

---

HYDERABAD – GAC meeting on Country Names and Country Codes  
Monday, November 07, 2016 – 09:00 to 09:30 IST  
ICANN57 | Hyderabad, India

CHAIR SCHNEIDER: With this, I think we can and should go to the next session, which is agenda item 18.

And it's about the country names and country codes on first and on second level. So there's a whole number of different items that is packed in this session. We've discussed all this before. So, basically, in terms of substance, there is nothing really new.

So I give the floor to Tom very briefly to guide us or remind us of the history a little bit and of where we are with this. Thank you, Tom.

TOM DALE: Thank you, Thomas. Good morning again. The briefing document that we circulated noted, firstly, that there are really four dimensions to this work. But, for purposes of this morning's discussion, the main item of interest appears to be still two-character country codes at the second level. But it's helpful to bear in mind that there are actually four areas, strictly speaking, of potential concern. Those are country names, that is, four

---

*Note: The following is the output resulting from transcribing an audio file into a word/text document. Although the transcription is largely accurate, in some cases may be incomplete or inaccurate due to inaudible passages and grammatical corrections. It is posted as an aid to the original audio file, but should not be treated as an authoritative record.*

---

country names at the second level; country names at the top level; existing country codes at the second level, which has been the subject of significant GAC advice concerning ICANN implementation; and, finally, three-character country codes at the top level.

The briefing provided a little bit of background to some context. But, to recap briefly, in the GAC Helsinki communique in relation to two-letter country and territory codes at the second level, the GAC noted that some countries and territories have decided that they require no notification for release of the two-letter codes at the second level. The GAC considers that, in the event that no preference has been stated, a lack of response should not be considered consent. Some other countries and territories require that an applicant obtains explicit agreement of the country or territory whose two-letter code is to be used at the second level. And the communique advised the GAC board to urge the relevant registry or the registrar to engage with the relevant GAC members when a risk is identified in order to come to an agreement on how to manage it or to have a third party assessment situation if the name is already registered.

Now, with regard to that issue, as was drawn to your attention on the GAC list after Helsinki, ICANN did conduct a public comment process on a proposed procedure. But ICANN had proposed for dealing with two-country character codes at the

---

second level. A number of public comments were received by ICANN, including from a number of GAC members. And, as you may have heard in the public forum earlier this week, the ICANN board has indicated they will be voting on a resolution to deal with the issue this week. And I believe that is going to be tomorrow.

That's the current situation, as I have information. Thomas, back to you.

CHAIR SCHNEIDER:

Thank you, Tom.

So we have roughly half an hour to discuss this. So let me ask you to be brief in your interventions as there may be quite a number of interventions.

I see Singapore and then Iran. Thank you.

IRAN:

Thank you, Thomas. Good morning to everybody.

Yes, the point I raised in public forum. At the end the chairman of the Board said, yes, we have a resolution. But it was not mentioned content of the resolution what it would be.

I think the GAC or the Board need to take into account of the content of the communique. And also we heard yesterday from

---

the ccNSO that there is not only a problem between the three constituencies in this, but also inside each, like GAC, there is divergence of views on that. So I hope the Board will take into account when they have the resolution. The resolution shall in no way be inconsistent with the views either expressed already or being expressed.

I think the Board, I understood, has been alarmed by that by some country that please kindly be careful when you have resolution, you should reflect the situation.

It seems that it may be too early to have a totally determined situation, but it should be some resolutions with conditions, with qualifications, and so on and so forth. But still the issue is under discussion. And some people said that they have to wait for a general agreement of all three constituencies -- ccNSO, GNSO, and GAC. And so on. So we'll have to be very careful of that resolution. And I think we should reflect the situation not to be before the fait accompli. Thank you.

THOMAS SCHNEIDER: Thank you, Iran. In my recollection of the discussion with the ccNSO, what you referred to was the discussion on the three-letter country codes on top-level domains where there is no consensus within the ccNSO and so on and so forth. It does not refer to two-character codes on second level. So that's a

---

different issue that is discussed differently and is at a different stage. So I just wanted to make that clear. As you know, we will meet with the Board this afternoon. And we have not yet received a response from the Board on our advice from Helsinki, as you have seen the letter of Steve Crocker apologizing for that. They have not had time to do that. And, of course, you're free to raise this issue. We'll have a preparatory session for that meeting. And you're free to raise your views and your expectations on the Board on this issue in the meeting with the Board this afternoon. This is just for your information.

So next is Singapore, please.

