CR – GAC / SSAC Joint Session
Tuesday, March 13, 2012 – 14:00 to 15:00
ICANN - San Jose, Costa Rica.

HEATHER DRYDEN: Good afternoon. Let's begin our session with the security and stability
                         committee. Welcome to our colleagues from the SSAC. We have a few
                         agenda items proposed. Perhaps I can turn to the chair of the SSAC,
                         Patrik Faltstrom, to perhaps introduce what we're going to be discussing
                         today.

PATRIK FALTSTROM: Thanks, Heather. I'm Patrik Faltstrom, chair of SSAC.   I'm happy to be
                         here again. And this time I brought some of my SSAC members. Can
                         the ones which are SSAC members sitting around the room raise their
                         hand, please. And the then rest of you can turn around and see who is
                         waving. A lot of people are sitting behind me. There are some over to
                         my front left. Thank you very much.

                         The -- as we have agreed on before, these meetings that we have
                         between SSAC and GAC gives an ability for both organizations to, first of
                         all, of course, identify who we are as individuals so we can talk more in
                         the corridors when we are to meet. But also, of course, to give an
                         ability to ask questions in both directions to help understand and
                         decrease the amount of misunderstanding or the various reports that
                         we write. So I wanted to -- before we go into the specific agenda items
                         do a quick review and description of SSAC, who we are and what we
                         have done. Next slide, please. Next slide. SSAC, as of today, is 38
                         people. Formally, a few are pending board resolutions this coming
                         Friday. But the size of SSAC is 38.

                         We have had -- each year we have a few -- have had a few changes, a
                         few members leaving and a few incoming.

                         In 2010 we did a big change regarding the membership management.
                         We changed the appointment to be three-year terms where we review,

annually, one-third of the membership. So in 2010 we appointed -- the people were assigned 1-, 2-, and 3-year terms. And all new appointments or reappointment on three years from thereon. Next slide, please.

The recent publications we have made include a few that I will describe quite quickly. And then we will go into the agenda. We have so far produced two this year -- one report on dotless domains, which is an initiative which we took ourselves. We have SAC052. That is a response on the question from the board on delegation of single-character internationalized top-level domains. And then in 2011 we produced, in the end of the year, a report on WHOIS terminology and structure, which was on our own initiative, and an advisory on DNS blocking that was a question -- a request from GAC, which we talked about at the last meeting. Next slide, please.

The current work is working group and committees where SSAC or SSAC-appointed members are active, including the ones you see on the screen. There are both the -- specifically, the -- a few working groups like the international registration data working group. But the work boards that we have that give an indication of future reports include one work party on the impact of DNS blocking, which, to some degree, partly it is -- I would not say a request from GAC. But, when we released SAC050 from GAC and from others in the ICANN community, we got a question whether we could not do a little deeper view into the actual impact. So that is one work party that is ongoing. The second one has to do with DNSSEC. And that is to look more carefully into how to and what are the actual implications of changing the root key for the DNSSEC. Next slide, please.

We had our normal outreach meetings where this is one. And we have various briefings to various supporting organizations and others which are requested -- which have requested our presence.

Specifically, at this meeting we have started to -- which we had Monday, regular meetings with law enforcement agencies and we are -- we

created -- I don't want to say, like, a working group. But we have a task group with a few people from law enforcement and from SSAC to see how to be able to make even more progress at the next ICANN meeting together. Next slide, please.

So, if you go into the documents that we have -- that we created, if we start by SAC050, this is one that you at GAC are very well aware about. We -- but to repeat, we urge people to think about the benefits and compare that with the harm that some kind of blocking might have and, specifically, what kind of impact, if any, the blocking might have on parties that want to communicate that is outside the administrative realm of the one that requested the blocking. Next slide.

51, a document on WHOIS taxonomy. As I said, earlier it was a document that we created based on our own initiative. We have written several documents before, reports before, that are related to WHOIS where we point out how important it is to use a terminology that, first of all, that all of us share but also that specifically point out whether people talk about the WHOIS database, the WHOIS service, the WHOIS protocol. Because, otherwise, it's very difficult to say -- for example, we want to internationalize WHOIS. Well, what do you talk about? Do you talk about the need change the protocol, or do you talk about the need to be able to handle internationalized data in the database. So, as we've said before, we have not seen much movement, if any, in the ICANN community. So we felt we have to write a new document on that.

