

27 January 2023

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Re: Release of IGO Acronyms in New gTLDs

Dear Ms Sinha,

We are writing in relation to the continued reservation of IGO acronyms at the second level in new gTLDs and, in particular, the remaining two-character IGO acronyms. We would appreciate clarity from the Board on what, if anything, still needs to be done before the IGO acronyms can be released, and when this will happen.

The IGO acronyms have been reserved from registration at the second level due to GAC Advice to the ICANN Board originating in 2013 which conflicted with the GNSO policy recommendations. The reservation of these acronyms was intended as a temporary measure until a permanent solution for protecting IGO acronyms at the second level could be developed. Unfortunately, after 10 years, there is still no implemented solution and the IGO acronyms are still reserved indefinitely. We represent a number of dot brand registries, many of whom have been waiting for years to be able to register the remaining two-character IGO acronyms. We are aware of some dot brand registries that have had to side-line projects as a result of this delay. It is also a matter of public record that other registries are keen for these names to be released, including a registry whose prospective customer for the name is one of the very IGOs the reservation policy is supposed to protect.

Without wishing to recite the long and complicated history of this matter, we believed its conclusion was close when the Board issued Resolutions 2020.10.22.06 – 2020.10.22.07 in October 2020. Those Resolutions indicated the Board's intention to reject aspects of the longstanding GAC Advice regarding protection of IGO acronyms, in favour of creating a post-registration notification system for IGOs when their corresponding acronym is registered at the second level. As required by the ICANN Bylaws, the Board initiated the Board-GAC Bylaws Consultation Process with a view to rejecting the GAC Advice. The last public correspondence we can find relating to the Board-GAC Bylaws Consultation Process is from October 2021 but did not appear to bring the Consultation Process to a conclusion. **We would be grateful if you could confirm the current status of the Consultation Process. If it has not yet concluded, could you please provide an update to the community on the expected next steps and timing on a) the Consultation Process and b) implementation of the post-registration notification system for IGOs.**

In parallel to the Board-GAC Bylaws Consultation Process, work has been taking place in the GNSO to find a solution to curative rights protections for IGOs. This has been done through various different work tracks over a number of years but most recently through the EPDP on Specific Curative Rights Protections for IGOs. That EPDP working group's Final Report was approved by the GNSO Council and delivered to the ICANN Board on 21 July 2022. The public comment on that Final Report is due to conclude on 30 January 2023, more than six months after submission to the Board, and we trust that the Board will be in a position to approve these recommendations promptly thereafter.

The above referenced letter of October 2021 from the GAC to the Board asserts the GAC's view that the IGO acronyms should remain reserved until the Curative Rights recommendations have been fully implemented. **Could you please confirm whether the Board shares this view. If so, again, could you please provide an update for the community on the expected next steps and timing to remove this further obstacle to the release of the IGO acronyms.**

We do appreciate that this has been a complex issue, with a number of different workstreams which have taken significant time to resolve. We would greatly appreciate your clarification of what remains outstanding, and hope that, under your new stewardship of the Board, this matter can now be brought to a timely and satisfactory conclusion.

Yours sincerely

Ashley Roberts

Head of New TLD Consultancy, Com Laude