SINGAPORE:

Thank you, Chair.

Good morning, Chair, and fellow GAC colleagues.

On first day of November the chairman of the Association of Southeast Asian Nation Telecommunication and Information Technology senior officer meeting, Tran Long, (phonetic) has conveyed the ASEAN statement on ICANN's authorization of the release of two-character country codes at the second level in the geographic domain top-level domain to Mr. Steve Crocker, chairman of ICANN board; Mr. Goran Marby, president and CEO

---

of ICANN; Miss Melissa King, vice president ICANN operations. This statement was also copied to our GAC chair.

Singapore has been tasked to read out this statement on behalf of ASEAN.

ASEAN notes that ICANN has been announcing the authorization of the release of two-character ASCII letter code as country codes as specified in the ISO 3166-1 alpha-2 at the second level in the new generic top-level domain since December 2014.

There have been since increasing concern from many countries about the possible public confusion between the two-character domain names and the two-character country code at the second level.

ASEAN further notes that ICANN has proposed three measures in July 2016 to address this concern. Namely, one, an exclusive preregistration period of 30 days for country code top-level domain managers; two, a registration policy requiring registry operator to take steps to ensure against misrepresenting government or country code managers; and third, a post-registration complaint investigation where registry operator must take steps according to ICANN requirement for reports pertaining to illegal conduct.

---

While ASEAN appreciates ICANN effort and contribution to keep the Internet secure, stable, and interoperable and that the authorization of the release of the two-character country codes at the second level aims to promote competition and choice in the domain name market, ASEAN nevertheless has concern with this development. ASEAN is further of the view that the proposed measure by ICANN are insufficient to address the concern and the public confusion with ASEAN member states and country code top-level domain as well as other country code top-level domains. It is, therefore, critical for ICANN to review the authorization process so that the concerns of ASEAN and other countries as well as civil society and other stakeholders can be adequately addressed.

ICANN needs to uphold the public interest of the Internet and the global community. In this regard ASEAN would like to urge ICANN to take into consideration the following recommendation in reviewing the authorization in the three measures. A: The two-country character code at the second level including brand top-level domain which should not be exempted and should be by default reserved for public interest reason unless the government or the country code top-level domain manager has given consent for the release to the registry operator.

---

This is in view that the public policy authority over country code top-level domain rests with the government or designated public authority.

B: Two-character country code at the second level should only be released through a formal process where ICANN or the registry operator submits a written request to the relevant government or country top-level domain manager and the government or the country code top-level domain manager issues an approval letter.

ICANN must continue to modify government country code top-level domain managers and the Internet community of every request for the release of the two-character country code at the second level.

B: Government or country code top-level domain managers should not have to spend resources to preregister two-character country codes at the second level.

There should not be any fee involved as this -- the use of public funds in this regard would not be justified.

E: Registry operators should be required to work with the government or country code top-level domain managers to resolve issues about inappropriate content or manner of use of the two-character country code at the second level.



---

F: ICANN must be empowered to step in to mediate differences between the country code top-level domain manager and the registry operator and to take action against a registry operator that fails to work or comply with a government or country code top-level domain manager's request.

ASEAN would like to express our appreciation to ICANN for its continued support for government and Country Code Top Level Domain managers. ASEAN reaffirms its continued support for ICANN work and is willing to work with ICANN and other stakeholder to achieve a mutually benefit outcome.

Thank you.

CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Thank you, Singapore.

I have Estonia next on the list.

ESTONIA: Hello. We heard yesterday that Cross-Community Working Group could not reach a consensus on if and how to release three-letter country codes and country names. This is about top-level domains now.

And I would like to make a proposal that GAC would start this discussion, because we are talking about country codes and

---

country names, and if I'm not mistaken, Netherlands yesterday said that this is foremost topic for governments and local Internet communities to discuss and decide.

And to get things moving, I also would like to declare that Estonia has done this step already and is very much interested in start using its three-letter country code.

There is nothing generic about country codes, in our view, and there are huge, huge issues with current ICANN ccTLD contract as it is right now. We think that countries should have -- any country should have total control over its codes, labels, marks, flags, anything that represents that particular country, and, therefore, we think that ccTLD model would be most appropriate in this case.

Thank you.

CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Thank you, Estonia.

So you say you would like to use your three-letter country code, and you see that this should be managed similar to a ccTLD and not to a generic TLD; is that correct?

ESTONIA: Yes. This is our first preference.

---

CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Thank you.

Other views on -- comments on this?

Yes, The Netherlands, please.