The second thing that this document is talking about is how to -- is a suggestion to develop a uniform standard framework for accessing the data that would provide -- as I see on the slide, that provides mechanisms that makes it possible to build different kind of access mechanisms with different access and authentication controls on top of it. Next slide, please.

What happened was that the board in October directed ICANN staff to produce, in consultation with the community, a roadmap for this kind of

coordination. So ICANN board picked up our recommendations and said, okay, we need to do something more structured about this.

And on the 18th of February this year, a draft roadmap is posted for public comment. And on 15th of March, which I think is Thursday of this week, there is a public workshop.

So, from our perspective, we are happy that this document seems to get the ball rolling regarding actually using a shared terminology, which, hopefully, will help future work that, of course, is already ongoing inside ICANN community. Next slide, please.

Number 52 of our reports, an advisor of delegation or single-character IDN top-level domains. This was a question from the board that came to us. And we recommend a very conservative approach in the delegation of single character top-level domains. We recommend that delegation in all script should be disallowed by default and that exceptions should be made only for the cases which are without confusability and without creation of any harm.

This document, just like the blocking document, is pretty short. It's 2-page background and 2-page recommendations. So, if you're interested in what we're saying, you should read that document. But we do point out very explicitly that we do know that there are cases where one character domains are needed. So we encourage ICANN to move forward and try to resolve issues that we point out so that delegations is possible in the future. Next slide, please.

Oh, okay. Sorry, go back one.

One of the people have asked, when we presented this, so what do you mean by confusability? Because you have confusability already with domain names and with top-level domains, which have more than one character. And I can respond a little bit on that. The problem with one-character top-level domains is you don't have any other context in the top-level domain itself that can help distinguish and tell what script, for

example, the top-level domain is written in. If the TLD is two characters and one is distinct, the other one can be pretty confusing with something else. And you will still be -- see a distinction between two different top-level domains. If it is the case that it is only one character, that one cannot be as confusing as the most confusing one in the two-character top-level domain. Okay.

Some people then say, oh, but wait a second. If a word is only one character, the eye in the human is looking much more carefully to see whether it's confusing or not. So, if it's fewer characters, the eye in the human has much easier to see the text that two characters are different.

But what we have to remember is that the top-level domain is only one piece of a potentially very long domain name.

So we have to ensure that the top-level domain, which is only one character, is distinct enough so people see a difference between two very long domain names where the rest of the domain names are the same.

Okay. And now I see a lot of people asking, possibly, what I'm talking about. Read the report. See me on the break. This is very complicated matters.

But the important thing here is to be careful. Because, as we say -- and as also the Internet architecture board mentioned in their report about similar issues, we cannot undo a delegation of domain that we see later was a mistake. Next slide, please.

53 -- and this is the last slide and also last report. We took initiative to write the report on dotless domains. What we mean by dotless domain, that is a domain name that doesn't have any dot in it. What? For example, if we have a web page that is addressed via a link that is, for example, HTTP://example/, that's a dotless domain name or an e-mail address that is Patrik@example without a dot in the domain name.

The reason we brought this up is we start to see some indications that were some -- everything from PR marketing to ideas to people being curious whether they -- for example, specifically, for brand top-level domains, whether they can use a link just to HTTP://brand/.   So we felt let's have a look if that would work. And their answer is no.

There are two reasons. The first one is that, specifically, the SMTP protocol that is used for electronic mail require a dot in the domain name part.

The second thing has to do with the fact that there is an enormous amount of software, web browsers, operating systems, and other kind of resolution -- directory services on today's shipping computers that simply do not send a single word or token without a dot to the DNS. So, if it is the case that you, in your browser, type in just one word, it will not go to the DNS.

And this is -- a lot of people, of course, that know DNS say there's no problem with a dotless domain in DNS. That is absolutely correct. The problem is that the query or the label do not reach the DNS.

It is the case, though, as I said, that this has to do with implementations in web browser and operating systems of today, which means that someone can change that. What we see, though, is that there are operating systems like old Mac, old Macintosh operating systems or Windows XP maybe around this table that has been around for a long time, which means, even though all manufacturers change their software now, it will take quite a long time before it will actually have an effect.

