



18<sup>th</sup> April 2019

## Comment on Proposal for Hebrew Script Root Zone

### Label Generation Rules

The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) published for public comment a Proposal for Hebrew Script Root Zone Label Generation Rules.

In the Supporting Document of the Rules' proposal (Section 5.1.4), it is written that Te'amim (U+0591 – U+05AF) are cantillation marks used for ritual reading from the Hebrew Bible. Te'amim also provide a reading structure to biblical sentences, much like modern punctuation marks. These characters are used exclusively in biblical text.

It is proposed that Te'amin be excluded from the RZ-LGR for the following reasons:

- They are excluded from MSR-4.
- They are used only in the context of biblical text.

In the Overview and Rational of the Maximal Starting Repertoire MSR-4 (Section 4.3), it is written that Hebrew cantillation marks have strong justifications to be excluded from the Maximal Starting Repertoire since they are exclusively used for liturgical use. In Section 5.10, it is written that Hebrew cantillation marks have been excluded from the MSR because they are exclusively used for Religious or Liturgical Purposes.

In the MSR-4 code table, Hebrew cantillation marks have been excluded with the annotation "*religious use*" (*cantillation mark*). The same applies to Puncta extraordinaria O5C4 and O5C5. Hebrew code table is enclosed hereby.

With all our respect, the above limitations in the Maximal Starting Repertoire – MSR-4 and in the Proposal for Hebrew Script Root Zone Label Generation Rules are contrary to fundamental human rights.

Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights states:

#### **Article 18**

1. Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right shall include freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice,



and freedom, either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching.

2. No one shall be subject to coercion which would impair his freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice.
3. Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health, or morals or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.

In its decisions, the United Nations Human Rights Committee asserted that a general ban on a religious basis violated the right to manifest religious belief under article 18 of the International Covenant. Such a limitation does not allow for a reasonable balance between public interests and individual rights.

The United Nations Human Rights Committee established in its general comment No. 22 that that the freedom to manifest religion or belief may be exercised either individually or in community with others and in public or private.

The freedom to manifest religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching encompasses a broad range of acts. It may include not only ceremonial acts but also the use of a particular language customarily spoken by a group. In addition, the practice and teaching of religion or belief includes the freedom to prepare and distribute religious texts or publications. Article 18(3) of the International Covenant permits restrictions on the freedom to manifest religion or belief only if limitations are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health or morals, or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others. In interpreting the scope of permissible limitation clauses, one should take into account the need to protect the rights guaranteed under the Covenant, including the right to equality and non-discrimination on all grounds specified in articles 2, 3 and 26. Limitations imposed must be established by law and must not be applied in a manner that would vitiate the rights guaranteed in article 18. The Committee observes that paragraph 3 of article 18 is to be strictly interpreted: restrictions are not allowed on grounds not specified there.

The above restrictions of the ICANN regarding the use of the Hebrew language in the Maximal Starting Repertoire – MSR-4 and in the Proposal for Hebrew Script Root

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Zone Label Generation Rules do not meet the grounds specified in article 18(3) of the International Covenant. The above restrictions are not prescribed by law and are not necessary to protect public safety, order, health or morals, or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.

Moreover, the restrictions of the ICANN regarding the use of the Hebrew language constitute a violation of article 26 and article 27 of the International Covenant. Article 26 states that all persons are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to the equal protection of the law. In this respect, the law shall prohibit any discrimination and guarantee to all persons equal and effective protection against discrimination on any ground such as language and religion. Article 27 states that persons belonging to ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language.

With respect to the importance of Emuna (faith in the Creator), we wrote in The Universal Garden of Emuna – which has been translated in English, French, Spanish, Russian and Dutch that Emuna is the one universal answer to all of the questions. By way of emuna, everything is clear and understood: there is a Creator and a Director of the world, who watches over every individual with special Divine Providence. He determines the exact conditions of a person's life: to which family he'll be born, who he will marry, what his appearances will be like, what his personality characteristics will be like, how many children he'll have, how much money he'll have, who his friends will be and many more details, more than the grains of sand on the beach.

