the AUC. Should DCA's application be allowed to proceed, it is likely to deceive and/or confuse the public into believing that the AUC is associated with, or endorses their application, which is clearly not the case.

In particular, it is contended that the amended DCA's .Africa application does not sufficiently differentiate itself from the AUC's endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application and will therefore confuse and deceive the public.

### Possible Remediation steps for Applicant – This will be posted publicly:

#### GAC Member(s) to identify possible remediation steps to be taken by the applicant

- The applicant for the string tries to address the concerns raised by the Early Warning
- The applicant should withdraw their application based on the information provided above

### Further Notes from GAC Member(s) (Optional) – This will be posted publicly:

### INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

#### **About GAC Early Warning**

The GAC Early Warning is a notice only. It is not a formal objection, nor does it directly lead to a process that can result in rejection of the application. However, a GAC Early Warning should be taken seriously as it raises the likelihood that the application could be the subject of GAC Advice on New gTLDs or of a formal objection at a later stage in the process. Refer to section 1.1.2.4 of the Applicant Guidebook (<http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/agb>) for more information on GAC Early Warning.

#### **Instructions if you receive the Early Warning**

**ICANN strongly encourages you work with relevant parties as soon as possible to address the concerns voiced in the GAC Early Warning.**

#### **Asking questions about your GAC Early Warning**

If you have questions or need clarification about your GAC Early Warning, please contact [gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org](mailto:gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org). As highlighted above, ICANN strongly encourages you to contact [gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org](mailto:gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org) as soon as practicable regarding the issues identified in the Early Warning.

#### **Continuing with your application**

If you choose to continue with the application, then the “Applicant’s Response” section below should be completed. In this section, you should notify the GAC of intended actions, including the expected completion date. This completed form should then be sent to [gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org](mailto:gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org). If your remediation steps involve submitting requests for changes to your application, see the change request process at <http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/customer-service/change-requests>.

In the absence of a response, ICANN will continue to process the application as submitted.

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## GAC Early Warning – Submittal Africa-CD-42560

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### Withdrawing your application

If you choose to withdraw your application within the 21-day window to be eligible for a refund of 80% of the evaluation fee (USD 148,000), please follow the withdrawal process published at <http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/customer-service/withdrawal-refund>. Note that an application can still be withdrawn after the 21-day time period; however, the available refund amount is reduced. See section 1.5 of the Applicant Guidebook.

For questions please contact: [gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org](mailto:gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org)

### **Applicant Response:**

## GAC Early Warning – Submittal – Africa-EG-1-42560

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<b>Application ID:</b>	Ref# 1-1165-42560
<b>Entity/Applicant Name:</b>	DotConnectAfrica (DCA)
<b>String:</b>	.Africa
<b>Early Warning Issue Date:</b>	20 November 2012

### Early Warning Description – This will be posted publicly:

#### GAC Member(s) to indicate a description of the Early Warning being filed

The Government of Egypt wishes to express objection to the application submitted by DotConnectAfrica (DCA) for the .Africa geographic Top Level Domain.

The African Union Commission (AUC) is a Union of 54 (fifty four) African states and [has the mandate](#) of African governments for "establishment of dot Africa as a continental Top-Level Domain for use by organizations, businesses and individuals with guidance from African Internet Agencies" and "set up the structure and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica project" as provided for in the [2010 Abuja Declaration](#). In keeping with this mandate and following an open and transparent Request for Proposal process, UniForum SA, trading as the ZA Central Registry, was appointed the registry operator to manage and administer the dotAfrica gTLD on behalf of the African Community and for the benefit of the African region.

The DotConnectAfrica application as revised,

- Does not meet the requirements concerning geographic names as described in the new gTLD Applicant Guidebook, since it does not satisfy the required minimum support of concerned (African) governments;
- Constitutes an unwarranted intrusion and interference on the African Union Commission's (AUC) mandate from African governments to establish the structures and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica (.Africa) project; and
- Is identical to the dotAfrica (.Africa) application officially endorsed by the African Union Commission (AUC) and the 39 individual African governments who have submitted letters of support per the Applicants' Guide Book (**Ref # 1-1243-89583**).

### Reason/Rationale for the Warning – This will be posted publicly:



### **GAC Member(s) to indicate the reason and rationale for the Early Warning being filed.**

The African Union (AU) and several African countries have supported and endorsed the application by UniForum (**Ref # 1-1243-89583**), which was selected through a transparent process conducted by the African Union Commission, as directed by the AU CITMC (Communications and Information Technology Ministerial Conference). The African Union has taken steps to ensure that UniForum will operate .Africa for the public good of the people of Africa, and will put in place sufficient checks and balances for the protection of interests and rights of African governments and the pan-African community.

The Government of Egypt therefore hereby records its objection to the DotConnectAfrica application which is competing with the UniForum application that has the support and endorsement of the African Union and an overwhelming number of African governments.

#### **1. DCA's Application lacks the requisite Government Support**

- Paragraph 2.2.1.4.2 of the Applicants' Guidebook prescribes that certain applied-for-strings may qualify as "Geographic Names" and must therefore be accompanied by documentation of support or non-objection from the relevant governments or public authorities. In particular, the guidebook requires at least 60% of the relevant national governments in a region to provide documentation in support of new applications for geographic strings and there must be no more than one written statement of objection.
- Africa is a clearly designated geographic region as defined in the UNESCO "Composition of macro geographical (continental) regions, geographical sub-regions, and selected economic and other groupings" list. In this regard the designation of the official AUC endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) TLD string application as a geographic name is therefore technically and procedurally correct. The "geographic evaluation process" that this application is subject to, provides sufficient checks and balances for the protection of interests and rights of African governments and the pan-African community.
- The issue as to whether DCA's application for the .dotAfrica string (**1-1165-42560**) will constitute a geographic name as outlined in the Applicant's Guidebook is uncertain, notwithstanding the fact that the applicant itself has designated the application as a "geographic name".
- According to the Applicant's Guidebook (section 2-18) "*Strings that include but do not match a Geographic Name will not be considered geographic names as defined in section 2.2.1.4.2 and therefore will not require documentation of government support in the evaluation process*", which used to be the case of DCA's application before being amended. Now, after amendment, it is identical to the AUC-endorsed application and must be regarded as a geographic name for purposes of evaluation. Consequently, it must be subject to the criteria and rules applicable to the evaluation of geographic names, including government support.
- In contrast to the DCA application, the AUC's officially endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application (**1-1243-89583**) has the support of over 39 (thirty nine) individual national governments in Africa, which exceeds the minimum governmental support prescribed by ICANN for new geographic strings.

#### **2. Unwarranted Interference and Intrusion**

- DCA's application constitutes an unwarranted intrusion and interference with the mandate

given to the AUC by African Head of States and African Ministers responsible for Communication and Information Technologies. In this regard the AUC has been mandated to establish dotAfrica (.Africa) as a continental Top-Level Domain for use by organisations, businesses and individuals with guidance from African Internet Agencies; and in doing so to set up the structures and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica (.Africa) project. DCA's persistent interference in this process is likely to have substantive political, economic and social repercussions in Africa.

**3. Confusing Similarity**

- DCA's applied for string (.Africa) is identical to the dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application as officially endorsed by the AUC. Should DCA's application be allowed to proceed, it is likely to deceive and/or confuse the public into believing that the AUC is associated with, or endorses their application, which is clearly not the case.
- In particular, it is contended that the amended DCA's .Africa application does not sufficiently differentiate itself from the AUC's endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application and will therefore confuse and deceive the public.

**Possible Remediation steps for Applicant – This will be posted publicly:**

**GAC Member(s) to identify possible remediation steps to be taken by the applicant**

- The applicant should withdraw the application based on the information provided above.
- The applicant should engage in a discussion with the AUC to agree on how the applicant's experience in the Internet field can be utilized to further benefit the African continent in ways that will not conflict with positions taken by the African Governments.

**Further Notes from GAC Member(s) (Optional) – This will be posted publicly:**

## GAC Early Warning – Submittal Africa-GA-42560

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Application ID:	(Ref# 1-1165-42560) 1-1165-42560
Entity/Applicant Name:	Dot Connect Africa (DCA)
String:	.Africa
Early Warning Issue Date:	20 November 2012

### Early Warning Description - This will be posted publicly:

The Government of the Republic of Gabon wishes to express its objection to the application submitted by Dot Connect Africa (DCA) for the gTLD .Africa.

The DotConnectAfrica application as revised, does not meet the requirements for support from African governments as described in the new gTLD Applicant Guidebook.

This domain should be managed by the African Union Commission (AUC) as a geographic gTLD for the benefit of the Africa region as the administrative organ of the African Union, a union of all but one African government. The African Union Commission (AUC) has the mandate of African governments to ‘establish dotAfrica as a continental To-Level Domain for use by African stakeholders including organisations, businesses, individuals and others with guidance from African Internet Agencies’ and ‘to set up the structures and modalities for the implementation of dotAfrica project’ as provided for in the 2010 Abuja Declaration.

The DotConnectAfrica .Africa application (1-1165-42560) fails to meet the minimum requirements prescribed by ICANN in the gTLD Applicant Guidebook concerning geographic names. It is a geographic string application that does not have the requisite minimum support from African governments.

## GAC Early Warning – Submittal Africa-GA-42560

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**Reason/Rationale for the Warning - This will be posted publicly:**

**GAC Member(s) to indicate the reason and rationale for the Early Warning being filed.**

**1. DCA’s Application lacks the requisite Government Support**

- a. Paragraph 2.2.1.4.2 (section 2-16) of the Applicants’ Guidebook prescribes that certain applied-for-strings may qualify as “Geographic Names” and must therefore be accompanied by documentation of support or non-objection from the relevant governments or public authorities. In particular, the guidebook requires at least 60% of the relevant national governments in a region to provide documentation in support of new applications for geographic strings and there must be no more than one written statement of objection.
- b. Africa is a clearly designated geographic region as defined in the UNESCO “Composition of macro geographical (continental) regions, geographical sub-regions, and selected economic and other groupings” list.
- c. Being a Union of 54 (fifty four) African states and specifically being mandated by these states to “*Set up the structure and modalities for the Implementation of the dotAfrica (.Africa) project*” the AUC is in an authoritative position to declare African government support or opposition to any “Africa” geographic string application.

**Supporting GAC Members (Optional):**

I agree to include the supporting GAC members in the publication of this Early Warning


**Possible Remediation steps for Applicant - This will be posted publicly:**

**GAC Member(s) to identify possible remediation steps to be taken by the applicant**

- The applicant for the string tries to address the concerns raised by the Early Warning
- The applicant should withdraw their application based on the information provided above
- The applicant should apply for another string.
- The applicant should engage in a discussion with the AUC to agree on how her experience in the Internet field can be utilised to benefit the African continent in ways that will not conflict with positions taken by the African Governments.

## **GAC Early Warning – Submittal Africa-GA-42560**

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- The applicant should withdraw their application based on the information provided above.

**Further Notes from GAC Member(s) (Optional) - This will be posted publicly:**

### **INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS**

#### **About GAC Early Warning**

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#### **Continuing with your application**

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In the absence of a response, ICANN will continue to process the application as submitted.

## GAC Early Warning – Submittal Africa-GA-42560

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### Withdrawing your application

If you choose to withdraw your application within the 21-day window to be eligible for a refund of 80% of the evaluation fee (USD 148,000), please follow the withdrawal process published at <http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/customer-service/withdrawal-refund>. Note that an application can still be withdrawn after the 21-day time period; however, the available refund amount is reduced. See section 1.5 of the Applicant Guidebook.

For questions please contact: [gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org](mailto:gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org)

### Applicant Response:

*In case of reply the **number** and **date** of this letter should be **quoted***

Tel No: +233-(0)30-266-6465

Fax No: +233-(0)30-266-7114



Republic of Ghana

MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS  
P. O. BOX M.38  
ACCRA

14 November 2012

My Ref. No:

Your Ref. No:

**EARLY WARNING AGAINST DOTCONNECTAFRICA'S (DCA)**  
**APPLICATION FOR (.AFRICA)**

The Ministry of Communications presents its compliments to the Commissioner, Infrastructure and Energy of the African Union Commission and conveys support for the AUC's mandate to apply for the DOTAFRICA (.AFRICA) generic top-level domain, and also the appointment of UniForum SA trading as the ZA Central Registry to manage the dot AFRICA domain registry.

In this regard, the Government of the Republic of Ghana wishes to express its objection to the application submitted by Dot Connect Africa (DCA) for the .Africa geographic Top Level Domain.

The enclosed GAC Early Warning Submittal is therefore being submitted outlining the basis of objection.

The Ministry of Communications avails itself of the opportunity to renew to the Commissioner, Infrastructure and Energy of AUC the assurance of its highest consideration.

  
**HARUNA IDDRISU (MP)**  
**MINISTER**

**DR. ELHAM M.A. IBRAHIM (Mrs)**  
**COMMISSIONER**  
**INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENERGY**  
**AFRICAN UNION**  
**P. O. BOX 3243**  
**ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**

Cc: Issah Yahaya, GAC Representative



## GAC Early Warning – Submittal \_\_\_\_\_

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Application ID:	1-1165-42560
Entity/Applicant Name:	Dot Connect Africa
String:	dotAfrica
Early Warning Issue Date:	(this box to be filled in by GAC Secretariat only)

### Early Warning Description – This will be posted publicly:

The Government of the **Republic of GHANA** wishes to express its objection to the application submitted by Dot Connect Africa (DCA) for the .Africa geographic Top Level Domain.

The African Union Commission (AUC) has the mandate of African governments to “*establish dotAfrica as a continental (geographic) Top-Level Domain for use by organizations, businesses and individuals with guidance from African Internet Agencies*” and “*to set up the structures and modalities for the implementation of dotAfrica project*” as provided for in the Abuja Declaration. In keeping with this mandate and following an open and transparent Request for Proposal process, UniForum SA, trading as the ZA Central Registry, was appointed as the registry operator to manage and administer the dotAfrica gTLD on behalf of the African Community for the benefit of the African region.

The Dot Connect Africa (DCA) application fails to meet the minimum requirements prescribed by ICANN in the gTLD Applicant Guidebook concerning geographic names.