So we were a couple people in SSAC, including myself, that were advocating for this. And I must say, personally -- excuse me -- for us to write this report.

I must say that I personally -- I'm surprised how much problems dotless domains would be. It was actually worse than expected. I was hoping that we would find, no, this is just a rumor and I will change my mind. But it was actually the other way around. Next slide, please.

So with that as a background, Heather, over to you.

HEATHER DRYDEN: Thank you very much, Patrik. That was quite comprehensive in terms of the kinds of issues that the SSAC has been focusing on with the inclusion of the single-character IDN issue.

I understand that various parts of ICANN have commented on that issue but that the GAC has not advised. And this may be something that the GAC would consider commenting on perhaps in the next few months. As a -- as I say, we have been asked to provide advice on single-character IDNs. But I wonder whether colleagues may have questions on some of the items that you've presented or perhaps even other issues that they would like to raise with the SSAC while they're here. EU Commission, please.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION: Thank you, Madam Chair. And thank you very much to Patrik and to also to the SSAC membership to be here. I hope that's not because you felt like you needed reinforcements, Patrik, but just to participate in the discussion. I have two questions or three questions.

But the first one: Did I understand correctly that somebody -- and I don't know if I understood correctly -- the Internet architecture board said that we cannot undo the delegation of a domain name which was seen as a mistake? Did I understand correctly, or could you elaborate on this? Thank you.

PATRIK FALTSTROM: Yes, absolutely. The IAB issued a report in early February -- I think it was February 8 -- related to what characters can be used in the top-level

domain. Because the current RFCs that exist say that the characters must be alphabetic. Okay? And there is some ongoing discussion in the IETF what the implications are.

And the reason why they've been discussing it in the IAB is because some of the discrepancies between different software implementations is just because some different software vendors have interpreted alphabetic differently, specifically, when we go to an IDN context.

So far, when we have been talking about just ASCII characters in domain names and similar addressing, it has been interpreted as A to Z digits and the dash, the last digit hyphen. But the question is: How do you expand that when you move into IDN space? So IAB wrote a report. And what they said in that report is that -- which they have said about other kind of things as well -- when it is the case that we actually have deployed, for example, a top-level domain, it is very difficult to -- I don't remember the words from the top of my head. If that's what you're after, you need to go back and see their report. It is very difficult to remove it just because it has such an implication. And that is similar things that we in SSAC, for example, have been looking at regarding, if a registry, for example, go away. That's why we have the rules for the fallback registry and all of those kind of things to make sure that the actual DNS resolution, et cetera, stays up. Because removing a top-level domain that people have started to use has big impact.

So from an IAB perspective, to the degree, so that you don't really want to do that. So you don't want to make a mistake to -- it's costly to make a mistake when you do an approval of a domain, yes.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION: If I may, chair, to continue with my questions. Thank you very much. That clarifies.

I would very much appreciate to receive and perhaps also other GAC colleagues the specific reference of this IAB report that you mention. I would be very curious to read it.

My second question concerns your report on the confusability of single string IDN. I wonder to if -- and to what extent the SSAC -- sorry. I'll rephrase.

I was wondering on which expertise does the SSAC rely for assessments concerning the confusability, which, of course, are issues that touch upon, among others, newer sciences, et cetera. The way we perceive characters, et cetera, is this some kind of expertise that the SSAC relies on?

And the third question, so I don't have to intervene again, pardon my ignorance and my lack of memory. But your report on DNS blocking was, I must say, extremely useful for the European Commission. It was even quoted in internal reports, if you're happy about that.

Does blocking of IP addresses -- is it within the remit of the SSAC or not, or blocking of other numbering resources or generating resources using the Internet? Thank you. And sorry. And, if so, would you consider writing a similar report and not focusing on the DNS but also other Internet resources. Thank you.

PATRIK FALTSTROM: Thank you very much. Regarding confusability and expertise, first of all, let me explain one process issue with the SSAC reports that might help you to evaluate what I will say.

The SSAC reports are created by SSAC and the people that are members of SSAC. And they are published as they are. There's no public comment period or anything like that.

So the -- so the good thing with that is that you can choose yourself whether you would like to follow that advice or not. It's very easy for you to say no, I don't trust that report. You have to make your determination. So that's why I ask this question. So I'm explaining to you so you can make a decision whether you trust us or not, to be blunt.

