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ICANN69 | Virtual Annual General – GAC Opening Plenary  
Monday, October 19, 2020 - 09:00 to 10:00 CEST

GULTEN TEPE: The session will now begin. May I ask the technical support team to start recording.

Good morning, good afternoon, and good evening. Welcome to ICANN69 GAC Opening Plenary, Monday 19th October, 7:00 UTC. My name is Gulden Tepe from the GAC support team. Recognizing these are public sessions and other members of the ICANN community may be in attendance, GAC leadership and support staff encourage all of you who are GAC representative and is delegates to type your names and affiliations in the participation chat pod to keep accurate attendance reports as well as for comments and questions to be read out loud. The room has chat feature at the bottom on the right. If you would like to ask a question or make a comment please type it by starting and ending your sentence with <QUESTION> or <COMMENT> to allow all participants to see your request.

Interpretation for GAC sessions will be conducted using both Zoom and the remote simultaneous interpretation platform operated by Congress Rental Network. If you have not done so, we encourage you to download the app. If you wish to speak,

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**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.**

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please raise your hand in the Zoom room and once the session facilitators, myself or Julia calls on your name, please unmute and take the floor. Remember to state your name for the record and the language you will speak if speaking a language other than English. Please also speak clearly and at a reasonable pace to allow for accurate interpretation. When speaking, make sure to mute all other devices, including the CRN application. Finally, this session, like all other ICANN activities, is governed by the ICANN expected standards of behavior. In the case of a disruption during the session, our technical support team will have to mute all participants. This session is being recorded and both recording and transcript will be available on the ICANN69 page. With that, I would like to leave the floor to GAC Chair, Manal Ismail.

MANAL ISMAIL, GAC CHAIR: Good morning, everyone. Welcome to the opening plenary, 700 UTC, scheduled for an hour.

**(Please stand by... Zoom room technical difficulties)**

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It has been quite some time since we last met face-to-face, I hope you and your families continue to be well and safe and in good health and thank you all for your participation despite challenging circumstances and also the challenging time zone to some of us. We have compiled a few slides to structure our session and help you follow the discussion, and ultimately all the material used during our meeting will be or is already linked from the annotated agenda available on the GAC website so please make use of it.

During the session we will be covering some administrative matters to help you participate to the meeting and feel comfortable in the Zoom room. We will go through the schedule, highlighting important sessions to the GAC and will review notable actions since ICANN68, recent demands and requests made to the GAC, report on leadership inter-sessional work and activities, and finally review the process that will be followed to develop the GAC communique at the end of the meeting.

Our GAC meetings will take place from Monday 19th October until Thursday 22nd, working hours 9 [indiscernible] -- I do apologize to those in advance who may be challenged by the working hours. We normally start our plenary with a tour de table for self introductions but given the remote set up we will

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be recording attendance from the Zoom room as Gulten mentioned, so we would kindly ask all GAC members and observers that you write your country, territory, or organization you represent before your name. This would help us identify GAC members and observers in the Zoom room for accurate attendance recording but also to identify who is requesting the floor and prioritize GAC requests throughout GAC sessions.

To request the floor as Gulten mentioned, please raise your hand in the Zoom room or just let us know if you are not in the Zoom room and Gulten will explain nor more details on the technical capabilities of the Zoom set up shortly. To reiterate, when given the floor, please make sure to say your name for transcript purposes and speak slowly, clearly, and close to the mic. And you can type your questions or comments to be read out loud following the format Gulten mentioned for us to be able to spot it in the chat room.

**(Please stand by...)**

Over to you, Gulten.

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GULTEN TEPE:

Thank you, Manal. I will try to be brief, displaying the agenda website. The first note would be always remembered to be logged in, as you may see, it says welcome, Gulden. That means I'm logged in to the website and able to see the sessions, briefings and presentations.

**(Please stand by...)**

Overall, ICANN69 block schedule -- posted briefings as file PDF and additionally publish them under each respective session. Now going to to the ICANN meetings website. During this meeting we didn't publish any remote connection links on GAC website, and it was advised by our team but I have been updating the calendar I already shared with GAC members including the necessary links 24 hours before the session, and you may find those details on this ICANN meeting's website. Again, only 24 hours before the session start time. This is an extra security measure taken by our IT team due to prevent any GAC members and observers from a Zoom bombing incident. If you missed a session, I would recommend you check the ICANN meetings page. You might find the recordings and transcriptions published on this page. Our meetings team will do that for us when available.