- It is a geographic string application that does not have the requisite minimum support from African governments.
  - DCA's application constitutes an unwarranted intrusion and interference on the African Union Commission's (AUC) mandate from African governments to establish the structures and modalities for the Implementation of the dotAfrica (.Africa) project; and
  - Its application does not adequately and substantively differentiate itself from the AUC's officially endorsed application for the dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic string and as such will likely result in public confusion with ensuing adverse affects on the goodwill and effectiveness of the African TLD space.
  - Post-amendment, DCA's applied for string is identical to the dotAfrica (.Africa) application officially endorsed by the African Union Commission (AUC) and the 39 individual African governments that have submitted letters of support per the Applicants' Guide Book (Ref # 1-1234-89583).
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**Reason/Rationale for the Warning – This will be posted publicly:**

- **DCA’s Application lacks the requisite Government Support**
  - Paragraph 2.2.1.4.2 (section 2-16) of the Applicants’ Guidebook prescribes that certain applied-for-strings may qualify as “Geographic Names” and must therefore be accompanied by documentation of support or non-objection from the relevant governments or public authorities. In particular, the guidebook requires at least 60% of the relevant national governments in a region to provide documentation in support of new applications for geographic strings and there must be no more than one written statement of objection.
  - Africa is a clearly designated geographic region as defined in the UNESCO “Composition of macro geographical (continental) regions, geographical sub-regions, and selected economic and other groupings” list. In this regard the designation of the official AUC endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) TLD string application as a geographic name is therefore technically and procedurally correct. The AUC is confident that the “geographic evaluation process” that this application is subject to provides sufficient checks and balances for the protection of interests and rights of African governments and the pan-African community.
  - The issue as to whether DCA’s application for the .dotAfrica string (1-1165-42560) will constitute a geographic name as outlined in the Applicant’s Guidebook is uncertain, notwithstanding the fact that the applicant itself has designated the application as a “geographic name”.
  - According to the Applicant’s Guidebook (section 2-17) *“Strings that include but do not match a Geographic Name will not be considered geographic names as defined in section 2.2.1.4.2 and therefore will not require documentation of government support in the evaluation process.”*
  - DCA’s amended application is identical to the AUC-endorsed application and must be regarded as a geographic name for purposes of evaluation. It must consequently be subjected to the criteria and rules applicable to the evaluation of geographic names, including government support.
  - In particular we contend that the DCA’s amended .Africa application does not sufficiently differentiate it from the AUC’s endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic string application and will therefore confuse the public.
  - Being a Union of 54 (fifty four) African states and specifically being mandated by these states to *“Set up the structure and modalities for the Implementation of the dotAfrica (.Africa) project”* the AUC is in an authoritative position to declare African government support or opposition to any “Africa” geographic string application.
  - In contrast to the DCA application, the AUC’s officially endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application (1-1234-89583) has the support of over 39 (thirty nine) individual national governments in Africa, which exceeds the minimum governmental support prescribed by ICANN for new geographic strings.
- **Unwarranted Interference and Intrusion**
  - DCA’s application constitutes an unwarranted intrusion and interference with the mandate given to the AUC by African Head of States and African Ministers responsible for Communication and Information Technologies. In this regard the AUC has been mandated to establish dotAfrica (.Africa) as a continental Top-Level Domain for use by organisations, businesses and individuals with guidance from African Internet Agencies and in doing so to set up the structures and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica (.Africa) project. DCA’s persistent interference in this process is likely

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## GAC Early Warning – Submittal

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to have substantive political, economic and social repercussions in Africa.

### 3. Confusing Similarity

- DCA's applied for string (.Africa) is identical to the dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application as officially endorsed by the AUC. Should DCA's application be allowed to proceed, it is likely to deceive and/or confuse the public into believing that the AUC is associated with, or endorses their application, which we clearly do not.
- In particular, we contend that the amended DCA's .Africa application does not sufficiently differentiate it from the AUC's endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application and will therefore confuse and deceive the public.

**Possible Remediation steps for Applicant – This will be posted publicly:**

**Further Notes from GAC Member(s) (Optional) – This will be posted publicly:**

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## GAC Early Warning – Submittal Africa-KE-42560

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<b>Application ID:</b>	Ref# 1-1165-42560
<b>Entity/Applicant Name:</b>	DotConnectAfrica (DCA)
<b>String:</b>	.Africa
<b>Early Warning Issue Date:</b>	20 November 2012

### Early Warning Description – This will be posted publicly:

#### **GAC Member(s) to indicate a description of the Early Warning being filed**

The Government of The Republic of Kenya wishes to express objection to the application submitted by DotConnectAfrica (DCA) for the .Africa geographic Top Level Domain.

The African Union Commission (AUC) is a Union of 54 (fifty four) African states and [has the mandate](#) of African governments for "establishment of dot Africa as a continental Top-Level Domain for use by organizations, businesses and individuals with guidance from African Internet Agencies" and "set up the structure and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica project" as provided for in the [2010 Abuja Declaration](#). In keeping with this mandate and following an open and transparent Request for Proposal process, UniForum SA, trading as the ZA Central Registry, was appointed the registry operator to manage and administer the dotAfrica gTLD on behalf of the African Community and for the benefit of the African region.

The DotConnectAfrica application as revised,

- Does not meet the requirements concerning geographic names as described in the new gTLD Applicant Guidebook, since it does not satisfy the required minimum support of concerned (African) governments;
- Constitutes an unwarranted intrusion and interference on the African Union Commission's (AUC) mandate from African governments to establish the structures and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica (.Africa) project; and
- Is identical to the dotAfrica (.Africa) application officially endorsed by the African Union Commission (AUC) and the 39 individual African governments who have submitted letters of support per the Applicants' Guide Book (**Ref # 1-1243-89583**).

### Reason/Rationale for the Warning – This will be posted publicly:



### **GAC Member(s) to indicate the reason and rationale for the Early Warning being filed.**

The African Union (AU) and several African countries have supported and endorsed the application by UniForum (**Ref # 1-1243-89583**), which was selected through a transparent process conducted by the African Union Commission, as directed by the AU CITMC (Communications and Information Technology Ministerial Conference). The African Union has taken steps to ensure that UniForum will operate .Africa for the public good of the people of Africa, and will put in place sufficient checks and balances for the protection of interests and rights of African governments and the pan-African community.

The Government of Kenya therefore hereby records its objection to the DotConnectAfrica application which is competing with the UniForum application that has the support and endorsement of the African Union and an overwhelming number of African governments.

#### **1. DCA's Application lacks the requisite Government Support**

- Paragraph 2.2.1.4.2 of the Applicants' Guidebook prescribes that certain applied-for-strings may qualify as "Geographic Names" and must therefore be accompanied by documentation of support or non-objection from the relevant governments or public authorities. In particular, the guidebook requires at least 60% of the relevant national governments in a region to provide documentation in support of new applications for geographic strings and there must be no more than one written statement of objection.
- Africa is a clearly designated geographic region as defined in the UNESCO "Composition of macro geographical (continental) regions, geographical sub-regions, and selected economic and other groupings" list. In this regard the designation of the official AUC endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) TLD string application as a geographic name is therefore technically and procedurally correct. The "geographic evaluation process" that this application is subject to, provides sufficient checks and balances for the protection of interests and rights of African governments and the pan-African community.
- The issue as to whether DCA's application for the .dotAfrica string (**1-1165-42560**) will constitute a geographic name as outlined in the Applicant's Guidebook is uncertain, notwithstanding the fact that the applicant itself has designated the application as a "geographic name".
- According to the Applicant's Guidebook (section 2-18) "*Strings that include but do not match a Geographic Name will not be considered geographic names as defined in section 2.2.1.4.2 and therefore will not require documentation of government support in the evaluation process*", which used to be the case of DCA's application before being amended. Now, after amendment, it is identical to the AUC-endorsed application and must be regarded as a geographic name for purposes of evaluation. Consequently, it must be subject to the criteria and rules applicable to the evaluation of geographic names, including government support.
- In contrast to the DCA application, the AUC's officially endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application (**1-1243-89583**) has the support of over 39 (thirty nine) individual national governments in Africa, which exceeds the minimum governmental support prescribed by ICANN for new geographic strings.

#### **2. Unwarranted Interference and Intrusion**

- DCA's application constitutes an unwarranted intrusion and interference with the mandate

## **GAC Early Warning – Submittal Africa-KE-42560**

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given to the AUC by African Head of States and African Ministers responsible for Communication and Information Technologies. In this regard the AUC has been mandated to establish dotAfrica (.Africa) as a continental Top-Level Domain for use by organisations, businesses and individuals with guidance from African Internet Agencies; and in doing so to set up the structures and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica (.Africa) project. DCA's persistent interference in this process is likely to have substantive political, economic and social repercussions in Africa.

### **3. Confusing Similarity**

- DCA's applied for string (.Africa) is identical to the dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application as officially endorsed by the AUC. Should DCA's application be allowed to proceed, it is likely to deceive and/or confuse the public into believing that the AUC is associated with, or endorses their application, which is clearly not the case.
- In particular, it is contended that the amended DCA's .Africa application does not sufficiently differentiate itself from the AUC's endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application and will therefore confuse and deceive the public.

### **Possible Remediation steps for Applicant – This will be posted publicly:**

#### **GAC Member(s) to identify possible remediation steps to be taken by the applicant**

- The applicant should withdraw the application based on the information provided above.
- The applicant should engage in a discussion with the AUC to agree on how the applicant's experience in the Internet field can be utilized to further benefit the African continent in ways that will not conflict with positions taken by the African Governments.

### **Further Notes from GAC Member(s) (Optional) – This will be posted publicly:**

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In the absence of a response, ICANN will continue to process the application as submitted.

**Withdrawing your application**

If you choose to withdraw your application within the 21-day window to be eligible for a refund of 80% of the evaluation fee (USD 148,000), please follow the withdrawal process published at <http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/customer-service/withdrawal-refund>. Note that an application can still be withdrawn after the 21-day time period; however, the available refund amount is reduced. See section 1.5 of the Applicant Guidebook.

**For questions please contact: [gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org](mailto:gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org)**



**Applicant Response:**

## GAC Early Warning – Submittal\_ Africa-ML-42560

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<b>Application ID:</b>	Ref# 1-1165-42560
<b>Entity/Applicant Name:</b>	DotConnectAfrica (DCA)
<b>String:</b>	.Africa
<b>Early Warning Issue Date:</b>	20 November 2012

### Early Warning Description – This will be posted publicly:

#### GAC Member(s) to indicate a description of the Early Warning being filed

The Government of Mali wishes to express objection to the application submitted by DotConnectAfrica (DCA) for the .Africa geographic Top Level Domain.

The African Union Commission (AUC) is a Union of 54 (fifty four) African states and [has the mandate](#) of African governments for "establishment of dot Africa as a continental Top-Level Domain for use by organizations, businesses and individuals with guidance from African Internet Agencies" and "set up the structure and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica project" as provided for in the [2010 Abuja Declaration](#). In keeping with this mandate and following an open and transparent Request for Proposal process, UniForum SA, trading as the ZA Central Registry, was appointed the registry operator to manage and administer the dotAfrica gTLD on behalf of the African Community and for the benefit of the African region.

The DotConnectAfrica application as revised,

- Does not meet the requirements concerning geographic names as described in the new gTLD Applicant Guidebook, since it does not satisfy the required minimum support of concerned (African) governments;
- Constitutes an unwarranted intrusion and interference on the African Union Commission's (AUC) mandate from African governments to establish the structures and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica (.Africa) project; and
- Is identical to the dotAfrica (.Africa) application officially endorsed by the African Union Commission (AUC) and the 39 individual African governments who have submitted letters of support per the Applicants' Guide Book (Ref # 1-1243-89583).

### Reason/Rationale for the Warning – This will be posted publicly:

### **GAC Member(s) to indicate the reason and rationale for the Early Warning being filed.**

The African Union (AU) and several African countries have supported and endorsed the application by UniForum (**Ref # 1-1243-89583**), which was selected through a transparent process conducted by the African Union Commission, as directed by the AU CITMC (Communications and Information Technology Ministerial Conference). The African Union has taken steps to ensure that UniForum will operate .Africa for the public good of the people of Africa, and will put in place sufficient checks and balances for the protection of interests and rights of African governments and the pan-African community.

The Government of Mali therefore hereby records its objection to the DotConnectAfrica application which is competing with the UniForum application that has the support and endorsement of the African Union and an overwhelming number of African governments.

#### **1. DCA's Application lacks the requisite Government Support**

- Paragraph 2.2.1.4.2 of the Applicants' Guidebook prescribes that certain applied-for-strings may qualify as "Geographic Names" and must therefore be accompanied by documentation of support or non-objection from the relevant governments or public authorities. In particular, the guidebook requires at least 60% of the relevant national governments in a region to provide documentation in support of new applications for geographic strings and there must be no more than one written statement of objection.
- Africa is a clearly designated geographic region as defined in the UNESCO "Composition of macro geographical (continental) regions, geographical sub-regions, and selected economic and other groupings" list. In this regard the designation of the official AUC endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) TLD string application as a geographic name is therefore technically and procedurally correct. The "geographic evaluation process" that this application is subject to, provides sufficient checks and balances for the protection of interests and rights of African governments and the pan-African community.
- The issue as to whether DCA's application for the .dotAfrica string (**1-1165-42560**) will constitute a geographic name as outlined in the Applicant's Guidebook is uncertain, notwithstanding the fact that the applicant itself has designated the application as a "geographic name".
- According to the Applicant's Guidebook (section 2-18) "*Strings that include but do not match a Geographic Name will not be considered geographic names as defined in section 2.2.1.4.2 and therefore will not require documentation of government support in the evaluation process*", which used to be the case of DCA's application before being amended. Now, after amendment, it is identical to the AUC-endorsed application and must be regarded as a geographic name for purposes of evaluation. Consequently, it must be subject to the criteria and rules applicable to the evaluation of geographic names, including government support.
- In contrast to the DCA application, the AUC's officially endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application (**1-1243-89583**) has the support of over 39 (thirty nine) individual national governments in Africa, which exceeds the minimum governmental support prescribed by ICANN for new geographic strings.

#### **2. Unwarranted Interference and Intrusion**

- DCA's application constitutes an unwarranted intrusion and interference with the mandate given to the AUC by African Head of States and African Ministers responsible for Communication and

Information Technologies. In this regard the AUC has been mandated to establish dotAfrica (.Africa) as a continental Top-Level Domain for use by organisations, businesses and individuals with guidance from African Internet Agencies; and in doing so to set up the structures and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica (.Africa) project. DCA’s persistent interference in this process is likely to have substantive political, economic and social repercussions in Africa.

**3. Confusing Similarity**

- DCA’s applied for string (.Africa) is identical to the dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application as officially endorsed by the AUC. Should DCA’s application be allowed to proceed, it is likely to deceive and/or confuse the public into believing that the AUC is associated with, or endorses their application, which is clearly not the case.
- In particular, it is contended that the amended DCA’s .Africa application does not sufficiently differentiate itself from the AUC’s endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application and will therefore confuse and deceive the public.

**Possible Remediation steps for Applicant – This will be posted publicly:**

**GAC Member(s) to identify possible remediation steps to be taken by the applicant**

- The applicant should withdraw the application based on the information provided above.
- The applicant should engage in a discussion with the AUC to agree on how the applicant's experience in the Internet field can be utilized to further benefit the African continent in ways that will not conflict with positions taken by the African Governments.

**Further Notes from GAC Member(s) (Optional) – This will be posted publicly:**

## **INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS**

### **About GAC Early Warning**

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### **Instructions if you receive the Early Warning**

**ICANN strongly encourages you work with relevant parties as soon as possible to address the concerns voiced in the GAC Early Warning.**

#### **Asking questions about your GAC Early Warning**

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#### **Continuing with your application**

If you choose to continue with the application, then the “Applicant’s Response” section below should be completed. In this section, you should notify the GAC of intended actions, including the expected completion date. This completed form should then be sent to [gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org](mailto:gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org). If your remediation steps involve submitting requests for changes to your application, see the change request process at <http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/customer-service/change-requests>.

In the absence of a response, ICANN will continue to process the application as submitted.

#### **Withdrawing your application**

If you choose to withdraw your application within the 21-day window to be eligible for a refund of 80% of the evaluation fee (USD 148,000), please follow the withdrawal process published at <http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/customer-service/withdrawal-refund>. Note that an application can still be withdrawn after the 21-day time period; however, the available refund amount is reduced. See section 1.5 of the Applicant Guidebook.

**For questions please contact: [gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org](mailto:gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org)**

Applicant Response:

## GAC Early Warning – Submittal Africa-MA-42560

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<b>Application ID:</b>	Ref# 1-1165-42560
<b>Entity/Applicant Name:</b>	DotConnectAfrica (DCA)
<b>String:</b>	.Africa
<b>Early Warning Issue Date:</b>	20 November 2012

### Early Warning Description – This will be posted publicly:

The Government of Kingdom of Morocco wishes to express objection to the application submitted by DotConnectAfrica (DCA) for the .Africa geographic Top Level Domain.

The African Union Commission (AUC) [has the mandate](#) of African governments for "establishment of dot Africa as a continental Top-Level Domain for use by organizations, businesses and individuals with guidance from African Internet Agencies" and "set up the structure and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica project". In keeping with this mandate and following an open and transparent Request for Proposal process, UniForum SA, trading as the ZA Central Registry, was appointed the registry operator to manage and administer the dotAfrica gTLD on behalf of the African Community and for the benefit of the African region.

