IDNG Working Group Charter

1. Purpose

To meet community demand, gain experience in dealing with IDNs as gTLDs and to inform the implementation of IDN gTLDs in the New gTLD process currently under implementation, a fast track approach to introduce a number of IDN gTLDs similar to the IDN ccTLD fast track is being considered in this IDN gTLD Fast Track Working Group (IDNG WG). Neither the New gTLD nor the IDN ccTLD Fast Track schedules should be delayed by the IDN gTLD Fast Track.

The purpose of the IDN gTLD Fast Track Working Group (IDNG WG) is to develop and report on feasible methods, if any, that would enable the introduction, in a timely manner and in a manner that ensures the continued security and stability of the Internet, a number of IDN gTLDs, limited in scope, while the overall New gTLD process is being implemented.

2. Scope

The scope of the IDNG WG is limited to developing feasible methods that do not pre-empt the implementation of the New gTLDs process. The New gTLD process, when implemented, will cover both IDN and non-IDN gTLDs.

In considering feasible methods the IDNG WG should take into account and be guided by:
- The overarching requirement to preserve the security and stability of the DNS;
- Compliance with the IDNA protocols and ICANN IDN Guidelines;
- Input and advice from the technical community in respect to the implementation of IDNs;
- GSNO Policy Recommendations on New gTLDs
- (http://gnso.icann.org/issues/new-gtlds/pdp-dec05-fr-parta-08aug07.htm)
- Draft New gTLD Applicant Guidebook (http://www.icann.org/en/topics/new-gtlds/comments-2-en.htm#expmem) and subsequent versions as they become available, along with corresponding comments received
- Draft IDN ccTLD Fast Track Implementation Plan (http://www.icann.org/en/announcements/announcement-18feb09-en.htm) and subsequent versions as they become available, along with corresponding comments received

The IDNG WG is not tasked on policy development, and should refer to policy recommendations already produced by the GNSO. The scope of the IDNG WG is limited to developing a feasible implementation framework for an IDN gTLD Fast Track.

The IDNG WG should at a minimum address the following issues in its reports:
- Definition of a limited scope for applicable IDN gTLDs for the Fast Track
- Types of IDN gTLDs acceptable for the IDN gTLD Fast Track
- Requirements for and evaluation of applicants for the Fast Track
- Consideration for requirements of rights protection mechanisms
- Where contention arise, how such contention could be addressed
- Conditions under which an application may be deferred to the full New gTLD process
- That if the IDN gTLD Fast Track is implemented it should be at a time comfortably before the full New gTLD process is implemented

If issues become apparent to the IDNG WG that are outside of its scope of devising feasible implementation mechanism, it should report and defer those issues back to the GNSO Council.

3. Process for the development of feasible methods for fast track approach

Two (2) reports will be produced by the IDNG
- IDNG Initial Report
- IDNG Final Report

Each report should be accompanied with a public comment period to obtain feedback from the community.

IDNG Initial Report
The IDNG WG shall produce an Initial Report for public consultation. The Initial Report should identify issues that should be taken into consideration for implementation of an IDN gTLD Fast Track. The consideration of these issues should form a set of guiding principles for the Fast Track methodology (to be included in the Final Report). The Initial Report may also identify possible options and methods for such methodology.

IDNG Final Report
The Final Report should review and analyze the comments received from the public comment period, and develop a set of principles and procedural framework for implementing an IDN gTLD Fast Track. The IDNG WG at its reasonable discretion, is not obligated to include all comments made on the Initial Report, nor is it obliged to include all comments submitted by any one individual or organisation. The Final Report should also take into consideration the then current drafts for IDN ccTLD Fast Track Implementation Draft and the New gTLD Applicant Guidebook to provide specific directives implementable by staff.

In considering its recommendations in the Final Report, the IDNG WG shall seek to act by consensus. The consensus view of the members of the IDNG WG shall be conveyed to the GNSO council as the IDNG WG Final Report. If a minority opposes a consensus position, that minority position shall be incorporated in the IDNG WG Final Report.

The Report shall be published after adoption of the Report by the IDNG WG and conveyed to the chair of the GNSO council.

Upon the submission of the Final Report to the GNSO Council, the IDNG WG should:
- Obtain GNSO Council Support for the IDNG WG Final Report
- Produce Supplemental IDNG WG Final Reports (if necessary)
- Submit an IDNG WG Board Proposal to the ICANN Board

Supplemental IDNG WG Final Reports
In the event that the GNSO council does not support the recommendations it will inform the IDNG WG of the reasons. The IDNG WG may, at its discretion, reconsider its report and submit Supplemental IDNG WG Final Reports to the GNSO council to seek support.

IDNG WG Board Proposal
Upon the obtaining of expressed support from the GNSO Council for the IDNG WG Final Report (or a Supplemental IDNG WG Final Report), the IDNG WG shall submit it as the IDNG WG Board Proposal to the ICANN Board.

4. Membership of the IDNG Working Group

The IDNG WG will have the following members:

- Members of the GNSO and the GNSO Council;
- Members of the GAC;
- Members of the ccNSO;
- Members of the At-Large and ALAC;
- One (1) representative of technical community;
- One (1) member of the SSAC: and
- Two (2) ICANN staff members.

