
ICANN76 | CF – ICANN Fellows and NextGen - Focus on UA

Tuesday, March 14, 2023 – 09:00 to 10:00 CUN

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Hello, everyone, and welcome to the session on universal acceptance with fellows and NextGeners. My name is Siranush Vardanyan, and I will be remote participation manager for this session. Please note that this session is being recorded and is governed by the ICANN standards of behavior. I also put the link in the chat space.

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full name, your first and last name. You will be removed from the session if you do not sign in using your full name. With that, I would like to introduce today's speaker. It's my great pleasure to introduce you to Abdalmonem Galila, who is a great friend of mine and always a fellow, as we used to say, and he is now a very active participant on universal acceptance topic, and he will introduce more what he is doing and what his role actually in this committee. He also the representative of the GAC from Egypt, and I also would like to introduce you to my colleague, Seda, who is supporting universal acceptance group in ICANN. With that, Abdalmonem, the floor is yours.

ABDALMONEM GALILA:

Thank you, Seda. Good morning, good afternoon, good evening for everybody. I am Abdalmonem Galila. I am working for the Telecom regulator of Egypt as the numbering manager and also responsible for operating the IDN ccTLD of Egypt. Before going into my presentation, could you go to first slide, please? I will go to some facts.

The first facts, all of you know that once a fellow, always a fellow. All the time, I am a fellow. I started from the fellowship from ICANN 54, and now I am here with you for the fellow. So [in charge of you] all the time, if you have any question, I will answer it with my colleague from Universal Acceptance Steering Group.

Let's go now for diving into universal acceptance. The majority of the worldwide population doesn't speak English as a first language, or write the English alphabet through the Internet. In fact, 36% of the worldwide population only uses Latin script, and there are billions of users who

would prefer to read and write the characters in Arabic script, in Cyrillic script, in Chinese script, etc.

So at the same time, the domain name system has changed dramatically over the last decade. 2009, we have only ASCII gTLDs, around 22, .com, .org, .edu, something like this, and also have ASCII ccTLDs that have two letters.

From 2009 to 2013, we started to move up the IDN ccTLDs. [inaudible] they are starting 2010. From 2013 till the moment, there is a new gTLD program. We have now over 1200 generic top-level domain names, whether it is long, .istanbul, .dubai, .pharmacy, .bank, and for the short gTLDs, .sky, .xyz, .biz, and also the trend of gTLDs that are IDNs. We have .abudhabi and other gTLDs in IDNs.

So do you imagine that all of this variety of top level domain names, it's ASCII and English and gTLDs for ASCII and Unicode, ASCII or non-ASCII, how do you imagine that all the Internet application devices and the system could interact well, could accept this kind of domain names and email addresses in its own application and the system?

That is why we are here. We are here for universal acceptance. All domain names and all email addresses should be treated equally in all Internet application devices and systems. With universal acceptance, we'll open the door for the next billion Internet users to exist online, as the majority couldn't speak English and the majority would like to read and write in their own local language, whatever the script, Arabic, Cyrillic, Chinese.

So the vision for universal acceptance is that all valid domain names, all valid email addresses work in all software applications, accepted, validated, stored, and processed and displayed correctly.

What is the impact of that? Actually the user now has multiple choices. You could choose whatever gTLD it is, the three letters or up to three letters, whatever it is, the new generic two-level domain names or .com, other ASCII gTLDs, and also you could select it from IDN-ccTLDs and select from IDN-gTLDs. There is a variety and diversity of two-level domain names the user or the consumer could select from.

Universal acceptance provides the gateway for the next billion Internet users to exist online using their own local language according to their interest. They are interested to read and write the domain names in their own local language. They want to receive notification and want to deal with email addresses that have their own local language. This is a variety of top-level domain names, so we have a diversity of top-level domain names at the moment, so the consumer could select any of them according to his interest, his culture, whatever his tradition.

Actually, we have universal acceptance promote consumer choice and competition. So now we have gTLDs, ASCII, and IDN, and we have gTLDs, ASCII, short or long. We have a variety and we could have a competition between all of them. And we have ASCII also for ccTLDs, it is two letters, and IDN for ccTLDs as well. And we have a broader access to the end user.

Actually, who cares about the issues that are related to universal acceptance? There is a community initiative supported by ICANN called Universal Acceptance Steering Group. It was founded in 2005. Universal

Acceptance Steering Group has many representatives, around 120 representatives representing different government companies, community members, or other community groups.