The DotConnectAfrica application as revised,

- Does not meet the requirements concerning geographic names as described in the new gTLD Applicant Guidebook, since it does not satisfy the required minimum support of concerned (African) governments;
- Constitutes an unwarranted intrusion and interference on the African Union Commission's (AUC) mandate from African governments to establish the structures and modalities for the Implementation of the dotAfrica (.Africa) project; and
- Is identical to the dotAfrica (.Africa) application officially endorsed by the African Union Commission (AUC) and the 39 individual African governments who have submitted letters of support per the Applicants' Guide Book (**Ref # 1-1243-89583**).

### Reason/Rationale for the Warning – This will be posted publicly:



The African Union (AU) and several African countries have supported and endorsed the application by UniForum (**Ref # 1-1243-89583**), which was selected through a transparent process conducted by the African Union Commission, as directed by the AU CITMC (Communications and Information Technology Ministerial Conference). The African Union has taken steps to ensure that UniForum will operate .Africa for the public good of the people of Africa, and will put in place sufficient checks and balances for the protection of interests and rights of African governments and the pan-African community.

The Government of Kingdom of Morocco therefore hereby records its objection to the DotConnectAfrica application which is competing with the UniForum application that has the support and endorsement of the African Union and an overwhelming number of African governments.

### 1. DCA's Application lacks the requisite Government Support

- Paragraph 2.2.1.4.2 of the Applicants' Guidebook prescribes that certain applied-for-strings may qualify as "Geographic Names" and must therefore be accompanied by documentation of support or non-objection from the relevant governments or public authorities. In particular, the guidebook requires at least 60% of the relevant national governments in a region to provide documentation in support of new applications for geographic strings and there must be no more than one written statement of objection.
- Africa is a clearly designated geographic region as defined in the UNESCO "Composition of macro geographical (continental) regions, geographical sub-regions, and selected economic and other groupings" list. In this regard the designation of the official AUC endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) TLD string application as a geographic name is therefore technically and procedurally correct. The "geographic evaluation process" that this application is subject to, provides sufficient checks and balances for the protection of interests and rights of African governments and the pan-African community.
- The issue as to whether DCA's application for the .dotAfrica string (**1-1165-42560**) will constitute a geographic name as outlined in the Applicant's Guidebook is uncertain, notwithstanding the fact that the applicant itself has designated the application as a "geographic name".
- According to the Applicant's Guidebook (section 2-18) "Strings that include but do not match a Geographic Name will not be considered geographic names as defined in section 2.2.1.4.2 and therefore will not require documentation of government support in the evaluation process", which used to be the case of DCA's application before being amended. Now, after amendment, it is identical to the AUC-endorsed application and must be regarded as a geographic name for purposes of evaluation. Consequently, it must be subject to the criteria and rules applicable to the evaluation of geographic names, including government support.
- In contrast to the DCA application, the AUC's officially endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application (**1-1243-89583**) has the support of over 39 (thirty nine) individual national governments in Africa, which exceeds the minimum governmental support prescribed by ICANN for new geographic strings.

### 2. Unwarranted Interference and Intrusion

- DCA's application constitutes an unwarranted intrusion and interference with the mandate given to the AUC by African Head of States and African Ministers responsible for Communication and Information Technologies. In this regard the AUC has been mandated to establish dotAfrica (.Africa) as a continental Top-Level Domain for use by organisations, businesses and individuals

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## GAC Early Warning – Submittal Africa-MA-42560

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with guidance from African Internet Agencies; and in doing so to set up the structures and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica (.Africa) project. DCA's persistent interference in this process is likely to have substantive political, economic and social repercussions in Africa.

### 3. Confusing Similarity

- DCA's applied for string (.Africa) is identical to the dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application as officially endorsed by the AUC. Should DCA's application be allowed to proceed, it is likely to deceive and/or confuse the public into believing that the AUC is associated with, or endorses their application, which is clearly not the case.
- In particular, it is contended that the amended DCA's .Africa application does not sufficiently differentiate itself from the AUC's endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application and will therefore confuse and deceive the public.

### Possible Remediation steps for Applicant – This will be posted publicly:

- The applicant should withdraw the application based on the information provided above.
- The applicant should engage in a discussion with the AUC to agree on how the applicant's experience in the Internet field can be utilized to further benefit the African continent in ways that will not conflict with positions taken by the African Governments.

### Further Notes from GAC Member(s) (Optional) – This will be posted publicly:

### **INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS**

#### **About GAC Early Warning**

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#### **Instructions if you receive the Early Warning**

**ICANN strongly encourages you work with relevant parties as soon as possible to address the concerns voiced in the GAC Early Warning.**

#### **Asking questions about your GAC Early Warning**

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#### **Continuing with your application**

If you choose to continue with the application, then the “Applicant’s Response” section below should be completed. In this section, you should notify the GAC of intended actions, including the expected completion date. This completed form should then be sent to [gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org](mailto:gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org). If your remediation steps involve submitting requests for changes to your application, see the change request process at <http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/customer-service/change-requests>.

In the absence of a response, ICANN will continue to process the application as submitted.

#### **Withdrawing your application**

If you choose to withdraw your application within the 21-day window to be eligible for a refund of 80% of the evaluation fee (USD 148,000), please follow the withdrawal process published at <http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/customer-service/withdrawal-refund>. Note that an application can still be withdrawn after the 21-day time period; however, the available refund amount is reduced. See section 1.5 of the Applicant Guidebook.

**For questions please contact: [gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org](mailto:gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org)**

**Applicant Response:**

## GAC Early Warning – Submittal Africa-NG-2-42560

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<b>Application ID:</b>	Ref# 1-1165-42560
<b>Entity/Applicant Name:</b>	DotConnectAfrica (DCA)
<b>String:</b>	.Africa
<b>Early Warning Issue Date:</b>	20 November 2012

### Early Warning Description – This will be posted publicly:

#### GAC Member(s) to indicate a description of the Early Warning being filed

The Government of The Federal Republic of Nigeria wishes to express objection to the application submitted by DotConnectAfrica (DCA) for the .Africa geographic Top Level Domain.

The African Union Commission (AUC) is a Union of 54 (fifty four) African states and [has the mandate](#) of African governments for "establishment of dot Africa as a continental Top-Level Domain for use by organizations, businesses and individuals with guidance from African Internet Agencies" and "set up the structure and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica project" as provided for in the [2010 Abuja Declaration](#). In keeping with this mandate and following an open and transparent Request for Proposal process, UniForum SA, trading as the ZA Central Registry, was appointed the registry operator to manage and administer the dotAfrica gTLD on behalf of the African Community and for the benefit of the African region.

The DotConnectAfrica application as revised,

- Does not meet the requirements concerning geographic names as described in the new gTLD Applicant Guidebook, since it does not satisfy the required minimum support of concerned (African) governments;
- Constitutes an unwarranted intrusion and interference on the African Union Commission's (AUC) mandate from African governments to establish the structures and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica (.Africa) project; and
- Is identical to the dotAfrica (.Africa) application officially endorsed by the African Union Commission (AUC) and the 39 individual African governments who have submitted letters of support per the Applicants' Guide Book (**Ref # 1-1243-89583**).

### Reason/Rationale for the Warning – This will be posted publicly:

### **GAC Member(s) to indicate the reason and rationale for the Early Warning being filed.**

The African Union (AU) and several African countries have supported and endorsed the application by UniForum (**Ref # 1-1243-89583**), which was selected through a transparent process conducted by the African Union Commission, as directed by the AU CITMC (Communications and Information Technology Ministerial Conference). The African Union has taken steps to ensure that UniForum will operate .Africa for the public good of the people of Africa, and will put in place sufficient checks and balances for the protection of interests and rights of African governments and the pan-African community.

The Government of Kenya therefore hereby records its objection to the DotConnectAfrica application which is competing with the UniForum application that has the support and endorsement of the African Union and an overwhelming number of African governments.

#### **1. DCA's Application lacks the requisite Government Support**

- Paragraph 2.2.1.4.2 of the Applicants' Guidebook prescribes that certain applied-for-strings may qualify as "Geographic Names" and must therefore be accompanied by documentation of support or non-objection from the relevant governments or public authorities. In particular, the guidebook requires at least 60% of the relevant national governments in a region to provide documentation in support of new applications for geographic strings and there must be no more than one written statement of objection.
- Africa is a clearly designated geographic region as defined in the UNESCO "Composition of macro geographical (continental) regions, geographical sub-regions, and selected economic and other groupings" list. In this regard the designation of the official AUC endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) TLD string application as a geographic name is therefore technically and procedurally correct. The "geographic evaluation process" that this application is subject to, provides sufficient checks and balances for the protection of interests and rights of African governments and the pan-African community.
- The issue as to whether DCA's application for the .dotAfrica string (**1-1165-42560**) will constitute a geographic name as outlined in the Applicant's Guidebook is uncertain, notwithstanding the fact that the applicant itself has designated the application as a "geographic name".
- According to the Applicant's Guidebook (section 2-18) "*Strings that include but do not match a Geographic Name will not be considered geographic names as defined in section 2.2.1.4.2 and therefore will not require documentation of government support in the evaluation process*", which used to be the case of DCA's application before being amended. Now, after amendment, it is identical to the AUC-endorsed application and must be regarded as a geographic name for purposes of evaluation. Consequently, it must be subject to the criteria and rules applicable to the evaluation of geographic names, including government support.
- In contrast to the DCA application, the AUC's officially endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application (**1-1243-89583**) has the support of over 39 (thirty nine) individual national governments in Africa, which exceeds the minimum governmental support prescribed by ICANN for new geographic strings.

#### **2. Unwarranted Interference and Intrusion**

- DCA's application constitutes an unwarranted intrusion and interference with the mandate

## **GAC Early Warning – Submittal Africa-NG-2-42560**

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given to the AUC by African Head of States and African Ministers responsible for Communication and Information Technologies. In this regard the AUC has been mandated to establish dotAfrica (.Africa) as a continental Top-Level Domain for use by organisations, businesses and individuals with guidance from African Internet Agencies; and in doing so to set up the structures and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica (.Africa) project. DCA's persistent interference in this process is likely to have substantive political, economic and social repercussions in Africa.

### **3. Confusing Similarity**

- DCA's applied for string (.Africa) is identical to the dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application as officially endorsed by the AUC. Should DCA's application be allowed to proceed, it is likely to deceive and/or confuse the public into believing that the AUC is associated with, or endorses their application, which is clearly not the case.
- In particular, it is contended that the amended DCA's .Africa application does not sufficiently differentiate itself from the AUC's endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application and will therefore confuse and deceive the public.

### **Possible Remediation steps for Applicant – This will be posted publicly:**

#### **GAC Member(s) to identify possible remediation steps to be taken by the applicant**

- The applicant should withdraw the application based on the information provided above.
- The applicant should engage in a discussion with the AUC to agree on how the applicant's experience in the Internet field can be utilized to further benefit the African continent in ways that will not conflict with positions taken by the African Governments.

### **Further Notes from GAC Member(s) (Optional) – This will be posted publicly:**



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## GAC Early Warning – Submittal Africa-SN-42560

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<b>Application ID:</b>	Ref# 1-1165-42560
<b>Entity/Applicant Name:</b>	DotConnectAfrica (DCA)
<b>String:</b>	.Africa
<b>Early Warning Issue Date:</b>	20 November 2012

### Early Warning Description – This will be posted publicly:

**GAC Member(s) to indicate a description of the Early Warning being filed**

The Government of the republic of Senegal wishes to express objection to the application submitted by DotConnectAfrica (DCA) for the .Africa geographic Top Level Domain.

The African Union Commission (AUC) is a Union of 54 (fifty four) African states and [has the mandate](#) of African governments for "establishment of dot Africa as a continental Top-Level Domain for use by organizations, businesses and individuals with guidance from African Internet Agencies" and "set up the structure and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica project" as provided for in the [2010 Abuja Declaration](#). In keeping with this mandate and following an open and transparent Request for Proposal process, UniForum SA, trading as the ZA Central Registry, was appointed the registry operator to manage and administer the dotAfrica gTLD on behalf of the African Community and for the benefit of the African region.

The DotConnectAfrica application as revised,

- Does not meet the requirements concerning geographic names as described in the new gTLD Applicant Guidebook, since it does not satisfy the required minimum support of concerned (African) governments;
- Constitutes an unwarranted intrusion and interference on the African Union Commission's (AUC) mandate from African governments to establish the structures and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica (.Africa) project; and
- Is identical to the dotAfrica (.Africa) application officially endorsed by the African Union Commission (AUC) and the 39 individual African governments who have submitted letters of support per the Applicants' Guide Book (**Ref # 1-1243-89583**).

### Reason/Rationale for the Warning – This will be posted publicly:

### **GAC Member(s) to indicate the reason and rationale for the Early Warning being filed.**

The African Union (AU) and several African countries have supported and endorsed the application by UniForum (**Ref # 1-1243-89583**), which was selected through a transparent process conducted by the African Union Commission, as directed by the AU CITMC (Communications and Information Technology Ministerial Conference). The African Union has taken steps to ensure that UniForum will operate .Africa for the public good of the people of Africa, and will put in place sufficient checks and balances for the protection of interests and rights of African governments and the pan-African community.

The Government of Senegal therefore hereby records its objection to the DotConnectAfrica application which is competing with the UniForum application that has the support and endorsement of the African Union and an overwhelming number of African governments.

#### **1. DCA's Application lacks the requisite Government Support**

- Paragraph 2.2.1.4.2 of the Applicants' Guidebook prescribes that certain applied-for-strings may qualify as "Geographic Names" and must therefore be accompanied by documentation of support or non-objection from the relevant governments or public authorities. In particular, the guidebook requires at least 60% of the relevant national governments in a region to provide documentation in support of new applications for geographic strings and there must be no more than one written statement of objection.
- Africa is a clearly designated geographic region as defined in the UNESCO "Composition of macro geographical (continental) regions, geographical sub-regions, and selected economic and other groupings" list. In this regard the designation of the official AUC endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) TLD string application as a geographic name is therefore technically and procedurally correct. The "geographic evaluation process" that this application is subject to, provides sufficient checks and balances for the protection of interests and rights of African governments and the pan-African community.
- The issue as to whether DCA's application for the .dotAfrica string (**1-1165-42560**) will constitute a geographic name as outlined in the Applicant's Guidebook is uncertain, notwithstanding the fact that the applicant itself has designated the application as a "geographic name".
- According to the Applicant's Guidebook (section 2-18) "*Strings that include but do not match a Geographic Name will not be considered geographic names as defined in section 2.2.1.4.2 and therefore will not require documentation of government support in the evaluation process*", which used to be the case of DCA's application before being amended. Now, after amendment, it is identical to the AUC-endorsed application and must be regarded as a geographic name for purposes of evaluation. Consequently, it must be subject to the criteria and rules applicable to the evaluation of geographic names, including government support.
- In contrast to the DCA application, the AUC's officially endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application (**1-1243-89583**) has the support of over 39 (thirty nine) individual national governments in Africa, which exceeds the minimum governmental support prescribed by ICANN for new geographic strings.

#### **2. Unwarranted Interference and Intrusion**

- DCA's application constitutes an unwarranted intrusion and interference with the mandate given to the AUC by African Head of States and African Ministers responsible for Communication and

Information Technologies. In this regard the AUC has been mandated to establish dotAfrica (.Africa) as a continental Top-Level Domain for use by organisations, businesses and individuals with guidance from African Internet Agencies; and in doing so to set up the structures and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica (.Africa) project. DCA's persistent interference in this process is likely to have substantive political, economic and social repercussions in Africa.

**3. Confusing Similarity**

- DCA's applied for string (.Africa) is identical to the dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application as officially endorsed by the AUC. Should DCA's application be allowed to proceed, it is likely to deceive and/or confuse the public into believing that the AUC is associated with, or endorses their application, which is clearly not the case.
- In particular, it is contended that the amended DCA's .Africa application does not sufficiently differentiate itself from the AUC's endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application and will therefore confuse and deceive the public.