The IDNG WG may select its own chair from the members of the Working Group. ICANN will provide adequate staff support to the IDNG WG

5. IDNG WG Timeline

Activity	Date (open)	Date (close)	Duration
Publish Initial Report	July 14, 2009 (Tue)		
Public Comment Period on Initial Report	July 14, 2009	August 13, 2009 (Thu)	30 days
Publish Final Report	August 28, 2009 (Mon)		
Public Comment Period on Final Report	August 28, 2009	September 27, 2009 (Wed)	30 days
GNSO Council Support of Final Report	September 2009		
Board Proposal	September 30, 2009		

Note that the Public Comment Period for the Final Report extends beyond the obtaining of support at the GNSO Council and the subsequent submission of the Board Proposal. This is similar to the IDNC with the expectation that public comments could be addressed by the actual implementation plan produced by ICANN staff.

6. Background and References

IDN and IDN TLDs have been an issue discussed at every ICANN meeting formally and informally since 2000. IDN was a subject culminating to a resolution by the ICANN board as early as September 25, 2000. The resolution was especially significant in recognizing "that it is important that the Internet evolve to be more accessible to those who do not use the ASCII character set," and that "the internationalization of the Internet's domain name system must be … fully compatible with the Internet's existing end-to-end model and that preserve globally unique naming in a universally resolvable public name space" which includes the importance of the introduction of IDN TLDs to preserve a unique global domain name space.

Thereupon, a Topic Paper and a Survey was produced in 2001, followed by two Discussion Papers in 2002 and the first version of the ICANN IDN Implementation Guidelines in 2003. Multiple workshops and discussion sessions were held at different ICANN meetings as well. Besides dedicated sessions, the issue of IDN and IDN TLDs is an issue that has consistently

been brought up during public forums and open sessions at ICANN. There can be observed an urgency for IDN TLDs within language communities around the world that do not use English or a Latin based script as a primary language, especially the CJK (Chinese Japanese Korean) communities and the left-to-right directional language communities (e.g. Arabic, Hebrew, Persian, etc.).

The results and learning from these activities fed into the New gTLD process, especially through the GNSO IDN WG. During the deliberations of the New gTLD PDP, a GNSO IDN WG was formed in November 2006 (http://gnso.icann.org/issues/idn-tlds/idn_working_group-18nov06.htm) to address policy issues that may arise from the impending introduction of Internationalized Domain Names at the top level (IDN TLDs). The IDN WG produced a final Outcomes Report (http://gnso.icann.org/drafts/idn-wg-fr-22mar07.htm) in March 2007. The recommendations of the Outcomes Report were eventually incorporated into the GNSO Final Report on the Introduction of New gTLDs. Besides the IDN WG, the Reserved Names working group (formed as part of the New gTLD PDP) also deliberated on issues relevant to the introduction of IDN gTLDs. The Reserved Names WG Final Report was also incorporated into the GNSO Final Report on the Introduction of New gTLDs. The findings and recommendations of both working groups should inform the IDNG WG.

In September 2007 the ccNSO council resolved to recommend to the ICANN Board that an IDNC WG (IDN ccTLD Fast Track Working Group) be formed to discuss the possibility of using an interim approach to IDN ccTLDs associated with the ISO 3166-1 two-letter codes. In November 2007 the ICANN Board resolved to establish the IDNC WG to develop and report on feasible methods, if any, that would enable the introduction, in a timely manner and in a manner that ensures the continued security and stability of the Internet, of a limited number of IDN ccTLDs while the overall IDN ccPDP is being developed. In June 2008, the IDNC WG submitted its final report to the ICANN board, and the Board directed ICANN staff to commence work on implementation issues. Subsequently 2 drafts of Implementation Plan for IDN ccTLD Fast Track Process were published in November 2008 and March 2009 (http://www.icann.org/en/topics/idn/fast-track/draft-implementation-plan-cctld-clean-19feb09-en.pdf) respectively.

The GNSO Council, in its comments in Response to the ccNSO-GAC Issues Report on IDN Issues (http://gnso.icann.org/drafts/ccnso-gac-issues-report-idn-cctlds-gnso-response-20feb08.pdf), as well as in its comments on the IDNC WG Final Report (http://gnso.icann.org/issues/idn-tlds/gnso-council-comments-idnc-final-report-14aug08.pdf) expressed that "the introduction of IDN gTLDs or IDN ccTLDs should not be delayed because of lack of readiness of one category, but if they are not introduced at the same time, steps should be taken so that neither category is advantaged or disadvantaged, and procedures should be developed to avoid possible conflicts."

Further, the GNSO Council made a resolution in January 2009 to assert that "the GNSO Council strongly believes that neither the New gTLD or ccTLD fast track process should result in IDN TLDs in the root before the other unless both the GNSO and ccNSO so agree."

Observing and following the successful development of the IDN ccTLD Fast Track based on the IDNC WG recommendations, the concept of a similar fast track approach to develop and report on feasible methods for the implementation of an IDN gTLD Fast Track is considered. An IDN gTLD Fast Track, if successfully implemented, could be introduced at a proximate time of the IDN ccTLD Fast Track, addressing concerns expressed by the GNSO Council regarding possible conflicts if IDN gTLDs and IDN ccTLDs are not introduced at the same time.