So, regarding characters, we have been very careful in the last couple of rounds in this membership committee, when we appoint SSAC members, to not only are we evaluating the skill set of the individual that we are approving. We also are examining whether the skill set that the person has adds something or covers a gap that SSAC, as a whole, is missing compared to the knowledge that SSAC, as a whole, should have.

So part of that evaluation, the last couple years have been that we have added, as you can see on our list on our members, that we have added people from various parts in the world with linguistic experience, linguistic technical experience. That's my first -- the first part of my answer.

The second part of my answer is that, for this specific issue, to talk about confusability, we have reached out to, explicitly, the Unicode people because -- and I will explain a little bit later, the people creating the Unicode character sets. We've reached out to a couple academic institutions to talk about -- and this is a key thing -- is there any kind of metadata connected to the Unicode codepoints so that one algorithmically can calculate and say whether two codepoints are confusing or not. And the answer to that question is no. So this is to decide whether the two characters are confusing, you need, as far as we know, so far, some kind of inspection and discussion. There is a gray zone. It is not possible. It's not a black and white decision that you can do algorithmically.

The second thing that we found in this report, which was more surprising, is that people have been talking all the time, regarding Unicode, that there is confusability between Latin, Greek, and Cyrillic, that specific group of scripts. So one thing that we were looking for when we were creating the report is is that group of script the only group of script where we do have confusability between the scripts, not only within the scripts? Or do we have other cases?

To gather data to that part of the report, we talked to the variant team that Dennis is running. And one of the findings and one of the working groups in Dennis's team is there are other groups that have been detected. And just because that way, the ICANN community in a sort of ad hoc way found other groups of scripts, SSAC drew the conclusion that there might be other groups of scripts that are yet not detected.

And that is also the basis of our recommendation that there must be more study before we can say more about confusability.

It's also the case that we have the IDN ccTLD fast track where we had an algorithm that we thought was okay -- an evaluation process that we thought was okay that was clarified in two steps.

But it is the fact that we have three applications at the moment where I claim people are not so much discussing whether two codepoints or two characters are confusing or not, but interpretation of the algorithm itself.

So from that we draw the conclusion that it's not even easy to directly translate the existing two-character evaluation process into and expound that to also be used for one characters. We need a special list of evaluation steps that one-character TLD application must go through. It's not more difficult than that.

And, of course, one could probably look at the individual codepoints and find 95% of all cases whether yes or no. But the last 5% -- or whether it's 1% or 10%, I don't know -- but also to identify, these things must be evaluated manually. So that is sort of the kind of work we have been doing.

So a lot of the conclusions we have is based on that, when we have been asking people that do have some expert skills, they said, no, there is more problem. There are more problems here.

Thank you.

HEATHER DRYDEN: Thank you very much, Patrik. Follow-up question, EU Commission?

EUROPEAN COMMISSION: There was another question concerning the IP blocking or blocking of other Internet resources.

PATRIK FALTSTROM: Oh sorry. I actually had it written up here. I just forgot it. Regarding IP addresses, yes, absolutely, it is within our realm to look at that. Because we are the security and stability advisory committee to the ICANN board and community, which means that we can answer any kind of -- we are supposed to be able to answer any kind of questions including, of course, that we have to do some kind of outreach.

                          And one of the things that we have been talking about -- we had a meeting today, for example, with the address supporting organization -- is, for example, how we are going to do that kind of collaboration. Because we do envision not this year but potentially 2013 that there might be questions regarding IP address allocation and management that we should look at that actually might have impact on stability. Regarding blocking, specifically, we have so far decided to look at the DNS blocking, domain name blocking. But nothing prohibits us from looking at blocking using other layers as well. Thank you.

HEATHER DRYDEN: Thank you, Patrik. I have Italy and Netherlands, please.

ITALY: Yeah. Thank you, chair.

                          I would like to ask you to explicit a little bit more about the evolution of WHOIS. We have been talking about WHOIS terminology and all the new protocols that could ease the access to the data. But you have an idea of how much this -- which time frame we may receive this? And

which impact on the -- on the problems connected to also the quality of the data if there is an impact, probably not, if the bad habits are continued by the registrants or by the registrars. But I would like to have an idea about what is foreseen in this aspect with the new protocol.