**Possible Remediation steps for Applicant – This will be posted publicly:**

**GAC Member(s) to identify possible remediation steps to be taken by the applicant**

- The applicant should withdraw the application based on the information provided above.
- The applicant should engage in a discussion with the AUC to agree on how the applicant's experience in the Internet field can be utilized to further benefit the African continent in ways that will not conflict with positions taken by the African Governments.

**Further Notes from GAC Member(s) (Optional) – This will be posted publicly:**

### **INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS**

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#### **Asking questions about your GAC Early Warning**

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#### **Continuing with your application**

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In the absence of a response, ICANN will continue to process the application as submitted.

#### **Withdrawing your application**

If you choose to withdraw your application within the 21-day window to be eligible for a refund of 80% of the evaluation fee (USD 148,000), please follow the withdrawal process published at <http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/customer-service/withdrawal-refund>. Note that an application can still be withdrawn after the 21-day time period; however, the available refund amount is reduced. See section 1.5 of the Applicant Guidebook.

**For questions please contact: [gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org](mailto:gacearlywarning@gac.icann.org)**

Applicant Response:

## GAC Early Warning – Submittal Africa-ZA-89583

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<b>Application ID:</b>	Ref# 1-1243-89583
<b>Entity/Applicant Name:</b>	DotConnectAfrica (DCA)
<b>String:</b>	.Africa
<b>Early Warning Issue Date:</b>	20 November 2012

### Early Warning Description – This will be posted publicly:

#### GAC Member(s) to indicate a description of the Early Warning being filed

The Government of South Africa wishes to express objection to the application submitted by DotConnectAfrica (DCA) for the .Africa geographic Top Level Domain.

The African Union Commission (AUC) is a Union of 54 (fifty four) African states and [has the mandate](#) of African governments for "establishment of dot Africa as a continental Top-Level Domain for use by organizations, businesses and individuals with guidance from African Internet Agencies" and "set up the structure and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica project" as provided for in the [2010 Abuja Declaration](#). In keeping with this mandate and following an open and transparent Request for Proposal process, UniForum SA, trading as the ZA Central Registry, was appointed the registry operator to manage and administer the dotAfrica gTLD on behalf of the African Community and for the benefit of the African region.

The DotConnectAfrica application as revised,

- Does not meet the requirements concerning geographic names as described in the new gTLD Applicant Guidebook, since it does not satisfy the required minimum support of concerned (African) governments;
- Constitutes an unwarranted intrusion and interference on the African Union Commission's (AUC) mandate from African governments to establish the structures and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica (.Africa) project; and
- Is identical to the dotAfrica (.Africa) application officially endorsed by the African Union Commission (AUC) and the 39 individual African governments who have submitted letters of support per the Applicants' Guide Book (**Ref # 1-1243-89583**).

### Reason/Rationale for the Warning – This will be posted publicly:

### **GAC Member(s) to indicate the reason and rationale for the Early Warning being filed.**

The African Union (AU) and several African countries have supported and endorsed the application by UniForum (**Ref # 1-1243-89583**), which was selected through a transparent process conducted by the African Union Commission, as directed by the AU CITMC (Communications and Information Technology Ministerial Conference). The African Union has taken steps to ensure that UniForum will operate .Africa for the public good of the people of Africa, and will put in place sufficient checks and balances for the protection of interests and rights of African governments and the pan-African community.

The Government of South Africa therefore hereby records its objection to the DotConnectAfrica application which is competing with the UniForum application that has the support and endorsement of the African Union and an overwhelming number of African governments.

#### **1. DCA's Application lacks the requisite Government Support**

- Paragraph 2.2.1.4.2 of the Applicants' Guidebook prescribes that certain applied-for-strings may qualify as "Geographic Names" and must therefore be accompanied by documentation of support or non-objection from the relevant governments or public authorities. In particular, the guidebook requires at least 60% of the relevant national governments in a region to provide documentation in support of new applications for geographic strings and there must be no more than one written statement of objection.
- Africa is a clearly designated geographic region as defined in the UNESCO "Composition of macro geographical (continental) regions, geographical sub-regions, and selected economic and other groupings" list. In this regard the designation of the official AUC endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) TLD string application as a geographic name is therefore technically and procedurally correct. The "geographic evaluation process" that this application is subject to, provides sufficient checks and balances for the protection of interests and rights of African governments and the pan-African community.
- The issue as to whether DCA's application for the .dotAfrica string (**1-1165-42560**) will constitute a geographic name as outlined in the Applicant's Guidebook is uncertain, notwithstanding the fact that the applicant itself has designated the application as a "geographic name".
- According to the Applicant's Guidebook (section 2-18) "*Strings that include but do not match a Geographic Name will not be considered geographic names as defined in section 2.2.1.4.2 and therefore will not require documentation of government support in the evaluation process*", which used to be the case of DCA's application before being amended. Now, after amendment, it is identical to the AUC-endorsed application and must be regarded as a geographic name for purposes of evaluation. Consequently, it must be subject to the criteria and rules applicable to the evaluation of geographic names, including government support.
- In contrast to the DCA application, the AUC's officially endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application (**1-1243-89583**) has the support of over 39 (thirty nine) individual national governments in Africa, which exceeds the minimum governmental support prescribed by ICANN for new geographic strings.

#### **2. Unwarranted Interference and Intrusion**

- DCA's application constitutes an unwarranted intrusion and interference with the mandate given to the AUC by African Head of States and African Ministers responsible for Communication and



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- In particular, it is contended that the amended DCA's .Africa application does not sufficiently differentiate itself from the AUC's endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application and will therefore confuse and deceive the public.

**Possible Remediation steps for Applicant – This will be posted publicly:**

**GAC Member(s) to identify possible remediation steps to be taken by the applicant**

- The applicant should withdraw the application based on the information provided above.
- The applicant should engage in a discussion with the AUC to agree on how the applicant's experience in the Internet field can be utilized to further benefit the African continent in ways that will not conflict with positions taken by the African Governments.

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In the absence of a response, ICANN will continue to process the application as submitted.

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**Applicant Response:**

## GAC Early Warning – Submittal Africa-TZ-42560

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<b>Application ID:</b>	Ref# 1-1165-42560
<b>Entity/Applicant Name:</b>	DotConnectAfrica (DCA)
<b>String:</b>	.Africa
<b>Early Warning Issue Date:</b>	20 November 2012

### Early Warning Description – This will be posted publicly:

#### GAC Member(s) to indicate a description of the Early Warning being filed

The Government of Tanzania wishes to express objection to the application submitted by DotConnectAfrica (DCA) for the .Africa geographic Top Level Domain.

The African Union Commission (AUC) is a Union of 54 (fifty four) African states and [has the mandate](#) of African governments for "establishment of dot Africa as a continental Top-Level Domain for use by organizations, businesses and individuals with guidance from African Internet Agencies" and "set up the structure and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica project" as provided for in the [2010 Abuja Declaration](#). In keeping with this mandate and following an open and transparent Request for Proposal process, UniForum SA, trading as the ZA Central Registry, was appointed the registry operator to manage and administer the dotAfrica gTLD on behalf of the African Community and for the benefit of the African region.

The DotConnectAfrica application as revised,

- Does not meet the requirements concerning geographic names as described in the new gTLD Applicant Guidebook, since it does not satisfy the required minimum support of concerned (African) governments;
- Constitutes an unwarranted intrusion and interference on the African Union Commission's (AUC) mandate from African governments to establish the structures and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica (.Africa) project; and
- Is identical to the dotAfrica (.Africa) application officially endorsed by the African Union Commission (AUC) and the 39 individual African governments who have submitted letters of support per the Applicants' Guide Book (**Ref # 1-1243-89583**).

### Reason/Rationale for the Warning – This will be posted publicly:

### **GAC Member(s) to indicate the reason and rationale for the Early Warning being filed.**

The African Union (AU) and several African countries have supported and endorsed the application by UniForum (**Ref # 1-1243-89583**), which was selected through a transparent process conducted by the African Union Commission, as directed by the AU CITMC (Communications and Information Technology Ministerial Conference). The African Union has taken steps to ensure that UniForum will operate .Africa for the public good of the people of Africa, and will put in place sufficient checks and balances for the protection of interests and rights of African governments and the pan-African community.

The Government of Tanzania therefore hereby records its objection to the DotConnectAfrica application which is competing with the UniForum application that has the support and endorsement of the African Union and an overwhelming number of African governments.

#### **1. DCA's Application lacks the requisite Government Support**

- Paragraph 2.2.1.4.2 of the Applicants' Guidebook prescribes that certain applied-for-strings may qualify as "Geographic Names" and must therefore be accompanied by documentation of support or non-objection from the relevant governments or public authorities. In particular, the guidebook requires at least 60% of the relevant national governments in a region to provide documentation in support of new applications for geographic strings and there must be no more than one written statement of objection.
- Africa is a clearly designated geographic region as defined in the UNESCO "Composition of macro geographical (continental) regions, geographical sub-regions, and selected economic and other groupings" list. In this regard the designation of the official AUC endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) TLD string application as a geographic name is therefore technically and procedurally correct. The "geographic evaluation process" that this application is subject to, provides sufficient checks and balances for the protection of interests and rights of African governments and the pan-African community.
- The issue as to whether DCA's application for the .dotAfrica string (**1-1165-42560**) will constitute a geographic name as outlined in the Applicant's Guidebook is uncertain, notwithstanding the fact that the applicant itself has designated the application as a "geographic name".
- According to the Applicant's Guidebook (section 2-18) "*Strings that include but do not match a Geographic Name will not be considered geographic names as defined in section 2.2.1.4.2 and therefore will not require documentation of government support in the evaluation process*", which used to be the case of DCA's application before being amended. Now, after amendment, it is identical to the AUC-endorsed application and must be regarded as a geographic name for purposes of evaluation. Consequently, it must be subject to the criteria and rules applicable to the evaluation of geographic names, including government support.
- In contrast to the DCA application, the AUC's officially endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application (**1-1243-89583**) has the support of over 39 (thirty nine) individual national governments in Africa, which exceeds the minimum governmental support prescribed by ICANN for new geographic strings.

#### **2. Unwarranted Interference and Intrusion**

- DCA's application constitutes an unwarranted intrusion and interference with the mandate given to the AUC by African Head of States and African Ministers responsible for Communication and

Information Technologies. In this regard the AUC has been mandated to establish dotAfrica (.Africa) as a continental Top-Level Domain for use by organisations, businesses and individuals with guidance from African Internet Agencies; and in doing so to set up the structures and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica (.Africa) project. DCA's persistent interference in this process is likely to have substantive political, economic and social repercussions in Africa.

**3. Confusing Similarity**

- DCA's applied for string (.Africa) is identical to the dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application as officially endorsed by the AUC. Should DCA's application be allowed to proceed, it is likely to deceive and/or confuse the public into believing that the AUC is associated with, or endorses their application, which is clearly not the case.
- In particular, it is contended that the amended DCA's .Africa application does not sufficiently differentiate itself from the AUC's endorsed dotAfrica (.Africa) geographic application and will therefore confuse and deceive the public.

**Possible Remediation steps for Applicant – This will be posted publicly:**

**GAC Member(s) to identify possible remediation steps to be taken by the applicant**

- The applicant should withdraw the application based on the information provided above.
- The applicant should engage in a discussion with the AUC to agree on how the applicant's experience in the Internet field can be utilized to further benefit the African continent in ways that will not conflict with positions taken by the African Governments.

**Further Notes from GAC Member(s) (Optional) – This will be posted publicly:**

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**Applicant Response:**

## GAC Early Warning – Submittal Africa-UG-42560

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<b>Application ID:</b>	Ref# 1-1165-42560
<b>Entity/Applicant Name:</b>	DotConnectAfrica (DCA)
<b>String:</b>	.Africa
<b>Early Warning Issue Date:</b>	20 November 2012

### Early Warning Description – This will be posted publicly:

#### GAC Member(s) to indicate a description of the Early Warning being filed

The Government of Uganda wishes to express objection to the application submitted by DotConnectAfrica (DCA) for the .Africa geographic Top Level Domain.

The African Union Commission (AUC) is a Union of 54 (fifty four) African states and [has the mandate](#) of African governments for "establishment of dot Africa as a continental Top-Level Domain for use by organizations, businesses and individuals with guidance from African Internet Agencies" and "set up the structure and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica project" as provided for in the [2010 Abuja Declaration](#). In keeping with this mandate and following an open and transparent Request for Proposal process, UniForum SA, trading as the ZA Central Registry, was appointed the registry operator to manage and administer the dotAfrica gTLD on behalf of the African Community and for the benefit of the African region.

The DotConnectAfrica application as revised,

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- Is identical to the dotAfrica (.Africa) application officially endorsed by the African Union Commission (AUC) and the 39 individual African governments who have submitted letters of support per the Applicants' Guide Book (**Ref # 1-1243-89583**).

### Reason/Rationale for the Warning – This will be posted publicly:

## GAC Early Warning – Submittal Africa-UG-42560

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### GAC Member(s) to indicate the reason and rationale for the Early Warning being filed.

The African Union (AU) and several African countries have supported and endorsed the application by UniForum (**Ref # 1-1243-89583**), which was selected through a transparent process conducted by the African Union Commission, as directed by the AU CITMC (Communications and Information Technology Ministerial Conference). The African Union has taken steps to ensure that UniForum will operate .Africa for the public good of the people of Africa, and will put in place sufficient checks and balances for the protection of interests and rights of African governments and the pan-African community.

The Government of Uganda ,therefore, hereby records its objection to the DotConnectAfrica application which is competing with the UniForum application that has the support and endorsement of the African Union and an overwhelming number of African governments.

#### 1. DCA's Application lacks the requisite Government Support

- Paragraph 2.2.1.4.2 of the Applicants' Guidebook prescribes that certain applied-for-strings may qualify as "Geographic Names" and must therefore be accompanied by documentation of support or non-objection from the relevant governments or public authorities. In particular, the guidebook requires at least 60% of the relevant national governments in a region to provide documentation in support of new applications for geographic strings and there must be no more than one written statement of objection.
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- According to the Applicant's Guidebook (section 2-18) "*Strings that include but do not match a Geographic Name will not be considered geographic names as defined in section 2.2.1.4.2 and therefore will not require documentation of government support in the evaluation process*", which used to be the case of DCA's application before being amended. Now, after amendment, it is identical to the AUC-endorsed application and must be regarded as a geographic name for purposes of evaluation. Consequently, it must be subject to the criteria and rules applicable to the evaluation of geographic names, including government support.
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#### 2. Unwarranted Interference and Intrusion

- DCA's application constitutes an unwarranted intrusion and interference with the mandate

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## GAC Early Warning – Submittal Africa-UG-42560

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given to the AUC by African Head of States and African Ministers responsible for Communication and Information Technologies. In this regard the AUC has been mandated to establish dotAfrica (.Africa) as a continental Top-Level Domain for use by organisations, businesses and individuals with guidance from African Internet Agencies; and in doing so to set up the structures and modalities for the implementation of the dotAfrica (.Africa) project. DCA's persistent interference in this process is likely to have substantive political, economic and social repercussions in Africa.

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**Applicant Response:**

# **EXHIBIT F**



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# **EXHIBIT G**



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# Report on the Redefinition of the .MK domain and Delegation of the .mkд domain representing the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to Macedonian Academic Research Network Skopje

26 September 2014

This report is being provided under the contract for performance of the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) function between the United States Government and the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN). Under that contract, ICANN performs the "IANA functions", which include receiving delegation and redefinition requests concerning TLDs, investigating the circumstances pertinent to those requests, making its recommendations, and reporting actions undertaken in connection with processing such requests.

