
ICANN85 Mumbai | CF – ccNSO: Universal Acceptance Committee Work Session
Saturday, March 7, 2026 – 15:00 to 16:00 IST

CLAUDIA RUIZ

Hello and welcome to the ccNSO Universal Acceptance Committee work session. My name is Claudia Ruiz, and I, along with my colleague Joke Bracken, are the participation managers for this session. Please note that this session is being recorded and is governed by the ICANN Community Participation Code of Conduct, the ICANN Expected Standards of Behavior, and the ICANN Community Anti-Harassment Policy.

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ABDELMONEM GALILA

Thank you very much, Claudia. Good morning, good afternoon, good evening. This is Abdelmonem Galila for the record. I will chair the session for today on behalf of the Universal Acceptance Committee. This is a working session like the other sessions conducted before the ICANN 85 meeting, where I will finish the preparation for the UAC session at the Tech Day to discuss the Universal Acceptance technical overview and one of the technologies like artificial intelligence.

The other point for the agenda will be to finalize our working plan for the Universal Acceptance Committee and review the first work item, which is the UA definition, which is the creation of a clear Universal Acceptance definition. Recently, we have a document that the Universal Acceptance Working Group published, a document of the guidelines that contains the ten guidelines, the answer to the ten questions in order to have guidelines to draw the map for the future of ICANN for Universal Acceptance adoption. This document was released for public comment, and we need to discuss all the points inside this document in order to have our input on all of this. At this time, I will leave the floor to Bart from the ccNSO Universal Acceptance Committee staff in order to handle the next items of the agenda for today. Thank you.

BART BOSWINKEL

Thank you, Abdelmonem. Can we go to the work plan, please?

So what I have done, as you may recall some time ago, the working group has looked at the work plan itself and made some edits, and

the work plan was based on the outcome of the discussions in Dublin. As you can see, there is what I would say needs to be completed between now and the Seville meeting. Originally, it was Mumbai, but we were a bit late because of the preparations of the session on Monday and going over it.

So what I have done is include the comments and observations made by members of the working group. The first one was to create this UA definition document. People referenced the Universal Acceptance Steering Group documentation, as you can see, and we will discuss this first draft at the next item on the agenda. Can you scroll down, please? So you can see what happened. That was the first one. Just scroll down. The purpose of this document is really to inform people who are not very familiar with UA, especially ccTLDs working with UA to inform their stakeholders. I think that we need to go back up a little bit because this is... you will see the next item there is all the documents. Scroll down.

The next item was a motivation toolkit. That would be the next one. This is really about successful use cases or use journeys to assist ccTLDs in their interaction with governments, but also other stakeholders, to inform them about potential positive experiences around the UA readiness and the need for UA. So again, that is one of the work items that was identified in Dublin. I have included the comments, et cetera. I don't know if there are any questions around this particular item, if you had the opportunity to read it,

but let's get back to it after running through this overview. Can we go to the next item, please? Scroll down.

The next item is a draft model procurement language. There is some available. The question is whether this is really a role for the UAC itself or something else. It was identified at the time to assist governments and to motivate them to introduce or to have procurement language. There are some references to it. Oh, there is too much echo. However, the question is whether there is a real role for the UAC itself to produce this because you need to have a good understanding of procurement, especially in your own country, et cetera. You may come up and alert people that this would be very helpful, so use the network of the UAC itself. But the question is whether the UAC as a group is well-positioned to develop this type of language itself. There are examples, you can point to examples, and maybe we could include this in the repository, but do not develop it yourself.

Can we scroll down? Again, now we are getting into the longer-term action, so that is post-Seville, I would say three to twelve months. Promote government task forces. Again, maybe this came out as one of the ways to interest governments in UA and UA readiness and UA awareness, et cetera. There is a reference to the Chinese experience with task forces. Probably this could be part of use cases available for ccTLDs, so reference some of these task forces. Whether the UAC itself is in a position to develop these types of frameworks is probably something to discuss at a later stage, but

definitely promote the use in the context with governments, given the experience to date.

Can we scroll down? And again, this was cleaned up, as you can see. And then create simplified implementation roadmaps, step-by-step guides. There are some available. It was considered useful and maybe it is more a matter of promotion and the role of the UAC. And I think, yeah, scroll down. There you are. And monitor the pilot implementations of UA and spread the word around it. So, again, sharing information around experiences. This again was considered an important role. As you can see, post-twelve months, I have deleted. If the UAC would be able to include this already in the next twelve months, it would be good, and probably it is a good thing in twelve months or even before to build out and look at the roadmap again to see what you want to do in the future.

So this is the cleaned-up version of the roadmap post the Dublin meeting. Can we scroll back to page one, please? So this was the explanation. Are there any questions or comments around this roadmap? Go ahead, Abdelmonem.

ABDELMONEM GALILA

Yes, thank you, Bart. As a member of the Universal Acceptance Committee, I see here many times the word government. So it means that we need to have support from the Governmental Advisory Committee, GET UA IDN work group. Why not? It is just a suggestion, a thought from my mind that if we have this scope of work item to be shared with the GET UA IDN work group and have

their inputs on it and search for... they could advise how we could cooperate for the future in order to achieve this scope of work for the Universal Acceptance Committee. From my point of view, it will be good. What do you think about that?