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You need to be registered to be able to see these links. Rob and myself shared a couple of reminders. If you experience an issue, please contact with us. With respect to the Zoom room, you are all familiar by now but a refresher for the newcomers, you may see a hand-raised function on the participant function of the Zoom. When you click on that, you will see that you are in the queue, and in my opening remarks I asked you to add your organization, country or territory you are representing by your name. You can hover over your name and update.

Before you speak, please be sure microphone is switched on and inform the audience if you will be speaking in a non-English language. And this will provide a heads-up for our interpreters state your name every time you take the floor. Please do not speak too close to the microphone. Mute all other additional devices -- phone, iPad, so on. Review notification settings and turn them off. If you intend to read a statement, please provide it to us in advance. Last but not least, please speak at a reasonable pace. This is all from my end. If there are any questions, please share it here in the chat box, and you can always send us an email by [GAC-staff@ICANN.org](mailto:GAC-staff@ICANN.org).

MANAL ISMAIL, GAC CHAIR: Back to the agenda of our meeting, we have 13 sessions scheduled over 15 hours and in addition, three cross community

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plenary sessions that will discuss topics of interest to the GAC and the GAC leadership will provide daily updates for GAC members and observers disadvantaged by the meeting time zone, but maybe let's move to the following slide to have a closer look at the schedule.

So I would like first to thank you all for your continued engagement inter-sessionally and in preparation for this meeting. Following the same agreed approach of previous virtual meetings, we focus the meeting week on addressing important and pressing topics to the GAC, including gTLD subsequent rounds, work stream -- we will have only two bilateral meetings, one with the Board and the second with ALAC. We had our bilateral with the GNSO a couple of weeks ago and agreed with the GNSO to receive their update in writing. GAC groups continue to meet with an optional slot to report back to the GAC. You are invited to review the individual working group web pages for progress updates.

During the meeting we will be receiving an update from the GAC public safety working group. We continue to avoid conflict with GNSO PDP sessions, GNSO meetings on SubPro and rights protection mechanisms were both held last week so I hope you were able to follow and participate to the sessions of your interest.

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We also avoid the conflict with the three cross community panels on DNS marketplace, practical solutions to DNS abuse, and consumer protection post who is in order to allow for GAC members' participation. Unlike face-to-face meetings, it's more challenging to remain focused and concentrating for long hours online so we continue to allow a 30 minute break between two consecutive sessions -- but also to make sure you have enough time to settle and get connected to the Zoom room and the real-time interpretation platform.

As mentioned earlier, for GAC members and observers who are disadvantaged by the meeting time zone, the GAC leadership arranged for a 30 minute slot daily update on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday from 15:45 to 16:15 UTC and would welcome anyone who would like to be updated or provide comments or ask questions on sessions they have missed. That said, it's important to note this daily update would be outside the official meeting hours. Hence they will not be considered part of the official record of ICANN69, will not be recorded, and will not benefit from language services or technical support but will be supported as a normal call by our great GAC support team.

The agenda is posted on the GAC website and the material linked there as Gulden showed us as well so please make sure you visit the website. And finally, the wrap-up session which is



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the last session of the GAC meetings, will be an opportunity to follow up, conclude or agree on next steps on issues discussed during the course of the week. Additionally, it will be an opportunity for GAC members to take stock and reflect on planning of future meetings and share ideas for future improvements.

Following slide please. Many thanks, since ICANN68 the GAC submitted a [reading]

**(Please stand by...)**

And the third accountability and transparency review team's final report and all those documents are archived and tracked on a special web page of the GAC website and you will find the link in the GAC briefs. Also since ICANN68 the GAC has also sent and received correspondences regarding matters of importance to the GAC including GAC statement on the new proceeds auction report and GAC requests -- preliminary issue report on GNSO transfer policy. Again, all the correspondences are posted and tracked on the GAC website. Also, GAC support staff are following from ICANN68 virtual policy forum and those actions are all tracked via Google a document, the link on which can be found in the GAC briefs.