## Factual Information

### Country

The "MK" ISO 3166-1 code is designated for use to represent the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

### String

This report discusses two strings:

1. The "MK" string, under consideration for redefinition, represents the ISO 3166-1 alpha-2 code for the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.
2. The "mkд" string, under consideration for delegation, is represented in ASCII-compatible encoding according to the IDNA specification as "xn-d1alf". The individual Unicode code points that comprise this string are U+043C U+043A U+0434. The string transliterates to "mkd" in English. The string is expressed using the Cyrillic script.

## Chronology of events

The following report presents findings on the request to redelegate the .MK country code top-level domain and the request to delegate the "mkд" string as a country code top-level domain representing the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The report combines both requests, as most of the documentation presented for each is identical.

The currently designated manager for the .MK top-level domain is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as described in the IANA Root Zone Database.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was the designated domain manager when the ccTLD .MK was delegated, however, the Macedonian Academic Research Network (MARnet), a department of the Computer Center at the Saints Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, who performed the actual operations and management of .MK.

In January 2011, as the responsibilities for managing the .MK ccTLD grew, a new public entity named Macedonian Academic Research Network Skopje was formed. Macedonian Academic Research Network Skopje is the proposed sponsoring organization in this request. As a separate public entity, the Macedonian Academic Research Network Skopje is responsible for developing, organizing and managing the telecommunication network in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, as well as managing the .MK top-level domain.

The Macedonian Academic Research Network Skopje continued the work of MARnet in managing the .MK ccTLD with the same technical and administrative staff.

In its efforts to establish the IDN ccTLD for the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Macedonian Academic Research Network Skopje facilitated a consensus-building process that resulted in the selection of .mkd as the string to represent the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The string "mkd" in the Cyrillic script represent the letters "mkd" in the Latin script. The string selection process had a suggestion-gathering period from 29 November 2012 to 3 December 2012, and a voting period from 15 December 2012 to 15 January 2013.

On 3 September 2013, Macedonian Academic Research Network Skopje applied for string .mkd to represent the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia through the IDN ccTLD Fast Track process.

On 14 April 2014, review by the IDN Fast Track DNS Stability Panel found that "the applied-for strings ... present none of the threats to the stability or security of the DNS identified in [the IDN Fast Track implementation plan] ... and present an acceptably low risk of user confusion". The request for the string to represent the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia was subsequently approved.

In April 2014, the Macedonian Academic Research Network Skopje commenced a request to ICANN for the redelegation of the .MK top-level domain and the delegation of the .mkd top-level domain.

### **Proposed Sponsoring Organization and Contacts**

The proposed sponsoring organization and contacts are the same for both .mk and .mkd.

The proposed sponsoring organization is the Macedonian Academic Research Network Skopje, a public entity established in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

The proposed administrative contact is Sasho Dimitrijoski, Director of the Macedonian Academic Research Network Skopje. The administrative contact is understood to be based in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

The proposed technical contact is Novak Novakov, Responsible in the DNS department, Macedonian Academic Research Network Skopje.

## **Evaluation of the Request**

### **String Eligibility**

The .MK string is eligible for continued delegation under ICANN policy, as the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is presently listed in the ISO 3166-1 standard with the assigned code MK.

The .mkd string has been deemed an appropriate representation of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia through the ICANN Fast Track String Selection process.

### **Public Interest**

Support statements for the applications to redelegate .MK and delegate .mkd were provided by Ivo Ivanovski, the Minister of Information Society and Administration. Additional statements in support of both the redelegation and delegation requests were provided by the following:

- Zoran Petrov, the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- Sinisha Naumoski, a representative of Academy of Banking and Information Technology Skopje;
- Gjore Dimov, director of PROCESS IN, an agency of intellectual and IT services and marketing;
- Blage Petrusevski, manager of MKhost, a web hosting company who also engages in domain registration and web development;
- Aneta Antova Peseva, CEO of ULTRANET DOO Skopje, an Internet service provider;
- Nenad Fidanovski, CEO of Global Net, a company specializes in software development; and
- Zoran Sapkarev, IT manager of ONE Telecommunications, a telecommunications service provider.

The applications are consistent with known applicable local laws in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

The proposed sponsoring organization undertakes responsibility to operate the domains in a fair and equitable manner.

### **Based in country**

The proposed sponsoring organization is constituted in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The proposed administrative contact is understood to be resident in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The registry is to be operated in the country.

### **Stability**

The redlegation request is deemed uncontested, with the currently listed sponsoring organization consenting to the transfer.

Based on the information submitted, ICANN staff has not identified any stability issues that would warrant a transfer plan given the substantive operation is not changing. Macedonian Academic Research Network Skopje has been managing the .MK ccTLD since its initial delegation, at first under the name of "Macedonian Academic Research Network (MARnet)", and later on as the Macedonian Academic Research Network Skopje after its establishment as a public entity. The latter continued managing this domain with the same technical and administrative staff.

### **Competency**

The application has provided satisfactory details on the technical and operational infrastructure and expertise that will be used to operate the .MK and .mkd domains. Proposed policies for management of the domains have also been tendered.

## **Evaluation Procedure**

ICANN is tasked with coordinating the Domain Name System root zone as part of a set of functions governed by a contract with the U.S. Government. This includes accepting and evaluating requests for delegation and redlegation of top-level domains.

A subset of top-level domains are designated for the local Internet communities in countries to operate in a way that best suits their local needs. These are known as country-code top-level domains (ccTLDs), and are assigned by ICANN to responsible trustees (known as "Sponsoring Organisations") that meet a number of public-interest criteria for eligibility. These criteria largely relate to the level of support the trustee has from its local Internet community, its capacity to ensure stable operation of the domain, and its applicability under any relevant local laws.

Through ICANN's IANA department, requests are received for delegating new ccTLDs, and redelegating or revoking existing ccTLDs. An investigation is performed on the circumstances pertinent to those requests, and, when appropriate, the requests are implemented and a recommendation for delegation or redlegation is made to the U.S. National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA).

### **Purpose of evaluations**

The evaluation of eligibility for ccTLDs, and of evaluating responsible trustees charged with operating them, is guided by a number of principles. The objective of the assessment is that the action enhances the secure and stable operation of the Internet's unique identifier systems.

In considering requests to delegate or redelegate ccTLDs, input is sought regarding the proposed new Sponsoring Organisation, as well as from persons and organisations that may be significantly affected by the change, particularly those within the nation or territory to which the ccTLD is designated.

The assessment is focussed on the capacity for the proposed sponsoring organisation to meet the following criteria:

- The domain should be operated within the country, including having its sponsoring organisation and administrative contact based in the country.
- The domain should be operated in a way that is fair and equitable to all groups in the local Internet community.
- Significantly interested parties in the domain should agree that the prospective trustee is the appropriate party to be responsible for the domain, with the desires of the national government taken very seriously.
- The domain must be operated competently, both technically and operationally. Management of the domain should adhere to relevant technical standards and community best practices.
- Risks to the stability of the Internet addressing system must be adequately considered and addressed, particularly with regard to how existing identifiers will continue to function.

### **Method of evaluation**

To assess these criteria, information is requested from the applicant regarding the proposed sponsoring organisation and method of operation. In summary, a request template is sought specifying the exact details of the delegation being sought in the root zone. In addition, various documentation is sought describing: the views of the local internet community on the application; the competencies and skills of the trustee to operate the domain; the legal authenticity, status and character of the proposed trustee; and the nature of government support for the proposal. The view of any current trustee is obtained, and in the event of a redlegation, the transfer plan from the previous sponsoring organisation to the new sponsoring organisation is also assessed with a view to ensuring ongoing stable operation of the domain.

After receiving this documentation and input, it is analysed in relation to existing root zone management procedures, seeking input from parties both related to as well as independent of the proposed sponsoring organisation should the information provided in the original application be deficient. The applicant is given the opportunity to cure any deficiencies before a final assessment is made.

Once all the documentation has been received, various technical checks are performed on the proposed sponsoring organisation's DNS infrastructure to ensure name servers are properly configured and are able to respond to queries correctly. Should any anomalies be detected, ICANN staff will work with the applicant to address the issues.

Assuming all issues are resolved, an assessment is compiled providing all relevant details regarding the proposed sponsoring organisation and its suitability to operate the relevant top-level domain.

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# Redelegation Report for .wang

2014-06-16

This report is produced in accordance with Section C.2.9.2.d of Contract Number SA130112CN0035 for the performance of the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority functions. Under the contract, ICANN verifies that all requests relating to the delegation and redelegation of generic top-level domains are consistent with the procedures developed by ICANN. Documentation is provided verifying that ICANN followed its own policy framework including specific documentation demonstrating how the process provided the opportunity for input from relevant stakeholders and was supportive of the global public interest.

## Summary

Applicant matches approved party ..... Yes  
 Contact Confirmations ..... Completed  
 Technical Conformance ..... Completed  
 Other processing ..... Completed

## Domain information

Label **wang** This reflects the label managed in the DNS root zone, also known as the top-level domain. It is used by end-users in applications and in technical configuration management.

## Applicant information

The proposed sponsoring organisation for this domain is:

**Zodiac Registry Limited**  
 Block B Unit 403  
 Horizon International Tower  
 No. 6 Zhichun Road  
 Haidian District Beijing 100088  
 China

## IANA change request eligibility

<b>Applicant matches the contracted party</b> — The entity listed as the "sponsoring organisation" in the Root Zone Database has overall responsibility for managing the delegation details with the IANA functions. The entity proposed as sponsoring organisation must match the currently contracted party authorised to operate the domain by ICANN.	Matches	✔
<b>Contact confirmations</b> — The proposed points-of-contact for the domain must confirm their details are correct and agree to responsibility for management of the domain.	Completed	✔
<b>Technical conformance</b> — The proposed technical configuration of the domain must pass a number of minimum technical requirements in order to be listed in the DNS Root Zone.	Completed	✔
<b>Other requirements</b> — The request must pass a number of procedural checks conducted for all root zone changes in order to be transmitted for authorisation and implementation.	Completed	✔



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# Redelegation Report for .Itida

2014-08-28

This report is produced in accordance with Section C.2.9.2.d of Contract Number SA130112CN0035 for the performance of the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority functions. Under the contract, ICANN verifies that all requests relating to the delegation and redelegation of generic top-level domains are consistent with the procedures developed by ICANN. Documentation is provided verifying that ICANN followed its own policy framework including specific documentation demonstrating how the process provided the opportunity for input from relevant stakeholders and was supportive of the global public interest.

## Summary

Applicant matches approved party ..... Yes  
 Contact Confirmations ..... Completed  
 Technical Conformance ..... Completed  
 Other processing ..... Completed

## Domain information

Label **.itida** This reflects the label managed in the DNS root zone, also known as the top-level domain. It is used by end-users in applications and in technical configuration management.

## Applicant information

The proposed sponsoring organisation for this domain is:

**InterNetX Corp.**  
 601 Brickell Key Drive, Suite 1020  
 Miami, FL 33131  
 United States

## IANA change request eligibility

<b>Applicant matches the contracted party</b> — The entity listed as the "sponsoring organisation" in the Root Zone Database has overall responsibility for managing the delegation details with the IANA functions. The entity proposed as sponsoring organisation must match the currently contracted party authorised to operate the domain by ICANN.	Matches	✓
<b>Contact confirmations</b> — The proposed points-of-contact for the domain must confirm their details are correct and agree to responsibility for management of the domain.	Completed	✓
<b>Technical conformance</b> — The proposed technical configuration of the domain must pass a number of minimum technical requirements in order to be listed in the DNS Root Zone.	Completed	✓
<b>Other requirements</b> — The request must pass a number of procedural checks conducted for all root zone changes in order to be transmitted for authorisation and implementation.	Completed	✓

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# Redelegation Report for .reise

2015-06-12

This report is produced in accordance with Section C.2.9.2.d of Contract Number SA130112CN0035 for the performance of the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority functions. Under the contract, ICANN verifies that all requests relating to the delegation and redelegation of generic top-level domains are consistent with the procedures developed by ICANN. Documentation is provided verifying that ICANN followed its own policy framework including specific documentation demonstrating how the process provided the opportunity for input from relevant stakeholders and was supportive of the global public interest.

## Summary

Applicant matches approved party ..... Yes  
 Contact Confirmations ..... Completed  
 Technical Conformance ..... Completed  
 Other processing ..... Completed

## Domain information

Label	reise	This reflects the label managed in the DNS root zone, also known as the top-level domain. It is used by end-users in applications and in technical configuration management.
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## Applicant information


The proposed sponsoring organisation for this domain is:

**Foggy Way, LLC**  
 c/o Donuts Inc.  
 10500 NE 8th Street, Suite 350  
 Bellevue, Washington 98004  
 United States

## IANA change request eligibility

<b>Applicant matches the contracted party</b> — The entity listed as the "sponsoring organisation" in the Root Zone Database has overall responsibility for managing the delegation details with the IANA functions. The entity proposed as sponsoring organisation must match the currently contracted party authorised to operate the domain by ICANN.	Matches	✓
<b>Contact confirmations</b> — The proposed points-of-contact for the domain must confirm their details are correct and agree to responsibility for management of the domain.	Completed	✓
<b>Technical conformance</b> — The proposed technical configuration of the domain must pass a number of minimum technical requirements in order to be listed in the DNS Root Zone.	Completed	✓
<b>Other requirements</b> — The request must pass a number of procedural checks conducted for all root zone changes in order to be transmitted for authorisation and implementation.	Completed	✓

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# Report on the Redlegation of the .TG domain representing Togo to the Autorite de Reglementation des Secteurs de Postes et de Telecommunications (ART&P)

18 January 2016

This report is being provided under the contract for performance of the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) function between the United States Government and the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN). Under that contract, ICANN performs the "IANA functions", which include receiving delegation and redelégation requests concerning TLDs, investigating the circumstances pertinent to those requests, making its recommendations, and reporting actions undertaken in connection with processing such requests.

## Factual Information

### Country

The "TG" ISO 3166-1 code is designated for use to represent Togo.

### Chronology of events

The currently designated manager for the .TG top-level domain is Cafe Informatique et Telecommunications, as described in the IANA Root Zone Database. Cafe Informatique et Telecommunications has managed the .TG domain since 1996.

On 11 February 1998, Autorite de Reglementation des Secteurs de Postes et de Telecommunications (ART&P) was created by Telecommunications Act No. 98-005.

On 14 May 2012, Order No. 005/MPT/CAB appointed ART&P the administrative manager of the .TG top-level domain.

On 18 June 2012, a work meeting took place between the commission in charge of the redelégation project and the local Internet community. After an exchange of views, the local Internet community provided support for the redelégation of .TG.

On 13 July 2012, the Togolese government and Cafe Informatique et Telecommunications signed a Memorandum of Understanding to work together on the redelégation of the .TG domain.

On 15 February 2013, Cafe Informatique et Telecommunications agreed to continue performing the role of the technical contact for .TG under the administration of ART&P after the redelégation is complete, to ensure a smooth transition.

On 20 January 2015, Autorite de Reglementation des Secteurs de Postes et de Telecommunications (ART&P) commenced a request to ICANN for redelégation of the .TG top-level domain.

### Proposed Sponsoring Organisation and Contacts

The proposed sponsoring organization is Reglementation des Secteurs de Postes et de Telecommunications (ART&P), a national regulatory authority in Togo.

The proposed administrative contact is Abayah Boyodi, the Chief Executive Officer of ART&P. The administrative contact is understood to be based in Togo.

The proposed technical contact is Yawo Noagbodji, Chief Executive Officer of Cafe Informatique et Telecommunications.

## Evaluation of the Request

### String Eligibility

The top-level domain is eligible for continued delegation under ICANN policy, as it is the assigned ISO 3166-1 two-letter code representing Togo.

### Public Interest

Government support was provided by Cina Lawson, the Minister of Posts and Telecommunications, Republic of Togo.