BART BOSWINKEL

I have no thoughts about it. This is the outcome of the session we had in Dublin with one or two representatives of the GAC IDN UA group, and the rest was the UAC. If the UAC itself thinks it is a good idea to develop this in cooperation with the GAC IDN UA group, then who am I to decide against it? This is what came out of your discussions, and this is the result of it. This was targeted, as you know from that session, towards governments because that was thought to be very critical for the acceptance of UA or IDNs and the promotion of universal acceptance.

ABDELMONEM GALILA

Today, I was for the session for the GAC IDN work group before this session. I saw that the chair of the human rights work group within GAC said that we need to cooperate with the UA IDN work group and UNESCO in order to go for the rights for the people to select the proper domain names and email addresses and, of course, universal acceptance, whatever they need. It is human rights. So they were thinking about this. And my point of view is that ccTLD is a local community. I think they are the base that we should build upon. That is why, if we could combine the work for the UAC scope

of work and the UA IDN work group and the human rights within GAC, I think it will be good as another idea.

BART BOSWINKEL

May I suggest that you include this as a separate working item to coordinate? Because if you wait for this to happen, probably you end up in Seville and nothing has happened. So include it as a separate working item to seek closer cooperation with the GAC IDN UA working group. This has been on the agenda, but to date, there has only been one session, and you invited the GAC IDN UA working group. But I do not know about its status, and you probably know better than I do. I think it is again a matter of what the UAC itself wants and whether they want to wait for the GAC IDN working group to participate or already start working on this. Because you can share the end product as well, and then you can adjust when needed. In that sense, you have the advantage of going ahead and being a little bit more ahead as well. You have got a reasonable working pace, but it is up to you.

ABDELMONEM GALILA

It is fine. The second point is that we for Egypt have the IDN one under the umbrella of the government. In other countries within Africa, it is not a part of the government; it is a private business. How could we cover this inside our scope of work where we consider government? For Egypt, it is fine. For other countries, what shall we do?

BART BOSWINKEL

I think in principle, although the ccTLD manager is a government-related organization, if you look at the whole structure of the ccTLDs, you will see that about 30% of all ccTLDs are government-related, but they still participate in the ccNSO as such. So whether your organizational and governance structure is government, academic, not-for-profit, or for-profit really does not matter in the ccNSO itself. You participate because you are a ccTLD manager and not because you are a government, and that is the difference.

ABDELMONEM GALILA

Whatever it is private business, public sector, or the government, it should work. I agree with that, thank you.

BART BOSWINKEL

Because this is a working group of ccTLD managers, independent of how they are organized and the governance model. For that reason, you are part of the ccNSO structure. You have this agenda independent of how the ccTLD is organized itself.

ABDELMONEM GALILA

It is fine for government and whatever the stakeholder. Now we have regional organizations. How could we have these regional organizations to help us as a very successful committee to achieve our scope of work?

BART BOSWINKEL	Reach out. Get in touch with them. Most ccTLDs, again, if you look at the structure, are members of regional organizations one way or the other. At times, they want to develop their activities under the umbrella of the ccNSO, and in other areas, they do it with the regional organization. Some working groups reach out to regional organizations, some do not. So if you want to involve regional organizations like APTLD and AFTLD in your work, then it is a matter of reaching out.
ABDELMONEM GALILA	If I recall well, we have an MOU between ICANN and the APTLD. That is done.
BART BOSWINKEL	That is ICANN; that is not the ccNSO.
ABDELMONEM GALILA	We need to think how it could happen.
BART BOSWINKEL	Pretty easy. You, as chair, can reach out and see if there is a willingness to cooperate.
ABDELMONEM GALILA	It works for me, thank you. Any other questions? I see Maria. Maria, go ahead.

MARIA KOLESNIKOVA

So, first of all, I would suggest prioritizing tasks for the work. Most of these tasks regard ccTLDs and how to make a ccTLD UA-ready. I agree with it and support this. We have just one task regarding the procurement policies and advice for governments. I agree with Abdelmonem; probably it would be nice to discuss it once again and decide. Probably the UA and IDN working group at GAC can have its own plan of tasks. If this group will include the task to prepare some guides for the governments on how to support UA readiness better, and probably this group will develop some guides regarding how to include UA requirements in the procurement policies, then we will not need to repeat this work. But it depends on what are in the plan of the UA and IDN working group in GAC. We can ask Abdelmonem, as he is the chair of this group in GAC, if they have plans so we will not repeat the work.

Anyway, I think the UAC can only make some recommendations. Moreover, we have already two documents mentioned in the work plan with already formulated recommendations for the procurement policies. So that is again a question about the repetitive work. Regarding the regional organizations, I agree with Bart here. For example, Dr. Yu is a member of APTLD. That is why I would like to more clearly formulate what task we want to make together with these regional organizations, because we need to be very clear here what we want to prepare with them together. So far, as I see, now our committee works mostly on recommendations for ccTLDs who are members of ccNSO. This is a worldwide

community, and I think that most of our registries in APTLD or in CENTR are already in ccNSO. So we need to think more here. Thank you.

BART BOSWINKEL

Thanks, Maria. What I am suggesting, based on Maria's comment, is to alert the IDN UA working group on the importance of draft model procurement language. I think that captures what you said. It is... this group and the UAC in its workshop realized the importance of it. They are not in a position, but based on the successful cases, they can alert the IDN UA working group that working on model procurement language might be very helpful going forward. So this is more an alert than really providing a draft themselves. Does that capture your point as well, Maria?