NETHERLANDS: Yes, thank you.

Well, Estonia referred to my remark yesterday. I would like just to adjust a little bit to what I referred yesterday.

I thought what I proposed was that the time is now ripe or it's more mature to discuss this. I didn't say it's now the priority, top priority.

I think, really, it's the time is ripe to discuss this. And I think, as Estonia said, I think the use of the three-letter code is a prerogative of the national Internet community. And I think I also said that there should be no restrictions or rulings from the GAC concerning the use of its, nor from ICANN, in the sense that of course there should be procedures, but that every country should be sovereign in the use of this according to the needs of the national Internet community.

Thank you.

---

CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Thank you.

Thailand.

THAILAND: Okay. Wanawit from Thailand, for the record.

I would like to make the remarks on -- I speak on behalf of the multistakeholder discussion in Thailand.

So since the issue have been proposed in the (indiscernible), in the ASEAN, so have been called the stakeholders. And the stakeholder who actually was in the Hall of Fame of Internet and way pioneer in the Internet, Dr. Kanchana and all the people we discuss with ccTLD people and try to ask their opinion and position about ccTLD in the perspective of this issue. And we reached a consensus in the multistakeholder that really not treat two-character and three-character as the country codes, because they do believe that there should be more, like four-character, like Thai is more represented. They said that the two-character and three-character, only engineer knows, and from the user perspective, only computer guys know what .TH mean or .THA mean. But the more meaningful is .THAI or the other like Thailand. That already protected.

So refer to that discussion that's why we also inform the Ministry of ICT, who also the representative in ASEAN, that this is

---

a position from the communities. But that is reflecting the position and the statement that coming from the government perspective.

And I urge the -- the position to be understand what we try to work, especially after IANA transition, we need to work with the communities and we share the wheel together. And if the community cannot find a consensus, we also have to do, no matter, we need to use the public fund or do if it's need or you need to contribute the team to do this work to protect the measure that are already in place.

So that what we agreed to do. And if we cannot change the thing as they are, we leave it to measure. So what I like to inform and take notes that Thailand position for multistakeholder perspective, we do not consider that two-character and three-character is important and it's not the country in the definition that we think.

Thank you.

CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Thank you, Thailand.

I see Switzerland, China, and Nigeria. And your neighbor is --

---

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Nigeria.

CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Both Nigeria. Thank you.

Spain. Could you tell me which -- the gentleman in the back, which?

Palestine. Philippine. Viet Nam. You're not sitting where you were sitting when I took my notes, but this is a challenge we will have to live with.

Norway.

Okay.

I have Switzerland. Thank you.

SWITZERLAND: Thank you, Chair. I just wanted to share with you that at the preliminary stage and before we reach out more to our community in Switzerland, we have a certain sympathy with the ideas expressed by Estonia and by The Netherlands. And also with the idea that on the three-letter top-level domains that are country representations, that this is something that probably could be dealt by -- most effectively by the local communities, and in case coordination is needed, by the Country Code Name Supporting Organization.

---

CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Thank you.

China.

CHINA: Thank you, Chair. Guo Feng from China.

Now I want to say that China share with the concern with ASEAN countries and many other countries on the issue of this three-letter country code and two-letter country code. This -- this -- the whole issues.

We think the three-letter country code should be equivalent to the two-letter country code. So I want to echo the Estonia, what Estonia has been said.

And also to, moving forward the discussion, I want to make suggestions that to deal with this problem, we can, as the GAC, as a whole, we can just make a table or several tables dealing with each kind of every issue, like two-letter country code at the second level or the country name at the top level, like this. And we can just make a table or several table listing each country's position on this issue.

And plus, we can discuss a confusion complaint procedure to dealing with the confusion issues with this country code or -- and country name issue.

---

So that's my -- that's my reaction to this topic.

Thank you.

CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Thank you. I'm trying to read my notes on who's next.

Nigeria.

NIGERIA: Mr. Chairman, this is to reiterate the support of Nigeria to ASEAN, China, and many other countries. We're in the support of total control of our names' two-digit codes and three-digit codes and the fact that Nigeria should not spend any more resources to retain them.

Thank you.

CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Thank you.

Spain.

SPAIN: Thank you, Chairman.

On the issue of two-letter codes at the second level, I think that the GAC -- the ICANN Board has not provided a response to the



---

GAC advice issued at the Helsinki communique. Is that right?  
Okay.

But they plan to approve measures, we don't know which ones, tomorrow based on the proposal put forward in the summer and followed by our public comment period.