Additional community support was provided by:

- Azanlekor Ekoué Segla, Resp. Computer Cell, Université Catholique de Afrique de Ouest- Unité Universitaire du Togo (UCAO-UUT);
- Dogba Agbeko, President, Entente des Specialistes des Technologies des TIC (ESTETIC);
- Laba Komlan, Association Togolaise des Consommateurs (ATC);
- Tepe Kossi, Teacher, University of Lome;
- Wallah Palakiyem, Teacher/Researcher, University of Kara;
- Jonathan Fiawoo, President, of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Togo.

The application is consistent with known applicable local laws in Togo.

The proposed sponsoring organization undertakes responsibility to operate the domain in a fair and equitable manner.

### Based in country

The proposed sponsoring organization is constituted in Togo. The proposed administrative contact is understood to be resident in Togo.

### Stability

The request is deemed uncontested, with the currently listed sponsoring organization consenting to the transfer.

Based on the information submitted, ICANN staff has not identified any stability issues given the technical operation is not changing. The currently designated manager has agreed to continue to act as the technical operator of the domain.

### Competency

The application has provided satisfactory details on the technical and operational infrastructure and expertise that will be used to operate the .TG domain. Proposed policies for management of the domain have also been tendered.

## Evaluation Procedure

ICANN is tasked with coordinating the Domain Name System root zone as part of a set of functions governed by a contract with the U.S. Government. This includes accepting and evaluating requests for delegation and redlegation of top-level domains.

A subset of top-level domains are designated for the local Internet communities in countries to operate in a way that best suits their local needs. These are known as country-code top-level domains (ccTLDs), and are assigned by ICANN to responsible trustees (known as "Sponsoring Organisations") that meet a number of public-interest criteria for eligibility. These criteria largely relate to the level of support the trustee has from its local Internet community, its capacity to ensure stable operation of the domain, and its applicability under any relevant local laws.

Through ICANN's IANA department, requests are received for delegating new ccTLDs, and redelegating or revoking existing ccTLDs. An investigation is performed on the circumstances pertinent to those requests, and, when appropriate, the requests are implemented and a recommendation for delegation or redlegation is made to the U.S. National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA).

### Purpose of evaluations

The evaluation of eligibility for ccTLDs, and of evaluating responsible trustees charged with operating them, is guided by a number of principles. The objective of the assessment is that the action enhances the secure and stable operation of the Internet's unique identifier systems.

In considering requests to delegate or redelegate ccTLDs, input is sought regarding the proposed new Sponsoring Organisation, as well as from persons and organisations that may be significantly affected

by the change, particularly those within the nation or territory to which the ccTLD is designated.

The assessment is focussed on the capacity for the proposed sponsoring organisation to meet the following criteria:

- The domain should be operated within the country, including having its sponsoring organisation and administrative contact based in the country.
- The domain should be operated in a way that is fair and equitable to all groups in the local Internet community.
- Significantly interested parties in the domain should agree that the prospective trustee is the appropriate party to be responsible for the domain, with the desires of the national government taken very seriously.
- The domain must be operated competently, both technically and operationally. Management of the domain should adhere to relevant technical standards and community best practices.
- Risks to the stability of the Internet addressing system must be adequately considered and addressed, particularly with regard to how existing identifiers will continue to function.

### Method of evaluation

To assess these criteria, information is requested from the applicant regarding the proposed sponsoring organisation and method of operation. In summary, a request template is sought specifying the exact details of the delegation being sought in the root zone. In addition, various documentation is sought describing: the views of the local internet community on the application; the competencies and skills of the trustee to operate the domain; the legal authenticity, status and character of the proposed trustee; and the nature of government support for the proposal. The view of any current trustee is obtained, and in the event of a redelegation, the transfer plan from the previous sponsoring organisation to the new sponsoring organisation is also assessed with a view to ensuring ongoing stable operation of the domain.

After receiving this documentation and input, it is analysed in relation to existing root zone management procedures, seeking input from parties both related to as well as independent of the proposed sponsoring organisation should the information provided in the original application be deficient. The applicant is given the opportunity to cure any deficiencies before a final assessment is made.

Once all the documentation has been received, various technical checks are performed on the proposed sponsoring organisation's DNS infrastructure to ensure name servers are properly configured and are able to respond to queries correctly. Should any anomalies be detected, ICANN staff will work with the applicant to address the issues.

Assuming all issues are resolved, an assessment is compiled providing all relevant details regarding the proposed sponsoring organisation and its suitability to operate the relevant top-level domain.

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# IANA Report on Redefinition of the .org Top-Level Domain (9 December 2002)

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## IANA Report

Subject: Redefinition of the .org Top-Level Domain

Date: 9 December 2002

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The Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (the IANA) is responsible for various administrative functions associated with management of the Internet's domain-name system root zone, including reviewing the appropriateness of contemplated changes to the content of the root zone and preparing reports on those changes. This report gives the findings and conclusions of the IANA on the redefinition of the .org top-level domain (TLD) from operation by VeriSign, Inc., to operation by Public Interest Registry.

### Factual and Procedural Background

#### A. Background of the .org TLD

The Internet domain-name system (DNS) was deployed under the guidance of Jon Postel in 1984 and 1985 (see RFC 921) as a distributed database for information about resources on the Internet, replacing the prior "hosts.txt" system. The DNS contains resource records that map easy-to-remember domain names to the unique numeric addresses assigned to every computer on the Internet.

The DNS is organized hierarchically with several TLDs containing second-level domains (SLDs), which in turn contain third-level domains (3LDs), etc. A domain name consists of a series of labels, separated by dots, tracing the hierarchy from the top-level domain down to the specific computer being identified: <3LD>.<SLD>.<TLD>. Thus, the domain name "www.icann.org" is within the "www" third-level domain of the "icann" second-level domain of the "org" top-level domain.

As initially deployed, the DNS included both generic top-level domains (gTLDs) and country-code top-level domains (ccTLDs). In RFC 920, entitled "Domain Requirements" (Oct. 1984), Dr. Postel and Joyce Reynolds proposed a set of initial gTLDs including "com" (commercial), "edu" (education), "gov" (government), "mil" (military), and "org" (organization)." By the time of actual implementation of the top-level domains in January 1985, an additional top-level domain named "net" was included.

From the deployment of the DNS until the end of 1992, the gTLDs were managed by SRI International's Network Information Center (SRI-NIC). Beginning in 1993, the registration function within gTLDs was assumed by Network Solutions, Inc. (NSI), under Cooperative

## Agreement NCR 92-18742 with the National Science Foundation.

That cooperative agreement was originally scheduled to conclude on 30 September 1998. In June 1998, however, the U.S. Department of Commerce (which took over from the National Science Foundation as the responsible U.S. Government agency) issued a Statement of Policy commonly known as the "White Paper" ("Management of Internet Names and Addresses," 63 Fed. Reg. 31741 (1998)), in which it announced its intention to transition responsibilities for management of the domain name space to a private, not-for-profit corporation (now known as the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers, or "ICANN") formed by the Internet community. In connection with the implementation of the White Paper, the NSI-U.S. Government cooperative agreement was extended in October 1998 (by Amendment 11) until 30 September 2000. In 1999, NSI and ICANN reached an agreement that supplemented the cooperative agreement with an ICANN-NSI registry agreement, under which NSI's operatorship of the .com, .net, and .org gTLDs was extended to 10 November 2003 or, if certain conditions were met, 10 November 2007. At the same time, NSI and the U.S. Department of Commerce amended the cooperative agreement to extend for the same period. (Amendment 19 to Cooperative Agreement NCR 92-18742, section I(B)(10).)

In May 2001, the ICANN-NSI registry agreement covering .com, .net, and .org, was replaced with three registry agreements, which separately covered (and had different termination provisions for) the three gTLDs.<sup>1</sup> The registry agreement for .org provided that VeriSign, Inc. (which had acquired NSI) would give up the operatorship of the .org registry on 31 December 2002,<sup>2</sup> after which a successor registry operator designated by ICANN would assume responsibility for the operation of .org.

### **B. Process for Selection of a Successor Operator of the .org TLD**

At its 4 June 2001 meeting in Stockholm, Sweden, the ICANN Board of Directors referred the issues raised by the scheduled transition of the operation of the .org gTLD to ICANN's Domain Name Supporting Organization (DNSO) Names Council. The Names Council, in turn, formed a working group, which submitted a report that the Names Council unanimously adopted at a meeting on 17 January 2002. The report was posted on the ICANN web site for public comment, and an in-person Public Forum was held on the topic on 13 March 2002 at ICANN's meeting in Accra, Ghana.

At the ICANN Board's meeting on 14 March 2002, the Board authorized the solicitation of proposals to succeed VeriSign as the operator of the .org registry. ICANN then posted, in draft form, a request for proposals, which included the following elements:

- application instructions;
- an application transmittal form;
- a proposal form (with detailed questions to be answered in proposals);
- a fitness disclosure for applicants;
- a form for requesting confidential treatment of submitted materials;
- a statement of criteria for assessing proposals; and
- a draft registry agreement that the selected successor would be expected to enter.

After a two-week comment period, these materials were revised based on the comments received. The final request for proposals was posted on 20 May 2002. In addition, ICANN solicited written questions from prospective bidders, and on 24 May 2002 posted 46

detailed answers to the questions received.

Eleven proposals were received by the 18 June 2002 deadline in response to the request for proposals. Each of these proposals was posted on the ICANN web site, and public comments were invited.<sup>3</sup> A special ICANN Public Forum was held on the evening of 26 June 2002 in conjunction with ICANN's meeting in Bucharest, Romania, where each bidder made a presentation to the ICANN Board and community on its proposal, and a dialogue was held with members of the community, the Board, and the bidders.<sup>4</sup>

Over the next three months, four teams designated by ICANN evaluated the applications under the eleven criteria that had been posted as part of the request for proposals. The four teams, which focused on different aspects, were:

- Gartner, Inc. performed a detailed evaluation of the technical aspects of the eleven proposals;
- A team of Chief Information Officers of academic institutions in the United States, Mexico, and Australia also did a technical evaluation, which was more summary than the Gartner analysis and served as a validator of it;
- A team of participants in the DNSO Non-Commercial Domain Name Holders Constituency did an evaluation of the proposals under three of the stated criteria, involving proposed measures to differentiate of the .org TLD, responsiveness to the needs of the noncommercial Internet community, and level of support from .org registrants and the non-commercial community; and
- The ICANN General Counsel evaluated how well the proposals met certain legal considerations.

Each of these teams based its evaluation on the written proposals, the presentations at the Bucharest Public Forum, and public comments received on the proposals through ICANN's online comment mechanisms. In addition, the evaluators were assisted by the applicants' responses to fourteen questions that were posed to clarify various aspects of the proposals.

On 19 August 2002, a draft evaluation report, which detailed and combined the analyses of each of the evaluation teams, was posted on ICANN's web site. This draft report recommended the following three proposals, in order of preference: (1) PIR (a not-for-profit organization proposed to be formed by the Internet Society), (2) NeuStar, Inc. (a for-profit company), and (3) Global Name Registry (a for-profit company). Public and applicant comments were invited on the draft evaluation report, and many were received.<sup>5</sup> These comments pointed out several areas in which the evaluation could be enhanced; these comments were addressed and a final evaluation report was issued on 23 September 2002. The final evaluation report included an overall "staff evaluation report" and supporting reports prepared by Gartner, Inc., the Non-Commercial Domain Name Holders Constituency team, and the ICANN General Counsel. Although the final evaluation report reflected revisions to several aspects of the evaluation based on the comments received, the recommended preferences for selection of (1) PIR, (2) NeuStar, and (3) Global Name Registry were reaffirmed by the analysis.

Further comments from the applicants and the public were invited on the final evaluation report, before its consideration by the ICANN Board. Eight of the eleven bidders chose to submit written summations for consideration by the Board. These were posted on the

ICANN web site.

On 14 October 2002, the ICANN Board met to consider the proposals in view of the extensive public and applicant comment, as well as the evaluation reports by the various evaluation teams. At that meeting, it selected PIR as the first-choice successor, and authorized the ICANN President and General Counsel to "negotiate a registry agreement with PIR consistent with the model .org Registry Agreement posted as part of the final Request for Proposals, supplemented as appropriate according to the proposal submitted by the Internet Society."<sup>6</sup>

### C. Negotiation of the ICANN-PIR Agreement

The .org Registry Agreement was negotiated over the next ten days. On 24 October 2002, the fully negotiated agreement was posted on the ICANN web site. In line with ICANN's usual practice, ICANN Board members were afforded seven days in which to raise objections to the agreements based on policy considerations; no such objections were raised. On 26 November 2002, the U.S. Department of Commerce approved PIR as successor registry under Amendment 3 of its Memorandum of Understanding with ICANN. The ICANN and PIR formally entered the .org Registry Agreement on 2 December 2002.

### Evaluation

This report is being provided under the 21 March 2001 contact for performance of the IANA function between the United States Government and the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers. Under that contract, the IANA is responsible for various functions, known as the "IANA functions", associated with the management of the root zone of the Internet domain-name system.

The overall purpose of changing operators of the .org registry is to enhance diversity of providers in the provision of registry services. This purpose, however, must be accomplished in a way that preserves the security and stability of the domain-name system. It should also be accomplished in a way so that .org is operated in a manner that reflects the particular needs of present .org registrants and the other entities within the non-commercial sector for which the .org top-level domain was established.

Because the .org TLD registry presently serves over 2,600,000 second-level domains, ICANN placed primary emphasis on stability in evaluating the proposals. Indeed, the first criterion for the selection was stability:

#### **1. Need to preserve a stable, well-functioning .org registry.**

ICANN's first priority is to preserve the stability of the Internet, including the domain-name system (DNS). Inasmuch as the .org TLD presently contains over 2,700,000 second-level domains, a principal consideration will be ICANN's level of confidence that a particular proposal will result in technically sound, high-quality services that meet the needs of .org registrants.

Proposals should include specific plans, backed by ample, firmly committed resources, as to how the proposed operator intends to operate the .org TLD in a stable and technically competent manner. . . . In evaluating proposals, ICANN will place significant emphasis on the demonstrated ability of the

applicant or a member of the proposing team to operate a TLD registry of significant scale in a manner that provides affordable services with a high degree of service responsiveness and reliability.

Reassignment of .org Top-Level Domain: Criteria for Assessing Proposals (20 May 2002).

This emphasis on stability was reflected throughout the evaluation process and the Board's selection. After a twenty-five day transition period, PIR will provide registration services through an outsourcing arrangement with Afilias, which as the registry operator for .info has experience in serving as registry operator for over 1,000,000 second-level domains. The technical evaluation teams both evaluated the Internet Society/PIR proposal as being within the top tier in terms of stability and other technical factors.

The evaluation considered not only the demonstrated the technical stability provided by Afilias, but also the organizational characteristics of PIR. PIR is a not-for-profit corporation organized under Pennsylvania law to serve as the .org registry operator. Its sole member is the Internet Society, which appoints its Board. The Internet Society was formed in 1992 and is a professional membership society with more than 150 organizational and 11,000 individual members in over 182 countries. Thus, the Internet Society is a long-established organization that is particularly knowledgeable about the needs of the organizations for which the .org top-level domain was intended. By establishing PIR as a subsidiary to serve as the successor operator of .org, the Internet Society has created a structure that can operate the .org TLD in a manner that will be sensitive to the needs of its intended users while allowing PIR to focus on the operation of .org by insulating it from the possibly distracting effects of pursuing the Internet Society's broader mission.

Under the arrangements put in place by the Internet Society, Afilias will provide start-up funding for PIR, after which PIR will receive one-third of the revenues from operation of the registry. These arrangements should provide PIR the financial resources necessary for it to operate in a financially stable manner. In addition, the presence of Afilias as a back-end provider provides assurance of continued stable operation of the .org registry.

