

27 February 2026

RE: Protections for Names & Acronyms of International Governmental Organizations in gTLDs

Nicolas G. Caballero
Chair, Governmental Advisory Committee
ICANN

Dear Nicolas Cabellero,

Thank you for your [letter](#) of 12 December 2025, confirming the Governmental Advisory Committee's (GAC) adoption of a process for adding or removing an International Governmental Organization (IGO) from the list of IGOs whose names and acronyms the GAC has requested be protected at the top and second level of the Domain Name System (DNS).

We note that the [IGO list](#) was established by the GAC and a coalition of IGOs in April 2013. Since July 2013, new gTLD registry operators have been required to withhold the acronyms on the IGO list from registration at the second level. This is a result of the ICANN Board's [decision](#) to temporarily protect these IGO acronyms while the community continued to work on a policy for IGO acronym protections. In April 2023, the Board adopted the community's policy recommendations for second level curative rights protections for IGOs, and in May 2024 the Board [accepted](#) the GAC's advice from the [ICANN76 Cancun Communiqué](#) to continue the moratorium on second level domain name registrations matching these IGO acronyms until implementation of the Board-adopted policy recommendations is complete.

We thank the GAC for its timely action in adopting a clear process for adding or removing an organization from the IGO list as the ICANN community prepares for the launch of the New gTLD Program: 2026 Round. The GAC's action will provide clarity and certainty for registry operators, registrars, and potential registrants. In light of the recent [action](#) that the Board took to close out the outstanding IGO-related policy recommendations from an earlier GNSO policy development process, and the [planned](#) completion of the implementation work on IGO curative rights later this year, the GAC's action also represents a significant step forward in establishing an appropriate policy level of protections for IGO acronyms in the DNS.

We confirm that the GAC's process for adding or removing an IGO from the IGO list is consistent with the discussions that the GAC and IGO representatives have had with ICANN staff as to their respective roles and responsibilities. In particular, we have taken note of the need for ICANN to inform the GAC of the effective date when an IGO entry is changed, and the relevant systems and documentation have been updated. ICANN staff will confirm its appointed point of contact for the GAC as soon as feasible.

Finally, concerning string similarity evaluations for the next round of new gTLDs in relation to IGO identifiers, which the GAC has noted is an [issue of importance](#) to the GAC, we are pleased to note the outcomes of the recent [Board-GAC Interaction Group \(BGIG\) call](#) on 12 January 2026. During that call, in addition to specific actions that ICANN has indicated it will take, the Board noted its expectation that "it will inform the GAC following string confirmation day of the

list of applied-for strings along with the relevant list of all reserved names so that the GAC and relevant [IGO] organizations can take any action based upon the list as needed.”

We appreciate the GAC's continued engagement with ICANN on matters of public policy and the collaborative work which has resulted in clear policies and procedures to ensure that the names and acronyms of IGOs are appropriately protected at the top and second levels of the domain name system.

Sincerely,



Tripti Sinha, Chair, ICANN Board of Directors



Kurt Erik Lindqvist, President and Chief Executive Officer