All of these members are targeted to promote more of the universal acceptance adoption. So all email addresses and all domain names and all email addresses accepted by all Internet-enabled applications.

The main task for Universal Acceptance Group, one of these tasks, the first one to develop strategies, develop technical documents, develop analysis for the sake of universal acceptance, train and host universal acceptance webinars, hands-on sessions, training, attend multiple events to interact more with different stakeholders. For Universal Acceptance Steering Group, we have multiple work groups that could help Universal Acceptance Steering Group to do their mission, to promote more adoption of universal acceptance. So let's go for the next slide, please.

So why does universal acceptance matter? Now achieving universal acceptance ensures that every person has the ability to navigate and communicate on the Internet using their chosen domain name and email addresses that best aligns with their interests, business, culture, language, and script.

So we are talking about our logo for universal acceptance, It is asterisk dot asterisk, anything dot anything, whatever the language. It will be accepted, validated, stored, and processed and displayed well. So universal acceptance can also help support a diverse and multilingual Internet, enable greater competition, innovation, and customer choice. The customer now have consumer choice, could have different choices

from gTLDs and ccTLDs, whatever the language, and according to his interest, create business opportunities.

Actually, universal acceptance, according to a study done by 2017, that there is an annual opportunity, \$9.8 billion, related to the adoption of universal acceptance, came from two parts, the 36% that uses English alphabet, that will use the new generic domain names to keep the brand, to keep their images online, to be in a better way. And also for the majority of the worldwide population who would like to read and write in their own local language for IDNs and for EALs. So we are creating business opportunities.

Offer career advantages for developer and system administrator. If you are a developer and develop an application, you want this application to publicly access whatever the language. Maybe I develop a website that have multiple language, it is not consistent that I access the Chinese content website using an English domain name. So it is Chinese content website accessed by Chinese domain name. I wanted to interact through the Internet using my Chinese email address. And also UA can help assess the governments and policy makers enriching their citizens.

You know that for IDNs, it is easy for the citizen to remember the domain name. It is in his own local language. It is easy to market for this domain name inside your local community. And also there are a lot of help that could be offered by universal acceptance. But for the moment, I would like to say this, and shall we go for the next slide, please?

The role of universal acceptance. Before maybe 20 years ago, if you are going to write, for example, soup.organic, it will not be accepted by the

browser. You will not go for this address. It is before universal acceptance. If you are going to use IDN-ccTLD or IDN-gTLD, it will not be accessed. If you are going for your bank account and try to make, to subscribe for the bank or register for the bank using your EAI address, Chinese EAI address, it will not be accepted as you will have a claim that this is not a valid email address.

But after universal acceptance now, if you are opening the browser and write then one of the generic domain names that is long, like .organic, soup.organic, you will go to the website correctly without any drama. If you are going to use the IDN-ccTLD or IDN-gTLD, you will go for this website correctly, whatever, anything. If you want to register or sign up using your EAI address, whatever the language, it will be accepted by the application itself. That is why you are going for universal acceptance readiness.

Actually it is a smaller bit about the issues that are related to universal acceptance. For example, if you wanted to send email to EAI address, you need to consider that your mail application could process the EAI address correctly. You need to check that your email server could accept these EAI addresses, or EAI compatible, email address compatible. Let's go for the next slide, please.

What are the scope and categories impacted by universal acceptance? For domain names, we have four internationalized domain names. For ASCII domain names and initialized domain names, we have the new short top-level ASCII domain names, like .sky, new long top-level ASCII domain names, like .engineering, internationalized domain names, IDNs, like this one, I couldn't pronounce it, by the way, but for example

[inaudible] in Arabic. For email address internationalization, for email addresses, we have ASCII@ASCII, English letter @ English letters, with the new generic top-level domain name, like [inaudible]. The top-level domain names here, more than three letters, and from the new generic top-level domain name program. ASCII@IDN, the mailbox, it is ASCII, and the domain name, it is internationalized domain name. Here, it is [inaudible]. Here, it looks like it is French or Dutch. Actually, it is not a Latin script, but it is a different script other than Latin. Unicode@ASCII, you have the user name or the mailbox name, it's Chinese format or Arabic format or Cyrillic format. At ASCII, the ASCII domain name here is example.com. Unicode@IDN, Unicode, it is a mailbox. It is Unicode letter, UTF-8 letters, and IDN, it is internationalized domain names. All of these are left-to-right script. Let's go for the right-to-left script, like Arabic. Unicode@IDN, it will be read, the email address could be read, it will be read from right to left, email@[inaudible].