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Following slide please, to go quickly on recent requests made to the GAC. So first regarding the independent review process, a feature of the updated independent review process under the new ICANN bylaws [reading] supporting organizations and advisory committees must collectively agree on a single proposed standing panel slate to be submitted to the ICANN Board for aprofit. The deadline for the submission of expressions of interest to serve on the standing panel was at the end of August. On the 25th of August ICANN staff shared proposed terms of reference for the group of community representatives who will work with ICANN org and the external consultant to propose a slate of nominees to the IRP standing panel for Board confirmation. Community leaders are supposed to consult with their groups about constituting community representatives group including seeking feedback on the suggestion that the seven SO AC chairs develop common criteria and make the following selection. Community leaders are supposed to review draft terms of reference when these are circulated with a view towards clarifying the scope of work for the community representative group and its expected outcomes. There is collective preference among the community leadership that the group be kept small, comprise an odd number, at least 7 but not more than 15, as diverse as feasible and possess certain skill sets. The group will seek to act by consensus, select its own chair and maintain confidentiality of

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deliberations while as maintaining as much transparency of course as practical.

A call for expressions of interest for potential group members will be out soon, so this is a heads-up to those interested in having the required skills regarding the opportunity to participate in the community representative group that will help select the new IRP standing panel.

Now moving on to the second topic, ICANN survey on future ICANN public meetings. The discussion about ICANN virtual meetings and phased return to face-to-face meetings is continued. The ICANN community looking towards meeting planning for 2021 and beyond and discussions with the community will start here at ICANN69 about how well virtual meetings are working and how they can be further improved to support the community's needs. Several community groups have been discussing the possibility that travel will be difficult or at least unwise through next year so it may be realistic to focus on improving the virtual meetings for the time being.

There was a general agreement that the survey to gather the community feedback can be useful as a first step that, the results of which will inform Board decisions, and the survey is seeking feedback mainly on current virtual meeting format and logistics, relative strengths and challenges of in-person and virtual

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meetings, and factors that should be considered for an eventual return to in-person meetings.

So I hope you can share your views through one or all, of course, of the three opportunities at hand. First, the survey which has already circulated, and you have already received it in your mailboxes, it is created to gather GAC views until the 5th of November. Also later today during the community-wide discussion with the Board which will take place at 14:30 Hamburg time or 12:30 UTC, and lastly, during the GAC wrap-up session on Thursday at 1:30 Hamburg time.

The third topic is a proposal for a new operation and design phase. This is a proposal for a new operational design phase envisioned to take place prior to Board action on GNSO approved policy recommendations that is between GNSO approval and the Board vote. It will be initiated through a Board request to ICANN org and anticipated only for complex costly or other large-scale implementation efforts. The objective of this additional design phase is to allow the Board to obtain relevant information about any operational and resourcing issues which may also offer an opportunity to advisory committees if they so wish to provide input on implementation issues as part of any advice to the Board.

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The operational design phase is intended to follow four principles. First, maintain fidelity to the underlying policy recommendations. Second, not to create delays in the overall timeline. Third, not to replace of course the implementation work of ICANN org with the implementation review team. And finally, to make sure that affected stakeholders should have the ability to provide input.

A concept paper was circulated to the SO AC leader for sharing with their relevant community groups for discussion and feedback, and the paper was also shared for input and feedback shortly before the meeting, so I hope you had the chance to look at it. ICANN org will continue to refine the paper and after ICANN69 plans to conduct fuller community consultation with an updated version of the paper and together community feedback.

On the last topic on this slide is the VPIC, virtual public interest commitments. The registry stakeholder voluntary public interest working group shares [reading] in registry agreements. The working group held a call with the GAC leadership team to discuss the issue and present the framework, and working group is not looking to make changes to the mandatory pic is but rather than looking to establish a clear transparent process that would allow modifications. The short paper was provided for

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GAC consideration, and we will be sharing with you shortly after ICANN69 all relevant material on the topic. At the moment the working group is not seeking GAC consensus input but rather an indication whether there are any red flags, and they were seeking our input by mid-November but we are trying to push this deadline to December.

So these are the four pressing topics, sort of, that we wanted to signal for your consideration and input. Now, if we move to the following slide, also on recent SO AC chair activities and the GAC communique, on the inter-sessional work in addition to the inter-sessional work calls and webinars you were part of and in addition to the four topics we highlighted on the previous slide, the GAC leadership also conducted additional activities with ICANN CEO as well as other chairs and relationships through a series of inter-sessional calls spanning different topics. First on planning and prioritization, so planning and prioritization remain critical topics to ensure early engagement by SO AC chairs in fiscal year 22 budget planning and ensure collaboration on prioritization of community work. In that respect ICANN org created a new planning team that is working to develop a methodology and process for the community to work with ICANN org and the Board on planning and prioritization and to develop a repository of information about each SO AC priorities, workload activities and how they manage their work, and to

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consider along with the SO/AC chairs whether and what type of tools may be useful to assist in this planning exercise.

