12 May 2022

RE: Next Steps for IDN Implementation Guidelines Version 4.0

Edmon Chung and Mats Dufberg
Co-chairs, IDN Guidelines Working Group (IDNGWG)

Dear Edmon and Mats,

We are writing to inform you on the progress to-date on the Final Draft of Internationalized Domain Name (IDN) Implementation Guidelines Version 4.0, since the IDNGWG handed over the draft to ICANN organization on 7 May 2018.

The Final Proposed Draft of IDN Guidelines 4.0 was published by ICANN org on 10 May 2018, after which ICANN org worked internally to analyze these for implementation. Following the analysis, as per the process for approval of the IDN Guidelines, version 4.0 was to be considered by the ICANN Board. However, you may be aware that the Board consideration has been delayed due to a request from the GNSO, with the following chronology of events (catalogued here for your convenience):

- On 30 April 2019, the Chair of the GNSO Council wrote to the Chair of the ICANN Board that "The GNSO Council formally and respectfully requests that the ICANN Board defer a vote on the IDN Guidelines 4.0 issue while we consider any policy implications under our remit."
- On 4 June 2019, the Chair of the ICANN Board responded to the Chair of the GNSO Council that: "The ICANN Board respects the Council's request and has deferred the vote on the Guidelines to allow the Council time to study the matter further" requesting the GNSO council to share its plan to move forward.
- On 10 May 2021, the GNSO published IDN Expedited Policy Development Process (EPDP) charter which included relevant items related to IDN Guidelines 4.0 for discussion.
- On 18 August 2021, the chair of GNSO Council wrote to the Chair of the ICANN Board "to request the Board to continue the deferral of IDN Implementation Guidelines v4.0 following the presentations made to and discussions within the GNSO Council, and the discussion on this topic during the joint meeting between the ICANN Board and the GNSO Council on 24 June 2021."
- On 20 October 2021, the Chair of the ICANN Board responded to the Chair of the GNSO Council requesting the council to identify the guidelines which overlap with the topics included in the IDN EPDP charter and suggesting that the subset of IDN Guidelines version 4.0 "that do not overlap with the IDN EPDP, would then be considered by the ICANN Board as the updated version 4.0 for implementation", adding that "The remaining overlapping guidelines … would be deferred until the GNSO's IDN EPDP working group has deliberated on these topics in coordination with the ccNSO and finalized the way forward."
- On 21 January 2022, the Chair of the GNSO Council wrote to the Chair of the ICANN Board that "the GNSO Council identified that the following guidelines overlap with topics included in the IDN EPDP charter and they should continue being deferred: 6a, 11, 12, 13, and 18" and that "the GNSO Council does not see harm in allowing [the remaining guidelines] to move forward for Board adoption."

- On 25 March 2022, the Chair of the ICANN Board wrote to the Chair of the GNSO Council that "Based on the input provided by the GNSO Council, the ICANN Board will defer guidelines 6a, 11, 12, 13, and 18 from Board's consideration at this time. The ICANN Board will seek further input from GNSO on this subset of deferred guidelines at the conclusion of GNSO's IDN EPDP work."

As for next steps, the ICANN Board intends to proceed with further consideration of the remaining guidelines in IDN Guidelines 4.0, excluding the guidelines 6a, 11, 12, 13, and 18 based on GNSO's request.

We thank the IDNGWG for their hard work and intend to inform you about the status of the IDN Guidelines version 4.0 as they proceed towards the consideration of the ICANN Board.

Sincerely,

Sarmad Hussain
Senior Director IDN and UA Programs