

Country Code Names Supporting Organization

Comments on the Final Report of the Accountability and Transparency Review Team

14 February 2011

The ccNSO Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on the final report and recommendations of the Accountability and Transparency Review Team (ATRT). This commentary represents the ccNSO's response to the ICANN Board's request (Resolution 2011.01.25.31) for input from Supporting Organisations and Advisory Committees on the ATRT's recommendations.

The ccNSO Council recognises the thorough and exhaustive efforts of the ATRT to identify, canvass and publicly consult on the wide range of issues associated with the improvement of ICANN's transparency and accountability. The Affirmation of Commitments (AoC) between ICANN and the US Department of Commerce set ambitious deadlines for this work and the ccNSO Council applauds the ATRT for successfully undertaking a comprehensive review process within these challenging timeframes.

The ccNSO Council also recognises the willingness of ATRT members to critically question and analyse ICANN's existing mechanisms for consultation, policy development and decision-making and to develop an appropriately challenging, ambitious and wide-ranging set of recommendations. The ccNSO Council believes that the implementation of these recommendations will deliver considerable improvement to the operation of the ICANN Board, the effectiveness of the GAC, and ICANN's public consultation and policy development processes and review mechanisms.

Therefore, the ccNSO Council endorses these 27 recommendations in their entirety. The Council shares the ATRT's view that Recommendations 7, 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17 and 23 are of particularly high priority. Furthermore, in light of recent developments and perceived ambiguity regarding GAC and ICANN Board interaction over the new gTLD Applicant Guidebook process, the ccNSO Council believes that the recommendations (9 to 14), developed through Working Group 2, should be afforded high priority.

As noted in a number of sections of the ATRT's Final Report, ICANN has undertaken a number of previous reviews into its Accountability and Transparency. On occasion, the input and recommendations of stakeholders and external experts has not been adopted or responded to. As such, the ccNSO Council calls upon the ICANN Board, with appropriate support from staff, to adopt the ATRT's recommendations within the timeframes defined in the AoC.

Consistent with the subject matter at-hand, the process (including staff briefing) by which the Board takes decisions and action on each recommendation should be completely transparent to the many stakeholders at ICANN that will be affected by these changes. Furthermore, as recognised by the ATRT, should the ICANN Board determine not to implement any of the recommendations as they would impose unreasonable costs or prohibitive resource constraints, the Board should provide a detailed explanation for their decision.

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