

Subject: Re: About the ALAC Statement on the Report: Supporting the Domain Name Industry in Underserved Regions
Date: Thursday, July 31, 2014 at 12:58:34 PM Eastern Daylight Time
From: Evan Leibovitch (sent by evanleibovitch@gmail.com <evanleibovitch@gmail.com>)
To: Ariel Liang
CC: ALAC ExCom

To the ALT,

Ariel has asked if I want to offer, for the record, my reasons for voting against the ALAC statement on "Supporting the Domain Name Industry in Underserved Regions".

Here they are.

Usually if I am just uncomfortable with the direction of an ALAC resolution I will abstain. But my opposition to this is multi-fold, goes well beyond mere discomfort and based on strong principle; no tweaking of the existing resolution -- short of a full reversal -- would have made this better. So I voted against.

1. I am fundamentally opposed to ICANN's "supporting the industry" in any way. That is well beyond mandate of making policy and maintaining the stability of Internet names and numbers. ICANN's role is to manage growth, not stimulate it.
2. Promoting the sale of developed-world-sourced domains (which for the most part are vanity products IMO) in regions of poor economic development amounts to a form of colonialism and exploitation. It most certainly involves an outflow of money from developing countries to developed ones. If the proposal was to CREATE a new domain industry in underserved economies I might be more supportive. But simply supporting rich-world incumbents to sell to the global south is unacceptable. Given the inability/unwillingness of ICANN (and its "industry") to stimulate the growth of domain registries in underserved regions, they should not be rewarded with resources to promote and expand a network of agents serving foreign masters. Outside of nominal employment amongst those agents, the economic benefit to underserved regions by such "support" has yet to be established.
3. ICANN's making a decision to "support" the industry which comprises such a disproportionate component of its community (and is the source of the vast bulk of its operating revenue) is easily recognized as blatant self-serving. At the present time when ICANN's public reputation and trust are considered at risk, such a display of corporate nepotism is unwise. This action merely enforces external perception that ICANN is captured by the industry that it is supposed to regulate.

- Evan