It was suggested to form a representative group from SO/AC chairs with at least one vice chair from each SO/AC for continuity purposes. The group is expected to work with ICANN org to design a process for community planning and prioritization. It was also agreed that the process shouldn't be [indiscernible] but should reflect the diversity of needs across the community, reviewing available material prior to each meeting and allowing sufficient time for group members to consult with their communities.

The second topic I would like to highlight is principles for implementation of reviews, cross community Working Groups, and other non-policy recommendations developed for the community. So ICANN's multi-stakeholder model results in a number of different types of non-policy representation, some directed at the Board, some at ICANN org, and some at the community. ICANN org is preparing a paper that will be circulated for community feedback describing the different roles and responsibilities of the Board, org, and community in developing community-developed recommendations coming from the reviews and the cross community Working Groups as mentioned earlier.

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Other activities included the bilateral meetings. So the leadership met with the government engagement team of ICANN with the Board GAC interaction group with ALAC and with the GNSO. And this was GAC wide bilateral, the one with the GNSO. During the meeting with the government engagement, the agenda of the call included the high-level government meetings mandated by the accountability and transparency review teams one and two, the recommendations of both review teams where ATR T1 asked the GAC to establish a process to engage senior government officials and to convene high level meeting on regular basis, preferably at least once every two years. So far the GAC and ICANN have organized four high-level government meetings in Toronto 2012, London 2014, Marrakesh 2016, and Barcelona 2018. Current circumstances of course prevented the holding of one in 2020 following the normal frequency, so the government engagement team compiled the paper to trigger a discussion on the next high-level government meeting listing next year's meetings highlighting initial pros and cons of each date and pros and cons of the meeting being held face-to-face or online, as well as different roles and responsibilities. So again, this is just a heads-up until we share the brainstorming paper for GAC discussion and host country's consideration.

With the BGIG agenda covered three main topics. Follow up on action item from previous meeting for policy staff to draft a short



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description of a process for acknowledging and registering GAC input on issues of importance in GAC communique or other information sharing categories. In other words, a description of how to handle information from the GAC that is not a GAC advice, per se. Second topic was review of GAC ICANN68 communique topics which all fall under topics of importance to the GAC, and finally, ATR T3 suggestions that would require joint effort between the Board and the GAC.

So with ALAC, the GAC and ALAC leadership meeting covered EPDP and subsequent procedures. With respect to EPDP it was agreed to schedule a GAC, ALAC [indiscernible] school after ICANN69 regarding EPDP and potential joint next steps and way forward and this topic is on our agenda with the ALAC later this week, I think on Wednesday. For the subpro, the ALAC consolidated policy working group started working on a comparative analysis of ALAC, GAC, ICANN Board, and ICANN org positions on subsequent procedures to see where there may be commonalities between ALAC and GAC positions. A concern was flagged that ICANN Board may not be in a position to enforce public interest commitments or registry voluntary commitments, premising this on the inability to deal with contents per ICANN bylaws. Yet the mention of security and stability of the DNS in ICANN bylaws was also noted on the call as part of the Board's responsibility.

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During our bilateral on Wednesday, ALAC will pick a few topics showing common underlying positions between ALAC and GAC to discuss and draw joint reactions to the ICANN Board and ICANN org comments. Finally, with the GNSO, as you may also recall, we had a GAC wide bilateral with the GNSO, and I have added this to my notes despite being a GAC-wide call as a reminder of recent updates and developments on topics of importance to the GAC, namely the EPDP, IGO protections and DNS abuse. So for EPDP, as you may know, EPDP Phase 2 report was passed by the GNSO council by super majority. The GNSO requested further consultation with ICANN Board to consider sustainability and cost/benefit analysis for the [indiscernible] model, and there is a suggestion to have a design team to help with that assessment. As for the remaining priority, two items, it is proposed to proceed in two tracks, one for data accuracy where the council is expected to approve proposed plan at its October meeting, I believe, and begin scoping exercise for data accuracy as separate new team or track.

The other track on legal versus natural and unique identifiers, and this is suggested to be worked on under current EPDP Phase 2, of course subject to appointment of a new chair and reconfirmation or selection of new community representatives. And the sense of urgency for these efforts was acknowledged on the call, and I believe the work is expected to start sometime in

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the new year. For IGO the council -- volunteers for both members and the chair of the IGO curative rights protection mechanisms Work Track, again with expectations for the work to begin in the new year.

