



The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers

October 3, 2012

Thomas Stelzer
Secretary, Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB)
Two United Nations Plaza
Office DC2-0610
New York, New York 10017

Dear Ambassador Stelzer,

Thank you for your letter of 11 July 2012 to ICANN on the issue of providing protections to Inter-Governmental Organization (IGO) names and acronyms within the New gTLD Program.

ICANN takes this issue seriously. The work to evaluate whether to provide more specific protections to IGOs has continued within ICANN and is currently being evaluated.

As you are likely aware, the New gTLD Program already contains broad protections at the top- and second-levels that are applicable to IGOs, including the objection processes and the rights protection mechanisms. These protections were detailed in a 11 March 2012 letter from ICANN's former President and CEO to the Legal Counsel of Public International Intergovernmental Organizations ([beckstrom-to-igo-counsels-11mar12-en](#)).

However, recognizing the continued interest in seeking additional protections beyond those already identified in the New gTLD Program, I am pleased to inform you that additional policy work is actively underway on this important topic. In March 2012, the ICANN Board of Directors requested that the Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) Council and the Government Advisory Committee (GAC) provide policy advice on the IGO's request (<http://gnso.icann.org/mailing-lists/archives/council/pdfP09WmWsbry.pdf>). In response, both the GAC and the GNSO are exploring this issue further, and ICANN awaits the results of these efforts.

Specifically, the GNSO Council is following its policy development process (PDP) as described in the ICANN Bylaws to evaluate this issue. In June 2012, ICANN solicited public comments on a Preliminary GNSO Issues Report on the Protection of International Organization Names in New gTLDs (<http://www.icann.org/en/news/announcements/announcement-5-04jun12-en.htm>) and entities representing IGOs (including the UN) substantially contributed to the comment cycle. Since that time, ICANN has published a Final GNSO Issue Report (<http://gnso.icann.org/en/issues/protection-igo-names-final-issue-report-01oct12-en.pdf>) on this topic, updated to address the comments received.

In the Final GNSO Issue Report, ICANN staff recommends that the GNSO Council initiate a PDP on an expedited basis to evaluate the need for special protections for certain international organizations including IGOs, at the top and second level in new gTLDs. ICANN staff also recommends that this policy work consider whether any additional protections be provided in existing gTLDs (e.g., .com, .net, .org) as well as in New gTLDs. The potential for protections at the second-level that could emerge from this PDP could directly address the concern raised in your letter regarding the need to register IGO names and acronyms across the new gTLDs.



The GNSO Council is expected to approve the initiation of this PDP at the upcoming Toronto ICANN Meeting in mid-October 2012. Given the expected timeline to delegation of new top-level domains (available at

<http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/announcements-and-media/announcement-17aug12-en>), there remains time for the GNSO PDP to progress to implementable recommendations prior to the launch of the TLDs approved within this round of the New gTLD Program. This would allow IGOs to receive the benefit of any protections recommended and approved through the PDP.

ICANN staff also encourages the GNSO Council in the Final Report to extend a formal invitation to representatives of IGOs to participate in the PDP Working Group. The participation of IGOs is welcomed within ICANN, and I hope to see representatives bringing the voice of IGOs to ICANN as this work proceeds. For information on how to get involved and track the progress of the Final Report, please see: <http://gns0.icann.org/en/group-activities/protection-igo-names.htm>.

Thank you for reaching out to ICANN with respect to these important topics. In fact the last three months have been witnessing a transition in ICANN's senior management, which has also partially caused some delay in our response to you. I am delighted to mention that as I have been starting my new role as President and CEO, I have been putting a special focus on a stronger engagement between ICANN and Intergovernmental Organizations and Governments. I have invited Tarek Kamel, the former Minister of ICT in Egypt, and whom you probably know from your previous IGF engagements, to join our top management global team as a Senior Advisor to the President for Government Affairs. His new role is to foster a stronger dialogue with Governments and Intergovernmental Organizations on a global level, and I am sure Tarek will always be available to help in any further detailed matters. You can reach him at tarek.kamel@icann.org.

Finally please convey my best regards to His Excellency Mr. BAN Ki-moon, the Secretary General of the United Nations. I would like to express to him my full commitment in my new role as a President and CEO to work closely with your esteemed Organization for the public interest in all the above-mentioned issues.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Fadi Chehadé". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Fadi Chehadé
President and CEO, ICANN

Cc Dr. Tarek Kamel, Senior Advisor for Governmental Affairs, ICANN