



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**The Assistant Secretary for Communications**  
**and Information**  
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dr. Stephen D. Crocker  
Chairman of the Board of Directors  
Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers  
12025 Waterfront Drive, Suite 300  
Los Angeles, CA 90094-2536

FEB 26 2013

Dear Dr. Crocker:

On February 3, 2013, the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) posted for public comment a revised new generic top-level domain name (gTLD) Registry Agreement that includes certain updates and changes, including a Public Interest Commitments Specification. I am writing to express the strong support of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) for this step and commend ICANN for so directly responding to the concerns previously expressed by the members of the Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC), including the United States, regarding the need for new gTLD applicants' commitments to be binding and enforceable. We therefore appreciate the opportunity to offer initial views on these proposals.

The inclusion of the Public Interest Commitments Specification provides new gTLD applicants the ability to clarify that they will in fact be accountable in the agreement for all the commitments made in their applications and to make additional commitments to respond to issues that may have surfaced since applications were made public. NTIA encourages *all applicants for new gTLDs* to take advantage of this opportunity to address the concerns expressed by the GAC in its Toronto Communiqué, the individual early warnings issued by GAC members, and the ICANN public comment process on new gTLDs, as appropriate. In this regard, we would specifically refer applicants to the principles the United States issued as part of its early warning submission, the views expressed by the National Association of Secretaries of State and the proposals for enhanced safeguards for strings related to the creative sector. With regard to these enhanced safeguards, we urge applicants to consider ensuring that WHOIS data is verified, authentic and publicly accessible. Applicants should also consider providing an enforceable guaranty that the domain name will only be used for licensed and legitimate activities as such a commitment will aid in combatting online illegal activities. NTIA believes that these new tools may help in the fight against online counterfeiting and piracy and is particularly interested in seeing applicants commit to these or similar safeguards.

In closing, we commend ICANN for the innovative approach outlined in the Public Interest Commitments Specification and encourage all applicants to participate. We are still evaluating the other updates and changes provided for in this revised new gTLD registry agreement and, as we prepare for the Beijing meeting, the United States will continue to work within the GAC to develop of GAC advice related to new gTLDs.

Sincerely,

  
Lawrence E. Strickling

cc: Mr. Fadi Chehadé, CEO and President