So there are five variables for universal acceptance. Accept, validate, store, process, store, and display. Accept, it means that your application could accept the variety of top-level domain names or email addresses, whatever the language. You don't restrict having only the domain names that have two or three letters. We don't have to restrict that. It is only for domain name and email addresses to only accept .com, .net, .org. We have a variety of these ASCII top-level domain names. And also we don't have to restrict that accepting only English letter, but also we have now domain names and email addresses in Unicode. So your application should be able to accept all of these.

The next step behind acceptance, you need to validate this domain name and email addresses. You need, for example, to validate that

domain name already exists. You can check the DNS. You want to check the top-level domain name for this, the top-level domain name as this domain name, it already exists for the root zone. You could validate all of these. You could validate that I accept only the proper letter I am allowed for my registry and for my application.

After that, you need to process these domain names and email addresses. After processing, you will go to store these domain names and email addresses inside the database or inside the file. You should select the proper, maybe all the databases now support UTF-8. So you could store the domain name and email addresses in the correct format in Unicode.

For display, as the consumer writes the domain name and email addresses, he also would like to see the same shape of domain name and email addresses displayed correctly. Next slide, please. Yeah, let's go now for Universal Acceptance Steering Group structure, and working groups. We have the structure for universal acceptance. We have working groups, technology working group, email address internationalization, measurement, communication, local initiative, and universal acceptance ambassador.

We have the gaps for universal acceptance in software, in programming language, in the tools, which we need to have working group to identify these gaps. It is measurement working group. So we need to follow up with these programming tools, standards, and applications, programming language, to make some redemption. It is technology working group. We need to follow up with email provider and email softwares and all related email topics. We need to have working group

for email address internationalization. And also have communication working groups that have the task that develop strategies for Universal Acceptance Steering Group, and oversees the execution for this strategy in cooperation with other working group, like, for example, engaging with regional and national IGFs, having social media campaigns.

And for Universal Acceptance Ambassador Working Group, I will skip it for now, as it has another slide. So we have also liaison and points of contact with other community, with support organization and advisory committee within ICANN. Me, for example, I am the point of contact between GAC and Universal Acceptance Steering Group. We have my colleague, Christian, from GNSO. We have my colleague, Satish, from ALAC. We have my colleague, Qing Cai, from ccNSO.

All of these people related to universal acceptance structure and structure are available online at [UASG.tech](https://uasg.tech) for the UASG people. Let's go for the next slide.

For the leadership of Universal Acceptance Steering Group, we have Dr. Ajay Datta from India as UASG chair, me as a vice chair, and my colleague, Pavanaja as a vice chair. He is a fellow as well, and I think he is online as well.

For the working groups, we have Mark from Microsoft as the chair of Email Address Internationalization Working group. We have Satish, the chair of Technology Working group. We have Mr. Anil from India as the chair of Communication Working group. We have my colleague, Nabil, who is here at the fellowship session for the Measurement Working Group. Next slide, please.

We have for the local initiatives that have the targets that promote the universal acceptance at the local communities, we have our colleague, Maria, the chair of the local initiative of Russia, and we have our colleague, Wei Pei, the chair of another local initiative at China. We have my colleague, Sarika, who is here today as local initiative for India. We have my colleague, Anawin, as well for Thailand. We have my colleague, Harsha, from Sri Lanka. Let's go for the next slide.

For the universal acceptance ambassador program, the main target for, the main task for universal acceptance ambassador to raise awareness about universal acceptance, internationalized domain names, and email address internationalization within their own local community. At the same time, they could engage, the universal acceptance ambassador could engage with the local initiatives in order to go for the role for the adoption of universal acceptance and increase awareness through webinars, through hands-on training, through workshop, through hackathons to support universal acceptance locally.

Currently, we have 13 universal acceptance ambassadors based in eight countries, meaning Bolivia, China, Egypt, India, Nigeria, South Africa, and Turkey. We have eight countries here covered, but at the same time, we have more than 150 countries worldwide with more than 8 billion population.