PATRIK FALTSTROM: Thank you very much. One of the SSAC people in the room is my vice chair, Jim Galvin. And he's the one that inside SSAC is running the WHOIS issue. So I'll hand over the microphone to him.

JIM GALVIN: Thank you, Patrik. I think I heard two questions, and I just want to clarify the first one. So you were asking when this new terminology and structure will be commonplace and used throughout? Okay.

So I think right now the staff have taken on the document and they have begun to use it. As I understand, the current plan is to begin to use that terminology and the structure in new work going forward rather than trying to modify all the existing work and any work that might be in progress.

So as much as possible, that's the path that they're taking in adopting what we have proposed there for terminology.

ITALY: Yes, but the question was using the technology when the number of TLDs will be duplicated or multiplied by ten.

JIM GALVIN: Yes. And I thought I saw a different second question up there, but to speak to what you just asked, we believe that the terminology will allow us to better frame all of the WHOIS and WHOIS-related discussions so that we can focus, in particular, on the three things that we are specifying words for so that we can separately talk about registration data, directory service, and access protocol.

I think one of the problems that WHOIS discussions and WHOIS-related discussions have had is we use the term "WHOIS" and frequently the parties who are talking have a different context for that word. And that's really the basis for the terminology.

So the goal here is to improve the discussions and allow -- ensure that people who are talking, are talking about the same thing because they can use the same phrase for that.

I thought I heard a second question from you about quality of WHOIS data. Did I hear that question, too? And did I answer your questions other than that one?

ITALY: You answered that it will constitute a best practice that will provoke a better quality of the data, is what you just said.

So I wanted to have an evaluation of in which time frame, then, this will be adopted. But you said that the staff is starting just now to adopt the new terminology. But then this will lead to a new standard.

What is the -- in time, what is the time frame when you foresee the effect of this application?

JIM GALVIN: I think the answer is that barring any extreme reaction from the community that this is a negative path and a bad idea that the transition has started, and it will continue until it's done.

I think, as I said, the goal is to begin using the new terminology in new work.

So as new things are started, they will start using it, and work that's in progress will, you know, come to closure and be left as is and we won't be trying to revise prior work.

So, I mean, in terms of time frame now it starts, and it will end when the current existing work that is WHOIS related ends, because there will be no mix in terminology at that point.

Heather, I think there were a couple of people who had hands over here.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you. I have Netherlands, Australia, and U.K.

NETHERLANDS: Thank you, Heather.

On the subject of blocking, I think it's a recurring subject of our discussions every time.

I have two questions. First of all, I have the same question as the last meeting, and it's about the broken of TLDs. We have of course the unfortunate experience with XXX. XXX was put in the root in April, I think, last year, somewhere. Sorry, it's almost a year ago. I'm still very, very curious, although of course this is not -- there has not been a very fortunate dossier for many country of us, but still we have at least the positive side is that we have experience with sensitive string being in root.

I was wondering after a year what are the symptoms of possible blocking, what are the negative sides? Is it being blocked?

Of course this is very difficult question, but still I would like to have some answers on this, because it will guide us, also give us information for possibly sensitive strings which could be blocked in the new program.

And that brings me to the second question. Are you contemplating -- because I think I heard something in the lobby somewhere, are you

contemplating a more -- let's say follow-up on your first recommendation and your first report on blocking?

Thank you.

PATRIK FALTSROM: So to answer the first question is we don't know. One of the problems that we have had in SSAC and also that we still have is that we have not really found anyone that is doing this measurement, which is the data that you are after. There are a lot of rumors, but we in SSAC don't write reports based on rumors.

And so the blocking that people are discussing is more blocking in the form of, for example, removal of second-level domains from TLDs or that ISPs that run resolvers are asked to also explicitly not resolve certain domain names. That is the kind of blocking that is more happening, which we are looking more in the second report. To partly answer your second question, yes, we do have a working party that is looking more into what types of blocking does exist and what kind of implications do each one of them actually have. That is the continuation.

But regarding blocking on the TLD level, the answer is we don't know.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you very much.

Australia.

AUSTRALIA: Thank you, Chair.

And, first of all, thanks to Patrik and the SSAC. These are always very useful discussions, and it's great to keep this dialogue going.

