

# The Role of Governments

East Africa IGF

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Governmental Advisory Committee

# Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC)

- The GAC is an independent committee at ICANN, comprised of 120 member governments, public authorities and distinct economies, from all geographic regions, and growing...
- Intergovernmental organizations also participate as observers in the GAC and contribute regional and expert perspectives to the work of the Committee.
- The role of the GAC is to advise on a range of public policy matters arising from the technical coordination of the names and numbers for the global Internet.



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# How the GAC Works / Public Policy Advice and Principles

- Advice generated by the GAC is formally presented to the Board and communicated openly to the community at the same time
- The GAC develops its advice on the basis of consensus
- The advice of the GAC must be taken into account by ICANN's Board of Directors, both in the formulation and adoption of policies
  - for example, approximately 90% of the advice presented by the GAC regarding new generic top level domains was followed by the Board



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# How the GAC Works / Public Policy Advice and Principles

- In the event that the ICANN Board determines to take an action that is not consistent with GAC advice, it must provide the reasons why it decided not to follow that advice. The GAC and the ICANN Board must then work together to find a mutually acceptable solution.



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# How the GAC Works / Public Policy Advice and Principles

- Advice of the GAC can take various forms, including the development of principles applicable to managing the global Domain Name System (DNS). Some examples:

- universal resolvability of the DNS
- law enforcement recommendations
- delegation and redelegation of country code top level domains

- In addition: strengthening accountability and transparency at ICANN



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# GAC Working Methods

- The GAC meets face-to-face three times per year at the same time as ICANN meetings
- The key negotiated output is a GAC communiqué of advice
- The GAC holds open meetings, communicates and interacts with other parts of the ICANN community as part of the overall bottom-up, multistakeholder, policy development process at ICANN
- Work is carried also carried out intersessionally online and via conference calls



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# GAC Working Methods

- GAC representatives serve as topic leads to guide the work on a particular topic; liaisons between the GAC and other parts of the community facilitate information-sharing
- Other parts of the ICANN community also provide briefs to the GAC
  - for example, the Security, Stability and Resiliency Advisory Committee paper on the technical impacts of blocking at the top level
- A chair and three vice-chairs are elected to represent the GAC; geographic diversity



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# Strengthened Role of the GAC / New Generic Top Level Domains

- ICANN recently launched an expansion of the generic top level domains, allowing new domains such as dot-city or dot-brand as well as top level domains in non-Latin script
- 1930 applications were received as a result of this program.
- New role for the GAC: Early Warning mechanism
  - GAC Members, via the GAC, can signal potential concerns with applications that are controversial or sensitive
- The GAC may also provide public policy advice directly to the Board on any application for a new gTLD



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# GAC Outreach and Capacity-building

- Capacity-building sessions organized for new representatives on an ad hoc basis by the GAC, with support from the GAC Secretariat
  - last session held at ICANN San Jose, Costa Rica, March 2012
- GAC high-level meeting is tentatively planned for October 14/15, 2012 in Toronto, Canada
  - overall theme: strengthening the ICANN multi-stakeholder model



# Outreach and Capacity-building / ICANN Support to the GAC

- Interpretation for all GAC meetings and main teleconferences; all 6 UN languages and Portuguese available by October 2012
- Translation of GAC documents; teleconferences recorded, transcribed and posted to the GAC website
- 20 fellowships for developing countries to participate in each GAC meeting



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# GAC Current Priorities

- Board/GAC Recommendation Implementation Working Group
  - increasing accountability and transparency at ICANN; effectiveness of the GAC
  - improving the overall policy development process
- New Generic Top Level Domains
- Country Code Names Supporting Organisation: Framework of Interpretation Working Group
- Law enforcement / ICANN due diligence and registrar accreditation agreement (RAA) negotiations / WHOIS Review Team recommendations / ICANN compliance function



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# Upcoming GAC meetings

- 13-18 October 2012 (Toronto, Canada)
- 6-11 April 2013 (Beijing, People's Republic of China)
- 14-19 July 2013 (TBD, Africa)



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# Thank you!

- For further information, please contact the GAC Secretariat at [gacsec@icann.org](mailto:gacsec@icann.org)



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