

September 1, 2012

Cherine Chalaby, Chair, Board Committee on New gTLDs
Akram Atallah, Interim Chief Executive Officer
Kurt Pritz, Senior Vice President, Stakeholder Relations

cc: Fadi Chehadé, Chief Executive Officer Elect

Re: Timelines and Milestones in New gTLD Program

Dear Messrs. Chalaby, Atallah and Pritz:

This letter follows our recent meeting with the Board and Staff in Prague during which we discussed the New gTLD program, both in our constituency sessions with the Board and in public meetings. The Registry Stakeholders Group of ICANN's Generic Names Supporting Organization ("RySG") now comprises 14 members contracted with ICANN to operate gTLD registries and 50 observer members, primarily consisting of applicants for new top-level domains.

The RySG takes an active interest in the New gTLD program and its timely progress. In that regard, we write to express concern with what we see as two recent slipped deadlines, which we believe may suggest a need for greater attention to, or staffing of, the New gTLD program.

First, we understood from Mr. Chalaby's presentation at the public forum in Prague that ICANN intended to open an applicant comment window shortly after the Prague meeting to solicit applicant feedback on the next steps in the new gTLD program, in time to assess those comments before the Board's New gTLD committee meeting the following month, on July 27, 2012. (<http://prague44.icann.org/meetings/prague2012/transcript-public-forum-28jun12-en.pdf>) That solicitation was not sent out until July 29, 2012, two days after the scheduled Board meeting, which precluded applicant input into ICANN's proposed road map.

Second, in ICANN's status report of 3 August 2012 (<http://www.icann.org/en/groups/board/new-gtld/report-03aug12-en.pdf>), the Board told us that "The roadmap will be released by the week of August 6, 2012." The roadmap was published Friday evening, August 17th, after the close of business in most regions of the ICANN community, and just one weekend day before the applicant comment period on recommended steps forward closed. This precluded most applicants from incorporating thoughts about the proposed "road map" into their comments to ICANN.

The members and observers of the RySG remain actively engaged in all aspects of the New gTLD program and wanted you to be aware of their concerns over these announced milestones. Our point is not to reopen any comment period but rather to ask ICANN to use its available resources to ensure that it has set both its staffing and corporate priorities to meet the ongoing milestones of this important and high profile New gTLD program. We ask that ICANN do whatever necessary to meet target dates but, when it is anticipated that targets will be missed,

that fact should be explained to the community as early as possible and new target dates announced quickly.

We look forward to meeting with you again in Toronto, or whenever else you would like to receive input from the members and observers of the RySG.

Best regards,

/s/ David W. Maher, Chair, Registries Stakeholder Group

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