On the -- Going back to the WHOIS issue, so, first of all, following on from the previous comments, I wear a hat at the moment on the WHOIS Review Team. So with that we thank you for your WHOIS report. We tried to, I believe did pick up on your terminology. So yes, it's being used and it's very welcome. I agree that the old terminology was very confusing.

And on that note, I'm not sure but it may have been that the previous exchange was at cross-purposes, and I just wanted to check.

I think that Italy may have been talking about the potential for new WHOIS protocol, which I gather has been discussed in some areas, not so much just the new terminology. I'm not sure if you can clarify, Italy, but I think there may have been a cross-purposes discussion there.

PATRIK FALTSROM: Regarding a new protocol -- First of all, thank you very much, and, yes, we got indication that the WHOIS Review Team and others picked up the report. The only thing they didn't like were the acronyms that we proposed because they were too long, so you needed acronyms for the acronyms. But part of the ongoing work is to resolve that issue as well.

The important thing is just to agree on terminology as quickly as possible so we don't diverge too much. This supposed to lead to harmonization and not the opposite.

Regarding the protocol itself, that nothing we can say anything about because the WHOIS protocol or a new protocol -- there are a couple of protocol suggestions that are out there. The IETF has developed at least two others, and/or three or four, even more. I think I have done two of them myself that are pretty crappy so no one is using them, lucky enough. But what the IETF has done, which might be more interesting, is that for one of the protocols, IRIS, they started by doing a requirement document which lists requirements on a new protocol, and then they went off to actually produce a protocol.

So there had been a discussion, of course, whether IRIS should be picked up, but of course it's very heavy to implement, and given what we know today, not the best protocol.

But I think even though sort of the community decide not to go toward IRIS, I think re-reading the requirements document is something that is probably a good thing to do.

But when people are going to adopt a protocol, well, we see the IETF developed IPv6 around 1993; right? And how many have IPv6 here at home? Not many.

So it is impossible to say.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you for that, Patrik.

                       Next I have U.K.

UNITED KINGDOM: Thanks very much, Chair.

                       When I see SSAC on the GAC agenda, my heart leaps up, in a nonromantic way.

                       [Laughter]

UNITED KINGDOM: I hasten. Because I know we're going to hear from the supreme expert on the DNS. My brain, however, is a little more apprehensive because my brain says I'm not going to be able to follow this for very long on any particular topic because I just don't have the brain power to follow it or the engineering background, so on. But it's always impressive to hear from you and your colleagues here as well.

So my app pretty much is to try to sort of identify what is the global public interest issue that's embedded in the technical research, and analysis, and reporting. And that's what I tried to pick out.

As I understand it, you are doing, as we have just been discussing, further work on blocking and there's a clear public interest there.

What I would urge is that when your current activity on that particular subject has reached a reporting stage that you try and sort of corral the public interest issues into a section that will allow me and other colleagues to gravitate more easily to the aspects that are more crucial to the interests of governments and the stability and resilience of the system that we are all here to preserve but help evolve.

So that's my first point.

My second point is on this issue of single character IDNs. And I wonder if I'm right in interpreting this as possibly identifying some kind of market constraint or limitation of opportunity if this confusability issue is going to argue against single character generic domains, and I wonder how that position -- it's not quite clear to me; forgive me if I have missed it -- relates to what's happening in the country code area where we do have single character country code domains.

So there's somehow, it seems to me, in my interpretation, something of a misalignment, if you like, between the generics and the country code.

So I wonder -- My question is, am I right in interpreting the situation in that way? It's obviously highly relevant to the trend towards internationalization of the system and increasing opportunity, taking into account cultural variations and diversity, I should say, not variation, diversity across the world with scripts and so on, multiple scripts.

Thanks.