So I would like to greet my colleague, Luis Sergio, who is the most recent universal acceptance ambassador, and also he is, he is here today with us remotely. Welcome, Sergio, for universal acceptance ambassador program. Actually, we are lucky to have him with us as he is a Spanish speaker. Let's go for the next slide.

For universal acceptance day, we want to rock the world, we want to say to the world that there is a universal acceptance need adoption for all Internet application devices and systems. So we organized universal acceptance day to be 28 March 2023. It will be recently, you could go for our website for UA Day. It is universalacceptance.day. [.day](https://universalacceptance.day) is a new short generic top-level domain name. And also feel free to join us for this webinar, for this workshop, for this hackathon, and I hope most of you in the next year could apply to host one of the universal acceptance day events. And of course, don't forget to use our tag, #Internet4All. Let's go for the next slide.

The main objectives for universal acceptance day is to rock the world and to buzz around adopting universal acceptance for the local, national, regional, and global organizations. To share UA challenges and current gaps in UA, drive UA adoption in all software systems and devices developed by local, regional, and global technical organizations. Motivate technical and the government decision maker to adopt universal acceptance. Create universal acceptance awareness in technical communities, especially around UA challenges and solutions. Allow language communities to enable policies to promote universal adoption.

For example, we need to make it a mandatory requirement for all software applications to adopt the concept of universal acceptance. And also, we need to celebrate the achievement of universal acceptance and recognize success stories. Next slide, please.

We have received a total of 89 proposals for the local, national, and regional UA Day events. We received by 31st of January, 2023. For the

five regions, we have for Africa, 32 proposals. We have for Asia Pacific, 41 proposals. We have for Europe, two. We have Latin America and Caribbean, 12. We have for North America, we have two. Around, we have selected from all of these only 50 shortlisted proposals announced on the UA Day web page. You could explore all of these. And also, among these 50, we have one regional UA Day event for each region from the five regions.

So all of the proposals received are all well, and it is very good. But actually, there is another measure to select from this variety of proposals from the around 89 proposals. And the [inaudible] universal acceptance day will be hosted by NIXI, Internet Exchange of India, and the manager of Indian IDNs and ASCII ccTLDs. And it will be 28th of March. So stay tuned and use the hashtag #Internet4All and try to attend one of these events, whatever it is, in local, national, or regional. Next slide, please.

Get involved. Let's go for the next slide. Want to become a universal acceptance ambassador. You want to, of course, when I say that, we have only 12 universal acceptance ambassadors cover eight countries. So from more than 150 countries worldwide, more than 8 billion population worldwide. So we need more and more universal acceptance ambassadors to help us to promote the concept of universal acceptance.

So want to be universal acceptance ambassador, the time you are passionate about the importance of universal acceptance, the time you are willing to help spread the universal acceptance message and the knowledge transfer, why does universal acceptance matter? The time

you could start by yourself to make your organization universal acceptance ready. The time you could connect to different stakeholders and tell them about universal acceptance and why does it matter. The time you could communicate and arrange universal acceptance sessions, trainings, hand-in-hand, and cooperate with other universal acceptance ambassadors. The time you could identify universal acceptance gaps in application devices and systems. The time you could drive universal acceptance promotion plan within your community. Please send email to info at UASG.tech and express your interest to join the universal acceptance ambassador program. And there are some details already published online in order for you to apply for universal acceptance ambassador, and I hope you could get many fellows from the fellowship like I was before. Next slide, please.

For the upcoming universal acceptance related sessions within this ICANN meeting, ICANN 76, today we have a session related to promoting universal acceptance through local engagement. We have speakers who will speak on behalf of academia, on behalf of end-user, on behalf of the government. Also we have another session tomorrow at Wednesday related to universal acceptance, the new internationalized email self-certification guide overview.

Actually for the self-certification guide, before going for this, you could go to UASG.tech website of Universal Acceptance Steering Group and check if your email server is EAI ready or not. So that is the first step for you. So for internationalized email self-certification guide, you could qualify your email system to be which one, it is silver, gold, or platinum category, and the email service provider could qualify his software. Is it silver, gold, and the platinum?

For the silver categories for email addresses, the email address could process EAI addresses correctly but couldn't host EAI address, couldn't host EAI mailbox. But when I say process, it means that he could send it to EAI address or receive from EAI address.