I don't know whether tomorrow they will deal with both things, the GAC advice and the proposals made by ICANN staff. But anyway, it's a no-work way of dealing with these, especially the day where we are supposed to work on our -- on our community. They don't give us time to react. I don't know whether this issue could be raised in the meeting with the Board.

And on the issue of three-letter codes as top-level domains, I would be thankful if we are reminded of the outcome of the Joint Working Group on the use of country or territory names, because it was supposed to be dissolved. But they are discussing how to close that working group. If someone more knowledgeable than me on that issue can tell us what are the outcome of their discussion, I would be very grateful.

Thank you.

CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Thank you. First of all, as I said before, we are free to raise this with the Board. That's clear. So we can use this opportunity.

---

With regard to the proposal by China to set up a list, we have done this for the two-character codes on second level, with the distinction every country was able to indicate whether you would be willing to free this without notification for all new TLDs or just for brand TLDs. So that was -- a difference was made because countries, some countries have -- are willing to let these two-character codes free for brands but not for others without being consulted.

And with regard to Spain's question, we have discussed this with the -- or heard from Bart Boswinkel in the exchange with the ccNSO that apparently there has been no consensus and they decided to just state that there is no consensus on what to do with the three-letter country codes on top level. That's the only thing that we know.

Mr. Lin Mao-Shong. Morris, please.

TAIWAN:

Thank you, Chair, and good morning, everyone. I'm Morris Lin from Taiwan.

I'm glad to hear so many concern and the valuable opinion from colleague regarding the use of two-letter country code in the second level and the use of three-letter country codes.

---

Our government's position remain the same as before. If the code are strongly associated with the common authority or national territory, they have to be issued carefully to avoid confusion or misuse.

However, we are open for further discussion, and it will be great to seek the balance between public interest and business demand.

Thank you.

CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Thank you. Viet Nam.

VIET NAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good morning. Actually, I'm alluding to topic again about the issues raised in the letter sent to the chair and also to ICANN.

Actually, I just want to notice one small fact. In our developing countries, whenever they see some country code, even two letter or three letters, they assume that it is from this country. They have (indiscernible).

So of course for some kind of essential strings, we have the list to send to the GAC, also to the Board later on. Now we're still working on that. We support the idea to open the string, but

---

limited one. We just -- We have the list, assertion list. We need to have some kind of notification procedure before releasing it in the (indiscernible) letter. But now we still want to have the consider to protect it before (indiscernible).

Thank you.

CHAIR SCHNEIDER:

Thank you.

On my list I have Palestine, Norway, and Brazil, and then we need to close, I think.

Okay. I take Iran and The Netherlands, and then I'm closing the list because we're running out of time. And Olof will give us some additional information.

Let me just note Iran and Netherlands. Okay.

Palestine, please.

PALESTINE:

Good morning. At first I would like to thank all the colleagues for their comments. If we look into the history of the DNS, we will observe that there was, in the past ten years or even more, anything that was related to the second-level domain were also in the past two years, a lot of it, more than 1,000 gTLDs were

---

offered. And now there is a conversation or discussion, and we're talking about the three letters.

So I would expect that this -- and during this very brief period, that it would cause some sort of a confusion in the DNS. And at the end, the end user might get into those details, and basically it might get misused.

I would also like to add that the sensitivity of, like -- towards governments themselves. Thailand, for example. How do you guarantee that there are no misuse that's going to happen from? For that reason, this subject is very sensitive towards governments.

And what ICANN is going to do towards the end user? And when people would know? There is like a segment, big segment of the users do not understand the difference between the ccTLD and the generic domains or the IDNs.

I thank you very much.

CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Thank you.

Norway.

NORWAY: Yes, thank you, Chair.

---

Just a quick comment on the three-letter code used as gTLD.

So I think we can understand the rationale for some countries want to use a three-letter codes as a CC, but of course that has not been discussed before. So -- but we're not against starting such a discussion, but of course in the gTLD process, we were concerned about keeping the protection for the three-letter code.

So I think it's also important to maintain, to keep the current protection in the gTLD process for the three-letter country codes. So I think also, we need to reiterate that for the Board. So thank you.

CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Thank you.

Brazil.

BRAZIL: Thank you, Chair. Just for the record, with regards to the three-letter country codes, first level, Brazil is of the view that it should be regarded as a ccTLD. And, therefore, it should be managed by each country national communities.

Thank you.

---

CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Thank you.

Iran.

