

Dear Philippe,

In my capacity as Chair of the EPDP 2A effort, I am pleased to submit the attached Final Report to the GNSO Council for its consideration. I would like to briefly share my observations and assessment of our work, my consensus designations on the Final Report, and my gratitude for the contributions of community members and staff who supported this work.

1. The EPDP 2A work was chartered and launched following very intense community work on EPDP Phase 1 and Phase 2, both of which presented significant challenges and difficult negotiations. As the new Chair, I had concerns at the outset of the 2A effort that the team's recent experience would make reaching consensus in this phase unlikely, at best. I am pleased to note that the EPDP 2A Team was able to engage and work constructively, from very different starting point and under challenging circumstances, to reach consensus on the recommendations and guidance contained in the Final Report.

2. While the Final Report and its recommendations have the consensus support of the EPDP 2A Team, it's important to note that certain groups feel that the work did not go as far as needed, or did not include sufficient detail, while other groups feel that certain recommendations were not necessary. Additionally, during the final stage of our work, some groups would have preferred an opportunity to assign more granular consensus-level designations to component parts of the recommendations. In this context, I urge all readers of the EPDP 2A Final Report to also read the minority statements submitted by each group, which will be appended to the Final Report and historical record of our work. This Final Report constitutes a compromise that is the maximum that could be achieved by the group at this time under our currently allocated time and scope, and it should not be read as delivering results that were fully satisfactory to everyone. This underscores the importance of the minority statements in understanding the full context of the Final Report recommendations.

3. Over the last eight months, the EPDP 2A team worked in challenging circumstances, including fully remote engagement and without the benefit of face-to-face interaction or dialogue. This proved to be a real challenge, and one that should be acknowledged in planning for future GNSO policy processes. In the experience of EPDP Phase 1 and Phase 2, there is no doubt that face-to-face engagement was crucial in constructively advancing the work of the group. During Phase 2A, in lieu of in-person meetings, the Leadership Team and Staff worked with Melissa Allgood of ICANN Org to set up facilitated conversations, outside the plenary setting, to try to replicate the less formal engagement of a face-to-face meeting. I feel that effort was helpful in generating dialogue and in bringing divergent perspectives and positions to a point where consensus was possible, even if on a limited set of recommendations.

4. In my assessment, the EPDP Phase 2A Final Report has consensus of the EPDP Team, and each of its recommendations have secured consensus. Over the last two weeks, we worked through and resolved our "can't-live-with" items and I want to acknowledge and thank all who contributed concrete suggestions and text edits that helped us resolve remaining differences and come together. While I believe we could have designated the recommendations as having "Full Consensus," many groups indicated that they will submit minority statements, which are typically used when there are dissenting views. As such, I feel that a "Consensus" designation is more appropriate, which will acknowledge and make room for explanatory text to be submitted outside the four corners of the Final Report body to provide important context around our deliberations and recommendations.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all EPDP Team members, alternates, support groups, and very importantly our ICANN staff colleagues who contributed tirelessly to this EPDP effort over the course of several years. Our Phase 2A work is the culmination of the EPDP as originally chartered and made necessary by the Temporary Specification. There may yet be future work needed on these important issues, but I'm pleased to report that we have concluded this phase and can be proud of our work to deliver the current recommendations, even if the results were not fully satisfactory to all. That is the nature of compromise and consensus-building, and I am confident we achieved the most we could under challenging circumstances.

Sincerest regards,

Keith