For the gold category for email addresses, it means that email address internationalization is not enabled by default. So the administrator could go and enable this feature for the email software. It will be called its gold category. For the platinum category, it means that you could have email address internationalization enabled by default. It means that you could host EAI addresses correctly. And all plugins like address book, calendar, could store the email addresses and domain name email addresses in a proper format. Next slide, please.

Get involved for more information about universal acceptance, you could go for our application, [UASG.tech](https://uasg.tech), or email us at info@uasg.tech. You could join our mailing list through our subscription that's found at the website. Register to participate in one of the universal acceptance workgroups related to UASG, whether it is measurement, email address internationalization, technology, communication, or local initiatives, something like that. Try to arrange for local initiatives within your local community. Apply for being an ambassador, and also don't forget to use UASG hashtag Internet for all.

We have social media as well at uasg.tech for Twitter. We have for LinkedIn, we have for Facebook. If you have also another issues related to universal acceptance, you could go to uasg.tech and submit a ticket, and one of our expertise will help you to fix these issues. Next slide, please. Thank you. I am here all the time to answer your question, and

also my colleagues from UASG are happy to answer any of these questions. Thank you. I hope I am on time.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Abdalmonem. We do have a couple of questions, and I know universal acceptance is a hot topic for now, especially with the upcoming universal acceptance day on 28th of March, so I will go directly to the questions. We have a question from Nicholas, Nicholas is an ICANN 76 fellow.

"As an active participant in the universal acceptance working group and an advocate for universal acceptance, I am aware of the efforts made during the UA day to promote UA compliance. However, given the lack of the law enforcement mechanisms, I am interested in understanding if national, regional, and youth Internet governance forums, IGFs, could serve as a platform to advance compliance for internationalized domain names, IDNs, and email address internationalization, EAI, in country code top-level domains, ccTLDs.

With various stakeholders present at these forums, do you believe that these initiatives could play a crucial role in promoting adoption of UA in local small systems and IDN resolution compliance in CCTLDs? Additionally, what is the role of the Governmental Advisory Committee in advancing actions to achieve UA compliance? Thank you.

ABDALMONEM GALILA: Actually, let me speak on behalf of the government as a government guy. Actually after COVID-19, while we are in COVID-19, we are already quarantined. You can't go anywhere and have services, governmental

services. So all the governments now are going for digital transformation projects. All the governmental services are already published online. And all the interaction with users will be through email addresses or through SMS, but they prefer to use email addresses. How could me as a government reach out to a large base of the citizens inside my country? How could the citizens, whatever their language inside my country, could access the governmental services?

The time they couldn't access the services that are published online by the government, they will be all totally locked. That's a problem. If I wanted to, for example, my child wanted to have the classes published online, how could this younger child access the classes using English domain name or receiving notification at English email addresses? So the role of the government here is to promote the adoption of universal acceptance by starting by itself.

For example, I wanted to make the governmental services to be universal acceptance compliant. I wanted to have my mail server that's used to send emails to the citizen to be EAI compliant. I want also to, as a government, to encourage email service provider within my local community to support email address internationalization. And at the same time, I want to encourage the citizen to use their own local language to access the governmental services and encourage them that they will receive a notification with the government through this EAI address assigned to him or the email address they have, whatever the language.

Me as a government, I could send the certificate of birth, certificate of death, certificate of violation to the email addresses for the citizen. So

it will help me, universal acceptance, to open the door for the citizen to access online without any problem to have the rights from the services I offer. For academia, I think maybe my colleague, Nabil, could help on that. How could academia help for promoting universal acceptance?

NABIL BENAMAR:

Definitely. Thank you, Abdalmonem. This is Nabil from the Measurement Working Group for the record. So this topic is very critical nowadays because the majority, as you might know, the majority of academia, faculty members, students, and staff members in universities are not aware of the existence of this technology, which is universal acceptance, and that they can express any domain name in a different script, not necessarily a Latin script, and also to write your own or to create your email address using different scripts. So in our working group, we have also tackled this issue by suggesting a proposal so that we can go to the academia and express our interest in collaborating with academia all over the world from different universities to update the existing curricula by inserting content related to universal acceptance technologies, especially for IDNs, international domain names, and email address internationalizations.

And from different other universities, we got some feedback that some people are starting somehow to implement this, or at least to raise awareness of this topic with their students. I encourage you also, if you are in universities, to, for example, suggest some capstones or projects with your students, for example, just to make it possible to configure or to set up an email server with universal acceptance, with IDNs, and with email address internationalization, and to do some testing with

different tools and to see if they are UA-ready, they are UA-compliant or not.