IRAN: Thank you, Thomas. With respect to the two-letter use at the second level, my understanding of discussions of yesterday was still for that is no consensus with entire ccNSO. But you said differently. It should be checked.

However, with respect to the table that China proposed, is good one. I don't know whether table is complete or not, whether we have two table, table one for the two character and table two for the three character. Perhaps for three character it may be early because discussion is still continue. Even some people talking that it should not be given, and some people wants to give that, they said that, with lowercase, some people with upper case. And perhaps we should distinguish between them.

But whatever the table should be should be given to the ICANN for implementation. I don't know what is the status of that table. If ICANN do something entirely separately and subject to the tacit agreement that many countries may not want that, we have problems.

So I suggest that we clearly put this in the agenda of discussion with the Board. And I have serious problems that Board start to

---

have a resolution when there is no clear-cut solution for this issue. We are not to be in hurry. We should not be pushed by some public comment people in the public comment of the day before yesterday. And we should really do something correctly and properly.

By the way, Chairman, our government has sent you a letter and sent to others that we want always a specific agreement. We have no problem for delivery. But we want a specific agreement. I don't know to what extent that letter has been taken into account. It is back and forth between government. And no one between GAC and ICANN give us a clear indication that, yes, the request has been received. And that is indicated the position of Iran that any such delivery at the second level of the ccTLD of Iran must be subject to specific agreement. It should be reflected and should be informed to the appropriate person or persons dealing with the matter. I don't know where is it. More than 10 emails have been exchanged. But no clear answer, and we have been ping ponged from one to the another. It is not good. Thank you.

CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Thank you. Let me give the floor to the Netherlands. And, hopefully, you can clarify the issue about the Cross-Community Working Group. And also the letter -- you want to go first? Okay.



---

NETHERLANDS: Thank you. I just want to echo what I think in many interventions before we had also the discussions on two-letter codes on the second level, I understand there's a lot of caution from governments for use of this.

On the other hand, I think we have a legacy already of using these codes. I think I mentioned, for example, we have de.nl in the Netherlands, which combines, let's say the German TLD with the Dutch TLD. Nothing happened. It's a major firm, Douwe Egberts. And I think many countries -- Australia, New Zealand, U.K -- said this also has a very -- let's say beneficial effect for many brand names. For example, to have those national subsidiaries, for example, I would say the Indian company Data, if they have a top-level domain, they would very likely have the subsidiaries on the second level with the two-letter codes.

So we should not only look at, let's say, the protection and the caution, but look at the positive side of the use of two-letter codes on the second level. Thank you.

CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Thank you. I have the USA, who also had their hand up. So please, USA, very briefly. And then Olof. Thank you. Then we need to wrap up.

---

UNITED STATES: I'll be brief, especially since the Netherlands just raised the point that I wanted to emphasize, which is the U.S. doesn't have the same concerns as other countries with respect to two-letter codes at the second level. At least to the United States, it's already predominantly in use. And we've seen no problems and do not have technical or policy concerns with this respect. Thank you.

CHAIR SCHNEIDER: Thank you. Olof.

OLOF NORDLING: Thank you. And this is in response to the request from China, in particular, saying that should be a list or proposing that -- to have a table. Now, there are tables. There is one table maintained as a repository by the GDD operations division within ICANN for the two-letter codes on the second level. And for those requesting notifications for that, it has to be notified through a particular email to the maintainer of that one.

There is also -- and this is a subsequent step which hasn't advanced as far as yet. And that is for a repository for the country names on the second level. And that we do maintain on the GAC Web site -- and that's accessible to you all. And, if you

---

want to change that, just send a note to me or to GAC staff email address.

So that's more easily accessible really. But there are two tables of the nature that China sought for.

Thank you.

CHAIR SCHNEIDER:

Thank you. We need to sum up just one thing. Given that we had quite a lot of discussions on a text for the communique on this in Helsinki and, given the very short amount of time that we had at that meeting, which was not ideal, in case somebody would want to have a text on this issue in the communique, please send this to the GAC list as a draft proposal as soon as you can. And, please, I'll start discussing this electronically, because time will not be as short as in Helsinki, but it will still be limited tomorrow when we draft the communique. And I'm just trying to help us be as efficient as we can just to invite you. If you want to have this reflected in the communique, of course, we know that the meeting with the Board may give some additional information. But so maybe, initially after the meeting with the Board, those who have strong feelings about this get together and start to prepare a draft for the communique so that we receive it before tomorrow when we start drafting the communique. Thank you very much.

**[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]**