MARIA KOLESNIKOVA

Yes, I agree. Probably Abdelmonem can later inform us if the GAC working group will make a plan of their tasks and if they would be ready to include this in their work.

BART BOSWINKEL

And that is up to the GAC working group. Vadim, I saw your hand.

VADIM MIKHAYLOV

Yes, I have a short notice. I remember that there are country codes that are not members of ccNSO but are members of a regional organization. And then, interaction with a regional organization is

a way to involve such national domain name registrations in the Universal Acceptance efforts and approaches.

BART BOSWINKEL

If you look at the numbers, there are hardly any, but it does not matter. In principle, yeah.

VADIM MIKHAYLOV

.eu, for example.

BART BOSWINKEL

But they are not a member of a regional organization either. Any other comments regarding the work plan? So with this, if you agree, Abdelmonem and Regina, then we close the discussion on the work plan and leave it for the first upcoming meeting in the sense that it is finalized. Based on what we have right now, the UAC starts to organize activities around this work plan. Can we go back to the agenda, please?

The next one was work item one. Claudia, can you open the document? A proposed draft summary capturing all the references in a very succinct document to be shared in simple language. So, what is Universal Acceptance? Why is it important? I think this was shared with the list. I do not know if you had an opportunity to read it, but at least the first work item, a strawman, is available for people to have a look at. It is ready to be shared outside the group as well. If you scroll down, why it matters for ccTLDs and local communities. And then standards to follow. Again, use cases and

local initiatives, just to illustrate some, and then references and resources. That is about it. This is really succinct, almost a two-pager to be introduced and make it accessible for people who are not very familiar with the UA and the standards. Any initial comments? feedback?

ABDELMONEM GALILA

The first impression about these two pages is that it is related to left-to-right scripts only. All the document is related to a left-to-right script. We need to consider one of the ccTLDs that is IDNs and uses the right-to-left script. For the first paragraph, you include .rf, thailand, and china, all of them left-to-right. We need to add another one, which is right-to-left, to be consensus that this document is related to all the languages, especially as one of these documents, I think UASG 005, is considering right-to-left scripts. We need to be unit as an example.

MARIA KOLESNIKOVA

I have no opportunity to read this document. Does it include the links or mention the already done work? For example, your roadmap for what ccTLDs what was developed by ICANN.

BART BOSWINKEL

We can include it in the references. If you want to be succinct, you have to be very careful what you want to include. Maybe one sentence and then include the reference to the documents. As soon

as you add these details, it starts to increase in length dramatically if you are not careful. Regina, go ahead.

REGINA FUCHSOVA

I wanted to say something similar. The aim is to address also ccTLDs who maybe have not introduced IDNs at the second or first level yet. It is too early to describe in more detail how to assess Universal Acceptance and so on, but just that this shows that enabling IDNs is the first step, and then there are more steps towards Universal Acceptance. I agree with this reference. I believe the aim of this document was to be a starting point for ccTLDs who might be at very different levels of UA adoption. Thank you.

BART BOSWINKEL

Thanks. Any additional comments? I do not see any reds, and I see a lot of greens. So we will update it and then revisit it. I will give you the opportunity to read it again before the next meeting. Can we go back to the agenda, please? Next is the public comment. Abdelmonem, I give it back to you to lead us through item five on the agenda.

ABDELMONEM GALILA

Thank you. ICANN announced that there is a Universal Acceptance Expert Working Group that will draw a future map of ICANN on Universal Acceptance adoption. This Universal Acceptance working group has nominees from different ACs and SOs, and we have Sami Mohammed Ali, who is nominated from the ccNSO UAC.

Recently, they published the public comment documents that have ten scope of works of ICANN that should be achieved in order to have the input from the community. These items have some points related to encouragement. Encourage ccTLDs, encourage hosting providers, encourage government, and open source communities in order to have their software development APIs be Universal Acceptance compliant.

I will give the floor to Sami to give us more details. I already shared this with Mr. Edmon Chung, the chair of the UA Expert Working Group: What is the validity over the lifetime of these guidelines for ICANN? Second question, as I know there are new technologies like AI that should be considered for the future adoption of Universal Acceptance. This document does not have any idea or even point to any of these new technologies like AI. So these are my only two comments for this document. Sami, I will leave the floor to you.

SAMI MOHAMMED ALI

Hi everyone, Sami here. Looking at the time, I will not be sharing the presentation because it might get too long, and we can do that during the UA Tech Day. For now, I will just give you a quick brief on the ten points that were discussed during the UA Expert Working Group. The first point was encouraging big tech organizations. All stakeholders agreed on the showcase of economic, business, social impact, linguistic and cultural value of this work when it comes to big tech to encourage them to adopt UA adoption and to start working with a more UA-friendly ecosystem. The second point was

strategies to encourage open source communities to adopt UA in their application and systems. Prioritizing fixing issues both from the way the technology stack is set up vertically, the category, and the usage of software applications. Plan to also develop their capacity in relevant areas. The third point was specific standards to contribute towards work with standards organizations to update relevant core and ancillary standards. A coordinated approach is necessary to avoid chicken and egg barriers between underlying platforms providers and high-level applications. Participate in Internationalization Standards Groups to help integrate UA concepts.