I think this is a critical step towards generalizing and making majority of users aware of this issue and that the possibilities exist, solutions exist, and this will help definitely making the Internet multilingual, definitely. Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you very much. We have a hand raised, Lia Solis, if you can unmute yourself and ask your question. Lia? Please go ahead.

LIA SOLIS: Greetings to you all. Thank you so much for this initiative. I am Lia Solis, and I am speaking on behalf of LACNOG, the network operation group in Latin America and the Caribbean, and it gathers all network operators and it engages in capacity building initiatives with these operators. Together with ICANN, we are working on the universal acceptance day in order to promote a multilingual Internet. We will be holding technical sessions on March the 30th and March the 31st, and our main speakers are different operators, email server operators, DNS operators, engineering students, future developers. We believe that universal acceptance helps bridge the digital divide on the Internet, and it also helps prevent fragmentation. So you are all specially invited to join our sessions. They will be held in Spanish, and we will be circulating a registration form. We will be holding virtual sessions, but at the same time, we will have different remote participation hubs in different countries. Thank you all once again, and warm greetings to you all.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Lia, and thank you for having you with us. It's great to see you. And thanks for sharing about the initiative in your region. So we have a question from Abdulrahman Abdoteleb. "Thanks for the information. I have some questions. Does the UA, universal acceptance, just a pure technical issue, and who are the most important players in the process to adopt and implement the universal acceptance and the EAI, email address internationalization? What is the status of UA in the MENA region at the moment, and what are the challenges that face implementing UA in the Arabic region especially?" Please.

ABDALMONEM GALILA: Actually, let us go for the next question before the first one. The next question was about the evaluation of, for example, websites for universal acceptance readiness and the acceptance of email address internationalization by email servers. We conducted a study related to the acceptance of internationalized domain names for the website. The time you are going for the website and try to subscribe or sign up or going to the page contact us and want to send a message to the administrator or whatever the holder of this website, the time you write your EIA addresses, you will receive it is not accepted EIA addresses.

So we conducted a study to see that if various type of email addresses accepted by the websites. We found that the ASCII at ASCII@ new short and new long to have a good base of acceptance by online websites. That is why we need to have more and more help from us or work from us in order to make this website to accept not only for ASCII domain names or ASCII, whatever it is, short or long, but also for the IDN email

addresses, internationalized email addresses, whatever it is using for a generic domain names IDN or ccTLD IDN. That is the first study.

For the next study, we went to the root zone and tried to grab all the domain names and tried to check for these domain names to find the MX record, the mail servers for this domain names. We identified unique email addresses and checked them to see that if this email server already compatible with EIA or not. And found that around 30% of this email server could accept only EIA addresses, and some of them couldn't accept or reject the messages that are related to EIA addresses. So we need to work more and more for email address internationalization to be compatible with all email servers.

And also for the websites, for online applications to accept such kind of domain names and email addresses. So you have to consult your developer in order to make the application itself could handle these EIA addresses, could handle these internationalized domain names in order to be accepted and then validated, stored, processed, and displayed. And of course, you have to consult your email service provider or the email server administrator within your organization to start deploying the concept of universal acceptance. Thank you. This is the first question.

Second question, may I consult my colleague, Dr. Sarmad, to answer this?

NABIL BENAMAR:

Sarmad, just before you jump in, I'd like to add one more detail. So because it was a good question from the remote participants about if

UA is a pure technical issue. I would like to thank him for this smart question because yes, it's not a pure technical problem or issue. We have established the rules, for example, the rules for making the Arabic script IDNs. And we were one of the first groups to develop these rules. And also the Armenian task force did the same, but I think six or seven years ago. And they were with the Arabic task force and Chinese and Korean, one of the first task forces to complete the work. And their work has been implemented in the ICANN root zone.

But still, for example, in the Arabic region, if I go to Morocco, so my country, I can see that we have the rules. We have established it. We have the.al-Maghreb. But if I look for the domain names created under the.al-Maghreb, I cannot find some decent numbers. So is it a problem of, is it a technical problem? Definitely it's not the case here.