And lastly, on DNS abuse, as you may recall, recommendations of the competition consumer trust and consumer choice review team, CCTrt, in short, recommendations on DNS abuse were referred to the subsequent procedures working group. The subsequent procedures working group then referred them to the GNSO council as DNS abuse is applicable to all gTLD's, not only new. The GNSO promised to work on a framework laying out the different alternatives for discussing the topic, but for now the progress on this DNS abuse framework is waiting to be informed by two activities, a survey to be conducted by ICANN org to assess the community's various views, and a report by the SSAC work party which is looking at DNS abuse and expected to be delivered soon.

On a different but related note, it is worth flagging that there will be changes in the GNSO council leadership I believe starting 2021 as Keith and rafik are both term limited and also Julf will be stepping down. And I think the new leadership and the new GNSO liaison to the GAC will be announced after the council meeting, I believe on the 21st of October.

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I think that's it in the substance. And thank you, Julf, for confirming the dates, and thank you for your excellent service liaising between the GNSO and the GAC. It was a pleasure working with you.

Regarding the communique, we have four sessions scheduled for communique drafting on Wednesday and Thursday, and we also have a review point on Tuesday, tomorrow. And again, following the same approach, early sharing of draft communique language is encouraged. We will discuss the communique remotely during scheduled sessions, circulate the final communique over email, and allow 48 hours for everyone to review in their own time zone before adopted and posting online.

Sorry if this was too long. I will stop here and see if there are any questions, comments. Please let me know if there was anything I missed in the chat. So if there are no requests for the floor...

GULTEN TEPE: We have Vincent on in the queue.

MANAL ISMAIL, GAC CHAIR: Okay. Thank you, Gulden. Vincent, please go ahead.

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FRANCE: Thank you very much, Manal. Can you hear me?

MANAL ISMAIL, GAC CHAIR: Yes, loud and clear.

FRANCE: Great, thanks. This is Vincent Guillard from France, for the record. Good morning, good afternoon, and good evening. It's a pleasure to be back with you, although virtually, for another ICANN meeting, and thank you Manal, as always, for this clear and informative introduction. I would like to deliver a message from my ambassador for digital affairs who was planning to connect but had a last-minute obligation, he sends you his sincere apologies for his absence. I shall deliver this message in French.

**(Please stand by...)**

(through interpreter) our economies or state -- all [indiscernible] digital environment namely so as ICANN which governs within the Internet an important relationship which shows why we are so numerous to be here in particular oversees the domain name system but also ICANN is one of the single multi-stakeholder organizations. Its model, although it follows long, complex

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procedures, enables all stakeholders in the Internet to express themselves and something we need to protect and improve. However, we can ask ourselves if [indiscernible] is actually necessary. We could for instance assess the PDP which has now arrived at the second stage of its procedure which is not as effective as it used to be.

As other states, France fears the complexity might reduce participation at ICANN, representing and the way we can all engage. ICANN has a very loaded program and the PDP has now seen a new stage with the publication of its final report. As I was saying, France ratified its content even though we risk not following the GAC's prerogatives, and we will pay attention to this. Other lengthy procedures also deserve our attention at ICANN69, such as DNS abuse, mechanisms to protect our intellectual property rights or multi-stakeholder model and its evolution.

So I wish you all an excellent meeting and encourage you to use the simultaneous interpretation system. We thank ICANN org and the interpreters for the excellent system that has been put into place and worked so well during ICANN68, multi lingualism is essential during the multi-stakeholder, and France is particularly -- attached to both.

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MANAL ISMAIL, GAC CHAIR: Sorry, I was on mute. Thank you very much, Vincent. Thank you for sharing this statement on behalf of the distinguished ambassador from France, and I think if you have it in writing and can share it on the GAC mailing list so that we can take a closer look and consider what is in the statement would be helpful as well. But thank you for sharing it with us now.

Any other requests for the floor? Okay. I see none. Then I'm happy to give you back a few minutes. So thank you, everyone. This concluded the GAC opening plenary. It is time now for a little bit, more than a 30-minute break. After the break there is the first community plenary on domain name services marketplace followed by another 30-minute break. Please be back in the GAC Zoom room at 12:30 Hamburg time, 10:30 UTC, to reconvene our discussions on subsequent procedures. Thank you, everyone. The meeting is adjourned.

**[ END OF TRANSCRIPT ]**