The fourth point was platforms and mechanisms to reach out to software development professionals so they can start working on developing local solutions. Fifth point: platforms and mechanisms to reach out to system administrators to develop capacity for smaller organizations so they can start working on Universal Acceptance. Sixth: engagement with the DNS industry, including gTLD and ccTLD registries, registrars, and resellers. The DNS industry has a crucial role and is encouraged to adopt Universal Acceptance using the right messaging. As we have discussed multiple times, ccTLDs and governments are going to be key players.

Seventh point is mechanisms to encourage hosting providers and internet service providers to provide IDN and EAI hosting services to the registrants. This will be part of the registry-registrar solutions. Eighth point is mechanisms to reach out to the public

sector to promote Universal Acceptance adoption. Collaboration with intergovernmental organizations is needed to achieve the goals. This would require marketing and awareness campaigns from the government side as well as the ccTLDs. Ninth: mechanisms to reach out to academia. This has already started with ICANN's Universal Acceptance curriculum being adopted by universities across the world. This will be the stepping stone for grassroots engagement. The last point was aspects of Universal Acceptance adoption to be measured. There needs to be a continuous monitoring of how the adoption is going based on awareness, policy support, implementation, and capacity development. The cycle needs to be continuously updated and re-evaluated. These were the ten points discussed through the Universal Acceptance Expert Working Group, and now we are working towards how this ICANN team will be implementing them and how we will be monitoring it. That is all for now. We will discuss more in detail during the Universal Acceptance Tech Day.

ABDELMONEM GALILA

Thank you, Sami. Any other comments about what Sami said? Maria, the floor is yours.

MARIA KOLESNIKOVA

I agree that probably it would be nice to reflect that artificial intelligence systems should be trained to work better with domain names and email addresses which are internationalized. But it is a question of how to do it. When we talk about AI systems and how

they should be ready for multilingualism, it is mostly regarding the support of local languages. I am not sure that this is in the scope of work on Universal Acceptance if we look at Universal Acceptance as a technical issue. People use AI for creating websites because it is easy, and some tools already exist. Probably in this scope, we can think about the support for IDN domain names and email addresses. This is a complicated question for me. It can reflect that Universal Acceptance should be considered more like an issue of digital inclusion and multilingualism problems. I am not sure if it matches the scope of the expert group and the guidelines for ICANN org. It is a discussable question.

Second point, if you mentioned it on practice, Universal Acceptance issues are usually discussed on IGF platforms and also the WSIS Forum. Probably that should be reflected in the report as well. It guides ICANN to continue its work and include Universal Acceptance in the international policies regarding internet governance. I know this work is ongoing, but probably it should be nice to reflect it in this report and guidelines for ICANN one more time. This is an important point and how it works in practice.

ABDELMONEM GALILA

Thank you, Maria. Before going to Sarmad, I would like to add another technology away from AI, which is voice recognition. Maybe I could not speak English or write English, but I could say the domain name in Arabic. I want to go to an Arabic domain name.

Voice recognition applications should be able to handle something like this. I will leave the floor now for Sarmad.

SARMAD HUSSAIN

Thank you, Abdelmonem. I just wanted to quickly respond to Maria's comment. Just for your information, we have done some initial investigation into AI tools and how they support UA. The specific perspective being how these automatic coding tools are supporting code and whether that is UA-ready or not. We are continuing to explore some more tools from ICANN's side, and once we have some concrete findings, we will come back and share that with the community. But we are already looking at that. Thank you. And just one last thing, there is a more detailed session on the UA Expert Working Group guidelines tomorrow, so for those who are interested in details, please attend that session. Thank you.

ABDELMONEM GALILA

Thank you, Sarmad. It is very important to act in this decision in order to know the roadmap for the future work of ICANN on Universal Acceptance adoption. Any other comments? Bart, go ahead.

BART BOSWINKEL

Question, because there is a limited time frame if you want to comment: Do you want to submit as a UAC a comment on the draft guidelines for advancing UA adoption?

ABDELMONEM GALILA

Yes.

BART BOSWINKEL

Okay, I will inform the Council because you are not mandated to do that, but we will find a way. That is for the upcoming council meeting. Second thing, are there drafters? Who is willing to draft a submission? Is there a small committee of the UAC willing to draft the comments? Maria, you had some ideas. If you just make a small list with bullet points, our staff can help in turning this into a submission. But in principle, it is your comments on this document. So if there are some volunteers from the UAC who are willing over the next two or three weeks to draft a comment and then go back to the UAC, then it can be submitted.

ABDELMONEM GALILA

We need a faster track in order to comply with the deadline. So just some volunteers from the group who are able to draft something and push it back to the committee itself. Then it is going to be a submission of the UAC. I like this. We need to decide now who will be the drafter of this document, or we could go for the next session on the 25th of March.

BART BOSWINKEL

I think if you have a draft ready by the 25th of March, then you will be able to submit it. If two or three people of the UAC are willing to pick up the pen and start drafting in a Google Doc, we can create

one tomorrow and circulate it. Then it is easy and you can comment on the 25th. But it is really a UAC submission, so my advice would be to start drafting it either next week or the week after. Regina, go ahead.

REGINA FUCHSOVA

I have a question because you said that it has to be submitted by the Council. Is there also some time needed for them to comment on it?

BART BOSWINKEL

No. The Council will need to mandate you to submit on your behalf. Some of you will be members of the SOPC. This is the only group of the ccNSO that can submit any comments on its own behalf. So we can ask and put it on the agenda for Thursday for this particular submission that you, as the UAC, submit on your own behalf, so you do not have to go back to the Council. It is really a submission by the UAC.