Divine Providence not only determines events on a general scale, but the daily events of each individual. The Creator decides when we succeed and when we fail, when times are easy and when they're hard, and infinite other details.

What does the Creator want from you? Essentially, God has one simple request from each of us – that we get to know Him. The Book of Splendor (Zohar), the foundation text of Kabbala and mystic thought, says that the creator created man in order to get to know Him. As such, the daily events and experience of our lives are none other than personal messages from the Creator, designed to stimulate our emuna and encourage us to speak to Him.

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Everyone has emuna, but most people simply fail to "live" their emuna. In other words, they don't know how to apply the powerful concept of emuna – man's greatest asset – to daily practice. We tap our cogent resources of emuna once we begin speaking to the Creator and asking for all of our needs. Emuna isn't activated in its entirety until a person begins a daily personal dialog with the Creator. Wherever we speak about emuna, we are referring to prayer. This is one's ability to connect and communicate with the Creator in a direct and personal relationship, speaking to Him and confiding in Him actively, whenever you like, in your own language and your own words.

The Hebrew cantillation marks belong to the world of melody. The world of melody and singing is a wonderful and special world with many virtues. Through it we enter a world of longing, through singing we receive hope, and the soul fills with joy. The songs and melodies connect us to our soul, our inner selves. Songs give us joy and do us good. Nachman of Breslev spoke a great deal about the topic of singing and said that through melody there is a spirit of purity over the person who submits and nullifies evil inclinations. So powerful is the holy singing that, by its virtue, it makes it possible to heal from all diseases, physical and mental.

Moreover, in the Proposal for Hebrew Script Root Zone Label Generation Rules, it is written that "The Hebrew script, written from right to left, is one of the most ancient alphabetic scripts in the world. The first Hebrew inscriptions date back 3000 years, and are written in letters similar to those of Phoenician script."

With all our respect, this description is not accurate.

The (holy) Hebrew language is the language that serves as the main language of the Kingdom of the Creator. In this language, the Creator spoke to His prophets and gave His Torah. This language is used in official standings of the Kingdom of Heaven. The Holy Tongue was the main language in which the Creator spoke with Israel in the Holy Land under the Kingdom of the Creator. The people of Israel continued to speak this language mainly for speech of the Kingdom of Heaven, in Torah learning and in prayer. The Holy Tongue is a language chosen and sanctified by God to be His Holy Tongue. Also, in this language, the Creator spoke before the world was created and with this language, the Creator created the world. The Holy Tongue



underwent a process of secularization, and it serves as the official and main language of the State of Israel.

In view of the above, the above restrictions in the Maximal Starting Repertoire MSR-4 and in the Proposal for Hebrew Script Root Zone Label Generation Rules are contrary to fundamental human rights and the principle of emuna (faith in the Creator).

Therefore, we require the ICANN organization:

- Not to exclude Hebrew cantillation marks from the Maximal Starting Repertoire and from the Proposal for Hebrew Script Root Zone Label Generation Rules.
- In the Hebrew Script Root Zone Label Generation Rules, to write regarding the Hebrew language: " The (holy) Hebrew language is a language that serves as the main language of the Kingdom of the Creator. In this language, the Creator spoke to His prophets and gave His Torah. This language is used in official standings of the Kingdom of Heaven. The Holy Tongue was the main language in which the Creator spoke with Israel in the Holy Land under the Kingdom of the Creator. The people of Israel continued to speak this language mainly for speech of the Kingdom of Heaven, in Torah learning and in prayer. The Holy Tongue is a language chosen and sanctified by God to be His Holy Tongue. Also, in this language, the Creator spoke before the world was created and with this language, the Creator created the world. The Holy Tongue underwent a process of secularization, and it serves as the official and main language of the State of Israel."

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