So we need to raise awareness of the existence of this, of the possibility to create domain names with non-Latin scripts. And I think that, I believe that one of the big solutions towards tackling this issue is the university. We need to teach our students, our faculty members, that this is something that has been created 10 years ago or more. The IETF has the RFCs, and we are not talking about this or raising these RFCs to our students in different topics, computer science, computer software development, software testing, computer networks. All these curricula do not show the interest and the fact that we can have universal acceptance. Yeah, so definitely it's not a pure technical problem. Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you. Sarmad.

ABDALMONEM GALILA: Could I jump in?

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Yes, Abdalmonem.

ABDALMONEM GALILA: Thank you, Nabil, for highlighting this. Actually, I don't consider that a technical issue, a technical problem at all, like Nabil said, but I think it is a traditional problem. What I mean by traditional problem is that all the developers currently are using the old APIs that developed 20 years ago. These APIs are not compatible at all for IDNs or EAs. The concept of universal acceptance, at the moment that these APIs were developed, they don't have the concept of IDN or EAs.

But currently, we have these APIs. We need to go for some awareness for this software developer, some awareness for email service administrator, that there is a new trend of top-level domain names and email addresses to be considered while development of the new APIs or making patches to handle the old APIs to accept, validate, store, process, and display the new trend of top-level domain name and email addresses.

As a second point, for me, I think everything started for academia, like my colleague Nabil said. For example, while I was in Africa conducting sessions related to universal acceptance, before starting that, I have a problem that the university admission system couldn't accept one of the guys that couldn't use English language. They couldn't go to the

admission website and have the services for the university to register for the classroom and register for the university itself. This is an issue of universal acceptance. He needs to have domain names, for example, in his language so he could access the university application and could sign up or subscribe for the news at the classroom he would like to. Thank you very much.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you. We have a lot of questions in the chat, and I thank Seda for responding to some of them. The question is, is the UA ambassador's membership open for individuals?

ABDALMONEM GALILA: Yes. Let me jump in. Yes, it is open for anyone who are passionate about to help to conduct training, to conduct sessions, use the material for universal acceptance, and cooperate with local initiatives to promote further for the adoption for universal acceptance. [inaudible] universal acceptance could go for the government in his own local community, could go for academia, could go for private sector, encouraging about the importance of universal acceptance, whatever they are interested in. Maybe I am private sector, I am interested in business, so universal acceptance opens the opportunity for your business. Maybe I am a government and wanted to reach out to all the citizens within my country, I need to go for the government, encourage them to do that, highlighting the issue through pandemic.

So feel free to apply for universal acceptance ambassador. We are happy to help. My contact is here with my colleague, Siranush. Feel free to ask anything. Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Abdalmonem. Just to let you know that I am taking the questions only posted via Zoom, so to give equal opportunities with our virtual participants as well. The question is from Amesinou Kossi. Can we say that UA offers democratization to all languages today online?

ABDALMONEM GALILA: Democratization. I think it is a huge word, by the way. Actually, universal acceptance, as I said, it opens the gateway for all Internet users, for all users to exist online, whatever the language, whatever the script, whatever they are selecting, short or long domain names. Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you. The question is from Samik Kharel. From a civil society perspective and coming from a developing nation, universal acceptance is a very important way forward to achieving equal access to the Internet. I believe UA should mandate itself parallel with the SDG. I would like to know some work the UA Steering Committee has done towards access in line with the SDG. And while responding, please open what does it mean SDG, so for everyone to be clear.

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- ABDALMONEM GALILA: I think I am like you as well for SDG, but actually communications, UASG communications work group within UASG are reaching out to national and regional and the global communities in order to encourage them or make them familiar with the concept of universal acceptance. So UASG are already reaching out to all organizations. So please feel free to text us at my email, info@UASG.tech, and to make your question more clear and we'll answer it and we'll find a way in order to help each other. Thank you.
- SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Abdalmonem. I would like to give the floor to one of our fellows who would like to share about their experience on UA Day. Please, Sami, go ahead.
- SAMI MOHAMED ALI: Hi. I'm Sami Ali from Bahrain, .bh and.al-Bahrain, ccTLD manager. We did our hackathon for UA and IDN last week, two weeks back, with the help of Dr. Sarmad and [inaudible], and the first thing we had issue was not mainly technical, it's about the awareness as our colleague Nabil mentioned. There was no awareness among the students. We had 150 students from seven universities attending and nobody was aware that there is opportunity of different languages that can be used on Internet. So it's key to introduce to the university level that there are different opportunities on the Internet and as ICANN says next billion users will be from the different languages. And for that purpose we have initiated local initiative with the universities. We will introduce with the help of ICANN projects or the problems, issues that are currently on for IDN and universal acceptance into the university programs. And all the

universities are on board due to the opportunity students will get to develop their skills and they are the next workforce that will be there out there in the market creating new businesses and new opportunities.