REGINA FUCHSOVA

Okay, thank you for the explanation. I can volunteer for this small group. We can have the comments that Maria already left as a starting point. And if one or two people want to join, with the aim to circulate it preferably before the 25th of March so that it is signed off at the meeting from the UAC point of view.

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- BART BOSWINKEL I think that is the best way. As staff, we will create a Google Doc and circulate it tomorrow to the email list so you can start drafting.
- ABDELMONEM GALILA I will volunteer for this as well. I will be happy to circulate a mail today for the mailing list.
- REGINA FUCHSOVA Maybe the best way would be to encourage the UAC members to leave the comments in the document, and we can start the drafting from there to see if there is some principle comment and then fine-tune it.
- ABDELMONEM GALILA We are six minutes past the hour, so it is time to close. The next meeting will be starting on the 25th of March, followed by the 8th of April and the 22nd of April. As advised by Regina, we will start drafting the document for our comments on behalf of the UAC after we have confirmation from the Council in order to submit these comments for the public document for the UA Expert Working Group. Any other business? Thank you very much. This is the close of the meeting for today. Thank you.
- BART BOSWINKEL And as such, that is why you have this agenda independent from how the ccTLD is organized itself.

ABDALMONEM GALILA

It is fine. It is for government and whatever the stakeholder. Now we have At-Large Structures, as I remember, for ccNSO. We have FTLD. We have other At-Large Structures.

How could we use them in order to achieve our scope of work? I do not know what the name for them is at ccNSO. FTLD, what is the name for FTLD?

BART BOSWINKEL

Regional organization.

ABDALMONEM GALILA

How could we have this regional organization help us as a Universal Acceptance Committee to do our job or to achieve our scope of work?

BART BOSWINKEL

Reach out. Get in touch with them. Most ccTLDs, again, if you look at the structure, are members of regional organizations one way or the other.

At times they want to develop their activities under the umbrella of the ccNSO, and at other times in other areas they do it with the regional organization. Some working groups reach out to regional organizations; some do not. It is really a matter of reaching out if

you want to involve regional organizations like APTLD or AFTLD in your work.

ABDALMONEM GALILA As I recall well, we have ICANN and the APTLD. It is done. They had an MoU between ICANN and the APTLD.

BART BOSWINKEL That is ICANN; that is not the ccNSO.

ABDALMONEM GALILA That is ICANN. We need to think how that could happen.

BART BOSWINKEL Very easy. As chair, you can reach out and see if there is a willingness to cooperate.

ABDALMONEM GALILA It works for me. Thank you.

BART BOSWINKEL Any other questions? I see Maria. Masha, go ahead.

MARIA KOLESNIKOVA I am trying to use another microphone. Is it okay?

SARMAD HUSSAIN

Yes.

BART BOSWINKEL

We can hear you without echo.

MARIA KOLESNIKOVA

Finally. My first comment was that I would suggest looking at the list of tasks and prioritizing them to understand what we need to do first and what we need to do a little bit later.

As I see the list, most of these tasks regard ccTLDs and how to make a ccTLD UA ready. I agree with that and support this. We have just one task regarding the procurement policies and advice for governments.

For this task, I agree with Abdalmonem. It would be nice to discuss it once again and decide if the UA and IDN working group at GAC could handle it. That group can have its own plan of tasks. If they include the task to prepare guides for governments on how to support UA readiness better and develop guides on how to include UA requirements in procurement policies, then we will not need to repeat this work.

It depends on what is in the plan of the UA and IDN working group in GAC. We can ask Abdalmonem, as he is the chair of that group in GAC, if they have plans so we do not repeat the work. Anyway, I think it is better that the UAC only makes recommendations.

Moreover, we already have two documents mentioned in the work plan with already formulated recommendations for procurement policies. That again raises the question of repetitive work. My second comment regarding regional organizations is that I agree with Bart here. For example, .ru is a member of APTLD. That is why I would like to more clearly formulate what task we want to...

MARIA KOLESNIKOVA

I would suggest we make a plan together with these regional organizations because we need to be very clear about what we want to prepare with them together.

So far as I see, our committee works mostly on recommendations for ccTLDs that are members of the ccNSO. This is a worldwide community, and I think most of our registries in APTLD or Center are already in the ccNSO, so we need to think more about it here. Thank you.

BART BOSWINKEL

Thanks, Masha. Claudia, can you scroll down to the page on the...

MARIA KOLESNIKOVA

Bart, sorry. Yes, there was also one case for governments. So we have two tasks: procurement policies and cases. If you scroll down a little bit to cases, I think our committee can be helpful by putting together well-known cases regarding what governments in

different countries are doing for Universal Acceptance readiness implementation.

For example, today at the GAC meeting there was quite a good overview of what is going on in India. I think we can put together all this information regarding cases, but the procurement policy is another point.

BART BOSWINKEL

No, and that is what I want to address. Thanks, Masha. What I am suggesting, based on Masha's comment, is to alert the IDN UA working group on the importance of draft model procurement language. I think that captures what you said. This group and the UAC in its workshop realized the importance of it.

They are not in a position to draft it themselves, but based on these successful cases, they can alert the IDN UA working group that working on model procurement language might be very helpful going forward. This is more an alert for information rather than providing a draft or drafting the procurement language itself. Does that capture your point as well, Masha?

MARIA KOLESNIKOVA

I am sorry, I do not really get the idea. Can you please...

BART BOSWINKEL

Can you scroll and let me go to the...

