

LATVIJAS REPUBLIKAS SATIKSMES MINISTRIJA

Gogoļa ielā 3, Rīgā, LV-1743, tālr. 67028210, fakss 67217180, e-pasts: sat_m@sam.gov.lv

Rīgā 08.06.2009. Nr. 10-04/221
uz _____ Nr. _____

Fiona M. Alexander, Associate Administrator,
Office of International Affairs,
National Telecommunications and Information Administration,
U.S. Department of Commerce

Dear Ms. Alexander,

The Latvian Government appreciates the opportunity to provide input into the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, US Department of Commerce, Notice of Inquiry on the upcoming expiration of the Joint Project Agreement (JPA) with the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN). This consultation process that followed the mid-term review is an opportunity to express its views on the conclusion of the JPA in September 2009. It is an important moment of genuine transition of the technical management of Domain Name System to a multi-stakeholder entity led by a private sector non-for-profit Corporation. While the JPA and the past relationships documented through several Memorandums of Understanding with the US Department of Commerce have provided an important guidance for ICANN's development, ICANN has reached the stage whereby a continuation of this relationship as documented in the JPA will not benefit but rather hinder its true global acceptance of ICANN.

Rather than address each of the questions posed in the Notice, the Latvian Government would like to just emphasize the following:

ICANN has over the 10 plus years of its existence matured into a responsible, multi-stakeholder organization. While US based, it has a global responsibility of stewardship over a single, interoperable Internet. As with any organization, efforts to continually improve are essential. ICANN has demonstrated it is committed to this, through its embedded review processes, its annual reporting, and the suggestions outlined in its work on improving Institutional Confidence. The Latvian Government believes that these measures can and should continue with the Internet community input, and are not reliant on the JPA or existence of a special agreement with US Government.

Additionally, in the realm of transparency and accountability, ICANN has established principles for transparency and accountability, as well as through the improving Institutional Confidence process, identified additional mechanisms for discussion with the community to address any further accountability mechanism. The Latvian Government believes that ICANN is not seeking to become less accountable to entire Internet community, including Governments of all countries around the world, but more.

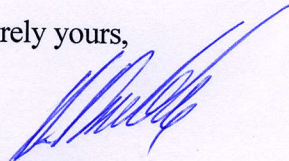
While some believe that through the JPA the United States plays an operational oversight role, the US Government has and will always play an important role in the Internet, not only through the IANA contract, but also through active and meaningful participation in the Governmental Advisory Committee of ICANN.

ICANN should uphold its commitment to the global community that it will continue to abide by its bylaws and values, that it will adhere to its affirmation of responsibilities the Board adopted (and annexed to the JPA), and that it will remain a not for profit private sector organization, a multi-stakeholder decision maker through a bottom up process. ICANN should remain an independent organization, which while headquartered in the United States, would have legal presence in other parts of the world and would take measures to best fulfill its core mission.

Any organization must commit to accountability and transparency, and ICANN should always strive to do more and be a steward in this area. In this realm, its strategic, operational and budget planning processes, its policy development processes, its consultation processes, its engagement with the Internet community, including governments, should always strive to be the best possible. It is through these processes that ICANN's continued responsibility to its mission and mandate remain agile and responsive to community input in a transparent and accountable manner.

The Latvian Government believes that over the past years ICANN's model has been tested, and it has demonstrated sustainability, functional capability, responsiveness to stakeholders input and new technical challenges. The JPA has been a good tool to continuously improve ICANN's performance in addressing challenging issues. It is now the time to conclude the oversight, endorse the ICANN model and let ICANN work for the benefit of all Internet community, including the governments.

Sincerely yours,



Nils Freivalds
State Secretary
Ministry of Transport

I.Tukris
+ 371 67028100
ivo.tukris@sam.gov.lv