Update on Cross-Community Working Group on Country and Territory Names

January 2016

Since the previous update the C & TN WG has been working on 3-letter codes as TLDs. The survey on 3-character TLDs was released in August/September. It contained 7 questions and resulted in substantive input. The WG received responses from many stakeholders and different constituencies, including 30 from ccTLDs and a letter from the GAC chair. Mid-December the Secretariat made an extensive summary and overview of the comments including groups of viewpoints provided by the community. The full responses were also sorted under the different questions and distributed. In addition the secretariat summarised the responses in a flowchart to see how the different views grouped together. It should be noted that even the range of responses from ccTLD community was broad. It should be stressed that the survey on 3-letter codes is just a starting point for the discussions, and should not be treated as a formal public comment process. But it will presumably make the work of the WG easier to move forward.

The responses of the survey show that the view on how to treat 3-character strings as TLDs in the future is very diverse. In the last teleconference the WG discussed whether it would be possible to find common ground. So far it seems that on certain points it will be difficult to come to a single position that could then be recommended as a way forward. One of the questions that raised was if that really is a problem or if this is helpful to the further process. It was concluded that the WG members should answer some questions to be able to make a straw man in time for Marrakech meeting. The questions are:

1 The members should check the summary of responses document to check if their response was captured properly by the secretariat
2 They should also think about whether the diversity of responses is of concern and if so, why
3 The WG also asked the members to suggest a way forward, especially in light of the diversity

It was also pointed out that according to the charter the WG task is to provide advice regarding the feasibility of developing a consistent and uniform definitional frame work. The group also discussed the definition of "status quo" – as a working definition it was agreed to mean the current policy framework for 3-character codes and its implementation and results of implmentation.

The WG will continue to have fortnightly teleconferences, if feasible. Upcoming work will involve F2F meeting in Marrakech and also a meeting between the GAC and the WG.