MARIA KOLESNIKOVA

Sorry.

BART BOSWINKEL

Can you scroll down? Scroll down further. There you are. We need to do this. I just added an alert to the IDN UA working group on the importance of draft model procurement language.

It is definitely not a task of the UAC itself to draft that language, but based on the successful cases, you can point out that this helps. I see Vadim's hand.

MARIA KOLESNIKOVA

I agree. Probably Abdalmonem can later inform us if the GAC working group will make a plan for their tasks, and they might be ready to include this in their work.

BART BOSWINKEL

That is up to the GAC working group. Vadim, I saw your hand.

VADIM MIKHAYLOV

Yes, I have a short notice. I remember that there are country codes that are not members of the ccNSO, but are members of a regional organization. Interaction with a regional organization is a way to involve such national domain name registrations in Universal Acceptance efforts and approaches.

BART BOSWINKEL That could be. If you look at the numbers, I think there are hardly any, but it doesn't matter in principle.

VADIM MIKHAYLOV .co, for example.

BART BOSWINKEL But they are not a member of a regional organization either.

VADIM MIKHAYLOV They are a member of APTLD.

BART BOSWINKEL Round as well. Are there any other comments regarding the work plan? If you agree, Abdalmonem and Regina, then we will close the discussion on the work plan and leave it for a final round at the first upcoming meeting to ensure it is finalized.

Based on what we have right now, the UAC can start to organize its activities around this work plan. Shall we go back to the agenda, please? The next one, as you can see, is work item one. Claudia, can you open the document? It is a proposed draft summary capturing all the references in a very succinct document to be shared in simple language.

It explains what Universal Acceptance is and why it is important. I think this was shared with the list. I do not know if you had an

opportunity to read it, but the strawman for the first work item is available for people to look at, so it is ready to be shared outside the group as well.

If you scroll down, it explains why it matters for ccTLDs and local communities. Then there are standards to follow, use cases, and local initiatives to illustrate some examples. It concludes with references and resources. This is a succinct two-pager designed to be accessible for people who are not very familiar with Universal Acceptance and the standards. Are there any initial comments, thoughts, or feedback?

ABDALMONEM GALILA

The first impression about these two pages is that it relates to right-to-left scripts only. Actually, I mean left-to-right scripts. The entire document is related to left-to-right scripts. We need to consider ccTLDs that are already using IDNs with right-to-left scripts.

On the first page, the first paragraph includes .rf, .th, and .cn, which are all left-to-right. We need to add an example that is right-to-left. This would ensure consensus that the document relates to all languages, especially since documents like UASG005 consider right-to-left scripts.

BART BOSWINKEL

We will include that as an example. Thanks. Does anyone else have comments? Masha, go ahead.

MARIA KOLESNIKOVA I have had an opportunity to read this document. Does it include links or mentions regarding the work already done? For example, the roadmap for ccTLDs developed by ICANN.

BART BOSWINKEL I have not checked if it is included in the references, but we can add it there.

MARIA KOLESNIKOVA Yes, because I really like that approach when talking about ccTLDs. It might not be for this document, but I think we can mention it here. Regarding ccTLDs, we usually talk about technical readiness. This means considering the technical infrastructure of ccTLD registries, which usually consists of several modules that should be made Universal Acceptance ready.

This document could briefly mention this by listing these modules so a registry knows what points to investigate regarding Universal Acceptance readiness. Thank you.

BART BOSWINKEL If you want to be succinct, you have to be careful about what you include. Ideally, you would use one sentence and include the reference to the documents. Thanks, Abdalmonem. We will include the reference to the document and a maximum of one sentence

explaining that various options are available if you are willing to do this.

As soon as you add these details, the document starts to increase in length dramatically if you are not careful. Thanks. Regina, go ahead.

MARIA KOLESNIKOVA

I agree, Bart, so it can be made in a short way.

REGINA FUCHSOVA

I wanted to say something similar. Thank you, Bart. The aim is to address ccTLDs that may not have introduced IDNs at the first or second level yet. It is too early to describe in detail how to assess Universal Acceptance.

This document shows that technical enablement of IDNs at the second or top level is the first step, and once ready, there are more steps toward Universal Acceptance. I agree with this reference. I believe the aim of this document is to be a starting point for ccTLDs that might be at very different levels of Universal Acceptance adoption.

BART BOSWINKEL

Thank you. Are there any additional comments? If not, I propose that we update this for the next meeting and revisit it at the first in-person or virtual meeting in two or three weeks.

Before we move back to the agenda, does anyone else have comments on the document? To engage you all, do you think it is worth going through this to refine it? Does this capture what you had in mind?

If you agree, please check your green boxes; if not, use the red ticks. I just want to make sure everyone is still with us. I do not see any reds, and I see many greens. Thank you. We will update it and revisit it. I will give you the opportunity to read it again carefully before the next meeting.

Can we go back to the agenda, please? Next is the public comment. Abdalmonem, I will give the floor back to you to lead us through item five.

ABDALMONEM GALILA

Thank you. For 2025, ICANN org announced that there is a Universal Acceptance expert working group that will draw the future map for ICANN regarding Universal Acceptance adoption. This Universal Acceptance expert working group has nominees from different ACs and SOs.

Our colleague, Sami Mohammed Ali, was nominated from the ccNSO UAC to be our representative in that group. Recently, perhaps a week or two ago, they published the public comment document that contains ten items in the scope of work for ICANN to be achieved based on community input.

