Registries Stakeholder Group Statement

Issue: **Proposed dates for ICANN Public meetings 2021-2023**

Date statement submitted: **29 September , 2017**

Reference URL: https://www.icann.org/public-comments/icann-meetings-dates-2017-08-21-en

Background

Proposed dates for the three annual ICANN Public Meetings in 2021, 2022, and 2023:

1st meeting:	Community Forum - 6 days
2nd meeting:	Policy Forum - 4 days
3rd meeting:	Annual General Meeting - 7 days

Registries Stakeholder Group (RySG) comment:

The Registries Stakeholder Group (RySG) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the proposed dates for the ICANN Public Meetings in 2021, 2022 and 2023.

It is a matter of good practice to have meeting dates set and announced well in advance, in particular for international meetings that require long distance travel for many participants. It allows participants to plan ahead, optimise travel and meeting schedules, and to obtain better airfares and room rates. This indirectly contributes to quality, diversity and affordability of the meetings.

The RySG takes note of the proposed dates and trusts that they have been cross checked against major global, national and religious holidays and known community events.

The RySG wants to use this comment opportunity to raise concern about the observed tendency to virtually shorten the meetings, the AGMs in particular, by moving important sessions or decision moments upfront in the schedule and reducing the meetings and events on the last day. ICANN 58 in Hyderabad and the schedule for the upcoming ICANN 60 in Abu Dhabi illustrate this well. While we understand the underlying motivation - the assumption that many participants prefer to avoid traveling back during the weekend - we are concerned that the schedule itself has become an incentive to skip the last day.

As more participants leave early, this behaviour reinforces itself and has a number of side-effects: it becomes increasingly difficult to plan meaningful meetings and sessions on the last day (group meetings as well as private meetings); participants still present feel frustrated about wasting their time and money; it becomes advisable not to arrange travel too long beforehand or to book the more expensive flexible alternatives so that one can still adapt when the meeting schedule is announced. In short, some of the positives of having a clear and long-term meeting strategy are undone.

We therefore prefer a consequent use of all the meeting days that have been announced, including the last day for wrap-up and closing sessions. This comment is not a plea for longer meetings or fuller schedules - on the contrary, we would suggest regular evaluations of the load and length of the different meetings. What we ask for is that the announced meeting dates of the ICANN Public Meetings guarantee constructive use of the participants' time.