So I think that will be a good way to go in. I have a question for Abdalmonem regarding UA Ambassador and local initiative. What are the benefits that can be used or people get from those two programs? If you can put a comment on that. Thank you.

ABDALMONEM GALILA:

Yeah, if I understand you well, you are talking about the benefits that developers will have from adopting universal acceptance? Am I right? Yes. Actually, maybe 20 years ago I was working for IBM. While developing the applications, they gave me a sheet. It is called UA sheet. It is a user acceptance sheet. There are huge difference between user acceptance and universal acceptance.

User acceptance for software developer means that the application I am developing should satisfy the customer needs, target specific customer in order to fit the application for them. But for universal acceptance it means that the application works for all the citizens, with all the people, not specific people where I am making this developed software for them. For developers, I think they have to make the application to be universal acceptance ready. Whatever, maybe it is a website. If you wanted to have a website that has multiple languages and the developer wanted to make this in a consistent way, that I use Arabic domain name for Arabic content website.

For the same website, I use ASCII domain name for English content website. And Chinese domain name for the same website. It will help me, my application, to reach out to a lot of more users. Of course, it will be, for example, the application will have a lot of businesses. And this will affect the e-commerce, shopping, and affect maybe I am developing application for the government. So the services, the governmental services will reach out to all the citizens and could accept domain names and email addresses, whatever the language is. This is for developers. And also for developers, they are opening more and more business to come through their applications. Reach out to a lot of citizens. Reach out to a lot of people. You know that the time you add one language for content at your site, if you are shopping, you will have increased for the sales for your products.

Actually, many years ago, the content online was 50% English and 50% non-English. Sorry. Currently, it is 50% English and 50% non-English. And it is expected in the future to be 75% non-English versus 25% English. So it is the time to enable the work for international domain names and email addresses. And we don't want to lose the business for the ASCII or new gTLDs, long or short, to keep the brands for most of the investors coming to my country, coming to the worldwide. Thank you.

NABIL BENAMAR:

Thank you. If you permit me, please, to add something here. I would like just to take this opportunity to mention that when we are talking about universal acceptance, the global topic is IDNs and email address internationalization, but we have some specific subtasks or subtopics, which are, for example, the readiness of programming languages,

identity platforms, e-commerce platforms. This is what we are doing currently in our measurement working group. We are addressing the gaps. We are checking if all platforms are treating all the scripts democratically, as said by one of the attendees, the remote attendees, I think.

So, for example, we are also comparing between mobile platform, mobile operating systems, and desktop operating systems, and we have seen that they are different. They are not the same. We still, for example, are facing a problem with a big issue with Android, for example, and now we are writing a white paper about the fact that Android is still using IDN 2003, which is an old version of IDN, and we are advocating to use IDN 2008 so that there will be no issues with the domain names that will be created in some scripts, like Arabic, Sinhali, Indic scripts, German, and Greek, as one of the examples that I have here.

So I think when we are doing some hackathons or workshops, for example, we need to talk about this. We need to encourage our students, participants, to find solutions, for example, for programming languages, why not to develop a new module or package to fix one of the problems. It's not only about just mentioning or just talking about this, but finding real solutions. Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN:

Thank you very much. Our session is coming to an end, and my apologies again for not being able to answer to many questions. I know universal acceptance is a hot topic for now, and we have my colleagues Seda and Sarmad and Pitinan here who always can respond to your

questions, so those who are in person here can take advantage and talk to these people. You can always reach Abdalmonem as well. I would like to thank Abdalmonem for your time and efforts to be here with fellows, and thanks to my colleagues to be here with me as well. Yes, there was an announcement from Deborah. Please, Deborah.

DEBORAH ESCALERA:

Hi. We've had a last-minute change in the schedule. The NextGen presentations will now be taking place at 10:30 in this room. It was changed yesterday from 10:30 to 3:00, and now once again it's been changed again to 10:30 in this room following this session, so my apologies.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN:

Right after this session, NextGen will stay here. With that, our appreciation to you, Abdalmonem. Thank you for coming, and this session is adjourned. Thank you very much.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]