This scope of work includes points related to encouraging ccTLDs, hosting providers, and governments. Another item relates to encouraging open-source communities to ensure their software development APIs are Universal Acceptance compliant.

I will give the floor to Sami to provide more details about the ten items in the UA expert working group. Before Sami speaks, we need to conclude our input for this public comment document by April 13.

My first impression, which I shared with the chair of the UA expert working group, Edmond Chung, is the question of the validity and lifetime of these guidelines for ICANN. My second question is that new technologies like AI should be considered for the future adoption of Universal Acceptance.

This document does not reference or point to any of these new technologies. Those are my only two comments for this document. I will now leave the floor to Sami for further overview. Thank you.

SAMI MOHAMMED ALI

Hi everyone, Sami here. Looking at the time, I will not share the presentation because it might be too long, but we can do that during UA Tech Day. For now, I will give you a quick brief on the ten points discussed during the UA expert working group and a summary of what we are looking at.

The first point was encouraging big tech organizations. Stakeholders agreed on showcasing the economic, business,

social, linguistic, and cultural value of this work to encourage them to adopt Universal Acceptance adoption and a UA-friendly ecosystem for their global solutions, such as Google or Meta.

SAMI MOHAMMED ALI

Meta, or any of these.

The second point was strategies to encourage open source communities to adopt Universal Acceptance in their applications and systems. Prioritizing fixing issues, both from the way the technology stack is set up vertically, the category, and the usage of software applications. They plan to also develop their capacity in relevant areas when it comes to Universal Acceptance.

The third point was specific standards to contribute towards work with standards organizations to update relevant core and ancillary standards. A coordinated approach is necessary to avoid chicken and egg barriers between underlying platforms, providers, high-level applications, and service providers. They will participate in the internationalization standards group to help integrate UA concepts when consulted by other standard groups.

The fourth point discussed was platforms and mechanisms to reach out to software development professionals so that they can start working on developing their local solutions when it comes to Universal Acceptance.

The fifth point focuses on platforms and mechanisms to reach out to system administrators to develop capacity for smaller

organizations and their system admins so they can start working on Universal Acceptance adoption.

The sixth point is engagement with the DNS industry, including gTLD and ccTLD registries, registrars, and resellers. The DNS industry has a crucial role and is encouraged to adopt Universal Acceptance using the right messaging and reaching out to stakeholders. ccTLDs and governments are going to be very key players when it comes to Universal Acceptance and universal adoption in the DNS industry.

The seventh point is mechanisms to encourage hosting providers and internet service providers to provide IDN and EAI hosting services to registrants. Again, this will be part of the registry and registrar solutions, which will be useful for end users and registrants.

The eighth point is mechanisms to reach out to the public sector to promote Universal Acceptance adoption through collaboration with intergovernmental organizations to achieve these goals. This would require a lot of marketing and awareness campaigns from the government side, as well as the ccTLDs, to encourage the use of Universal Acceptance-related tools.

The ninth point is a mechanism to reach out to academia. This has already started with the ICANN Universal Acceptance curriculum that is being adopted by universities across the world in different regions and will be the stepping stone when it comes to engaging

and promoting Universal Acceptance adoption from a grassroots level.

The last point discussed was aspects of Universal Acceptance adoption to be measured. There needs to be continuous monitoring of how adoption is progressing based on different efforts, such as awareness, policy support, implementation, and capacity development. The cycle needs to be continuously updated and reevaluated to determine what effort needs to be done.

These were the ten points discussed through the Universal Acceptance Expert Working Group. Now we are working towards looking at how the ICANN team will be implementing them and how we will be monitoring progress. That is all for now, ABDALMONEM GALILA. The remaining points we will discuss more in detail during the Universal Acceptance Tech Day.

ABDALMONEM GALILA

Thank you, Sami, for sharing this. Are there any other comments or thoughts about what Sami said regarding the scope of work or the ten scope items for ICANN? MARIA KOLESNIKOVA, the floor is yours. Go ahead.

MARIA KOLESNIKOVA

I will try to be brief. I agree with you that it would be nice to reflect that artificial intelligence systems should also somehow be trained to work better with internationalized domain names and email

addresses. However, the question is how to do it. Usually when we talk about AI systems and how they should be ready for multilingualism, it is in a more general way. It is not specifically regarding domain names and email addresses, but mostly regarding the support of local languages.

I am not sure if this is within the scope of work on Universal Acceptance if we look at it strictly as a technical issue. As you know, people now use AI to create websites because it is easier. Some tools already exist, and AI can help in this area. Perhaps within this scope, we can think about supporting IDN domain names and email addresses somehow. This is a complicated question for me.

It can also reflect that Universal Acceptance should be considered more as an issue of digital inclusion and multilingualism. I am not sure if it matches the scope of the expert group and the tasks and guidelines for ICANN. It is a point for discussion.

My second point is that I am not sure if it is reflected in the report, but in practice, Universal Acceptance issues are usually discussed on IGF platforms and the WSIS Forum. Therefore, it should probably be reflected in the report as well. The guidelines should guide ICANN to continue its work and include Universal Acceptance in all agendas and international policies regarding Internet governance. I know this work is ongoing, but it would be nice to reflect this one more time in this report and the guidelines for ICANN, because this is an important point and reflects how it works in practice. Thank you.