The negotiated .org registry agreement reinforces the overriding emphasis on technical stability. It is modeled on the registry agreements ICANN has entered for the four unsponsored TLDs (.biz, .info, .name, and .pro) that have been introduced in 2001 and 2002. The agreement's features designed to ensure that the continued stability of the .org TLD include functional and performance specifications, data escrow requirements, and a detailed transition plan (including contingency scenarios) that are designed to ensure that .org customers and Internet users do not experience failures or disruptions as a result of the reassignment of the .org registry.

The reassignment of the .org registry from VeriSign to PIR will also meet the goal of enhancing diversity in the provision of gTLD registry services. Based on 1 July 2002 registration data, the top four providers of registry services for commercial gTLDs<sup>7</sup> currently are:

Provider	Number of Domain Names	Percentage of Total
VeriSign (.com/.net/.org)	28,908,179	94.54%
Afilias (.info)	868,162	2.84%

NeuLevel (.biz)	721,198	2.36%
Global Name Registry (.name)	80,000	0.26%

With the reassignment of .org to Public Interest Registry, under which Afilias will provide the back-end technical services, the providers' shares will be adjusted as follows (again, based on 1 July 2002 data):

Provider	Number of Domain Names	Percentage of Total
VeriSign (.com/.net/.org)	26,366,166	86.23%
PIR (.org) (Afilias back-end)	2,542,013	8.31%
Afilias (.info)	868,162	2.84%
NeuLevel (.biz)	721,198	2.36%
Global Name Registry (.name)	80,000	0.26%

These figures indicate that the reassignment of the .org registry from VeriSign to PIR (with Afilias as a back-end provider) will materially increase diversity among gTLD providers, although concentration remains quite high.<sup>8</sup>

The enhanced diversity of back-end providers also provides enhanced features for the .org registry services. Among the enhanced .org features will be much quicker DNS and Whois update times (15 minutes maximum) than presently provided (12 hours maximum), as well as a variety of no-cost and low-cost ancillary registry services.

## Transition Plan

To help ensure a stable transition, PIR has contracted with VeriSign, Inc., to provide temporary back-end support for the .org registry beginning on 1 January 2003. This will permit a phased transition, during which the existing .org registrars that have completed contractual and other arrangements with PIR will continue submitting registry updates to VeriSign's registry system until 25 January 2003, in exactly the same technical manner as they do at present. Effective 25 January 2003, VeriSign will cease accepting .org updates from registrars and this function will be taken over by the new back-end provider, Afilias. The Afilias system will initially use the same protocol as presently used. Later in 2003, registrars will begin a migration from the current RRP protocol to the more-fully-featured EPP protocol, and will convert from the current thin registry model to a thick registry model. These migrations, as well as extensive contingency plans, are described in detail in PIR's Transition Plan. These plans are technically conservative and should lead to a stable transition to the new registry.

## Conclusion

Based on the foregoing factors, the .org registry should be reassigned from VeriSign to Public Interest Registry as of 1 January 2003. This reassignment offers a material increase in the diversity of providers of gTLD registry services, while ensuring the continued stable operation of the .org registry.

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## Notes:

1. The new agreements (.com, .net, and .org) were approved by the Department of Commerce in paragraph I of Amendment 3 to its Memorandum of Understanding with ICANN.
2. See ICANN-VeriSign .org Registry Agreement §§ 5.1.1, 5.1.2 (25 May 2001).
3. The postings are archived at <<http://forum.icann.org/org/>>.
4. For a compendium of the presentations given, see <<http://www.icann.org/bucharest/org-presentations.htm>>. The proceedings were also transcribed and are posted at <<http://www.icann.org/bucharest/captioning-evening-26jun02.htm>>.
5. Comments of the applicants are posted at <<http://www.icann.org/tlds/org/applicant-comments-on-preliminary-report.htm>> and public comments are posted at <<http://forum.icann.org/org-eval/>>.
6. A preliminary report of the Board meeting, showing the resolutions adopted by the Board, is posted at <<http://www.icann.org/minutes/prelim-report-14oct02.htm#SuccessorOperatorfororgRegistry>>.
7. This table does not include .mil, .gov, .int, or .edu, which are not ordinarily used for registrations by commercial entities. In addition, the table does not include three recently introduced sponsored TLDs (.aero, .coop, and .museum) and one special-purpose unsponsored TLD (.pro), which account for fewer than 10,000 registered names combined.
8. VeriSign is one of eighteen gTLD registrars that jointly own Afilias. The ICANN General Counsel's evaluation considered the competitive effect of this ownership, and concluded that it would not impair the pro-competitive effects of the reassignment:

ISOC[PIR]'s back-end provider, Afilias, also has VeriSign as an investor. Afilias is organized as a consortium of eighteen gTLD registrars. VeriSign is a minority (5.6%) shareholder of Afilias as one of these registrars. Because the other Afilias shareholders are VeriSign's competitors, however, VeriSign's ability to exercise control over Afilias is effectively minimized and, indeed, no VeriSign employee has ever been elected to Afilias' Board of Trustees/Directors. In these circumstances, it does not appear that this investment relationship undercuts the competitive benefits of reassignment of .org, particularly in view of the fact that the .org registry would be assigned to ISOC[PIR], not Afilias.

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Comments concerning the layout, construction and functionality of this site should be sent to [webmaster@icann.org](mailto:webmaster@icann.org).

Page Updated 09-Dec-2002

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# **EXHIBIT H**



# NEWS

Get the latest news from Afilias and its Industry Experts.

## Public Interest Registry Assumes Control of .ORG Domain Name Registry

### Largest Domain Redefinition in the History of the Internet Commences

**Reston, VA - January 2, 2003** - The [Public Interest Registry \(PIR\)](#) today announced that it has assumed the role of registry operator for the .ORG top-level domain in a smooth handoff from former operator VeriSign Global Registry Services. This historic transition, which commenced yesterday when PIR officially assumed control of registry operations, marks the beginning of the largest transfer of data from one registry to another in the history of the Internet.

"We are pleased to begin the transition process," said David Maher, chairman of the PIR board. "We have put together a solid transition team and are working together toward a smooth, stable transition resulting in no interruption of service for .ORG registrants."

In order to minimize disruption, a 25-day phase-in period has begun during which VeriSign will still provide back-end technical services. This will allow those that sell .ORG domain names more time to prepare for the transition. On January 25, 2003, the technical services for the registry will be cutover from VeriSign to Afilias Limited, PIR's chosen back-end service provider.

The .ORG domain, which has come to be associated with noncommercial organizations, is the Internet's fifth largest top-level domain, housing over 2.4 million domain names worldwide. PIR was created to manage the .ORG registry by the Internet Society (ISOC), and is committed to setting a new standard for registry services in its management of .ORG that will meet the unique needs and interests of noncommercial organizations around the world.

Earlier this year, the Board of Directors of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) selected ISOC's proposal from among 11 organizations bidding to operate the .ORG top-level domain. VeriSign's contract as registry operator for .ORG expired on December 31, 2002. As such, it is relinquishing .ORG to comply with an agreement entered into with the ICANN and the U.S. Department of Commerce in May 2001.

### **About PIR**

Public Interest Registry ([www.PIR.org](http://www.PIR.org)) is a not-for-profit corporation created to manage the .ORG domain. PIR's mission is to manage the .ORG domain in a way that supports the continuing evolution of the Internet as a research, education and communications infrastructure, and educates and empowers the noncommercial community to most effectively utilize the Internet. PIR is based in Reston, VA.

PIR was created by the Internet Society ([www.ISOC.org](http://www.ISOC.org)). ISOC is a not-for-profit, open membership organization founded in 1991 and is dedicated to ensuring the open evolution, development and use of the Internet for the benefit of all people. It provides leadership in addressing issues that confront the future of the Internet, and is the organizational home for the groups responsible for Internet infrastructure standards.

For additional information on PIR and the .ORG registry, please visit [www.PIR.org](http://www.PIR.org).

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### You might be surprised how many new gTLDs have changed hands already

Kevin Murphy, July 1, 2015, 16:15:05 (UTC), Domain Registries

**At least 86 new gTLD registry contracts have changed hands since the end of 2013, I have discovered.**

ICANN calls the transfer of a Registry Agreement from one company to another an "assignment". Global Domains Division staff said in Buenos Aires last week that it's one of the more complex and time-consuming tasks they have to perform.

So I thought I'd do a count, and I discovered some interesting stuff.

#### Donuts/Rightside

The biggest beneficiary of incoming assignments so far is of course Rightside, aka United TLD Holdco, which has so far taken over 23 of the gTLDs applied for by Donuts.

The two companies have had an agreement since the start that allows Rightside to take on as many as 107 of Donuts' original 307 applications.

Interestingly, Rightside sold .fan to AsiaMix Digital after Donuts had transferred the gTLD to it.

#### Amazon

We also discover that Amazon is repatriating its gTLD contracts en masse.

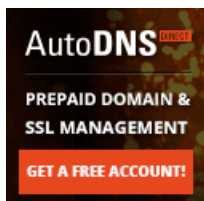
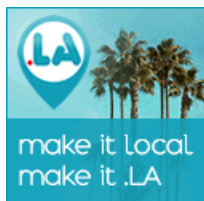
So far, 21 gTLDs applied for by Amazon EU Sarl — the Luxembourg-based company Amazon uses to dodge tax in other European countries — have been transferred to US-based Amazon Registry Services Inc.

Amazon EU has made money losing new gTLD auctions.

Given the company's usual MO, I have to wonder whether Amazon Registry Services, under the US tax regime, plans to make any money at all from its new raft of gTLDs.

#### Subsidiary changes

Speaking of tax, four gTLDs associated with the Hong Kong-based Zodiac group of applicants have been transferred to new



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Thick Whois coming to .com next year, price rise to follow?

Radix acquires .fun gTLD from Warren Buffett

Uniregistry says it was unaffected by mother of all DDoS attacks

Cayman Islands companies with similar names.

A bunch of the other assignments appear to be registries shifting contracts between various subsidiaries.

IG Group, a large UK derivatives trader, has assigned seven gTLDs (such as .forex, .markets and .spreadbetting) to newly created UK subsidiaries, for example.

Also, Ireland-based Afilias transferred the .green RA to a new Irish subsidiary, while Germany-based .srl applicant mySRL has sent its contract to a Florida-based sister company from the InternetX stable.

There are several other example of this kind of activity.

### Actual acquisitions

As best as I can tell, there have been only eight actual post-contracting acquisitions so far: [.trust](#), [.fan](#), [.meet](#), [.reise](#), [.xn--ses554g](#), [.rent](#), [.theatre](#), and [.protection](#).

The only one of those I didn't know about — and haven't seen reported anywhere — was [.meet](#), which Afilias seems to have sold to Google back in February.

It should be noted that while I've counted 86 assignments, I may have missed some. At least one — XYZ.com's acquisition of [.security](#) from Symantec, does not appear have been completed yet, judging by ICANN's web site.

Related posts (automatically generated):

[Generics versus brands as two more gTLDs are sold](#)

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### COMMENTS (3)

**Acro**

July 1, 2015 at 4:26 pm

Great research! Such "behind the scenes" transactions generate extra millions in capital shifting.

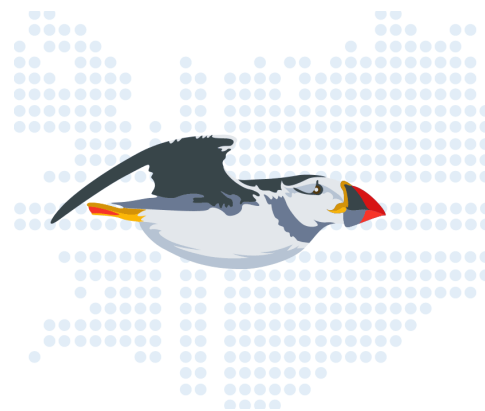
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**Ruben Couto**

July 2, 2015 at 11:25 am

Interesting info!

Reply



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Considering the number of languages in India, we also have plenty of room in LGR (Label Generation Rules) panels to defi... [read more](#)

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**George Eblacker:**

There go all the 4 number domains! Should be a huge boost for the registry's though.... [read more](#)

**ARBEL ARIF:**

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**Richard Hearne:**

Sounds like an interesting read. Another pre-orderer here :)... [read more](#)

**Ryan:**

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**Joseph Peterson**

July 6, 2015 at 1:08 am

Thanks for doing that digging, Kevin. My own to-do list just got 1 item shorter.

It would be interesting to identify nTLDs in advance – the isolated registries or registry applicants – that seem poised or vulnerable for buyout.

That way, we'd have a hypothetical picture of the future consolidated nTLD landscape.

[Reply](#)

**Mark Thorpe:**

I am not surprised DropCatch bought more registrars, I just don't know where they got the money to buy more! They buy re... [read more](#)

**Volker Greimann:**

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## Minds + Machines dumps back-end and registrar in Nominet, Uniregistry deals

Kevin Murphy, April 8, 2016, 08:35:22 (UTC), Domain Registries

**Minds + Machines is to get out of the registrar and back-end registry services markets in separate deals with Nominet and Uniregistry.**

The cost-saving shake-up will lead to about 10 job losses, or about 25% to 30% of its current headcount, CEO Toby Hall told DI this morning.

Under the Nominet deal, M+M will outsource the back-end registry functions for 28 new gTLDs, currently managed in-house, to the .uk ccTLD manager.

The deal covers all the gTLDs for which M+M is the contracted party (such as .law, .cooking and .fashion), as well as the four it runs in partnership (eg .london) and the five where it currently acts as back-end for a third party registry (eg .broadway).

The company also plans to dump its "unprofitable" registrar entirely, migrating its existing customers to Uniregistry's Uniregistrar business.

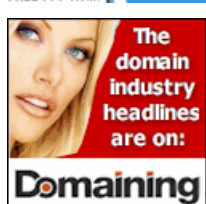
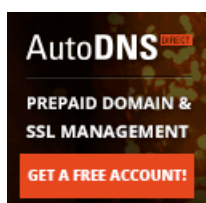
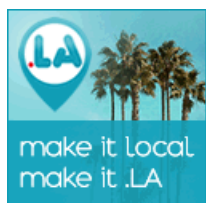
About 49,000 domains will be affected by this move, Hall said.

Uniregistry will pay M+M a commission over the lifetime of the accounts.

Focusing on the registry business was the plan from the moment Hall took over M+M, following a [shareholder coup](#) that kicked out founding CEO Antony Van Couvering in January.

Hall told DI:

It [previously] had a very ambitious plan. It wanted to be vertically integrated, but the considered view is there are people out there who are far better able to run parts of the exercise than ourselves, both on the RSP piece and likewise the registrar piece. The strategy from day one was to rapidly evolve into becoming a business-to-business marketing-led registry business and radically overhauling our cost structure at the same time.



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The company is currently in a financial quiet period and will not yet disclose the amount of savings it expects to reap, Hall said. He added:

Reducing cost isn't a strategy for growth, and as a business that will be where we will be judged. Growing our portfolio, growing our domains under management, growing our revenue within those domains. That's what the business has to be focused on. We see within the industry that the highest value is in the [TLD] ownership part.

The job losses are expected to be largely on the technical side of the house.

The RSP outsourcing means that Nominet significantly boosts its stable of managed TLDs. While it's in the top five back-ends in terms of DUM (due to the 11 million in .uk) its portfolio of clients there is relatively small, largely limited to a handful of dot-brands.

Nominet CEO Russell Haworth said in a statement:

This partnership takes us into the top tier of registry operators globally by volume of TLDs and compliments the brands we currently manage, such as .BBC, .Bentley and .Comcast. It also underlines our long-term strategy to provide a more diversified range of services to gTLDs and registrars."

With the Uniregistry registrar deal, Hall said that competing with its own channel "was just not right for us".

It might be worth noting that Uniregistry is actually a vertically integrated triple-play along the lines of M+M, also, managing its own back-end, registry and registrar businesses.

Hall said that the M+M registrar had sold mainly to domain investors with little interest in buying value-added services such as email and hosting, which is often where much of the profit lies.