PATRIK FALTSROM:	Thank you very much. Regarding the public interest portion, thank you very much for the suggestion.
	We are trying to, in the earlier -- in an earlier point in time than before we are creating our reports, to think about who our reader is so already when we start to create the outline that we think about very, very early what portion, what parts of the document should be included.
	Your points were explicitly regarding blocking, that there is a public -- the public interest that you talked about. I am very happy to bring that back to the work party, and I'm even prepared of extending that to say that we could actually discuss with, for example, like we are doing outreach in SSAC. Even though it's a report that we write, we have the ability to talk to outsiders, do you think this fulfills the need for this and that reader. And apart from ourselves, we can check whether that is fulfilled in one way or another. So thank you for that.
	Regarding the single character IDNs, so the status at the moment in ICANN is that the Board has said no to single character IDNs in the first round. So that decision is taken. And personally, I haven't heard any indication that the Board is thinking of changing that, and we're in the middle of the....
	The reason why we at SSAC do urge ICANN to -- or say very explicitly that there is a need for single character IDNs is for the reason you brought up and others; that there are valid cases where single-character IDNs are needed. Which means that even though we are not going to include it in the first round, of course it's needed to resolve this issue. We cannot continue to have this hanging there. Because I think if it is the case that it continues to hang in there, that is when we get the implications that you are talking about.
CHAIR DRYDEN:	Thank you very much, Patrik. So you know, my heart leaps as well.
	Okay. Sweden, you are next, please.

SWEDEN: Thank you very much, Heather.

                           Actually, my question was a bit similar to my colleague from the U.K.,
                           which was pointing at what kind of public-policy issues do you see
                           concerning the security and stability overall in the new gTLD program
                           that we might have missed or maybe we should focus on and give GAC
                           advice about. So it was a little bit similar to your case -- question.
                           Thank you.

PATRIK FALTSROM: I think that is a question that neither me nor individuals from SSAC can
                           probably respond in a meeting like this. That is, instead, a session or a
                           separate discussion that we should potentially have, if it is the case that
                           we should work together.

                           But I also encourage GAC to internally ask that question among
                           yourselves, because I do know that you have a lot of clueful people both
                           around the people and that you also have as advisors that can actually
                           help you to come up with specific questions to SSAC. For example, the
                           very specific question, and we very thank you once again for the
                           formulation of the question that led to SAC50. Because just because
                           the question from GAC was precise, we could write very quickly a very
                           short document.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you very much. I have Netherlands, please.

NETHERLANDS: Yes. Speaking on the question of Maria, we have national -- had a
                           national consultation on the way on the criteria we should use to assess
                           new TLDs, whether it's a string or the proposition behind it. And one of
                           the main criteria is security and stability of the DNS. But we are very
                           much aware that we are not the experts. We know nothing about this,
                           and it's not, let's say, our field of work.

Another criteria is, for example, is it should be conforming international law and human rights, et cetera. So we have a couple of criteria.

On the question of blocking, I would envisage, and at least some other countries have also these kind of ideas, that we ask the Board to advise on, let's say, specific. In an early warning we can say this, or later but I suppose in early warning, if we have concerns about this special -- this specific string, because it could be blocked.

I think what our responsibility would be as a GAC to ask experts, ask the board in this case, to make a report on this and to, let's say, say to us, yes, this is not going to have negative effects or, no, it's going to have negative effect, this string.

I mean, we cannot say this. We heard a lot around, we have beautiful reports, but we cannot say this.

The same thing I would envisage, but this is something else, for example, if human rights are involved, we could ask the Council of Europe for an assessment of whether a string should not or whether it should be accepted or not.

So I think we -- it's fortunate that we have the early warning because we have time to let things sort out, but I would say to you, I think we asked the same thing last time, we would like SSAC to really give us feedback on our questions regarding, also, specific strings.

Thank you.

PATRIK FALTSROM: Thank you for the question.

SSAC doesn't have a role in the gTLD process regarding evaluation.

In the gTLD program, there is already today specific evaluation regarding stability and also separate for string similarity which are

distinction. And I tried to find here on the actual graph for the various stages that the evaluation of a string is included, string similarity, DNS stability, technical operation or capability, which are in parallel to the registered services. Geographical name and the others. And all of those evaluations are done in parallel.

So I think what -- I hope what you -- To some degree I am a little bit confused here because it sounds like what you are asking for is you don't believe that the provided DNS stability application in the Applicant Guidebook is good enough. You want to have yet another kind of evaluation, or are you talking about GAC reaching out, being able to reach out? I'm a little bit confused here. I'm sorry.

Netherlands.

NETHERLANDS: If there's a provision in the new gTLD program -- I didn't know in detail what you were saying, but if there is provision that it has been tackled, the specific concern we have on a certain string -- for example, when blocking will be done, will this harm the stability of the DNS? -- if it's in the program, it's all right, but it should be somewhere.

