



.Africa - Africa's map in the digital inclusion!

STATEMENT FOR THE ICANN PUBLIC FORUM – THURSDAY 28TH OCTOBER, 2011

DCA would like to thank the Chairperson, Board Members, Executives and Staff of ICANN for organizing yet another successful meeting. DCA congratulates the host country Senegal and the MINISTRY for providing a great platform for a very successful meeting and its gracious hospitality; including giving DCA a voice that it desperately needed during the pre-ICANN Ministerial Round Table meeting, and DCA is grateful for that.

DCA would like to use the opportunity offered by this public forum to highlight two important issues. The first is about DotAfrica and how this affects ICANN's leadership of the multi-stakeholder Internet governance process. The second issue is on the 'African Agenda' of the African Ministerial Round-Table.

DCA is not comfortable with the proposal to include DotAfrica, DotAfrique and DotAfriqia in the List of Reserved Names and make these strings unavailable during the gTLD application round. DCA believes that the DotAfrica name string is not at risk and as such does not need any special legislative protection to preserve it for the African Union or any other prospective applicant. The new gTLD Applicant's Guidebook does not in any way indicate that DotAfrica will be unavailable and included in the List of Reserved Names. If we knew that the DotAfrica gTLD string was going to be unavailable, DCA would not have expended great efforts and huge amounts of money over many years to actively campaign and promote DotAfrica globally. We therefore urge ICANN and its global community not to entertain any request to include DotAfrica on the List of Reserved Names. DotAfrica and similar name strings should only be applied for through the ICANN new gTLDs programme.

We believe that the DotAfrica issue is a **battle test-ground for ICANN's leadership and oversight of the Global Internet Governance process**. If AU imposes its will on ICANN, and prevails on this issue it will set a bad precedent that will be detrimental to ICANN's ability to control the multi-stakeholder process.

Any government or inter-governmental organization that passes a resolution and imposes such on ICANN will set a bad precedent, and cause other organizations to always point to such a precedent and also pass a resolution and ask ICANN to accept and approve such. This will cause great confusion and undermine the entire multi-stakeholder model; including even undermining ICANN's standing/position in these matters.

Therefore, DCA hereby insists that the new gTLD programme of ICANN is a transparent globally-accepted process that **should not allow any intergovernmental or governmental organization to pass a set of resolutions and impose it on ICANN as a "Separate Agenda"** such as the one attempted by the "**African Agenda**." What is transparent for the world should be transparent for Africa. We cannot request exceptions to satisfy the "opaque agenda of a few people" that is NOT representative of all of Africa. Even in this African Ministerial Round-Table, there was no representative quorum in terms of attendance. Such proposition of a "Separate Agenda" would be against all what we have worked on at ICANN for the past 6 years, and a threat to the multi-stakeholder model that most in the Internet governance world cherish, and ICANN should take heed of such.

Thank you.