AT-LARGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Joint Statement of the GAC and the ALAC on the Second Milestone Report of the Joint Applicant Support Cross-Community Working Group (JAS-WG)

Introduction
By the Staff of ICANN

At the Singapore ICANN conference, the Government Advisory Committee (GAC), At-Large Advisory Committee (ALAC) conducted a Joint meeting on 19 June 2011, with an agenda centering mainly on support for needy applicants in the new gTLD process, currently tasked to the Joint Applicant Support Cross-Community Working Group chartered by the Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) and the ALAC. Following that meeting, a small working party of At-Large and GAC individual members studied the possibility of drafting a joint GAC-ALAC Statement. The Team met on several occasions during the ICANN meeting and co-drafted a statement which was then reviewed by the ALAC and the GAC.

On 11 July 2011, the text was circulated by Evan Leibovitch (Vice-Chair of the ALAC and member of the JAS WG drafting team) on the ALAC Internal list and matters discussed in the mid-month ALAC Executive Committee conference call, the July 2011 ALAC call and the July 2011 end of month ALAC Executive Committee conference call.

On 29 July 29 2011, the GAC agreed to a revised version of the joint statement.

On 3 August 2011, Olivier Crépin-Leblond, requested the At-Large Staff to post the revised joint statement on a wiki web space, announce it and begin a three day (72 hours) express ALAC vote on this statement, with the premise that as soon as the ALAC vote reached quorum, the statement would be sent to the Board by the GAC and to the relevant Public Comment space on the ICANN Web site, by the ALAC. This rush was required by the very tight schedules that the JAS WG is operating under.

On 4 August 2011, the ALAC vote having reached quorum, the statement was ratified and sent to the respective recipients mentioned above.

The vote resulted in the ALAC endorsing the resolution with 12-0 votes and 0 abstentions. You may review the result independently under:
http://www.bigpulse.com/pollresults?code=1964HJn7FEbTx9tRqKCUq4h6

[End of Introduction]

GAC/ALAC joint statement

The GAC and ALAC jointly welcome the Second Milestone Report of the Joint Applicant Support Cross-Community Working Group (JAS-WG).

The GAC and ALAC strongly believe that the Board must take all necessary steps to ensure that there are no barriers that would prevent the new gTLD round in 2012 from being fully inclusive to stakeholders and communities in all countries so that this is a truly global opportunity to contribute to the evolution of the domain name system. We are encouraged therefore by the reference to the JAS-WG in the resolution of the ICANN Board which launched the round of gTLD expansion, as demonstrating the Board's commitment to taking full account of the concerns and specific needs of individual stakeholders and communities in developing countries.

ICANN must now move forward quickly to support the JAS-WG in the finalization of the Second Milestone Report and the complete implementation of all its recommendations as soon as practicable so as to allow potential applicants sufficient time to prepare for the round. . It is therefore a matter of urgency that ICANN commits the necessary legal, authoring and logistical resources required to support this work including the early publication of a universally accessible "Needs-Assessed Applicant Guidebook".

In moving forward, the GAC and ALAC recommend consideration of the following issues as the JAS-WG and ICANN staff now convert the existing MR2 document into a final report and guidance for applicants:

● The GAC and ALAC believe that local and regional governments, as well as public-private partnerships, should remain eligible if they meet the positive criteria elements as listed in 3.1 and 3.2. The reference in Part 3.3 that disqualifies consideration of applicants who are "from a governmental or parastatal applicant" should therefore be significantly narrowed to exclude only national governments.
● The previous GAC advice recommending a reduced gTLD application fee of approximately $47,000 should be implemented, including for applications designed to create a string in multiple IDN scripts.

- The seed funding of $2 million should be offered to qualifying needs-assessed applicants to assist with the costs of non-ICANN-related expenses which could include startup services and technical assistance.
- ICANN needs to develop and/or collate a set of best practices that would enable qualifying needs-assessed applicants to reduce costs and time in the application process and implementation steps. Such best practices could include application templates, encouragement to applicants to collaborate where appropriate, and assistance in the definition of continuity instruments.
- Support for qualified applicants should include technical support and the transfer of capacity building skills in various key areas, including IPv6 capability.

In addition to the above recommendations from the JAS-WG work, the GAC and ALAC advise that the Board undertake the following policy initiatives, designed specifically to address the requirements of qualifying needs-assessed applicants:

- Allowing an additional option to the continuity instruments that would enable pooling of resources as well as providing applicants with the option to designate their intended successor operator, thereby reducing ongoing costs;

- Lowering fees for qualifying needs-assessed applicants for a string in multiple IDN scripts, particularly where simultaneous IDNs are required in countries of great linguistic diversity.

The GAC and ALAC look forward to receiving the Board's early response to the above proposals and recommendations.