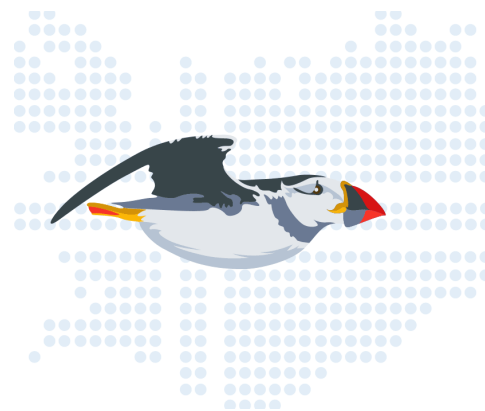
Both deals are subject to ICANN approvals, and client approval in case of the back-end transition, will be phased in over many months, and are expected to be finalized by the end of the year.

UPDATE: M+M said later this morning that it is changing its official company domain to mmx.co from mindsandmachines.com.

Related posts (automatically generated):

[Uniregistry doing private new gTLD auctions? Company deals with Donuts on five strings](#)

[Even without AI Gore, don't count Minds + Machines out of the .eco race](#)



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[Google could shake up the registry market with new open-source Nomulus platform](#)

[States drop IANA transition block lawsuit](#)

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[Rightside new gTLD renewals can top 80%](#)

[.xxx to get lower ICANN fees, accept the URS](#)

[NameCheap stops selling .xyz domains](#)

[The DNA loses second exec director in a year](#)

[XYZ hires .top guy as first China employee](#)

[ICANN faces first post-transition test of UN power \(for real this time\)](#)

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# **EXHIBIT I**

# User Documentation on Delegating and Redelegating a Generic Top-Level Domain (gTLD)

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## Delegating a generic top-level domain

This document provides a guide to the generic top-level domain (gTLD) delegation process.

### What is a delegation request?

As part of the responsibilities for managing the root zone, ICANN's IANA department is responsible for receiving requests to delegate domains in the DNS root zone. Note that this process is distinct from the process used to apply to be eligible for a new gTLD.

The delegation process results in the "NS" records being placed in the DNS root zone to make the domain active in the domain name system. This then facilitates the registry operator to commence the process to bring the registry service into production.

### Submitting a delegation request

At the conclusion of the evaluation process for a new gTLD, i.e. following contract execution and pre-delegation testing by ICANN, a the registry operator will be provided with a unique delegation token and URL to ICANN's IANA Root Zone Management (RZM) site for new gTLD delegations.

Registry operators that are ready to commence a request for delegation must visit the RZM site and enter their token in order to commence the procedure.

At the start of the procedure, the registry operator or its agent (requestor) is asked to provide an email address to serve as a contact point for the life of the request. This email address will be validated to ensure it works correctly.

Following this, the requestor will be asked to provide details on the sponsoring organisation (i.e. contracted party), its designated administrative and technical contacts, and its technical configuration. The requirements for these elements are the same as for [other types of root zone changes](#). The request will follow the routine change processing steps as defined below. In addition to following the routine steps, a delegation report will be sent to the ICANN Board and the Root Zone Administrator.

### Tracking status

Once a request has been lodged, an applicant can revisit the delegation page with their token in order to be provided with a view of the current status of their requests. Any questions regarding the process can be directed to [root-mgmt@iana.org](mailto:root-mgmt@iana.org).

### Review of Delegation Steps

Step 1	After Pre-Delegation testing has been successfully completed, the requester receives unique, secure credentials to initiate a request within the automated Root Zone Management (RZM) System.
Step 2	Requester uses provided credentials and URL to login to the RZM System.

Step 3	Requester provides a contact email address for use with the request. In order to confirm the email address works, a link will be emailed to it, and the requestor should follow the link to proceed.
Step 4	<p>Requester completes form in RZMS including the fields for the following:</p> <p>Manager: Also known as the “Registry” or “Sponsoring Organization”, this is the organization to which responsibility for the domain is delegated.</p> <p>Administrative and Technical Contacts: These are contact points for the domain, responsible for responding to public enquiries concerning the domain, and also for authorising routine updates to the domain.</p> <p>Name servers/DS Records: This is the list of authoritative name servers maintained by the registry to serve the top-level domain, along with the delegation signer records for DNSSEC.</p> <p>Registration Information: Additional information pertaining to the domain, such as the location of its WHOIS server, and a web address where registration can be found.</p>
Step 5	The request will go through the steps described in the “ <a href="#">Routine Root Zone Change Request</a> ” described below.

## Redelegating a generic top-level domain

This is a guide to the generic top-level domain (gTLD) redelegation process. This process is used when the IANA Root Zone Database must be updated to reflect a change in the management of a gTLD. The primary requirement of this process is to have an existing contract with ICANN, which reflects the changes related to the management of the gTLD.

To update the Root Zone Database to reflect a change to the registry operator for a gTLD, the registry must first secure an executed amendment to its Registry Agreement in accordance with its contractual obligations with ICANN. Once completed, a [root zone change request](#) should be filed according to the routine change process defined below.

During processing of the change request, ICANN’s IANA department will confirm with ICANN’s new gTLD team that the request accurately reflects the currently contracted party for the given gTLD. (Note that this process differs from the redelegation process for a country-code top-level domain.) The request will follow the routine change processing steps as defined below. In addition to following the routine steps, a delegation report will be sent to the ICANN Board and the Root Zone Administrator.



## Review of Redelegation Steps

Step 1	Complete necessary contract amendments reflecting the change with ICANN
Step 2	<p>Requester submits a root zone change request changing the relevant fields for the TLD in the Root Zone Database with new information. These include:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Manager: Also known as the “Registry” or “Sponsoring Organization”, this is the organization to which responsibility for the domain is delegated.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Administrative and Technical Contacts: These are contact points for the domain, responsible for responding to public inquiries concerning the domain, and also for authorising routine updates to the domain.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Name servers/DS Records: This is the list of authoritative name servers maintained by the registry to serve the top-level domain, along with the delegation signer records for domains that are DNSSEC secured.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Registration Information: Additional information pertaining to the domain, such as the location of its WHOIS server, and a web address where registration can be found, can also be listed for a top-level domain.</p> <p>The root zone change request can be initiated through the RZM System if the requester has credentials. If not, the Delegation Request Form (<a href="#">link to form in document</a>) can be used.</p>
Step 3	The request will go through the steps described in the “ <a href="#">Routine Root Zone Change Request</a> ” described below. During processing, Root Zone Management staff will verify that the proposed changes match the current contractual language for the TLD.

## Routine Root Zone Change Request Process

### Methods for submitting a routine request

An online interface is provided at <https://rzm.iana.org> for TLD managers to submit change requests. ICANN recommends that all TLD managers use this method if possible, as it will guide you through the process, provide immediate online feedback of potential issues, and offer the fastest processing time.

### Processing a routine request

Once a request is received, it will go through the following processing steps:

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Pre-review	The request is reviewed to ensure it is complete and clear. If it is not clear, clarification is sought from the requestor.
Technical testing	Any changes that are technical in nature will be validated against the relevant technical requirements. Any deficiencies are reported back to the requestor to fix. See: <a href="#">Technical requirements for root zone changes</a>
Contact confirmation	The contact persons for the domain will be asked to agree to the changes.
Manual review	ICANN staff will review the request to ensure it is in accordance with any special obligations and other known regulatory requirements.
Delegation evaluation	If the request is deemed to represent a substantial change of control of the TLD, it is considered a redelegation request, and must be assessed according to the criteria of that process.
Supplemental technical testing	The technical tests are performed a second time, to ensure no new technical issues have arisen during the time the request was being processed
Authorisation	The details of the request are transmitted to the U.S. Department of Commerce for authorisation.

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Implementation

Once implementation of a change request is authorised, the changes are implemented in the Root Zone and the Root Zone Database.

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During processing of the request, the requestor will receive email updates relating to the status of the request. At any time, the contacts for the domain can log in to our web interface to check the status of the request.

# Delegation Request Form

This is to be used as part of submitting a delegation or redelegation of a country-code top-level domain.

IANA TLD MODIFICATION TEMPLATE 2010-02-17

\*\* This should be completed and submitted to [root-mgmt@iana.org](mailto:root-mgmt@iana.org).  
\*\* In most cases, this can be completed online. For more information  
\*\* visit <http://www.iana.org/domains/root/> or contact IANA for  
\*\* assistance.

1. Top-Level Domain Name.....:

2. Purpose of change.....:

## Manager

3a. Organisation Name.....:

3b. Street Address.....:

3c. City.....:

3d. State.....:

3e. Postal Code.....:

3f. Country Code (2 letter).....:

## Administrative Contact

4a. Contact Person's Name.....:

4b. Job Title.....:

4c. Organisation Name.....:

4d. Street Address.....:

4e. City.....:

4f. State.....:

4g. Postal Code.....:

4h. Country Code (2 letter).....:

4i. Phone Number.....:

4j. Fax Number.....:

4k. Email Address.....:

4l. Treat as role acct? (y/n).....:

## Technical Contact

5a. Contact Person's Name.....:

5b. Job Title.....:

5c. Organisation Name.....:

5d. Street Address.....:

5e. City.....:

5f. State.....:

5g. Postal Code.....:

5h. Country Code (2 letter).....:

5i. Phone Number.....:

5j. Fax Number.....:

5k. Email Address.....:

5l. Treat as role acct? (y/n).....:

## Authoritative Name Server

6a. Hostname.....:

6b. IP Address(es).....:

Authoritative Name Server (duplicate for additional name servers)

6a. Hostname.....:

6b. IP Address(es).....:

Delegation Signer Record (for DNSSEC signed zones only)

7a. Key Digest.....:

7b. Key Tag.....:

7c. Key Algorithm.....:

7d. Key Digest Type.....:

Delegation Signer Record (duplicate for additional DS records)

7a. Key Digest.....:

7b. Key Tag.....:

7c. Key Algorithm.....:

7d. Key Digest Type.....:

Domain Information

8a. URL for Registration Services...:

8b. WHOIS Server.....:

Special notes (for staff processing change, does not appear publicly)

9. Notes.....:

## Technical requirements for authoritative name servers

This article describes the baseline technical conformance criteria for authoritative name servers. These are evaluated by ICANN as the IANA functions operator for changes to delegations in the DNS root zone.

### Definitions

1. For purposes of this document, an authoritative name server is a DNS server that has been designated to answer authoritatively for the designated zone, and is being requested to be listed in the delegation. It is recorded by its fully-qualified domain name, potentially along with its IP addresses.
2. Name server tests are completed against each unique tuple of a hostname, an IP address, and a protocol. If a hostname has multiple IP addresses, for example, the tests will be conducted against each IP address.

### Detailed requirements

#### Minimum number of name servers

There must be at least two NS records listed in a delegation, and the hosts must not resolve to the same IP address.

#### Valid hostnames

The hostnames used for the name servers must comply with the requirements for valid hostnames described in RFC 1123, section 2.1.

#### Name server reachability

The name servers must answer DNS queries over both the UDP and TCP protocols on port 53. Tests will be conducted from multiple network locations to verify the name server is responding.

#### Answer authoritatively

The name servers must answer authoritatively for the designated zone. Responses to queries to the name servers for the designated zone must have the “AA”-bit set.

This will be tested by querying for the SOA record of the designated zone with no “RD”-bit set.

#### Network diversity

The name servers must be in at least two topologically separate networks. A network is defined as an origin autonomous system in the BGP routing table. The requirement is assessed through inspection of views of the BGP routing table.

#### Consistency between glue and authoritative data

For name servers that have IP addresses listed as glue, the IP addresses must match the authoritative A and AAAA records for that host.

### Consistency between delegation and zone

The set of NS records served by the authoritative name servers must match those proposed for the delegation in the parent zone.

### Consistency between authoritative name servers

The data served by the authoritative name servers for the designated zone must be consistent.

All authoritative name servers must serve the same NS record set for the designated domain.

All authoritative name servers must serve the same SOA record for the designated domain.

If for operational reasons the zone content fluctuates rapidly, the serial numbers need only be loosely coherent.

### No truncation of referrals

Referrals from the parent zone's name servers must fit into a non-EDNS0 UDP DNS packet and therefore the DNS payload must not exceed 512 octets.

The required delegation information in the referral is a complete set of NS records, and the minimal set of requisite glue records. The response size is assessed as a response to a query with a maximum-sized QNAME.

The minimal set of requisite glue records is considered to be:

One A record, if all authoritative name servers are in-bailiwick of the parent zone; and,

One AAAA record, if there are any IPv6-capable authoritative name servers and all IPv6-capable authoritative name servers are in-bailiwick of the parent zone.

### Prohibited networks

The authoritative name server IP addresses must not be in specially designated networks that are either not globally routable, or are otherwise unsuited for authoritative name service.

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0.0.0.0/8	Not globally routable	RFC 5735
<hr/>		
10.0.0.0/8	Not globally routable	RFC 5735
<hr/>		
100.64.0.0/10	Not globally routable	RFC 6598
<hr/>		
127.0.0.0/8	Not globally routable	RFC 5735
<hr/>		

169.254.0.0/16	Not globally routable	RFC 5735
172.16.0.0/12	Not globally routable	RFC 5735
192.0.2.0/24	Not globally routable	RFC 5735
192.88.99.0/24	6to4	RFC 3068
192.168.0.0/16	Not globally routable	RFC 5735
198.18.0.0/15	Not globally routable	RFC 5735
198.51.100.0/24	Not globally routable	RFC 5737
203.0.113.0/24	Not globally routable	RFC 5737
224.0.0.0/3	Not globally routable	RFC 5735
::/128	Not globally routable	RFC 5156
::1/128	Not globally routable	RFC 5156
::FFFF:0:0/96	IPv4 mapped addresses	RFC 4291
2001:2::/48	Not globally routable	RFC 5156



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2001::/32	Teredo	RFC 4380
2001:10::/28	Not globally routable	RFC 5156
2001:DB8::/32	Not globally routable	RFC 5156
2002::/16	6to4	RFC 3056
FC00::/7	Not globally routable	RFC 5156
FE80::/10	Not globally routable	RFC 5156

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#### No open recursive name service

The authoritative name servers must not provide recursive name service. This requirement is tested by sending a query outside the jurisdiction of the authority with the “RD”-bit set.

#### Same source address

Responses from the authoritative name servers must contain the same source IP address as the destination IP address of the initial query.

#### DS record format

Trust anchors must be provided each with the four attributes of a DS record — the key tag, the key algorithm, the digest hash type, and the digest hash. They must be provided with legal values for each of the DS record fields. For the hash digest, ICANN supports two types — SHA1 (value 1), and SHA256 (value 2).

#### Matching DNSKEY

At the time of the listing request, there must be a DNSKEY that matches the DS record present in the child zone. This will be tested for as part of the implementation of the record. As with most technical conformance criteria for the root zone, if a top-level domain operator has a situation where this is not the case, but this is by design and can be demonstrated not to affect the stability of the TLD or the root zone, it is possible to request that the DS records be listed regardless.

## Validation of RRSIG

ICANN must be able to validate the RRSIG records returned for the zone based upon the DS record set that has been provided for the root zone. We test this by querying the apex SOA for the top-level domain with the DO bit set, and validating the SOA record against the proposed DS resource set.

## Useful References

For more information on some of the key DNS technical concepts referenced by these technical tests, please look at the following references:

- Domain Names — Concepts and Facilities (RFC 1034)
- Domain Names — Implementation and Specification (RFC 1035)
- Preventing Use of Recursive Nameservers in Reflector Attacks (RFC 5358)
- Operational Considerations and Issues with IPv6 DNS (RFC 4472)
- Extension Mechanisms for DNS (EDNS0) (RFC 2671)
- DNS Referral Response Size Issues
- DNS Transport over TCP - Implementation Requirements (RFC 5966)
- IANA IPv6 Special Purpose Address Registry
- Special-use IPv6 Addresses (RFC 5156)
- Special-use IPv4 Addresses (RFC 5735)