ABDALMONEM GALILA

Thank you, MARIA KOLESNIKOVA, for your comments. Before going to Dr. SARMAD HUSSAIN, I would like to add another technology besides AI, which is voice recognition. I may not be able to speak or write English, but I could say the domain name in Arabic. I want to go to an Arabic domain name. Voice recognition applications should be capable enough to handle something like this. I will leave the floor now for Dr. SARMAD HUSSAIN to respond to our point. Thank you, Dr. SARMAD HUSSAIN. Go ahead, please.

SARMAD HUSSAIN

Thank you, ABDALMONEM GALILA. I just wanted to quickly respond to MARIA KOLESNIKOVA's comment. For your information, we have done some initial investigation into AI tools and how they support Universal Acceptance. The specific perspective or case being how these automatic coding tools are supporting code and whether that is UA-ready or not. We are continuing to explore some more tools from the ICANN side. Once we have some concrete findings, we will come back and share that with the community. We are already looking at that. Thank you.

Just one last thing. There is a more detailed session on the UA Expert Working Group guidelines tomorrow. For those who are interested in details, please come and attend that session. Thank you.

ABDALMONEM GALILA

Thank you, Dr. SARMAD HUSSAIN, for sharing this. It is very important to attend this session in order to know the roadmap for the future work of ICANN on Universal Acceptance adoption. Are there any other comments or thoughts from here or remote participants? BART BOSWINKEL, go ahead, please.

BART BOSWINKEL

I have a question, because there is a limited timeframe if you want to comment. Do you want to submit a comment as the UAC on the draft guidelines for advancing Universal Acceptance adoption?

ABDALMONEM GALILA

Yes, I think it would be better to have some.

BART BOSWINKEL

That means I will need to inform the Council because you are not mandated to say, but we will find a way. That is one point for the upcoming Council meeting. The second thing is: who is willing to draft a submission? Is there a small committee of the UAC who is willing to draft the comments? Especially, MARIA KOLESNIKOVA, you had some ideas. If you just make a small list with bullet points, we as staff can help in turning this into a submission. In principle, it is your comments on this document. If there are some volunteers from the UAC who are willing to draft a comment over the next two or three weeks and then go back to the UAC, then it can be submitted.

ABDALMONEM GALILA Yes, let us have some points from your experience. We need a faster track in order to comply with the deadline for submitting our comments. Should it go through creating or formulating a new subgroup from the UAC, or should we ask the ccNSO to do something like this?

BART BOSWINKEL No, just some volunteers from the group who are able to draft something and then push it back to the committee itself. Then it is going to be a submission of the UAC, and that is it.

ABDALMONEM GALILA I like this.

BART BOSWINKEL But then we need some volunteers who are willing to start the drafting.

ABDALMONEM GALILA We need to decide now who will be the drafter of this document, or we could go for the next session on 25 March. What do you think?

BART BOSWINKEL I think if you have a draft ready by 25 March, then you will be able to submit it. If two or three people of the UAC are willing to pick up the pen and start drafting in a Google Doc, we can create one

tomorrow and circulate it to the UAC. If two or three of you are committed to help and assist in drafting, then it is easy and you can comment on the 25th. It is really a UAC submission, so my advice would be to start drafting either next week or the week after. The 25th is two or three weeks beforehand. REGINA FUCHSOVA?

REGINA FUCHSOVA

I have a question because you said that it has to be submitted by the Council. Is there also some time needed for them to comment on it?

BART BOSWINKEL

No. My advice would be, if you agree, the Council will need to mandate you to submit on your behalf. Some of you will be members of the SOPC. This is the only group of the ccNSO who can submit any comments on its own behalf. We can put it on the agenda for Thursday for this particular submission so that you, as the UAC, submit it on your own behalf. You do not have to go back to the Council. It is really a submission by the UAC.

REGINA FUCHSOVA

Thank you for the explanation. I can volunteer for this small group. We can have the comments that MARIA KOLESNIKOVA already left as a starting point. If one or two people want to join, we can aim to circulate it, preferably before 25 March, so that it is signed off at the meeting from the UAC point of view.

BART BOSWINKEL I think that is the best way. What we will do as staff is create a Google Doc so it is available on the email list. We will circulate it tomorrow so you can start drafting already.

ABDALMONEM GALILA I will volunteer for this as well, and I will be happy to circulate a mail tomorrow from the staff for the mailing list asking them. No problem.

REGINA FUCHSOVA Maybe the best way forward would be to encourage the UAC members to leave their comments in the document and then we can start the drafting from there to see if there is any principle comment. Then we can fine-tune it for formulation. Thank you.

BART BOSWINKEL Thanks. Back to you, ABDALMONEM GALILA. We are six minutes past the hour, so it is time to close.

ABDALMONEM GALILA Sorry for that. The next meeting will start on 25 March, followed by 08 April, followed by 22 April. As advised by REGINA FUCHSOVA, we will start drafting the document for our comments on behalf of the UAC after we have confirmation from the Council in order to submit these comments for the public document for the UA Expert Working Group. Any other business? Any thoughts? Final ones

before closing the meeting? Thank you very much. This is the close of the meeting for today. Thank you very much.

REGINA FUCHSOVA

Recording stopped.

ABDALMONEM GALILA

Thank you very much. Bye bye.

BART BOSWINKEL

Bye all.

CLAUDIO RIZ

Thank you, everyone. If anybody here is going to attend the next session for ccNSO, it is in a different room just down the hall.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]