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Date 11th of February 2008
Subject Request for Comment on the Midterm Review of the ICANN Joint Project Agreement

Reference

Your reference

Our reference 2008012

Attachment

Dear Ms. Sene,

SIDN is the registry for the .nl country-code top level domain, which, with close to three million registered domains, is one of the world's largest and most successful ccTLDs.

As one of the founding members of the ccNSO, SIDN has been closely collaborating with ICANN since its creation with the objective to assure availability, accessibility, security, overall quality and further development of the Internet in general and the .nl name-space in particular.

As the Chief Executive of SIDN, I welcome the opportunity for stakeholders to give input to the process of Continued Transition of the Technical Coordination and Management of the Internet Domain Name and Addressing System.

We believe that the original principles of stability, interoperability, competition and private bottom-up coordination continue to gain additional relevance in light of the developments such as the advance in Internet technology, the expanded global reach of the Internet, and the international dialogue, including the discussions within the Internet Governance Forum in Athens and Rio de Janeiro.

We also believe in a DNS that is managed by the private sector and an Internet that is co-ordinated, not controlled.



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With this submission SIDN does not aim to individually address the questions raised in the Request for Comment published by the NTIA.

I do note however, that ICANN, under the previous Memoranda of Understanding and the present Joint Project Agreement, has realized significant progress in becoming a truly transparent, international organization, accountable to all its diverse stakeholders.

In our opinion, ICANN is presently fulfilling its responsibilities, among which the 10 responsibilities stipulated in the JPA, in a satisfactory way.

With the improvement and resiliency of the L-root servers, the development of registry failover plans, the Registrar Data Escrow program and improvement of IANA services, ICANN has further contributed to the security and stability of the DNS. It remains important that ICANN optimizes its method of processing the input of ccTLD registries in planning and executing the IANA functions. It cannot be stressed enough that the IANA function must be accountable and responsive to ccTLDs irrespective of ccTLDs' individual relationship with e.g. ICANN and/or supporting organisations.

The independent assessment of ICANN by One World Trust proves that measures to improve the multi-stakeholder model and ICANN's transparency and accountability have their results. I compliment ICANN with improvements as the strategic planning process and the publication of operational and financial plans and reports, the improvement of ICANN's website, the appointment of a General Manager Public Participation, various periodic publications and translation and interpretation in a growing number of languages. With regard to the planning and reporting processes, I would like to stress that though successes should be mentioned, the analysis and explanation of failure to reach certain goals merits attention as well.



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Both the introduction of .IDNs as well as the introduction of new gTLDs have so far been slow processes. In the case of the first, we note with satisfaction that ICANN has acted on the advice of the ccTLD regional organizations APTLD and CENTR and is investigating the possibilities of a "fast track" mechanism for the introduction of a limited number of IDN ccTLDs. With regard to the introduction of new gTLDs, ICANN has promising plans for 2008. I do hope that ICANN and the community together will be able to develop a process whereby newly introduced gTLDs will be of clear added value to Internet users in general and registrants in particular.

Internet users rely on the efficient and flawless functioning of the root database. Our experience supports former U.N. Secretary General Annan's statement during the WSIS that the "United States government has exercised its oversight responsibilities fairly and honourably".

Nevertheless, we wholly endorse the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society in that *"countries should not be involved in decisions regarding another country's country-code Top Level Domain"*.

I suggest that, as the end of the JPA approaches, the US continues its leading role by establishing with ICANN, its Supporting Organizations and Advisory Committees and within the existing ICANN process, a dialogue and process that will lead to a successful completion of the transition of both ICANN and the IANA (being part of the technical management and co-ordination of the DNS), in September 2009. Mechanisms should thereby set in place that assure that multi-stakeholder processes do not further politicise an essentially technical function, slow down innovation or lead to increased bureaucracy and costs.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roelof Meijer', written in a cursive style.

Roelof Meijer
CEO SIDN