Dear Council Members,

As discussed during ICANN59 in Johannesburg and our call on 12 October, the GNSO Council is looking to form a Standing Committee consisting of interested GNSO Council members focused on the ICANN Budget and Operational Plan. You will recall that the GNSO Council submitted comments as part of the FY17 & FY18 ICANN draft budget and operating plans. These past efforts have been ad hoc and somewhat reactionary. Given changes to the ICANN bylaws and the new powers afforded to the Empowered Community, one of which is the power to reject the ICANN budget, it was discussed that the formation of this new Standing Committee could formalize the Council’s consideration of future budget cycles in a more proactive and continuous manner. As a reminder, this standing committee is not expected to compete with or overtake any work that SG/Cs may undertake in relation to the ICANN budget and operating plans. On the contrary, observers from SG/Cs are encouraged and the Standing Committee should explore how to best make use of the expertise that may already exist within SG/Cs while remaining within the remit of the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee is expected to focus solely on the aspects of the budget that are considered within the remit of the GNSO Council. Obviously as there are common interests, the Standing Committee may want to consider how to engage and facilitate dialogue with SG/C members that are involved in the budget planning process, but as said, the Standing Committee is in no way intended to overtake those separate efforts.

A draft of proposed activities is attached here. In short, the intent of the Standing Committee is to better prepare the GNSO Council for the yearly draft ICANN budget and operating plan that begins at the start of each new calendar year. It is anticipated that the Standing Committee will also monitor and inform the GNSO Council on a quarterly basis as ICANN delivers its quarterly reports of actual spend as compared to the approved budget for the current fiscal year. It is also anticipated that this committee could also help inform the GNSO should the Empowered Community decide to trigger the power to reject the ICANN budget.

Council leadership is placing this call for volunteers to Council members that are interested in participating, including incoming Council members. Please submit your interest to join this Standing Committee to gnso-secs@icann.org. This would give the Council a good idea of the interest that exists for this standing committee and allow for informal conversations with those that have volunteered to take place at ICANN60.

At one of the upcoming GNSO Council meetings, we will make this topic an agenda item to discuss who volunteered and to further consider the Standing Committee’s statement of work.

Near-term action items to prepare this committee include:

1. Submit Call for Volunteers and compile member list (this email and attached charter)
2. Revise draft charter as required and formally launch the Standing Committee
3. Staff will create a dedicated wiki page for the Standing Committee within the GNSO Council section
4. Staff will create a separate email list to which anyone interested can be added as an observer
5. Provide updates on the Standing Committee’s planned activities at future Council meetings and on the mail list as appropriate

 Thank you for your attention to this matter and we look forward to your participation in this important effort.

James Bladel, Heather Forrest, Donna Austin

GNSO Council Leadership Team