Sirs,

I have never commented about an issue of this sort before, but felt compelled to say something when I read recently about the statement of Mr. Paul Twomey, the President of ICANN.

I work regularly in developing countries and have regular, ongoing contact with NGOs and small, entrepreneurial private sector companies. Their use of the Internet increases daily and I regularly hear them talk about their desire to expand their ability to work on the web. They understand just how critical the Internet is to their future growth and development, and are eager to see the web's dynamic nature preserved.

I also, however, hear people express concerns: that the developing world might run out of IP addresses; that people still can't fully use their own languages in their own scripts on the net; and that voices from places like Africa are not being heard in the discussions around the future of the Internet at places like ICANN.

I am very concerned that a change to the system now -- without a clear direction forward -- will jeopardize the strong, vital private participation that has helped the system grow in North America and Europe. I fear this could lead to the development of a more political, government-dominated system rather than the private and user-centered system which has served the world so well.

 Mr. Twomey may be right that ICANN has made some real progress in addressing their "to do" list but it doesn't seem to me that these issues have been settled. Considering the many unresolved issues, why should ICANN get out of its agreement with the Commerce Department early? Why not continue to address these issues and agree on the "next phase" of Internet Governance when these crucial issues are more fully settled?

Sincerely,

C. Daryl Edwards