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**AL/ALAC/ST/1211/5
ORIGINAL: English
DATE: 30 Dec 2011
STATUS: Final**

AT-LARGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

ALAC Statement on the Joint ccNSO and GNSO Working Group on Single Character IDN TLDs

Introduction

By the Staff of ICANN

Cheryl Langdon-Orr, ALAC Liaison to the ccNSO and At-Large member from the Asian, Australasian and Pacific Islands Regional At-Large Organization (APRALO), originally composed an initial draft of this Statement after discussion of the topic in the November 2011 monthly ALAC call.

On 21 November 2011, this Statement was posted on the [At-Large Workspace for Joint ccNSO and GNSO Working Group on Single Character IDN TLDs.](#)

On 16 December 2011, after gathering input from At-Large members, with wide participation from the APRALO region, a second version of the Statement incorporating the comments received both by emails and also in the workspace was drafted by Salanieta T. Tamanikaiwaimaro, ALAC member from the Asian, Australasian and Pacific Islands Regional At-Large Organization (APRALO).

On 22 December 2011, the Chair of the ALAC, Olivier Crépin-Leblond, requested that Staff open a five-day ALAC ratification vote on the revised Statement. The online vote resulted in the ALAC endorsing the statement with 9 votes in favor, 1 abstention, and 0 votes against. You may review the result independently under: <https://www.bigpulse.com/pollresults?code=294587mCD3cGJsSVMu5qAMf6>

On 30 December 2011, the Chair of the ALAC requested that the Statement be transmitted to the Chair of the ICANN Board, with copies to the Board Secretary, the Chair of the ccNSO and the Chair of the GNSO.

[End of Introduction]

The original version of this document is the English text available at <http://www.atlarge.icann.org/correspondence>. Where a difference of interpretation exists or is perceived to exist between a non-English edition of this document and the original text, the original shall prevail.

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Further to the August 2011 Board Meeting where it was specified that Single Character IDN TLDs not be included in the first round, the ALAC would like to invite the Board to re-consider creating an exception for Single Character IDN TLDs.

The language scripts within the region covered by the Asian, Australasian and Pacific Islands Regional At- Large Organization (APRALO), commonly utilise single characters as meaningful words/terms/ concepts. These language scripts include and are not limited to Chinese (Hanzi, Han), Vietnamese (Han Tu), Japanese (Hiragana, Katakana, Kanji), Korean (Hangul) etc.

Cultural diversity has long been recognised as a driving force of development, not only in respect of economic growth, but also as a means of leading a more fulfilling intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual life. This has been enshrined within various International Legal instruments such as Article 19 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* which acknowledges that people have the right to freedom of expression. The *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions 2005*, *Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage* also promote multilingualism.

The Board is invited to note ICANN's core values in particular of seeking and supporting broad informed participation reflecting the functional, geographic and cultural diversity of the Internet at all levels of policy development and decision-making.

Single Character Internationalised Domain Name Top Level Domains (IDN-TLDs) in the new gTLD process, **inclusive of the first round**, has been a matter of considerable and lengthy community discussion, joint SO work group activity (ccNSO and GNSO's JIG-WG) and consensus support in the wider ICANN and At-Large Community and specifically is of intense interest and importance to the Internet users and potential Domain Name Registrants in the Asia Pacific Region.

The ALAC also notes that the August 2011 Board resolution generally requested input from ICANN's Advisory Committees on this matter and therefore gives its support of concept and requirement, input and advice to the ICANN Board, as a matter of some urgency so that it is properly informed and reminded of the wide community support and the necessity of these IDN-TLDs. The Board may be able to review their current resolution regarding this, and move, we trust to the more reasonable, fair and justifiable option of including the implementation of Single Character IDN TLDs as acceptable applications for the first round of the new gTLD program.

The ALAC is aware of a letter from the Joint ccNSO/GNSO IDN Working Group (JIG-WG) which we believe is under current discussion for resolution and endorsement in the GNSO and ccNSO. The ALAC specifically wish to have formally noted our support to the following items from that letter:

The JIG, through the ccNSO and GNSO councils therefore sincerely urges the Board to:

1. *Implement the community consensus of allowing Single Character IDN TLDs without restricting such implementation to being after the first round of the new gTLD process, and to decouple the requirement that IDN ccTLD or IDN gTLD mechanisms wait for the other;*
2. *If necessary, form an implementation team to assist staff in immediately implementing Single Character IDN TLDs for scripts and languages where the input of a Single Character requires multiple keystrokes (e.g. ideographical scripts, and avoiding the potential technical concern of keyboard layouts identified in the JIG report), and for the team to further guide implementation for other scripts as well as coordinate input from the ACs; and,*
3. *Update or amend the New gTLD Applicant Guidebook for such implementation before the application period for the first round is over.*

From our Regional endorsement in particular by APRALO and support from the ALAC of these proposals to the ICANN Board (whether or not they are endorsed by both or either the ccNSO or the GNSO), the ALAC advise the ICANN Board on this important issue of equity and opportunity for meaningful and usable IDN-TLD opportunities to be part of the coming First Round of acceptances of new gTLD application, with the strongest possible encouragement for their review of their 25 August 2011 resolution on the matter inline with the above.