PATRIK FALTSROM: I'm happy to look at this together with you personally, and we can look at this and potentially together identify what you should look further into to make sure that you feel -- that you feel confident that the evaluation is according to whatever need that you have. So I am happy to talk to you off-line, because I think we are running out of time; right?

CHAIR DRYDEN: Yes, is the short answer. We are running out of time.

It is clear, however, that there is going to be a continued interest in security and stability issues related to new gTLDs, blocking, and perhaps we should take a closer look at the single-character IDN issue as well to

identify what public-policy issues may be of interest to this committee there.

So may we conclude at this point? Yes; okay. All right.

So one last comment.

PAKISTAN: This is from (saying name), a member GAC from Pakistan.

There is suggestions for ICANN for the security and stability of the Domain Name System that ICANN may make giant efforts with (indiscernible) to perform research work to handle the security and stability of Domain Name System.

This is my suggestion regarding the security and stability of the Domain Name System. And there is a question from the concerns that whether we can say ICANN is at the right direction to pursue the security and stability of Domain Name System, and whether the same approach are, existing approaches, enough to handle the security and stability issues by the introduction of TLDs.

(Off microphone)

>>   Yeah.

PATRIK FALTSROM: Let me just introduce Ram Mohan. He is the liaison from SSAC to ICANN Board, and he is the one who works real closely, from SSAC, with the various security evaluation groups that -- or processes that ICANN have that is related to the -- what do you call it? The....

Oh, the Affirmation of Commitments. Sorry.

RAM MOHAN:	Thank you. And thank you for the question. I might end up paraphrasing the question to make sure I understood it correctly.
	So the first question, the way I understood it, and if you could please help me if I got it right, is whether the current approach that ICANN is taking with addressing you are security and stability of the Domain Name System, whether that is consistent with the commitments made by ICANN in the AoC. Is that the right question?
PAKISTAN:	Yes.
RAM MOHAN:	Okay. I think the real answer for that is it was really going to come from the community. I think ICANN has taken a very clear and unequivocal step to say that it is committed to the -- to working on security and stability. And there are a series of steps and there is a tracking chart on every single one of them.
	I can say this to you. As the SSAC's liaison to the Board, the Board has spent and continues to spend a significant amount of its time, energy, and effort not merely just tracking to the various issues, but actually working on executing to the spirit of it and not just the letter of it.
	So there is a very clear and unyielding focus on ensuring that what's been agreed to is not only completed but, if possible, done in a way that continues in a long-term way.
	The second question that I thought you had said was whether SSAC itself, as an organization, is adequate to address the ongoing challenges for security and stability, especially with new TLDs coming up.
	So the well-known secret about SSAC is that it has no power, it has no authority. We're just an advisory committee.

We get together as volunteers and we write reports. We think about what threats and issues might be. We issue these reports, and we hope that they are written in such a way that they are relevant and that folks will actually find them useful.

So all of our influence is derived from the value of the work that we do; right?

So it's not for me to say that SSAC is sufficient.

One of the things that I wanted to point out to you is that when SSAC came through a review, its first external review, one of the things that SSAC said was in its charter there was requirement that the risk of the DNS system must be evaluated by SSAC. And SSAC members thought that it was out of its scope and it could not complete that job. And that task has now been taken and is currently under the supervision of a board working group specifically focused on DNS risk and the evaluation of risk.

The charter of that working group is complete, has been posted. And on Thursday there is a session, it's a public workshop that invites community members to comment upon what are the risks that ICANN ought to be evaluating when it comes to the DNS system. And once that is clear, this board-led working group will make a recommendation to the Board so that staff can take that function of evaluating the risk and the security components of the DNS and do that in a routine, regular, basically a no-drama manner. But at the same time, ensure that it's done effectively with continued oversight from the Board Risk Committee.

CHAIR DRYDEN: Thank you very much for that response, Ram.

Okay. So many thanks to our colleagues from the SSAC, informative, as always.   And we look forward to continuing our joint efforts to

understand the security and stability aspects of the DNS and how that relates to the work carried out by the GAC.

And we will hopefully meet with you again soon. And for this afternoon, thank you again.

For the GAC, if we can just take a few minutes to get ourselves organized, and we will continue with our agenda.